

Trade Unionists May Seek New Ray Trial

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The 7th annual convention of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, which opened yesterday at Holiday Inn Rivermont, is expected to adopt a resolution calling for a new trial for James Earl Ray, said its president William Lucy.

Lucy of Washington is the national secretary-treasurer of the American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees, the union which was in its infancy when it organized the sanitation workers

in Memphis. It was the effort to gain union recognition for the sanitation workers that brought Dr. Martin Luther King to Memphis, and it was here that the civil rights leader was slain. Ray pleaded guilty to the killing and is serving a 99-year sentence in a state prison.

Lucy, who was active during the sanitation strike in Memphis, said at a press conference yesterday that CBTU believes a trial should be held to "lay questions to rest."

Lucy said AFSCME is now the largest

union in the AFL-CIO ranks. It is third-largest union in the nation, only smaller than the Teamsters and the United Auto Workers.

The press conference held yesterday by Lucy and other officials of CBTU, took place during registration for the convention. By noon yesterday, 1,100 had registered to attend the meeting, which winds up Monday with a speech by Lucy at 11 a.m. The convention is expected to attract 2,000 participants by tonight.

During the convention, Lucy said CBTU "will be looking at some of the crucial issues that we, as black and poor workers, face. We will try to formulate methods to deal with these problems."

One of the major problems facing the black community, Lucy said, is unemployment. "We have a national unemployment rate of about 13 percent. In our inner cities, we have as high as 25 to 30 percent — while our black teenagers face a 45 percent rate." He said CBTU expects to pass a resolution during its convention calling on Congress and the president "to do more in this area. The president has taken some steps in the right direction, but more can be done. We are also urging the Senate to pass the Humphrey-Hawkins Full Employment Bill."

Another major concern to be discussed during the convention, Lucy said, is a pro-

posal for national health insurance. Lucy said he feels a national health and medical insurance plan is "right for all."

Lucy said another resolution will call for passage of the Labor Law Reform Act which is now before Congress. "It is not true that this bill will be a boom to unions," Lucy said. "It will not make organizing easier for unions, but will, instead, fully implement the Wagner Act (under which the National Labor Relations Board was established)."

Douglas Fraser, president of the United Auto Workers Union, was to be the keynote speaker for the convention, talking to the delegates today. Workshops during the convention will range from organizing, political action and subjects dealing with women in the labor movement.

One of the major highlights of the convention will be a special service at 10 a.m. tomorrow noting the 10th anniversary of the assassination of King. A movie recapping the events of the 1968 sanitation workers' strike will be shown during the service.

The Coalition, consisting of representatives from 54 international and national unions with 26 chapters across the country, is working within the framework of the labor movement to "uplift the plight of black and other minority workers," Lucy said.