

CHARLESTON AFL FIGHTS REAL ESTATE CHISELERS

By ELIZABETH GREEN
Federated Press

Charleston, S. C.—(FP).—In face of a severe housing shortage here, AFL officials are fighting a gang-up on homeless veterans and civilians by real estate interests palming off shoddy homes at exorbitant prices.

According to state Federal Housing Authority officials, 76,000 new homes are needed in South Carolina in the next few months, 8,000 of them in Charleston. To relieve the crisis the Charleston Central Labor Union and Building Trades Council are protesting an order for the demolition of several projects of temporary war housing.

"These houses are not suitable for permanent occupancy," CLU Pres. John J. Irvin said, "but they are far better than much of the housing where workers live. Furthermore, many workers who were able to afford \$60 rentals in privately financed housing backed by FHA during the war when they had overtime pay are no longer able to afford such rentals and should be allowed to move into publicly financed housing. Under present regulations they are not allowed to do so."

The charge that private construction companies united in the V Housing Authority, which built all the FHA-backed housing here during the war, were taking advantage of the present crisis to unload poorly constructed homes on returning vets and desperate civilians was made by Paul Fine, president of the building trades council.

He cited in particular the Byrnes Downs Houses, erected just outside the city by the V Housing Authority. These are brick veneer houses of five and six rooms, selling at \$6,200 to \$7,150 on a 20-year payment plan. If properly constructed, these houses would be out of the reach of most Charleston workers, but Fine said the houses "aren't worth \$2,500 at the most."

"The houses at Byrnes Downs will hold up for about five or six years," he asserted. "You'll find the temporary war houses will last longer than they will. In my opinion the V Housing Authority obtained money through the government for the houses they built far in excess of their cost or value even if they had used skilled workers to do their construction work. It is also my opinion that they used the very cheapest labor available and the cheapest construction materials."

Calling for a thorough probe of the whole V Housing Authority setup, Fine suggested that the government buy one of the Byrnes Downs houses and "take it apart to see how it's built." The government has the authority to make an investigation, he said, since it is guaranteeing loans on these houses.

An agent of the V Housing Authority quoted prices on the Byrnes Downs homes at \$6,200 to \$6,400 for the 5-room dwellings and \$6,900 to \$7,150 for the 6-room dwellings. A down payment of about \$500 is asked and monthly payments of \$48 to \$55 are to be made for 10 years. After that payments of \$40 to \$48 are to be made for another 10 years. The houses are built on brick foundations with 18-inch clearance from the ground, which does not appear to be well-graded enough to insure drainage during rainy periods.

Thousands of families in this city are living in homes without proper sanitary facilities, the Negroes suffering particularly from shortage of decent housing. The need here is for homes costing about \$2,000 and renting for \$16 to \$20 a month.

Observers here believe there is a definite connection between the drive for the demolition of the temporary war housing and the campaign to sell the Byrnes Downs houses, there being practically no decent housing available in the vicinity except that at Byrnes Downs.

Business Scans Trends Of 1946

Washington—(FP).—Peering ahead into the mists of 1946, American business admits that wages are to be the biggest issue in a year it feels will be "tough and rough at the start," but moderating toward its close when competition puts its bite into those concerns that failed to provide for better coordination between cost and price.

Modern Industry magazine, in its annual preview, sees a steady climb in production and employment "with strikes, though numerous, having less effect on overall output than newspaper headlines would indicate."

Pressure for higher wages and competition, it finds, "will emphasize productivity per man, and measures to boost it and control costs—better plant layout, more efficient equipment, closer production, inventory and quality control. Instead of pessimists' predicted 10 million unemployed, peak will be 4 to 5 million, reached next spring as demobilization ends."

In labor relations, Modern Industry said "These developments will dominate the labor scene: 1—Union organization drives; 2—Strikes, with labor and management tempers razor sharp, effect of steel and auto strife filtering down into hitherto peaceful smaller industries, the public in the middle and demanding Congressional crack-down; and 3—Inter-union jurisdictional fights, bellweathered by John L. Lewis' re-entry into AFL and beginning of all-out AFL-CIO fight in 1946-organized basic industries."

