

Mr. Nelson - Mr. Lockart -
Mayor Johnson

Mr. Gibson -
Mr. Shaffer

[Sept. 6, 1948]
delivered in
Duluth, MN
broadcast
Evelyn
file

Today is one of the proudest days in our great American tradition. It stands unique among the holidays we celebrate in this country.

Labor Day is not like the Fourth of July when we recall the signing of the Declaration of Independence, one of the great and formative events in our history. It is not like Washington's or Lincoln's birthday when we honor our great heroes of the past.

Today we celebrate no single event, we honor no single leader in our history. We pause instead, to pay tribute to millions of men and women. Their names are not recorded in our history books. They never will be. They are the men and women who--now and in the past--have worked all through their lives to earn their daily bread by the sweat of their brow.

They are the men and women who go down into the earth to bring up coal and iron; who climb dizzy heights to build great skyscrapers; who stand on assembly lines to make automobiles; who drive tractors and plant seed; who do the many services for us that make life easier.

These men and women continue a great tradition. They are descendents of the pioneers who sailed Yankee Clippers and cleared the forests and laid the railroad tracks.

As we look around us today at our great buildings, our airplanes, our smooth roads, at our rich crops and our

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filled silos, let us remember that this is the result of the fine skill and back-breaking labor of many, many people.

There are men who sit in fine offices and tell us that America was built by hard work and free enterprise. No one denies that. But it was the hard work and the enterprise of all the people and not just a few that built this nation from a wilderness to the most powerful nation in the world.

* * * * *

Labor ~~and laboring men and women have~~ made more than a material contribution to our nation. There is a far greater job that labor has done in this country.

American working men and women have helped produce a good that far surpasses anything other nations offer for export. They have built a product that stands as a challenge to all men. It is a product that cannot be seen or touched. But it can be felt. It is democracy.

In the twentieth century, democracy has been presented with many new and formidable problems. In fact, democracy is a never-ending challenge to its people. *As* mayor of a large city I can tell you that each day brings a new crisis that must be resolved, a new injustice that must be righted, a new problem that requires a brand new solution. Our purpose--the general welfare--remains stead-

*Freedom
opportunity*

1. Labor Day - no single person
2. Parents think of the labor in America
Story needs to be told
3. History of labor - 1700 - 1776 - 1800's -
Knights - A.F. R.R. Bro.
C.I.O.
4. Labor had broad interests
 - wages - Health
 - Hours
 - Safety
 - Working Conditions
 - Public Educ.
 - Income Tax
5. Labor's charter as Bill Rights
 - free speech
 - free press
 - free assembly
6. Labor in Political Action | Rejects
American Way - not loyal "Lovers"
not class conscious
Main Politicians worried about Labor
out to get them"
7. Labor mgmt place - Prior History
Wagner Act - Big Business -
into Union

Back to Labor - mgmt —

Did Congress want good Relations

Apt labor - \$14,500,000

Agric \$577,000,000

Commerce \$172,480,000

Labor mgmt Place built on
good Homes, educ, Jobs Security
Inflation, Slums etc. injuries

Profits = 78 Billion 1941-47

This to included in unrest

Labor must be champion of
Farmer - Pensioner - Veteran
Small Business - educator
etc

Be Big!

Labor - and its record in War -
NO Stunke

Minnesota Labor Record -

Postwar - Taft Hartley -

2 minn senators } for T-H.
8 congressman }

80th Cong - minority Congress
39% vote

80th Cong Record -

✓ ~~minimum wage~~
✓ Social Security

✓ Top Law -

✓ Inflation -

✓ Housing

✓ Agriculture

✓ Educ

✓ Health.

Prices
wage

(K)
What's in Store -

T-H. for Coops

T-H. for farmers
Price supports

REA -

T-H. for Sml Business

T-H. for Foreign Trade

T-H. for Marshall Plan

fast. Our basic principles contained in the bill of rights remain the same. But we are called upon to constantly invent new methods, and new techniques, and these demand the highest intelligence, the most gifted imagination and the generous good-will of all the people.

In meeting these problems of our century, ~~labor~~ and the labor movement is helping to lead the way. ~~is especially true since the trade union movement has become strong. Indeed, I fear no contradiction when I say that the trade union movement is one of the most important reasons why we have kept democracy alive and vital in our~~

Vigorous
A free and ~~healthy~~ trade union movement is synonymous with a free and healthy democracy. ~~The trade union movement is wedded to democracy in holy matrimony joined together so fundamentally that one cannot exist without the other. Without free trade unions there is no democracy, and without democracy there is no free trade union movement.~~

The charter of our trade unions is the Bill of Rights.
If there is no freedom of assembly, workers cannot organize for united action. If there is no freedom of speech, workers cannot talk among themselves and decide their course of action. If there is no freedom of press, workers cannot state their case to all the people.

