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Connally Accuses Meany of Arrogance



Associated Press

George Meany, A.F.L.-C.I.O. president, rebutting criticism of treatment of Mr. Nixon

Treasury Secretary Calls President Mistreated

By EDWIN L. DALE Jr.

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Nov. 22—Secretary of the Treasury John B. Connally sharply attacked George Meany today in connection with the treatment of President Nixon last Friday at the convention in Bal Harbour, Fla., of the A.F.L.-C.I.O.

Speaking of Mr. Meany, who is the president of the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations, Mr. Connally declared at a news conference:

"In my humble opinion the actions of Mr. Meany last week reflected an arrogance and a boorishness and a discourtesy that ill becomes a leader of the American labor movement in the United States."

"We must make abundantly clear," Mr. Connally said, "that we cannot permit one man to put himself above the interest of all of the working people of this country. There are 80 million working people in the United States. He does not represent all of these people."

Mr. Connally also expressed his personal regret "as a lay-



United Press International

John B. Connally, who assailed Mr. Meany for behavior toward President.

man" at the approval last week by the Pay Board of a large wage settlement in the coal industry. He said he hoped this decision would not be viewed as a precedent, but made clear that he would not act as chairman of the Government's Cost of Living Council to try to reverse the decision.

In his personal attack on Mr. Meany, much the sharpest to date from any member of the Nixon Administration, Mr.

Labor Leader Declares Nixon Sought Incident

By PHILIP SHABECOFF

Special to The New York Times

BAL HARBOUR, Fla., Nov. 22—George Meany, president of the A.F.L.-C.I.O., accused President Nixon today of deliberately trying to provoke an incident at the federation's convention last week so that he could contend that he had been mistreated by labor and thereby gain political advantage.

Apparently stung by Administration charges that the President had been discourteously received when he spoke last Friday, Mr. Meany strongly denied the charges today and suggested that the President himself had tried to stage-manage the labor convention for his own political purposes.

"We were not discourteous. There was no booing and there was no jeering," Mr. Meany declared in a speech to the biennial convention, which ended today.

The 77-year-old president of the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations conceded that

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there had been some laughter when the President told delegates that prices were going down because of his Administration's program.

But he added, "I still think we have a constitutional right to laugh."

Mr. Meany described the speech Mr. Nixon made on Friday as "pure political propaganda." But he said he found no fault with this because the President should not be barred from making a political speech.

He added, however, "I have the impression the President did not come here to make a speech. He came here to contrive a situation under which he could claim that he had been unfairly treated."

The A.F.L.-C.I.O., Mr. Meany declared, respects the office of the President and the man who holds that office and it will continue to do so.

"However this doesn't mean that we have got to be subservient to the man who holds the office," he told applauding delegates.

"This does not mean that our respect for the President and his office calls for us to submit to something that we consider unjust. Otherwise our pride in America and its institutions would be meaningless," he said.

"This is still a democracy," he went on. "This is still not a monarchy. And the respect for the President and the respect for our rights as Americans is part and parcel of the entire American way of life to which we are committed without reservation."

In his speech to the labor convention last Friday, President Nixon appealed for labor support but said he would pro-

ceed with his economic program "whether we get that participation or not."

Patrick E. Gorman, the chief executive of the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen, told the convention this morning that 55,000 members of his union temporarily walked off their jobs today to protest the decision of the Pay Board to disallow, in general, the retroactive payment of wage increases withheld during the 90-day freeze. Mr. Gorman said the action was taken to show employers that workers could also abrogate contracts.

The retroactive pay issue has been the chief target of labor leaders in their attack against the Phase Two controls.

Mr. Gorman has urged the A.F.L.-C.I.O. to take militant action against the Pay Board, including the authorization of a general strike. His plea was rejected by Mr. Meany, who said that if necessary the federation would call a special convention to take stronger action.

In his speech today Mr. Meany described what seemed to be intense jockeying for tactical advantage between White House aides and labor officials before and after President Nixon's address here last week.

Mr. Meany said that while he had agreed to all security requests by the White House, he had refused to move away some delegates' tables for special cameras that White House aides wanted for a live telecast of the President's speech—a telecast that never took place.

Mr. Meany said he had also turned down a request for an

orchestra to play "Ruffles and Flourishes" when the President entered the Americana Hotel.

He said he gave this explanation to the White House aides: "We don't have an orchestra. We have what you might call some chamber music. I don't think you can play 'Ruffles and Flourishes' on a violin. I may be wrong but that is my impression."