Truman Names Board In General Motors Dispute

Washington—(FP).—An informal fact-finding board was named Dec. 12 by Pres. Truman to look into the dispute between the General Motors Corp., and the United Auto Workers.

The board is headed by Judge Walter P. Stacy, recently chairman of the Natl. Labor Management Conference; and Chairman Lloyd K. Garrison of the Natl. War Labor Board and Pres. Milton Eisenhower of Kansas State college, brother of the famous U. S. general.

Because the Norton bill has not yet been enacted, the fact-finding board has no legal standing, but UAW officers in Detroit quickly said it would give full cooperation in getting all the facts.

Time Now To Get Busy On Third Party

Oakland, Calif.—(FP).—Independent political action by labor—possibly leading to formation of a third party—is needed now to prevent workers from having to choose between Tweedledum and Tweedledee candidates in the 1948 elections, the East Bay Labor Journal, AFL newspaper, said in an editorial here.

"The anti-labor trend of the Truman administration strongly hints that it is about time to begin thinking about 1948 and the presidential race," said the official publication of the Alameda County Central Labor and Building & Construction Trades Councils.

Rapping the President's cooling-off for strikes proposal, the paper called it "utterly fantastic" for the labor movement "to enter the year 1948 and be caught in a position of choosing between Harry Truman and Tom Dewey—or between smiling Harry and that young Republican, Harold Stassen, former governor of Minnesota."

Independent political organization by labor is an important subject," the editorial said. "It is true that most workers are not yet prepared for it—but some serious thinking about it from all sides, and particularly from the rank and file in the local unions, can do no harm. Should a period of contemplation and discussion of the possibilities of independent political action—a third party—develop into something really concrete on a national scale, it might hold the balance of power in 1948."

"The time to begin considering it, however, is not in 1947 or 1948—but immediately. The ground work must be done first. There should be wide agreement that independent political action is the best possible way to get the job done—to educate the people not only in the unions, but on the streets and avenues, in the homes and shops. It calls for a really gigantic program."

Forbidden To Aid

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ing room in the Student Union Bldg. Rosemary Robin the student who obtained use of the room, said she was told by the university's vice president that there was no intention to hinder freedom of expression on the part of the students but that student activity in controversial matters might endanger grants of several million dollars toward expansion of the university.

The students said they would not be denied their desire to participate actively in strike assistance.

Experts Survey

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eral, who catches a "living interpretation" of the act as reflected by court decisions; Louis G. Silverberg, who shows the law's influence in one major industrial area, Detroit; and Dr. H. A. Millis, former board chairman, who describes what the act has done to collective bargaining practices.

ADDED SERVICES
Los Angeles—(FP).—Unions continue putting new technical developments to work for welfare of their members. At the big headquarters building of Teamsters Joint Council (AFL) here, facilities are on hand to make photo copies of veterans' discharges and other important documents. The service is given without charge to members and locals of the council.

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PLAN FOR NEW YEARS—Executive Secretary Frederick F. Umhey (left) and President David Dubinsky of International Ladies Garment Workers Union talk over plans for 1946—on the wage front and in the campaign to keep America the world's style center—during an executive board meeting in Miami.—(Federated Pictures).

Preview of 1946

By ROBERT J. WATT, AFL International Representative

Troubles are transitory. Hope springs eternal. So as we look ahead to 1946, we can't help anticipating better times. There is so much room for improvement in domestic affairs and in world affairs that an observer would have to be a confirmed pessimist not to see any indications of progress.

After all, the war is over and we won it. To parents throughout America and to the millions of young men and women who are coming home, that alone makes 1946 a year of promise. No matter how grave the problems of readjustment may become, no matter what disappointments may lie ahead, the worry and the heartache of the war years have lifted and the relief we all experience is a blessing.

Is it conceivable that after the terrible struggle we have undergone to win a war for the preservation of our democratic beliefs that we should now falter and hesitate and fail to overcome the far simpler problems of peace? Labor refuses to admit that possibility. We are determined that 1946 shall be a year of reinforced peace and reconstruction, a year of redemption to the noble goals which inspired us to victory.

