

THE

JOB

AHEAD

Speech by

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*International Union
United Automobile, Aircraft and
Agricultural Implement Workers
of America, CIO*

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Opening Speech of UAW-CIO President Walter P. Reuther
To First Session of 11th UAW-CIO Convention.



Mr. Chairman, distinguished guests, delegates to this great Convention, and friends: The Eleventh Convention of the UAW-CIO meets in a period of growing political reaction on the home front and increasing tension and suspicion on the world front. We are a long way from realizing the hopes and aspirations for which men fought and died in the last war. The common people everywhere and millions of little people like ourselves, who work in factory and field all over the world and who share the same hopes and aspirations that we share, want peace.

People of all nations and of all tongues want the same things that we want: an opportunity to enjoy economic security and well-being. They want an opportunity to live with freedom and justice, in human dignity, without fear of tomorrow. What you and I do in this great Convention and what we do in CIO and what CIO does in America can be a decisive factor in that brave new world that we talked so nobly about during the war.

American labor in this difficult period must take the initiative in giving aggressive leadership in the full mobilization of the democratic forces, so that this time we will not throw away on the home front the opportunity that we won on the the battlefield. We can't drift to that brave new world; we have got to work for it, we have got to plan for it—yes, we have got to fight for it, and this Convention has convened at Atlantic City in order that we may equip and prepare ourselves to make our contribution in that fight.

OUR PRACTICAL JOB

We have a practical job in America of giving more than lip service to noble principles, of taking the fancy promises and translating them into the practical things of life, into bread and butter, into decent houses, into economic security for the great mass of our people.

Our fight is essentially a fight to make democracy work. Democracy is not something in the abstract. We have the practical job as organized labor, as the van-

guard of the democratic progressive forces of this nation, of forging the weapons with which we are going to fight and the tools with which we are going to build. Nobody else is going to do the job that must be done unless we in CIO and we in the American labor movement give leadership and direction in that struggle.

The whole world looks to us, they expect us to find the answer, and we have got to find the answer. We have got to find the answer to the problem of how men can get the things they need, how we can feed and clothe and house ourselves without sacrificing our basic human freedom. We want economic security in the world, but we don't want to pay the price of human freedom to get that security. We want security with freedom, and that is the thing we are fighting for.

NOT BACKWARD WITH N.A.M.

I have said many times, and I repeat, that the answer to that problem will not be found by going back to the good old days with the N.A.M. We did not fight a war and millions of our best men did not die to go back to something; we fought a war to go forward to something better than we ever had before.

The N.A.M. program of monopoly and scarcity with a few years of boom and then a blow-up and depression is not the answer. The answer will not be found in any of the so-called magic totalitarian formulas whereby you trade freedom for bread. The answer will be found in making democracy work, in making it work in the political field and making it work in the economic field, not every four years or every two years, but 365 days in a year.

MOBILIZE ON ALL FRONTS

After all, what is the labor movement all about? The kind of labor movement we are building in the CIO is not a labor movement committed to a nickel-in-the-pay envelope kind of philosophy; it is a labor movement that says we have to mobilize workers in the economic field and then apply that power to the struggle in the political field as citizens, and to the consumers field as organized consumers.

We are building a labor movement, not to patch up the old world so you can starve less often and less severely; we are building the kind of labor movement that will remake the world so that the working people will get the

benefits of their labor. That is the kind of fight we are making.

We have the tools for the first time in the history of civilization to conquer poverty and human insecurity. All we have to do is learn to use those tools. That is the great job.

We know how to make things. But now we have to learn how to take those things we know how to make and translate them into human happiness and human security and make them mean things to the people.

HEADING FOR TROUBLE

We are heading for trouble in America. This phony prosperity the newspaper editorials talk about is going to explode one of these days, and we are going to wind up in another depression with mass unemployment and all of the other evils of human insecurity and suffering.

We are heading for trouble for the simple reason that big business and monopoly industry are robbing the American public by high prices and inflation, and they are milking the most scandalous profits out of our people that have ever been known in the history of this nation. Prices and profits are up in the stratosphere, and purchasing power and real wages are being depressed more every day. Unless we get some balance in this economic machine of ours we are hell-bent for another depression.

THE NATHAN REPORT

A year ago President Murray of the CIO rendered a very valuable service to the people of this nation when he asked Robert Nathan and his associates to make an economic study of just where we were in America economically speaking, and what we could expect out of our economy.

