

Meany, Citing Disillusionment, Will Not Invite Nixon to Speak

By DAMON STETSON

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OAK BROOK, Ill., Aug. 2—George Meany, who remained neutral in the 1972 Presidential campaign, emphasized today his dissatisfaction and disillusionment with President Nixon and the performance of the Republican Administration.

In a series of sharp comments following the summer meeting here of the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations, Mr. Meany, president of the federation, said that the evidence of corruption in the Federal Government kept piling up and that he thought the Republican party would be in trouble in the 1974 elections because of the Watergate revelations.

Asked whether the President would be invited to speak at the federation's convention this October, as has been a tradition, Mr. Meany replied sharply that he would not be. He added that Secretary of Labor Peter J. Brennan and Secretary of Agriculture Earl L. Butz also would not be invited.

Mr. Meany, speaking at a news conference, charged, with evident irritation, that Charles W. Colson, former special counsel to President Nixon, had "deliberately tried to arrange a confrontation" at the federation's 1971 convention.

'Act 2' Comment

The President had been invited on Sept. 18, 1971, to speak at the convention two months later, Mr. Meany said, but no reply was received until a call on Nov. 17, on the eve of the convention, saying that Mr. Nixon could speak at noon the next day.

"Every White House fink knew our schedule," Mr. Meany said, "and they were reporting to Mr. Colson."

Mr. Nixon did speak the next afternoon, Mr. Meany recalled, but afterward White House staff members, he charged, began spreading the word that the President had been insulted at the convention.

Mr. Meany said that after the President had spoken and left the hall at Bal Harbour, Fla., he had commented, "Now let's proceed with Act 2." Mr. Meany acknowledged today that his comment might have been "a little flip," but he denied that the President had been insulted either by him or by the delegates.

As for Mr. Brennan, formerly President of the New York Building and Construction Trades Council, Mr. Meany said that the Secretary of Labor, who has also traditionally been invited to speak at A.F.L.-C.I.O. conventions, had taken "antilabor positions" on a number of issues and had made it clear that he represented both union and nonunion workers.

"Maybe we'll invite him after he appears before a nonunion convention," Mr. Meany said.

tween the so-called "new politics" and the old-line party workers who "play the political game and work at it." But he said that he thought the party was "behaving a little better," was looking at its problems and was in "better shape."

The Executive Council, which ended its quarterly meeting here today, approved a statement that criticized the Administration for making what the council called unilateral concessions to the Soviet Union in the recent summit talks between President Nixon and Leonid I. Brezhnev, the Soviet leader.

The council said that despite the easing of United States-Soviet relations, the Soviet Union was continuing to seek world domination and was, therefore, a threat to America's national security and world peace. The council urged the United States to seek "reciprocal and adequate concessions by Moscow" in future negotiations.

Wisdom of Neutrality

Questioned about the wisdom of his personal neutrality as well as the federation's neutrality in the 1972 Presidential contest, Mr. Meany said, "We were wise beyond anything we dreamed of."

He explained that the federation's leadership had recognized that the membership, normally 80 per cent Democratic, was split down the middle once it became clear that Senator George McGovern was to be the Democratic candidate. The Executive Council, he said, voted 27 to 3 against any endorsement for President and decided to concentrate on electing labor's friends to Congress.

"From our point of view," Mr. Meany said, "our strategy was a 100 per cent success."

He added that contributions to the federation's Committee on Political Education were "going overboard" and were "bigger than ever."

Mr. Meany said that an internal struggle was still going on in the Democratic party be-