So let's see what can be done. Next month the assembly of the United Nations Organization will hold its first meeting. It will consider peace terms for the liberated nations of Europe and Asia and for our conquered enemies. We, the American people, should resolve that our nation shall stand for justice at the peace tables and for the opportunity for all peoples to enjoy security and freedom. Only in that way can lasting peace be assured.

Next month Congress will return to work. These lawmakers are supposed to represent us, the American people. Let us inform them in no uncertain terms what we want. We want action. We want legislation that will promote the objective of jobs for all in America. We want a law that will provide health insurance for all our people. We want a decent minimum wage level and unemployment insurance to protect those unable to find jobs during reconversion. We don't want any new laws which will infringe on the basic liberties of workers or farmers or businessmen.

For its own part, labor is ready to make some New Year's resolutions. The American Federation of Labor will do its utmost to cooperate with employers for the immediate expansion of peacetime production. At the same time, we will keep up the fight for higher wage rates and other conditions necessary to protect and improve the living standards of American workers. For unless the wage earners of our country are well off, the entire nation will suffer.

We in the American Federation of Labor firmly believe that if all elements and all groups in our population pull together we are bound to win the peace and establish a prosperous economy in our country in 1946. And we hereby offer to pull our share of the load.

Decline U. S. Aid In Strike Row Upholds ITU In Dual Union Fight

Washington—(FP).—Both the General Electric Co., and Westinghouse Electric & Manufacturing Co., have turned down the invitation of the U. S. government to meet with Conciliation Director Edgar L. Warren to help solve the strike threat of 200,000 members of the United Electrical Radio & Machine Workers employed in 76 of their plants in 22 states.

The union has threatened a strike unless the two corporations act on the workers' demand for a \$2 a day wage increase.

Warren said "I'm afraid it's a serious situation," and added he saw a threat to production of such scarce products as washing machines, toasters, refrigerators and radios.

UE Intl. Representative Neil Brant, commenting on the refusal of GE and Westinghouse to meet with Warren, said Vice Pres. E. D. Spicer of General Electric, "in turning down Mr. Warren's invitation to discuss the imminent strike threat in GE's plants arrogantly defied the government's efforts to conciliate and mediate the present wage dispute."

"This is but another proof of the total indifference of GE to speedy and effective reconversion. This company has already shown as holding up the distribution of electrical appliances until such time as it could blackjack the OPA into granting higher price ceilings."

Touchnig on the Westinghouse refusal to conciliate, Brant said its reply was no different than GE's. "Here is a company that has been in negotiations with our union since September of this year and has not made an offer of a single penny increase." He said it "preferred to choose a later date for a meeting with Mr. Warren" and there is no basis for its belief that it can indefinitely postpone making an offer.

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RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Whereas, The Supreme Ruler of the Universe, in his infinite Power, has seen fit to remove from our midst, our Congenial Friend and Sister worker, Dorothy Watson

And Whereas, We members of Local Union No. 195, East Liverpool, Ohio, regret beyond words the loss of this Sister with her ever pleasant personality, who was respected and held in highest esteem by her sister workers,

Therefore Be It Resolved, In further acknowledgement of our esteem, and heartfelt sympathy to her bereaved family, that copy of this resolution be spread upon Minutes of Local Union No. 195, published in the Official Trade Paper, and a copy forwarded to the bereaved family, and further that our Charter be draped in mourning for a period of 30 days.

MILDRED MCKENZIE
LILLIAN FIELDS,
MAE BROWN,
Committee for Local Union No. 195.

National Health

(Continued From Page One)

joint recommendation was adopted that a committee of three from each side be appointed to represent the two organizations, to act as a "Standing Committee," having to do strictly with sanitation.

The benefits to be derived through the formation of this committee cannot be measured in mere words, nor can they be accomplished through the sole efforts of the committee. They must have the wholehearted cooperation of every member working at the trade.