The Nathan report found that American industry would be earning at an annual rate of \$15,000,000,000 in profits, after taxation, and that out of these tremendously swollen profits could give wage increases without price increases. After the Nathan report was published we witnessed the most concentrated propaganda campaign in the history of this nation. The radio, newspaper, and every kind of public communication were literally loaded down with propaganda calculated to disprove the basic position of the Nathan report. They did a pretty good job of it. They even convinced some people who hold CIO membership.

The Nathan report was wrong, and history and the facts that have developed since it was published prove that it was wrong. But it was not wrong on the side which the N.A.M. said it was wrong on. It erred on the side of conservatism. Instead of American industry making \$15 billion in profits after taxation, American industry in the first half of 1947, on an annual basis, made \$17½ billion in profits, after taxes,—two and a half billion more than the CIO Nathan report said it would.

That is 17½ billion in take-home profits; not profits before taxes, but take-home profits, after taxes. What does that mean? It means that the slogan we raised two years ago and which the CIO raised in the Nathan report, that the profits of American industry were sufficiently large to pay wage increases without price increases, was the correct economic calculation.

PROFITS BEFORE TAXES

Let us look at those profits before taxes, because that is really the way to look at them. In the first half of 1947 American corporations made \$29 billion in profits before taxes. They could have given every corporate wage earner, every salaried employee a 20 per cent wage increase or salary increase out of that \$29 billion in profits, and not increase the price of anything one cent. They still could have made \$8 billion in profits after taxation.

Or they could have had a general price reduction of 9 percent across the whole basic price structure of our economy, and still they would have wound up with 8.8 billions of dollars in profits after taxation, or equal to the highest profit year of 1929, or two and one-half times the average profits for the period of 1935 to 1939.

Let's look at a couple of companies. They say when you talk about profits in round figures it doesn't mean anything. You have to talk about profits in terms of capitalization, earnings on investments. Well, let's look at the picture that way for a minute.

PROFIT RATE

Continental Baking Company, which is the biggest corporation of the baking goods industry, made in 1946 a rate of return on investment of 24.9 percent. You put your few dollars you are able to squeeze out of a pay envelope—if you can still do it, and which I doubt very much—put it into the bank, and they give you 2 percent, 2½ percent, maybe 3 percent. Then they invest that in

the Continental Baking Company, and they take out of your pockets as consumers a return of 24.9 percent per year on your dollar, which they invested in the company.

Take the steel industry leaders. They broke the doors in at the White House and opened the flood gates of inflation. They got a \$5 a ton price increase and they went on from there, and they are still going on.

In 1940, forty-seven steel companies made \$278 million in profits. In the first half of 1947 the same forty-seven steel companies made profits at the rate of \$450 million a year.

PLANNED STEEL SCARCITY

Why are we in serious difficulty in our industry with respect to material shortages, sheet steel in particular? Because there is a deliberately organized and planned program of economic scarcity in the steel industry. They don't want to expand steel production; they would rather have low production, high prices and high profits. Thousands of automobile workers have walked the streets, working two and three days a week, because the steel monopoly is more interested in protecting swollen profits than in meeting the economic needs of this nation with respect to sheet steel production.

In 1940 and 1941 our industry got 44 percent of the total sheet steel capacity. We are now getting 35 percent, and in the first three months of 1947, if we had gotten 44 percent, we could have gotten 470,000 more tons of sheet steel, and we could have made 360,000 more automobiles in those three months, and every worker in the Big Three and the independents and the parts plants could have had a minimum of 40 hours work per week in that period instead of unemployment.

But the steel industry; carrying out this program of planned scarcity to protect profits, is unwilling to expand. I say that unless the leaders of the steel industry are willing to get off their fat bottoms and expand steel production, the government has to step in and do it for the people.

AUTO PROFITS

Look at the auto industry. Fifteen automobile companies in 1940—and that was a good year; you didn't see C. E. Wilson or any of the other top executives running around the country with patches in their pants, they were doing good in 1940—15 automobile companies in

1940 made a profit of \$242 million after taxes. In the first half of 1947 the same 15 companies made profits after taxes at the rate of \$418 million a year.

And let us look at General Motors—good old General Motors. In the second quarter of 1947—this is not ancient history—the second quarter of 1947 the General Motors Corporation made \$142 million in profits before taxes.

C. E. Wilson says the price of automobiles is still going to go up. It costs as much for a Chevrolet now as you used to pay for a Cadillac, and they say they are still going to go up. They like to blame it on us because we fought for a few pennies in wage increase. The real cause of the scandalous, rising prices of automobiles, as well as other basic commodities, is these scandalous profits which these great corporations are milking out of the American people.

