

Union Leadership Votes 21 to 2

# Reuther's Foreign Policies Rebuked

By Frank Porter

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CHICAGO, Aug. 22—Walter P. Reuther, the No. 2 man in the U.S. labor movement, received another stinging rebuke on foreign policy here today from the leadership of the AFL-CIO.

The Federation's executive council voted, 21 to 2, to "reject out of hand the campaign of vilification that has been conducted against the AIFLD (the American Institute For Free Labor Development)."

The prime target of the resolution wasn't Reuther, who heads both the 1.3-million-member United Auto Workers (UAW) and the Industrial Union Department of the AFL-CIO, but statements made by his brother Victor.

Victor Reuther is director of the UAW's department of International Affairs and has publicly assailed the AIFLD, among other things, he has charged the AFL-CIO-sponsored Institute with working with the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency and interfering in the internal political affairs of Latin American nations.

## Wrong in Attacks

Although the quarterly executive council meetings that opened here today are closed, members said Walter Reuther conceded his brother had been wrong in his attacks on the AIFLD.

The UAW president nonetheless voted against the motion along with Joseph Curran, president of the National Maritime Union. President Jacob S. Potosky of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America abstained and three other council members were absent.

Walter Reuther reportedly favored the first part of the resolution, which commended the AIFLD for its "work in carrying out the policies of the AFL-CIO in the international field."

But colleagues said they believed he could not lend support to a motion which con-

demned his brother by in-  
direction. They also speculat-  
ed that a yes vote from Wal-  
ter might have implied that  
he is in accord with overall  
AFL-CIO foreign policies  
when indeed he is not. Pres-  
ident George Meany has  
scheduled a special executive  
council meeting for after the  
November election at which  
Reuther and his supporters  
will have a chance to debate  
these policies.

## No Comment

Walter Reuther would not comment on today's action.

The Routhers' earlier defeat on foreign policy came in June when the council upheld, 18 to 6, the walkout of American labor delegates to the International Labor Organization meetings in Geneva after election of a Polish Communist as president. Walter Reuther, aided by his brother, had protested the action bit-  
terly as inimicable to a free labor movement and asked Meany for a special hearing.

The episode was regarded as a tempest in a teapot by some rank-and-file unionists who contend AFL-CIO foreign policy holds little interest for the membership as a whole.

But higher-ups view both the ILO and AIFLD incidents as greatly weakening Walter Reuther's chances of succeeding Meany as federation president. Even some of his friends, while supporting him in the ILO fight in theory, were dismayed by what they considered Reuther's decisive tactics in bringing the matter into the open before the council could consider it.

## Report Outcome

Today's resolution was the outcome of a long report defending the AIFLD by Joseph A. Bierne, its secretary-treasu-

rer since its inception in 1961 and president of the Communications Workers of America.

Although the report was not made public, Bierne told The Washington Post that he sought to refute what he called a number of untruths about the Institute, among them charges that the AIFLD:

- Works as an arm of the U.S. State Department.
- Is dominated by or cooperated with the CIA.
- Fosters company unions in Latin America.
- Intervenes in the internal affairs of foreign countries.
- Supports anti-democratic leaders in Latin America.

Bierne said he was not unduly disturbed when "this fabric" of allegations was woven by individual newspaper and magazine writers.

## Public Changes

"It still didn't have credence until someone from the movement (Victor Reuther) gave it credence," he said. Shortly after Victor first made his charges public in a newspaper interview last May, Bierne asked Meany for the opportunity to defend the AIFLD, which is an outgrowth of pilot projects in Latin America by his own union.

Today's report was the fruition of that request. Bierne said his action was "not an attack on Victor Reuther as a person but on the statements he made." The CWA chief, who called the AIFLD "the one bright star in the whole alliance for progress," said he told the council the Institute has trained 43,000 Latin Americans as labor leaders, spent or committed \$63 million on worker housing and spent another \$100,000 on such "impact" items as sewing machines for cooperatives, sanitary facilities, schoolhouse improvements and the like.

The council also passed a resolution supporting the communications workers in their efforts to shatter the "shield" of the Administration's 3.2 per cent wage guidepost which the union says Western Electric has erected to resist CWA demands for "decent wage levels."

It asked the Senate to act promptly on an improved minimum wage bill, asked that the House expedite the so-called truth in packaging bill which it said has become bogged down in committee, and gave "support without reservation" to seven unions seeking to bargain collectively with General Electric and Westinghouse.