Responsibility for getting active cooperation on the various plants is vested in plant health committees and strong active committees are a very definite must. It is extremely important that plants not now having health committees should organize them at once as the national committee at their first meeting set February 1, as the deadline for these committees to be organized.

The duties and responsibilities of the National Health Committee is to offer constructive advice for healthful working conditions in the industry. If, after reasonable periods committee recommendations have not been followed, then all responsibilities shall be removed from the committee and the blame placed equally on the employer and employees of the respective plants.

The committee will suggest by-laws for the various plant committees and when these are adopted will be just as much a part of the agreement as any wage rate, and officials of both organizations will make every effort to enforce these rules and regulations.

President Duffy urgently requests that all local unions throughout the trade whose members are employed in plants where health committees have not been functioning, to take this matter up immediately and forward the information to headquarters.

WHAT NEXT?

A reported new process for making shipping containers out of cotton stalks may give relief in the paper shortage. The process was developed at John Smith University, Charlotte, N. C. Reports indicate that the method is fast, required no new machinery and produces good quality corrugated paper.

WARREN SIDESTEPS JOBS FOR ALL ISSUE

Sacramento, Calif.—(FP).—Gov. Earl Warren (R) has scheduled a special session of the legislature for Jan. 7 but so far has not indicated there will be any discussion of full employment or fair employment practices. Both AFL and CIO groups have been pressing the governor to include these items on the agenda.

However, the governor has committed himself on child care centers and housing. These subjects definitely will be included and legislation on both is sought by organized labor.

THE CHERRY TREE

Why is it that, as we go into this New Year, not many people think of the coming years as years of peace in which we shall build a world safe from war?

The nations that won the war got together before the shooting ended and created a pattern of a world organization for the peaceful settlement of difficulties.

But so few seem to really believe it will work!

Why is this?

Is it, possibly, because for the past decade there has been war in some part of the world and people are unable to think that actually war can be ended?

Or has a monumental cynicism got the world by the throat, throttling it so that it doesn't think clearly?

Or, on the other side of the picture, is the structure of the United Nations Organization faulty, so that people can see that the faults are such that it cannot work?

Whatever the reason is, the world had better get over being cynical, if that is the trouble, or they must teach themselves to think that we don't have to have war, if a decade of war is the trouble.

But, if the structure of the United Nations Organization is so filled with faults that ordinary people believe it cannot work, then ordinary people ought to begin to shout to high heaven for remedying of those faults.

There is too much glib talk of "the next war."

Those that talk about "the next war" ought to talk instead about the war to end civilization, if they believe another war is coming.

For that "next war," if it comes, will leave so little that civilization as we know it will "perish from the earth" and not all the cyclotrons in existence could put it together again—in our time.

Some folks may think they are sophisticated when they rattle on about "the next war." Maybe they think it's the "smart" way to talk.

On the contrary, it is either most foolish, or it is utterly stupid and you can take your choice. Maybe it's both.

Now look at this: Within foreseeable time there are only two nations capable of waging war against the United States and they are Russia and

the British Empire. No other group of nations could last beyond the first round, unless they were able to spring a string of atomic bombs on our cities by surprise.

A group headed, perhaps, by Argentina, could do that. Of course the possible development of atomic bombs by some nation is something to take into account, until the United Nations Organization perfects its control machinery.

But that is sure to come, unless the United Nations Organization is wrecked. So, by and large, we remain with two nations and only two, to consider.

Well, if we have the sense of a goose we aren't going to fight either one, nor are we going to allow them to pick a quarrel to fight us.

Now more than ever in all history, men and women need to think and believe that this peace-organization must work.

It must be made to work. The future of mankind, as a civilized being, depends upon it.

Every person who talks about "the next war" should be required to state categorically "why" and "with what nation."

And let us act, meanwhile, toward other nations as if we expected peace with them and from them.

We can actually talk ourselves into that "next war" and "last war" if we don't watch our tongues and our actions.

If enough persons tell a man he is sick he may easily find himself sick and bringing trouble by thinking trouble doesn't end there.—CMW.

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