General Motors—and I defy the General Motors Corporation to explode these figures—General Motors in the second quarter of 1947 could have reduced the price of every car they sold by \$250 and they still would have had enough in the \$142 million in profits left over to have a return of 8 percent on their investment during that quarter. And yet they blame us for the high price of cars.

The Eighteenth Quarterly Report of the OPA said that in fifteen basic industries in America, for every dollar industrialists paid out in higher wages they took \$3 out of the public pockets in higher prices.

I want to give you a very simple illustration which will take you out of the realm of higher statistics down to a practical level.

THE PRICE OF BEER

Some weeks ago in the State of New Jersey there was a state-wide conference of tavern owners. They had convened because the breweries had raised the price of beer 62 cents a barrel. The tavern owners gathered to find out what they were going to do about an increase in the cost of beer. They met in the morning and they discussed pro and con whether they should raise the price of a glass of beer from 10 cents to 15 cents. They voted that down. They met in the afternoon and a motion was made that instead of raising the price of a glass of beer from 10 cents to 15 cents, they would keep the 10-cent price tag on the glass of beer, but they would cut the size of the glass from 10 ounces to 8 ounces.

Here you have a very simple illustration of what is happening many, many times over throughout the whole economic structure of this nation. I do not claim to be an authority on this particular subject, but we found out that there are 700 8-ounce glasses of beer in a barrel. That is, if they do not put a head on the beer, and I am told that they do. But if they filled it right up to the rim, without a head, there would be 700 glasses. So that in order to cover the 62 cents per barrel increase, the tavern owners cut the 10-ounce glass to 8 ounces and sold it for 10 cents. For every barrel of beer they sell you—and I am told that will be quite a few—they will take in \$14 to cover the 62-cent increase in the price of a barrel of beer.

That is a very down-to-earth example of what is happening in America.

NAM PROPAGANDA

The N.A.M. propaganda campaign preceding elimination of price controls in the summer of 1946 included an advertisement which made the following charge: "Would you like some butter or a roast of beef? The reason you cannot get them is that there is price control." They carried on this propaganda campaign until they smashed price control. They said in the ads, "If we get rid of this wicked New Deal price control machinery, and we let the wonders of free enterprise get going under their own motion, production will soar, and when production gets up at certain levels prices will come tumbling down." That is the way they teach economics in the high school textbooks: The supply increase will balance the demand and the prices will come down.

But it does not work that way in practice, because free enterprise in America is neither free nor enterprising. Important segments of our country are controlled by powerful monopolies which control the level of production and the price level. They set both the level of production and the price level not at that relationship which meets the needs of the people, but at that relationship where they can get the greatest profits.

As for the N.A.M. theory about production soaring—let me give you a couple of figures from governmental reports, because only to the extent that we can get the great mass of people in America to understand something about the simple arithmetic of our economy can we get them mad enough to fight back.

Take the textile industry. Production of textiles and cotton goods has been cut back 17 percent from the peak since the war. It is 17 percent lower now than it was eight months ago. They cut production back 17 percent, and in the same period they increased prices 43 percent.

Take the shoe industry. My wife bought a pair of shoes for our five-year-old girl a couple of weeks ago—a little pair of shoes so big, didn't take a half a cowhide to make them—\$7.50 for a pair of shoes for a five-year-old girl. What has happened to the shoe industry? They have cut back production 13 percent, increased the prices 35 percent, and that is happening throughout all sections of the American economy. This N.A.M. talk about free enterprise—the wonders of free enterprise—is just so much tommyrot for public consumption.

CONGRESS MUST ACT

The guts of our economy are being tied into knots by the most unscrupulous bunch of profiteers in the history of the world, and we are going to pay the price unless we do something about it. Congress meets in special session in Washington. Congress had better begin to take action to roll prices back; they had better begin to take action to see that monopoly controls and restriction of production are removed, so that we can get the impact of full production on the price structure and bring prices down. Thirdly, they had better work out a program of allocation of basic foods and materials at the source.

Congress must roll back prices. Congress must step up to its responsibility. All of the people of America, wage-earners, people of fixed incomes, people living on government pensions, people living on private retirement funds, all of these people will benefit by rolling prices back.

But that is a job which industry and government must take on themselves. I say to industry in the automobile, aircraft and farm equipment industries, where we represent the workers, and I say to government: if they continue in their failure to meet the crisis by taking appropriate action to roll back prices, we in the UAW, like the other members of organized labor, will be compelled to handle it our own way by launching an all-out fight for higher wages.