The American worker has had many grievances, but he has always sought to right those grievances within the

framework of democracy. By legitimate union activity, by presenting his petition to all Americans, by voting, the American worker has fought--in the democratic way--for what he believes to be right and just.

There are some politicians, and there are some of them right here in this State, who bitterly complain that labor is out to "get them" in this coming election. Unwittingly, these politicians have paid labor a great compliment. They are emphasizing, just as I am, that American labor is peaceful and democratic--that it will present its case at the ballot box--the American way.

Instead of complaining that ~~labor is~~ ^{the working people are} exercising ~~their~~ democratic privilege, these politicians should ask why the worker is going to vote against them?

American labor is wedded to American democracy and seeks to present its case to the American people through the American democratic process. Our trade union movement is native to our soil. It has consistently rejected all totalitarian ideologies. Fascism, Communism, Ku-Kluxism and all the rest of the isms have found little response among American workers.

Our trade union movement is not class conscious, it is community conscious; it is not revolutionary, it's ~~is~~ evolutionary; it does not believe in the dictatorship of the proletariat; it believes in government of the people,

by the people and for the people.

At one time or another every ism, including 'big businessism' has tried to control the American ~~trade union~~ *people* ~~movement~~. These isms have been rejected, are being rejected and will be rejected by the American worker. In the 1920's the Communist party made a deliberate and concerted effort to capture control of the American Federation of Labor. Communism was repulsed. In the thirties and forties, the Communists tried to infiltrate and sieze the CIO. They haven't been able to do it. In those few places where they still maintain power, the Communists are losing ground day by day. They're being licked the American way-- by free men who can out-think them, outwork them and out-vote them.

And they didn't have the benefit of a Hollywood extravaganza. They did not smear innocent people for the sake of publicity; they did not violate anybody's constitutional rights; and they did not need the help of any Congressional committees.

↙ In its brief history, the American trade union movement has done more to destroy the influence of Communism in the United States than the Thomas Committee or a dozen Thomas committees will ever do if they sit in constant session for the next hundred years. ↘

~~Our unions have rejected isms. They follow the constitution of the United States. The goal of American trade unionism is one of the basic tenets of the consti-~~

~~that~~: The American workers have organized to achieve equality--equal bargaining power, equal treatment under the law, and equal opportunity for the pursuit of happiness. Workers^{have} organized to achieve their rightful place in the community. The American trade union movement was founded on the principle that workers should be a part--an equal part--of the whole community. Not inferior, not superior; an equal part of the whole community.

Our unions have followed the creed of Abraham Lincoln; a creed that said ^uas I would not be a slave,^u "neither would I be a master."^u

American labor wants equality, not more, not less.

There are some politicians--and there are some of them in this State--who possess short tempers and short patience about the trade union movement.

They have short memories, too. They would restrict and weaken labor in its drive toward equal rights. They do not remember the times of inequality, the years not long ago when strike-breaking was big business. They do not remember when finks and goons could be hired in any number to break a strike. They do not remember the days of sweatshops and lockouts, of company spies and company unions. They do not remember the mine operator of two decades ago who ignored safety rules, and took back what little wages he paid out in the profits of his company store.

What these politicians of short memory forget is that American trade unions have survived despite bitter

opposition because they fill a great need in the community, and because their goals are American goals.

The trade union movement has humanized modern industry. ~~The trade union movement has constantly worked for equality for its members.~~

When workingmen and women joined together and formed unions, they not only raised their wages and raised themselves from poverty--more important, they made of themselves human beings and not machines. Before trade unions, a man had a choice of taking a job as it was offered to him or leaving it and going hungry. He took the job--and with it the whims and prejudices of the foreman, the hours that the plant superintendent set, and the wages the manager decided on. He had no choice. If he had a grievance, he kept it to himself--there was no one he could tell it to. And even if he put up with the foreman, the hours, the wages and the working conditions, he had no way of knowing whether he would still be on the job the next month or even the next week. Discharge slips went just as often to the man with five years seniority and five children to support as to the unmarried apprentice. And when the discharge slip arrived, there was no recourse, there was no help. But some politicians have forgotten. The past ten years, there was recourse and there was help. The foreman's whims and prejudices could be challenged by the majority rule of the workers. The wages and hours once set by the same impersonal forces as set the price of grain and livestock, were set by human beings for human beings around a

bargaining table of the employers and the workers. The discharge slips were passed out in good order, according to a system of seniority established by union-management cooperation.

