

Hillman Denies CIO Committee Has 'Purge List'

Insists Law Does Not
Prohibit Work for
Fourth Term

By J. A. O'LEARY

Denying that the CIO Political Action Committee has any "purge list" of candidates, Sidney Hillman, its chairman, told the Senate Campaign Expenditures Committee today his group has indorsed only one person—President Roosevelt for a fourth term.

In congressional and local elections the indorsement of candidates is left to local organizations. Mr. Hillman insisted, but he added that local units of the CIO consult the Political Action Committee on the problems of indorsement.

The CIO committee has been under fire from Republican leaders, who have charged that its activities are in violation of the Corrupt Practices and Hatch Acts. The committee recently was given a clean bill of health by Attorney General Biddle, who reported that an investigation had uncovered no violations of the acts by the committee.

Application to Primaries Denied.

Mr. Hillman declared he is satisfied the law against labor union campaign contributions does not apply to primaries, or to advocating the renomination of President Roosevelt before the Democratic convention is held.

Both Mr. Hillman and John J. Abt, attorney for the CIO group, took this position when Senator Ball, Republican, of Minnesota questioned the Political Action Committee's activity in support of a fourth term, in view of the provision written into the Smith-Connally anti-strike law, placing labor unions under the same ban that prohibits corporations from contributing to political campaigns.

\$669,764 Fund Raised.

Defending the legality of the \$669,764 fund raised by the committee to date, of which \$189,112 has been spent, Mr. Hillman demanded that the committee also investigate the organizations representing "big business and high finance."

"Our committee has nothing to hide," continued the labor leader. "We have no concealed aims, no hidden purpose. If there is to be

an investigation, let it be full, fair and complete. Let it include not only the activities of labor, but the less publicized, the more obscure, efforts of some of the representatives of big business and high finance.

"Let it include such organizations as the Committee for Constitutional Government, the National Association of Manufacturers and its host of subsidiaries and satellites, political activities of a few men of great wealth and, yes, the Republican and Democratic parties as well.

"If political work is to be conducted under klieg lights—as we believe it should—then let the light shine equally on all. Let no individual and no organization remain in shadow."

Third Party Plan Denied.

Mr. Hillman said the Political Action Committee is "a nonpartisan organization" and has no purpose to establish a third party at this time.

"Nor are we an appendage of either major political parties. We are prepared to and do give our support to candidates on the basis of their records, without regard to party labels."

The witness said the committee has three goals, namely, to stimulate discussion of the campaign issues; to educate the people to use their vote by registering, and, finally, "to bring to the American people the record of the candidates who solicit their support, to enable them to use their ballot intelligently and effectively.

"To this end we carefully examine the background, the voting records and the promises, kept and unkept, of the persons who present themselves to the people as candidates for office. We keep our regional directors fully advised as to the results of this examination and they in turn inform the local CIO organizations, State councils and local unions."

At the outset Senator Ball sought permission to question Mr. Hillman before he read his statement, but

Chairman Green decided the statement should be read first.

Satisfied About Law.

"We are quite satisfied the Smith-Connally law does not apply until people are nominated," Mr. Hillman testified. Mr. Hillman added that he knew that "after the nominations are made certain activities would be covered. We believe it is unfair to labor, but we will live up to it."

"I have no quarrel with what you are doing," Senator Ball told the labor leader, "but I think you ought to go join the Democratic party and do it as individuals, and not with union dues. Your activities are perfectly proper political activities, except for this provision of the Smith-Connally Act."

Mr. Hillman replied that the law specifically applies to election campaigns, and not to primaries or convention.

Looking ahead to the situation that may exist after the national convention, Mr. Hillman said his group had been hoping against hope that both parties would have "constructive candidates and policies," but indicated that he did not now expect that to be the case.

"You mean you are sure of what will happen at the Republican convention in Chicago—you may be fooled," observed Senator Ball, an active supporter of former Gov. Harold Stassen of Minnesota, now a lieutenant commander in the Navy, for the Republican nomination.

Senator Ball told Mr. Hillman he could be much more certain of what will happen at the Democratic convention in July than of who will be nominated by the Republicans.

Answering Senator Ball's question about the application of the Smith-