3 CONSTRUCTIVE POLITICAL ACTION

ALL OF ORGANIZED LABOR'S POLITICAL EFFORT IS AIMED AT just one goal: The achievement of labor's legislative objectives.

These objectives mean fair labor-management legislation; taxes based on the ability to pay; slum clearance and adequate housing; a strong defense; effective unemployment insurance and just workmen's compensation laws; good schools and better pay for teachers. These objectives, in fact, have as their target the greatest good for the greatest number of the people of the United States.

The COPE Dollar

When a candidate for public office campaigns, he must pay for such things as TV and radio appearances, newspaper advertising, billboards, secretarial help, telephones, travel and a multitude of other things. Now the only place where a pro-labor candidate can get the money to pay his expenses is from working people themselves. For it is certain he won't receive any aid from corporation executives.

The simplest way for a working man or woman to help office seekers is to contribute voluntarily to COPE's annual fund-raising campaign. All money contributed to COPE is used to help liberal candidates meet their campaign expenses.

Fifty cents of each dollar contributed by an AFL-CIO member is used in the state where the contributor lives. The other 50 cents is used in key races in other states.

Registration

Now, of course, if union members fail to register, labor's political program is blocked at the very beginning.

In sum, the legislative achievements which organized labor has helped to enact and the legislation which it wants passed in the future all depended and will depend, in the final analysis, on the ballot box or the voting machine.

You can write letter after letter to your representatives in Washington or the state capital asking them to vote for this piece of legislation or against that one. But all they want to know about you is whether you are registered to vote.

The efficiency of labor's political organization is in absolute, direct ratio to the number of trade union members who are *active* citizens and are registered to vote, and who go to the polls on Election Day and cast their ballots for legislators and public officials who are friendly to the ideals and purposes of the trade union movement.

It is that simple.

Working Through the Political Parties

One of the most effective ways to participate as a citizen in the processes of government is to take an active part in one of the two major political parties.

In being a voice in party councils—Democratic or Republican—a trade unionist, or any other citizen, can accomplish three things:

1—Help establish party objectives and to formulate principles of party platforms.

2—Assure the nomination of capable, liberal candidates sympathetic to the needs of the people.

3—Hold candidates, through party discipline, to party principles after their election.

There is no easy route to effective work in a party. One's influence in his party comes with experience. Hard and consistent work is the only way to achieve effectiveness and to gain the serious consideration of fellow party members.

The quickest way to reach the higher ranks of the party structure, particularly at county or state levels, is by starting at the bottom. That means in the precinct. That, in turn, means ringing doorbells, handing out literature near the polls, working with telephone committees, helping to furnish transportation to the election place, and performing a host of other shirt-sleeve jobs.

Ultimately, a devoted party worker may eventually reach the goal of being elected delegate to his party's national convention.