The trade union could remedy the human errors and answer the human needs in the great impersonal factories of the great corporations. Unions brought grievance machinery that could give workers a voice in improving conditions in the factory. Unions brought open meetings where workers in assembly could talk over common problems, where they might feel that if conditions ever did get bad enough they could take common action to remedy them. They went beyond the grievances and irritations of the shop and talked about vacations, pension plans, health insurance, incentive systems and safety regulations. They could not decide all these issues. But they could feel that now they had something to say about them. Each worker had a voice in making the rules about his own job, and about his own life. The will of every individual became important when he had a union he could speak through. The worker became an individual. It is the trade union movement--the natural banding together of human beings with a common interest and a common goal--that kept them human beings in the mass society of the long benches and identical assembly lines and the millions of workers punching similar time-clocks at the same hour.

The city worker wasn't the only one seeking ^{Justice} ~~equality~~ in the ^{American economy} ~~early thirties~~. The same kind of movement took place in the country. The "giantism" of big business invaded our farms, too, and the farmer had to change with the economy. The farmer didn't face gigantic factories and assembly lines. He faced "giant markets" where he had to sell his produce. He faced a market that he couldn't control and couldn't predict.

The farmer did the same thing the laborer did. He got together with his friends and joined a union, too. But the farmers called their union a cooperative. ^{a marketing or a producers coop.} That was the way he humanized the commodity market; that was the way he got more of what he deserved for the work he did; that was the way he assumed more control over the forces that made up his life.

~~You know there is really a very great similarity between the cooperative movement and the labor movement. In history, you remember, the craftsman, the skilled laborer, produced something himself with his own hands. He took pride in his work and he sold it himself. The farmer of a few years ago was the same. He grew the best ears of corn, the best wheat or tomatoes or beans. He was proud of his crop and he sold it personally in the market. Now the economy has changed for both farmer and worker.~~

~~Neither of them, when the work is done and the crop sold, can point to a product--an automobile or a loaf of bread--and say "I did that." So both the worker and the~~

farmer found a way to keep their own importance in the economy. The worker and the farmer found a way of having something to say about how much they earned and how and where he should work.

By joining together in cooperatives and trade unions farmers and workers have increased their strength as individuals. Cooperatives and trade unions have made a great contribution to individualism in the twentieth century.

In the early days of trade unions in this country,
union members were concerned with limited objectives.

~~Their first and most important goal was better pay and better hours. They were the bread and butter days of trade unions.~~

But as the labor movement developed, and as the community began to respect and recognize the labor movement, our trade unions took their places as full fledged members of the community.

The labor movement turned outwards. Unions changed their struggle for the improvement of their own members to a struggle for the improvement of everyone in the community. Working men joined their fellow citizens in the councils of government. Representatives of labor became respected and responsible in our cities and towns.

Then the ^{working people} ~~labor movement~~ began to lead the whole community to new ideas and new fields of democratic endeavor. They began to seek ^{just} laws for the entire community.

They began to speak about public housing and health insurance, about anti-monopoly laws and regional valley authorities. They spoke of minimum wage laws to protect the un-organized worker, ~~and to protect the employer of higher~~ ~~salaries~~. Labor began to consider more than itself. Labor began to think of the farmer and small business man, and the professional and the white collar man. Workers spoke out for better education and for fair employment practices.

Labor
must
be
broad
in its
program

Wherever it has had a voice, labor has stood for the enlargement of freedom and the extension of democracy. By its record in the twentieth century American labor has shown that it wants to progress with, not at the expense of, the community.

And American labor has shown that it is willing to assume its obligations in the world community. It has rejected the narrow doctrine of isolationism. It actively seeks world cooperation and world peace. American labor has supported the Marshall Plan, the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act, the International Wheat Agreement, and the United Nations. American labor has shown that it is willing to make sacrifices to live in a free and peaceful world.

The second World War proved that American labor asked no more than its fair place in the American community. The war showed that labor was willing to cooperate with the rest of the community. The war showed that labor was willing to sacrifice for the rest of the community. The war showed that unions and their members were willing to give

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the last full measure of devotion for the cause of democracy against Fascism.