They will have their chance. Congress is meeting, and if it continues in its record of failure to face its respon-

sibility in this grave crisis, we do not intend to mark time and stand still on the wage front.

POLITICAL ACTION

I think that this is the best time in the world to drive home to the great membership whom we represent why we cannot solve the complex problems that face us if we fight only in the economic field. We have to fight both in the economic and political fields, because what you win on the picket lines they take away in Washington if you don't fight on that front. We are learning that at a great cost.

We have the job of making our people realize, as I have said many times over, the relationship between the bread box and the ballot box. We have to make our people realize that in the kind of complex economy in which we live, the surest way to guarantee that your ice box will be filled with good food is to see that the ballot box is filled with good votes on election day.

We have to mobilize for an all-out political fight in 1948. And this is not something that you put at the bottom of the agenda in your local unions; this goes smack on top of the agenda of every union meeting. It is not a side issue you get to when everything else is completed; it is the top priority issue in the year ahead. We have to do a job of mobilizing our political power to clean house in Congress in 1948.

80th CONGRESS—GAS PLANT

The 80th Congress has betrayed the American people and the ideals for which we fought the war. I told Martin Wagner of the CIO Gas Coke and Chemical Workers Union, "Martin, you have a big gas plant down there in Washington. Why don't you organize it? The biggest gas plant in America is completely unorganized."

I told him this story—some of you people have heard me tell it before—I said a couple of months ago when Congress was in session and they were debating the Taft-Hartley Act I flew down to Washington in a big DC-4, a 60-passenger plane that our boys make out in Douglas, and we flew right over the dome of the Capitol Building.

As we got up about 500 feet above the dome the plane bounced about 500 feet in the air, and then we settled down and landed, and I asked the pilot what had

happened; and he said, "I should have known better. Every pilot has been warned not to fly over the Capitol Dome when the 80th Congress was in session, because the political hot air and gas comes rushing up," and I said to Martin Wagner: "Your union has jurisdiction over gas plants; you ought to go down there and organize them; it is the biggest political gas plant in America, the 80th Congress."

TAFT-HARTLEY

We have a big job to do. I testified before the Senate Committee on Labor and Education. I told Senator Taft, Senator Ball and their reactionary team-mates that their approach to the problems in America, passing punitive anti-labor legislation, would fail to achieve greater industrial stability, because they were taking a negative approach to the problems that demand positive solutions. We have to work as we never worked before in mobilizing our political power in America, to repeal the Taft-Hartley Law, and to drive out of public office every congressman and senator who voted for that vicious piece of legislation.

I told the Senate Committee if they wanted to know why people strike in America they have to go behind the strikes to find out the reasons for strikes. Why do people strike? Free people strike because, after they have exhausted every other way of settling their problems, that is their only weapon. A lot of UAW members have walked the picket lines and have fought courageous, heroic battles.

For fourteen months they walked the picket line in the J. I. Case strike. That was the longest one. Does anybody think they did that just for the fun of it, through two bitter winters? They did it, because like other workers, like other free men, they were fighting to win a measure of economic security, social justice and human dignity.

I say the answer to these problems is not in passing punitive anti-labor legislation. The answer and the only basis on which we can achieve greater industrial stability, is to begin to deal in a positive way with the problems out of which human insecurity grows, and out of which strike action grows.

MORE HOUSES

That means we have to fight for a positive legislative program that will deal with America's basic problems—

for instance, decent housing. America's housing shortage is its No. 1 scandal. We gave the veterans fancy promises but we could not give them decent homes. We spent billions of dollars during the war to wreck homes but we cannot spend a million dollars to build homes. I have seen the tar-paper shacks near the Milwaukee airport. In Detroit the veterans are living in quonset huts, big tin cans laid on their bellies, at \$46.00 a month—\$46.00 a month for a half of a tin can for a veteran. That is what is going on. Congress does not have the guts, does not have the courage to take on that kind of a problem.

MINIMUM WAGE

Then there is the minimum wage law. Millions of American families are getting 40 cents an hour and less. They are not living. They are existing like animals. We have to fight for at least 75 cents an hour minimum to start with, and push it up to \$1.00 an hour. Until every American worker gets at least \$1.00 an hour we do not have a minimum wage law in America.

We have to fight for expanded social security, for a national health program, for permanent fair practice legislation, anti-lynch legislation, and legislation to strengthen the civil rights fiber of America. We have to fight for a decent, equitable, fair tax program.

