

Jobs Policy

Tunney Blasts Nixon Economics

Senator John V. Tunney voiced a bitter attack on the Nixon administration yesterday, both for Watergate and for permitting "millions of Americans to remain trapped in poverty, joblessness, frustration and despair."

"When historians tell the story of our time, they may well decide the biggest scandal of the 1970s was not the burglarizing, the bugging and the corruption of Watergate," the California Democrat said.

"They may well conclude that a far greater scandal was that this nation — the richest in the history of the world — permitted and fostered unemployment, want and deprivation on a massive scale."

Tunney told an audience of National Urban League delegates at the Hilton Hotel that the government should not only encourage jobs in private employment but should do massive public hiring.

Cuts in defense spending and the closing of "gaping loopholes that permit the super-rich and the special interests to avoid their fair share of taxes" could finance employment in mass-transit, housing, education, health care, law enforcement and waste treatment, Tunney said.

"It should be abundantly clear to all but the most neanderthal of economists that the free play of the private market cannot by itself provide full employment without creating intolerable inflationary pressures," Tunney said.

"The public sector must take up the slack."

Tunney said he was co-sponsoring legislation to

eliminate oil and gas depletion allowances and to reduce the cost of the nation's foreign military aid programs.

John F. Hemming, executive secretary of the California Federation of Labor, told Urban League delegates he regards administration methods against inflation as ineffectual.

"The President is advocating Boy Scout remedies to solve a sophisticated problem," Hemming said.

"He is talking about personal denial when he is involved with people like Hughes, Rebozo and Vesco who have made millions off this administration."

Congressman Augustus F. Hawkins, a Democrat who has represented the Watts district in Los Angeles for 12 years, offered angry criticism of President Nixon's recent talk on inflation.

"He said the unemployed must be very grateful for not being drafted," Hawkins said. "That must be very reassuring to the welfare mothers of my district."

Another speaker, Ivan J. Houston, president of Golden State Mutual Life Insurance Company, told delegates that black business men have managed to carve out unique markets and build successful businesses, such as record firms and blue jean factories.

The federal government and big business are increasingly being asked to help in setting up black-run firms, about 300 listeners at a panel discussion were told.

Cosmetics firms, factories for metal stamping, and even a black-run plantation are among industries now operating successfully, said Houston.