Murray Commemorated in Gift to Israeli Labor

The Philip Murray Memorial Foundation, created to honor the memory of the late president of the CIO and the United Steelworkers of America, on April 19, presented a $100,000 contribution to Histadrut, the Israeli Federation of Labor, for the construction of a Philip Murray Labor Center in Elath, a pioneer city in the Negev, the southern district of Israel.

The Philip Murray Labor Center will serve as a cultural and educational rallying point for trade unionists in Elath and the entire Negev area, according to officials of Histadrut. The Israeli trade unions will contribute the difference between the $100,000 presented by the Philip Murray Memorial Foundation and the total cost of the new structure.

The $100,000 gift from the Murray Foundation was presented to Mr. Moshe Bitan, American representative of Histadrut, at ceremonies in the Carpenter Suite of the Hotel Waldorf-Astoria.

The presentation was made by James B. Carey, secretary-treasurer of the CIO and of the Philip Murray Memorial Foundation. Mr. Carey headed a CIO delegation to Israel in 1953.

President Jacob S. Potofsky of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, who is Chairman of the CIO International Committee, presided at the presentation ceremonies. Others participating were Emil Rieve, chairman of the Philip Murray Memorial Foundation and President of the Textile Workers Union of America, and Arthur J. Goldberg, Director of the Foundation and General Counsel for the CIO and the United Steelworkers of America.

In making the presentation, Mr. Carey said:

"By his words and his deeds, Philip Murray proved his friendship, sympathy and devotion to the cause of Israel and of Histadrut. It is fitting, therefore, that the Philip Murray Foundation honor his memory by this contribution, to provide a Philip Murray Memorial Center at Elath, in the heart of the Negev.

"This great trade union center in a pioneering community will be a landmark—a symbol of the desire of the people of Israel and of Histadrut to build a modern community out of the desert. And it will always stand as a symbol of the sympathy and friendship felt by the men and women of the CIO to their working brothers in Israel.

"Bearing the name of Philip Murray, this great trade union center will be truly a living memorial to the belief in democracy and humanity of one of the great men of our era—the late Philip Murray."

In announcing the Foundation's decision to make the gift to Histadrut, Chairman Emil Rieve of the Foundation and Arthur J. Goldberg, its director, declared:

"The CIO, under the leadership of both Philip Murray and Walter P. Reuther, has constantly demonstrated its friendship for the people of Israel.

"It is fitting that Philip Murray—a staunch friend of the Israeli people—should be memoralized in this pioneer democracy of the Middle East."

At presentation: Arthur J. Goldberg, David J. McDonald, James B. Carey, Emil Rieve, Moshe Bitan, U. S. representative of Histadrut; Jacob S. Potofsky, Joseph Schlossberg, chairman of National Committee for Labor Israel and former ACWA officer; Michael J. Quill and Isaac Hamlin, Exec. Sec. of the National Committee.

Prominent Members of the German Parliament Meet with CIO Officials

Shown, left to right, seated, are Dr. Carlo Schmid, Dr. Guenter Klein, Willy Brandt, all of the German Bundestag; standing, Victor Reuther, assistant to the CIO president; Tilford Dudley, assistant director, CIO-PAC; Everett Kassalow, associate research director; Fritz Erler, German Bundestag; Tom Burke, CIO Congressional Liaison Chief; Harry Pollak, assistant director, CIO International Affairs Dept.

THE WETBACK CRISIS: A GROWING PROBLEM

For many years, thousands upon thousands of Mexican workers have crossed the frontier into the United States in order to do seasonal work, such as cotton and fruit picking and to seek employment in similar endeavors.

A relatively smaller number of these workers enter this country under agreements concluded by the United States and the Mexican government. Others—and they form the large majority—enter the country illegally. Many of them have made their way across the bed of the shallow and often dry Rio Grande River which forms the border between the two countries for many miles.

More Than One Million Illegal Immigrants Annually

These illegal immigrants, known as braceros or *"wetbacks"* number over one million per year and represent a growing menace to American labor, particularly in the Southwest. Steadily threatened with deportation, they are forced to submit to every whim of the employers, most of whom are the big planters. These employers take full advantage of the precarious position in which the "wetbacks" find themselves. Wages are negligible, while working and living conditions are among the worst in the country. Congress generally has refused to adopt measures providing a larger and adequate border patrol and penalties for employers who use and abuse the illegal entrants. The consequences for United States labor, are obvious.

Dangerous Situation Long Ago Foreseen by CIO

The CIO long ago saw the dangers resulting from these conditions at an early time and initiated action through the Department of Organization and the Committee on Latin American Affairs. The CIO also realized from the outset that joint action with the organizations of free labor in Mexico was essential, particularly with the powerful Confederation of Mexican Workers (CTM) under the leadership of its Secretary General, Fidel Velasquez. The late Executive Vice President of the CIO, Allan S. Haywood, initiated the first contacts with our Mexican brethren more than two years ago. These subsequent negotiations indicated that there was a broad basis for common understanding and action. Top officials of both the CIO and the Mexican CTM held a conference in El Paso in April 1953, and policy was established for future action. In a joint declaration, both organizations pledged to form a nucleus for continuing joint action in the common interest, to end the discrimination and injustice imposed on both Mexican and American workers involved, and to fight reaction, corruption and indifference which were barring the way to a final and adequate solution of the problems involved. In addition, the delegates proposed to enlarge the terms of reference for future meetings and to include a program for developing close, practical relations between Mexican and U. S. workers in identical industries.

An appeal was also directed to ORIT, the inter-American regional organization of the ICFTU, to call another U. S.-Mexican labor meeting on the broadest possible basis. This meeting took place in December of last year and was attended not only by the CIO and CTM, but also by the representatives of the AFL, the United Mine Workers, and various other Mexican trade union groups.

The December Conference initiated a new chapter in inter-American labor relations, and its effect was felt throughout Latin America. The meeting reiterated the position taken at the El Paso Conference. It was decided:

1) to request from both governments strict enforcement of their agreements in Mexico as well as the United States,
2) to impose severe penalties on U. S. employers and persons who employ wetbacks or contribute to their employment,
3) to inhibit illegal immigration by better border protection on both sides of the frontier,

(Continued on page 12)

Term Mexican Labor Act "Veiled Threat"

APRIL 19—U. S. members of the Joint U. S.-Mexican Trade Union Committee last week charged that President Eisenhower, perhaps unwittingly, had put his signature to "a scarcely veiled threat" when he signed the unilateral Mexican contract labor bill.

President Signs After Agreement

In a statement summing up actions at a meeting of the U. S. delegates in Washington, the union representatives pointed out that the President acted six days after the U. S. government—through its Ambassador in Mexico—had entered into an agreement establishing standards for hiring of Mexican nationals for the next two years.

"The virtually simultaneous signing of an international agreement and an Act of Congress empowering abrogation of the agreement is unprecedented in the relations of this country with friendly nations, at least in this hemisphere," the statement said.

CIO Pres. Reuther In Joint Protest

Following up a recommendation of the meeting, CIO President Walter P. Reuther has joined top officers of the AFL, Mine Workers and the Railway Labor Executive Association in requesting the President to accord official consultative status to the four major national labor organizations on the new Joint U. S.-Mexican International Commission.

The Joint Commission was established by the two-year international agreement with Mexico signed March 10. Its purposes are:

1. To investigate treatment of Mexican nationals employed in this country as farm workers and to recommend ways of improving that treatment.

2. To devise more effective methods of controlling the flood of wetbacks pouring across the Mexican border illegally.