On The Labor Front

July 10, 1959

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"U. S. PLEDGES FULL SUPPORT FOR STEELWORKERS" - RUBIN

WASHINGTON: "The Industrial Union Department, AFL-CIO, pledges its full support to the steel industry in its efforts to negotiate a fair and equitable contract with the steel industry," Walter Murphy announced.

The Steelworkers Union has been negotiating for over two months. During that period, the union has laid before the corporations the facts fully supporting its case for wage increases and other contract improvements. During this period, the steel industry has not only refused to enter into good faith bargaining, but has also refused to enter into good faith bargaining.

The steel industry's attempts to use steelworkers as whipping boys for inflation is a hypocritical maneuver to hide the industry's true guilt for inflation through its self-dealing system of discriminatory prices. Despite the industry's refusal to enter into good faith collective bargaining, the union, nevertheless, continued to negotiate for two weeks beyond the contract expiration date, as requested by President Eisenhower.

The facts prove fully the union contention that the steel industry can grant steelworkers wage increases and other improvements because of technological progress and the present price structure. This has been borne out by a fact sheet recently released by Senator Mike Kefauver, chairman of the Senate Anti-Jobbery Subcommittee, which has thoroughly studied the economics of the industry.

Senator Kefauver has pointed out that any rise in labor costs has been substantially offset by increases in steel prices, and that the "increase in costs resulting from the wage increase" is no greater than that obtained in a contract between the steel companies and the United Steelworkers Union.

Members of the United Steelworkers have earned wage increases and other contract gains through their increased productivity. As a result, the steel industry today is paying record wages to 10 percent fewer workers than were employed three years ago. Today, the basic steel industry provides employment for about 35,000 workers, this is 40,000 fewer than were employed in 1956. Employment today is lower even than in 1957.

(continued in Column 8)

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