During the war American labor made a no-strike pledge. During the war, American labor helped to police its own wildcat strikes. Labor helped in the problems of war-time conversion. When factories were switching over from iceboxes to tanks and shells, there was plenty of grist for the mill of jurisdictional disputes. And yet during the war there were very few jurisdictional disputes. Labor sought the ways and means of increasing production. Labor worked over-time both at home and abroad.

Let's never forget it, my friends, labor went to war.

And our workers won praise from every nation in the world for the job they did.

When the war ended, when our men came home from all over the world, when we turned once more to peacetime production, we were faced with the tremendous problems of post-war dislocation. We needed houses for our veterans, we needed to control an ever-increasing inflation, we needed to assume our obligations in a war shattered world. We had a great deal to do and the problems were tremendous.

Labor was willing to do its share. But it never got the chance.

As thanks for their heroic war work, as thanks for their no-strike pledge, their harmony and helpfulness, labor got the blame for all the inevitable difficulties of a world following its greatest war.

In the wave of weariness that followed the war, our people were tired and politically indifferent. Only one-third of our citizens went to the polls in 1946. They elected the 80th Congress.

In the last two years, labor has reaped not its just reward for its role in war, not apt commendation for improving industrial relations before the war. Labor reaped its reward for failing to go to the polls in 1946.

For big business, the 80th Congress passed a tax law that gave big investors a greater share in the war profits of their corporations. It increased inflation and gave corporations more of the profits they earned from inflation.

For labor, the 80th Congress passed the Taft-Hartley act, a punishment for the postwar irritations all of us felt that no one was really responsible for.

With major problems like housing and inflation facing us, this Congress made its greatest contribution to our postwar world--the legalistic, complicated, harrassing and threatening Taft-Hartley law.

There are enough loopholes in the poorly written law to send all the unions of America into bankruptcy. There are statements in this law in black on white that will let employers break a union if they want to. But we have yet to see the full effects, because the full employment we have now gives workers an extra bargaining strength.

Since the passage of this act there has been a lot of talk about its effect. There is even a special Congressional Committee to report its progress. It is called the Taft-Hartley "watchdog" committee. That's the wrong name for it. It should be called the Taft-Hartley "whitewash" committee. It is not telling us the complete story.

This Taft-Hartley "whitewash" committee doesn't mention the reasons why they have found fewer strikes under the act. It doesn't mention that the National Association of Manufacturers has been telling its members not to use the act for a while--at least until after the election.

The "whitewash" committee ignores the fact that many employers just don't use the act--they don't like it any better than labor does. It ignores the fact that full employment should be the period of labor's greatest power, yet real wages have gone down, while real profits go higher every day.

It ignores the fact that the real potentialities of this act will only be seen when men are unemployed. And they ignore the obvious fact that strikes went down faster since the war before the Taft-Hartley act than after it. Under the Taft-Hartley act the old strike breaking technique of the injunction is back. Fifteen times in the first year of the act the injunction has halted union action.

Under the Taft-Hartley Act the company union has

equal status with legitimate employee unions.

Under this law certain strikes are outlawed on a broad general scale without regard to whether they are legitimate or illegitimate strikes.

Under the Taft-Hartley act when a recognized union is on strike, an employer can replace them with non-union employees, then hold a new election among these non-union employees and discard the recognized union that was out on strike.

Under the Taft-Hartley act, one man--the Labor Board General Counsel,--has dictatorial powers over the entire labor-relations field.

Under the Taft-Hartley law, the labor board is so jammed up with cases that it cannot handle an emergency.

But the greatest crime of the Taft-Hartley law is that it substitutes bureaucratic procedures and legal decrees for free collective bargaining. This law creates a vast governmental bureaucracy to take the place of free employers and free trade unions.

That is the Taft-Hartley act. Injunction in place of negotiation. Courtroom bargaining in place of collective bargaining. Legalism in place of humanism. Bureaucratic decrees in place of voluntary agreements.

The men who passed the Taft-Hartley law preached industrial peace. They posed as friends of labor. They said they only wanted to restore the balance between labor and capital. And all the while they were saying these

things they were doing something that gave the complete lie to their words. Th

They were crippling the Department of Labor. Today many authorities believe that the Department of Labor has been so severely weakened that it will not survive as a separate cabinet post.

Let's look at the figures: In the current budget the Department of Agriculture gets 577,000,000 dollars. That's all right. Agriculture needs that appropriation. The Department of Commerce gets 172,480,000 dollars. That's all right. Business needs that appropriation. But what did the Department of Labor get? The Department of Labor was slashed to 14,500,000 dollars. Labor got about one sixtieth of what Agriculture got. Labor got about one-twelfth of what Business got. This is the action of Congress that says it wants to restore the balance between labor and business. Twelve to one in favor of business is what this Congress thinks is an even balance.

