

UNIONS FIGHTING NEW JOB BUREAU BILL

The danger of free employment bureaus becoming strike-breaking agencies as proposed under the bill now being given a hearing by a senate commission, the unfairness of a provision of the bill that separate records of ex-convicts shall be kept and a separate department maintained for them, and the inadequacy of the formation of the board, were brought to the attention of the committee by John Fitzpatrick of the Chicago Federation of Labor at a session in the Hotel La Salle this morning.

"While we believed that the creation of free employment agencies would result in some good in the publicity they would receive which might tend to bring the employer and the agency together and do away with the system now existing between private employment agencies and foremen and managers of factories, there are some clauses in this bill we object to," Mr. Fitzpatrick said.

"It is stated that information in regard to employment and other things shall be sent out and the services of the board shall not be withheld from anybody. We think that is a dangerous proposition. The board may be called upon to furnish strikebreakers in case of a strike and we think in that particular case the board would serve the public better if they withheld that information.

"When there is a strike it is resistance on the part of the employer against the fair demands of labor and a channel through which they could spread the information and secure men to work despite the existence of a strike would strengthen the employers' hands.

"There are hundreds of men in Chicago who lay around and only work when detective agencies send out a call for strikebreakers. These

men, under present conditions, do not bear of hundreds of strikes that are carried on, but if the free employment bureaus spread the information of strikes at each different plant they will be acting as press agents of the employers who are resisting the just demands of labor.

Mr. Fitzpatrick declared he believed it unfair to keep a record of ex-convicts and migratory workers, as the bill provides. He said that after a man has served his term in the penitentiary he has paid the bill and he should be treated as any other good citizen without having a stigma continually attached to him.

The provision of the proposed law calling for a board of advisers of two employers, two labor representatives and a representative of the public, Mr. Fitzpatrick said had never been found to work satisfactorily. He suggested instead of a representative of the public, the lieutenant governor or some other servant of the people should be the fifth member.

A. B. Adair of the printing trades declared that the money spent creating these free employment bureaus would be absolutely wasted unless a memorial were sent to congress asking that a national bureau be created and that means and authority be given congress to create public work for the unemployed when there is no work through private employers.

"Your free employment agencies cannot create jobs," he said. "The private employers employ labor only when they can do so at a profit. There are free employment agencies in the shape of advertisements and for each job there are almost 1,000 applicants. There are no jobs for the other 999. There is always a surplus of labor the private employers will not use and free employment agencies will not take care of them. Congress must provide work for them."

Lies of the United Charities and other social workers are backing the bill.