

Meany's Bitter Attack On Nixon

Miami Beach

President George Meany opened the tenth AFL-CIO convention yesterday with a charge that "never in history has a great nation been governed so corruptly" as the U.S. under President Nixon.

Veterans of AFL-CIO conventions called it the most detailed indictment ever made by Meany of an incumbent president and his administration.

In a sweeping keynote address, the 79-year-old Meany blasted the President and his administration for economic and moral failure at home and abroad and pledged the AFL-CIO to political action next year to elect a veto-proof Democratic Congress.

"We need a Congress that has the numbers and the will to override every veto the President can throw at us to liberate every dollar he impounds," Meany told the 868 delegates representing 106 national and international unions and other labor affiliates.

AGNEW

In biting reference to the latest administration embarrassment — the resignation of former vice president Spiro T. Agnew — Meany said:

"The wordy, strong man of law and order — the nemesis of permissiveness — stands before the nation as a convicted felon, a tax-dodger."

He called the settlement,

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in which Agnew pleaded no contest and was given a suspended sentence in return for his resignation, "crime without punishment — unless being assigned to the presidential limousine and chauffeurs for the next few months is punishment."

SCANDAL

Meany, mentioning the

word Watergate only twice — recited a long litany of administration scandal over the last year and said the people have decided "that this administration has cast a dark shadow of shame over the spirit of America. After five years of Richard Nixon," he said, "this great and once-proud nation stands before the world with its head bowed — disgraced, not by its enemies abroad, but by its leaders at home.

"In the final analysis," Meany said, "let us keep in mind that the Watergate and the cover-up itself was paid for by the great corporations of America — the members of the National Association of Manufacturers and the

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Chamber of Commerce, who seem more willing to pay out some of their exorbitant profits in order to place their hirelings in strategic spots in a friendly government.

"In other words, to put it quite simply, it is anything for a buck. Not a buck for the working man, but a buck for the fat-cats. A buck for the people who gave \$60 million to the Nixon campaign."

A pattern of greed running through the administration's conduct, the AFL-CIO president said, has kept unemployment and food prices high at home while enriching the President's contributors through high interest rates and favoritism in the economic controls program.

"... Since the President refused to adopt equitable, across-the-board controls," Meany said, "... the sooner controls end, the sooner the free economy returns, the better workers will be.

"We say to the President: 'Take the shackles off wages — the only part of the economy stringently controlled for more than two years. Let us seek then at the bargaining table the wages we need to put milk, bread, potatoes and meat on the family table, to clothe our children and shelter our families.'"

Abroad, he said, the administration is motivated by "the self-interest of profits" in the Russian wheat deal and other transactions

whose brunt is borne by American taxpayers.

Detente with the Soviet Union, he said, has produced "bitter fruit" in the Middle East, as evidenced by the Russian resupply of the Arabs in the new outbreak of war against the Israelis.

RESOLUTION

Later, the convention approved a resolution calling for "the early phase-out of the administration's misnomered stabilization program."

During discussion on the resolution, Meany told a delegate that labor would continue to sit on the labor-management advisory committee to the Cost of Living Council. It is "strategically wise to do so, so that we would not provide the man in the White House a diversionary issue," he said. "We're going to stay there a while so we don't give Richard Nixon a new whipping boy."

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