TAX PROGRAM

If our people back home in the shops really knew how important a tax bill is to their economic welfare they would do something about it on election day. The kind of tax bill that Congress passes is just as important as a wage contract negotiation session, and yet our people don't know what goes on. The Republicans are booming another tax program, calculated to save \$4 billion. If they put it across it will be three billion for the big guys and one billion for the little guys.

The last tax program which was vetoed supposedly was a 20 percent tax reduction. If that bill had gone through, the worker with a family of four, with an annual income of \$2500, would have gotten a \$17 tax reduction, but a fellow making \$100,000 a year, with a family of four, would have gotten a \$12,000 tax reduction.

DOUBLE STANDARD

It's the old game. If you've got too much they give you some more; if you've got too little they take some

away from you. That is the trouble with America and that is what we are going to change. It is the old double standard.

Oh, they give you pious speeches around the collective bargaining table about how the UAW is demanding unreasonable things, fantastic things, and the guys who sit there on their side of the table, in the smug security of 300,000 bucks a year, look down their noses and say, "Here you come again with some more fantastic demands." It is the old double standard in America. That is wrong and we are going to fight like hell until we change it.

PENSIONS NOT WINDOW DRESSING

And what is the double standard? Let's look at the question of pensions. We are entitled to pensions and we are going to get them. Don't let anybody tell you that it is window dressing; don't let anybody tell you it is just more fancy CIO slogans. Ten years ago if we had told them we were going to have a million members in UAW they would have said, "That is fantastic." And when they tell you the pension plan is fantastic tell them to go fly a kite, because we are going to get it.

Why are we going to get it? There isn't a single major corporation in this industry where for the executives, the \$500,000, \$300,000, the \$100,000 a year people, they don't put aside as much as \$25,000 a year in a retirement fund. You see it is the old shell game. If you don't need a pension plan they give you one, and if you need one they say they can't afford it. We are going to turn it around, we are going to do it just the other way, because that is the way it has to be.

A fellow making \$300,000 a year doesn't need a retirement plan; a guy making \$3,000 does.

ANNUAL WAGE

Take the annual wage. There you get the double standard again. If you make \$300,000 they pay you by the year, and you eat by the day, but if you make a buck forty an hour they pay you by the hour and you eat by the year. I have been saying that if the good Lord when He made us had intended C. E. Wilson's kids to live 365 days in the year, eat 365 days in the year. He would have made them one way, and if He had intended your kids to eat only when you punch a time clock, He would have made them another way.

We have a labor movement in America because we know the difference between what is right and what is wrong, and when Wilson and the other economic royalists in our industry look down their noses and say an annual wage is unreasonable, we are going to tell them: we don't care what you say, we are going to battle for it until our kids get an even break in America with your kids. That is what we are after and we are going to get it.

GUARANTEED WEEKLY WAGE

The first step of the annual wage fight is the fight for a guaranteed weekly wage. When a guy punches a time clock in any week he should be guaranteed 40 hours pay for that week. The company must assume that responsibility.

45-HOUR WEEK RACKET

Industry has come up with a new one, the 45-hour week racket. Mr. Wilson dreamed that one up, and NAM has taken up the ball. They want to take away overtime up to 45 hours a week. Yet they cannot give us 40 hours, let alone 45 hours. I want to say to Mr. Wilson and NAM: we are not going back. The Auto Workers don't believe our future and the future of America lies in going back. We say to these gentlemen that we are on the threshold of the atomic age. Let us mobilize that power, let us mobilize that technology, let's not go back to the 45-hour week. We are planning on a 30-hour week, with higher pay and higher living standards than we ever had, and we can do it.

STRUGGLE AGAINST SPEED-UP

I want to say on the question of speed-up: of course the companies are trying to push people around. But wherever a local union is being pushed around in this area, your International Union stands foursquare and united in support of the struggle of that local union in resisting any speedup plan.

Our union was born out of the struggle against speed-up; that more than any single factor brought about the birth of our union. I say the struggle against the speed-up must be the very cornerstone of our basic union policy.

LABOR UNITY

We have to work for a united labor movement. Philip Murray and the CIO committee on unity have pointed out

a practical approach, and we have to support that practical approach to achieve working unity and ultimately organic unity.

We should also begin to take preliminary steps for the establishment of a national labor daily newspaper so that our people can read the facts instead of reading the propaganda of the employers.

