

# Building Unions Adopt An Anti-Nixon Stance

## Washington

Leaders of the building and construction unions applauded vigorously yesterday as AFL-CIO President George Meany said that "the American people have completely lost confidence" in President Nixon and his administration.

The union leaders, representatives to a legislative conference of the Building and Construction Trades Department of the AFL-CIO, also cheered when told their executive committee had just voted unanimously against any extension of wage controls in their industry.

Union cooperation was considered essential if the controls were to continue even after other wage-price controls expire April 30.

Since May, 1971, construction unions have cooperated with the Nixon administration in forming a labor-management-government.

Construction Industry Stabilization committee to control wage costs in that industry. Before the panel was formed, building wage costs had gone up about 17 per cent a year. Afterward, construction increases averaged about 5.5 per cent.

Even though the committee will expire on April 30 with the death of wage-price controls, President Nixon could continue it with an executive order. He set it up that way in 1971, long before wage-price controls were put on the rest of the economy.

A year ago, the same AFL-CIO delegates gave a warm welcome to President Nixon, whom many had actively supported in the 1972 presidential election.

Yesterday no member of the Nixon administration appeared on the union platform, not even Secretary of Labor Peter J. Brennan, the former leader of the New

York Building and Construction Trades Council.

At yesterday's meeting, the union leaders were in obvious accord with Meany and other speakers who criticized the President. They responded enthusiastically

when Meany urged strong political action by labor in the forthcoming congressional elections so that "we, as a group of workers millions strong, can play our part in giving America back to its people."

Meany had scathing words for almost all administration activities, including foreign policy. "I pray every night that Henry Kissinger won't give the Russians the Washington Monument—he's given them every goddamn thing else," said the veteran labor leader in the noisy, smoke-filled ballroom of the Washington Hilton Hotel.

But Meany and other speakers reserved their sharpest criticism for what they said was the Nixon administration's mismanagement of the economy.

Representative Carl Albert, the speaker of the house of Representatives, asserted that the President's policies "have left the economy in a shambles and have badly hurt workers and their families, especially construction workers."

"This country needs a Nixon-proof, veto-proof, impoundment-proof Congress," the Oklahoma Democrat said.

Senator Henry M. Jackson (D-Wash.) predicted that corporate reports coming out in the next few weeks will show oil profits in the first quarter of 1974 rising to "obscene levels."

"Mismanagement of our economy is so bad that President Nixon may be the first president to get his picture on a postage-due stamp," Jackson said.

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