The Department of Labor was established by law in 1913. The bill setting up the Department set forth its purposes; the purposes of the Department were "to foster, promote, and develop the welfare of the wage earners of the United States; to improve their working conditions and advance their opportunities for profitable employment."

All these fine purposes have been repudiated by the 80th Congress. It has not abolished the Department; it has deprived it of the necessary funds with which to operate.

The great Bureau of Labor Statistics--which has been used by both business and labor alike--was slashed first 40% and then 13%. Now it will have to eliminate many of its vital studies. The Women's Bureau dealing with the problems of 17,000,000 working women has had to close its field offices. So did the division of Veterans' Re-employment. The Wage and Hour and Public Contracts Division, which administers the minimum wage and maximum hours law will be able to inspect only 7% of the plants that fall under its protection.

What the 80th Congress didn't destroy it took away from the Department of Labor. Over President Truman's veto they took the United States Employment Service away from the Department of Labor. Then, under the Taft-Hartley law they took the Conciliation Service out of the Department of Labor and set it up as an independent agency. They claimed it was too partial to labor, although it had a record of settling nearly 90% of all industrial disputes.

And now I want you to listen to something. This is from a political platform of 1944. It is the Republican platform. I quote:

"The Department of Labor has been emasculated by the New Deal. Labor Bureaus, agencies, and committees are spread far and wide.....and have no semblance of systematic or responsible organization. All governmental labor activities must be placed under the direct authority and responsibility of the Secretary of Labor."

In 1944, the Republicans promised to strengthen the Department of Labor. In 1948, they have almost destroyed it.

This 80th Congress cannot pose as a friend of labor when it cripples the Department of Labor. It cannot solve all our post-war problems by blaming everything on labor. It cannot wave a magic wand and do away with strikes by writing a long and complicated law which few people understand.

Strikes are made by unions. And unions are people. Neither trade union leaders nor trade union members like strikes. Strikes bring hardships to all members; long and unsuccessful strikes may destroy the union and depose its leaders.

Men and women strike because as human beings they have human goals and human aspirations. They strike because they have just grievances. They strike because they live in tenements. They strike because their wages do not buy enough to feed and clothe their families. They strike because they fear the coming of a depression and unemployment. They strike because they work under dangerous conditions of employment. They strike because they are not recognized as human beings. They strike because they believe they have received unfair treatment at the hands of the rest of society.

This Congress did little or nothing to remove the real causes of industrial conflict. It has done little to

curb inflation. It has done nothing to remove tenements and build decent low cost housing. It has kept the minimum wage at forty cents--a figure that mocks the American worker. It set up a Council to plan against unemployment and then ignored all of its recommendations. It has failed to develop the great regional valleys of our country. It has done nothing for those who need medical care. It has failed to move forward with a social security law that will provide for our people in their old age. It has failed to act for the people and has spent its efforts against certain groups. In short, the 80th Congress has failed to represent the American people, it has failed to speak for the American people, it has failed to act for the American people.

What this 80th Congress has failed to do is the unfinished business of American democracy. It should be the program for American labor. That program should consider the welfare of all the people.

As we approach election time, these are days of bitterness and even hatred. Labor has been badly treated and unjustly blamed. I do not underrate this injustice. But tonight I ask my friends in the labor movement to put aside all thoughts of narrow partisanship. If you seek justice not vengeance, all Americans will join you. If you seek equal treatment, not special privilege, all Americans will support you. If you set your political aims no higher than revenge, if you make your goal no deeper than an attack on all who voted for the Taft-Hartley

law, you will turn back the movement of unionism and ignore the place of labor as a full partner in the whole community.

I want to ask you to judge all candidates for office--I want to ask you to judge me--not only by our attitudes on labor laws, but by our full platform for a better United States and a better world.

You, the man and women of the labor movement, have achieved an equal place in the community, a place of respect and leadership in the community. I want to ask you, in these days of critical importance, do not abandon your position for one of narrow partisanship.

I am proud and glad that more workers are registered to vote than ever before in our country's history.

This is a critical year--for all the world. I ask you to think as a part of the whole community. I ask you to vote with all the issues in mind. I ask you to lead forward all the people with brotherly consideration for the farmer and business man, with a great vision for the peace and happiness of all the world.

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