One of Mr. Meany's aides disclosed earlier that the White House staff had actually brought the sheet music for "Ruffles and Flourishes" and "Hail to the Chief" and distributed it to the orchestra.

However, union officials told the orchestra not to play the music. It was noted here by union officials that "Hail to the Chief" had been played for Presidents Kennedy and Johnson when they addressed A.F.L.-C.I.O. meetings.

The expected pilgrimage of potential Democratic Presidential candidates to this A.F.L.-C.I.O. meeting did not materialize. Senators Hubert H. Humphrey, Henry M. Jackson and Edmund S. Muskie all remained in Washington, with the understanding of the federation leadership, to participate in Senate action on a campaign spending bill.

The convention unanimously re-elected Mr. Meany to another two-year term as president of the federation.

Vernon E. Jordan Jr., the executive director-designate of the National Urban League, also addressed the convention today. He asked labor to bring minorities into the union movement as leaders, to help in the politi-

cal education and voter registration of the black community and to help break what he called "the white suburban noose around the necks of the increasingly black cities."

Networks Report Calls

Both the American Broadcasting Company and the National Broadcasting Company say they received calls last Friday from White House officials protesting alleged discourtesies to President Nixon at the A.F.L.-C.I.O. convention.

Av Westin, executive producer of "The A.B.C. Evening News," said yesterday that he had received three calls from a White House official, whose name he would not disclose, shortly after President Nixon left the convention hall Friday morning. He also said that A.B.C.'s Washington bureau had received a call from John Scali, Presidential aide and a former A.B.C. newsman, and that two calls from the White House had been made to Howard K. Smith, the network's veteran correspondent.

"I explained that our correspondents had kept us informed of the developments," Mr. Westin said, adding that the network had used the alleged slights as a separate story on its evening newscast.

N.B.C.'s Washington bureau also was called by a White House official making similar complaints, Frank Jordan, the network's bureau chief, said yesterday. He said he could not identify the caller. Mr. Jordan said the alleged slights had been reported on N.B.C.'s evening newscast.

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Connally called the salary increase voted for Mr. Meany by the convention "flagrant contempt for the program" of anti-inflation controls.

"It ill becomes the man," Mr. Connally said, "to have his salary raised from \$70,000 to \$90,000 at a time when we're asking other people to make common sacrifices in the interest of all of the people of this country."

Mr. Connally said that Mr. Meany "personally is not the labor movement as a whole." He said most working people supported the recent freeze and "want cessation of inflation." The interests of working men and women "are no different from the interests of Americans generally," Mr. Connally said.

He conceded that the wage control program "cannot function as well as it can and should function" if organized labor does not cooperate. He said it was "inconceivable that a responsible group of people would not cooperate," adding that the Administration had adopted labor's suggestion for the tripartite board to administer the program.

Reactions to Miami

Meanwhile, the White House continued to display a mild reaction to the episode at Bal Harbour, where Mr. Nixon's welcome was less than warm. Gerald L. Warren, deputy White House press secretary, maintained his refusal to characterize the President as "upset."

Senator Hubert H. Humphrey, Democrat of Minnesota, charged that the President had gone to Miami Beach to provoke a confrontation with organized labor

and to "accentuate differences," all for "political advantage." He said the President had been treated with "respect, if not warmth."

Mr. Connally opened the news conference with a glowing account of the "solid accomplishments and results" of the wage-price freeze portion of the program. He cited figures not only on prices but also on other aspects of the economy, such as retail sales and housing construction.

He said that consumers were displaying confidence but that businessmen were "more reluctant." The current "drag on the economy is the attitude of businessmen," he said.

He also expressed hope of progress in settling the current world monetary uncertainty, although he said he did not expect a complete solution to emerge from the Nov. 30 meeting in Rome of the finance ministers of the 10 leading industrial nations.

As for Congressional efforts to amend the law authorizing wage and price controls, Mr. Connally said that on the key issue of retroactive wage payments, the version approved by the Senate Banking Committee was "much more acceptable" than they voted earlier at the House committee. At issue is whether wage increases due during the freeze must be paid. The Senate bill would leave considerable flexibility on this issue to the Pay Board.

On the coal decision, Mr. Connally emphasized that the Administration had always foreseen some settlements in excess of any guideline that might be adopted. He urged that the program not be judged "on the basis of any one decision," but conceded there was a "question of credibility."

His reference was to the danger that the public might come to doubt the Pay Board's determination to hold wage increases to its guidelines of 5.5 per cent.