BUILD CO-OPS

We should intensify our work to build Co-ops. We are doing a good job in that and we have made a good start. Some of the locals in Detroit have gone into the grocery business temporarily, as a beginning. Saturday after Saturday they are dishing out around \$60,000 worth of groceries in local union halls in Detroit, selling the stuff to the workers at cost. That is only a beginning.

What we have to do is to build a powerful Co-op movement, with democratic control over the distribution machinery of this nation so that we can end the robbery and exploitation that take place both at the consumer end and at the producer end. We have to develop a relationship between the workers and the farmers, whereby we get their stuff and they get a decent price, and nobody in the middle robs us. We should really find out what is going on in America, among the middlemen between the workers and the farmers. When the farmer buys what you make you get robbed on your end and he gets robbed on the other end. When you buy what the farmer grows, the farmer gets robbed on his end and we get robbed on this end. Wall Street has the only cow in captivity that gives milk at both ends. And that is a fact.

ORGANIZE THE UNORGANIZED

We have to organize the unorganized. That means effective, well-coordinated campaigns, where we work out specific organizational targets, and concentrate on those targets until they are finished. And then we move on to the next target. That means special attention to the major organizational objectives such as Auto-Lite, Ford Motor, the aircraft industry, farm equipment, and many others.

On the wage front we must work harder toward equalization and overall coordination, and we have to put our own house in order to do this job.

STRIKE FUND

I propose that we build up a powerful defense fund of a minimum of five million dollars. I want to tell you this, just as one of the guys who has had some practical experience. When you sit down and bargain with management and the boss knows you have five or ten million dollars in the international treasury strike fund ready to back you up, it makes a hell of a difference.

You can't do an effective job in collective bargaining, you can't be strong collective bargaining-wise unless you are in a financial position to back up your demands.

And so we need a defense fund earmarked in a special bank account, not one penny to be spent for organizers or anything else, every penny to be spent for strike purposes only.

REAFFIRM CIO POLICY

The UAW-CIO reaffirms the CIO policy of resenting and rejecting the interference of the Communist party or any other outside political party.

One of the cornerstones of democratic freedom is the right of all to believe in any religious or political belief they may want to embrace. We don't claim any right to interfere with that basic principle. What we assert, and we say it out loud, is that the guys back home who pay the buck and a half a month into this union and who punch time cards every day can run their affairs without anybody sticking their noses in from the outside.

LOYALTY UNQUESTIONED

I say that the loyalty of our union and its membership is beyond question, with respect to the United States and Canada. We know that both in the United States and in Canada we don't have what we would consider a perfect situation. There are many injustices; there is discrimination, and all sorts of things that are wrong. We are building this union to fight to correct those injustices. But while we are fighting in America, in the United States and Canada against the vicious evils and injustices that exist, I think it should be known to everyone that we will fight with equal determination anyone in this union or anyone in this country who attempts to sell the membership, the union, or our country down the river to any foreign power in the world.

VICIOUS LEGISLATION

The road ahead is going to be a rough one. We are in a period of growing reaction. The Taft-Hartley Act, every-piece of vicious legislation, every obstruction they can put in our way will be thrown in our path.

Newspaper men say to me, "What is the possibility of a split in the UAW-CIO?" And I say to the newspaper men and I say to the world: The UAW-CIO is anchored firmly in the structure of the CIO under the leadership of Philip Murray, and no one has the power from within or from without to split UAW-CIO. They can't destroy us. We are not a nickel-in-the-pay-envelope labor movement.

The CIO has a conscience, and it has that inward strength of knowing that it is part of a great human crusade. That is a power in our union that nobody can destroy, and nobody can divide. We have always had a rough time of it. The great captains of industry have never served us anything on a silver platter. Everything that labor has in the world, every decent step forward we have made, we have made because people had loyalty and the courage to struggle. And so while the road will be rough we can meet the test—we can meet the test because we have been steeled in struggle.

We won our major fights before the National Labor Relations Board was declared constitutional.

We did it in 1936 and 1937 and in 1938, and if we could do it in 1937 and 1938 we can do it in 1947 and 1948 just as well.

STRENGTH IN RANKS

The strength of our Union is the men and women in the ranks. With teamwork in the leadership and solidarity in the ranks there is no power in the world that can stop the kind of a movement that we have. The irresistible power that we will have can overcome all of the obstacles. Let us demonstrate the power, the good sense, to pound out a program and put our house in order. I am confident that together we can work and fight and make our contribution in America and in the world toward the building of a better tomorrow, a new world based upon peace, plenty, freedom, and the brotherhood of man.