

NATIONAL REPORT

Illinois Industrialists Oppose Carter's Energy Program At Chicago Meetings

On Jan. 31, representatives of fifty Illinois industrial firms gathered in Chicago at a meeting called by the Illinois Chamber of Commerce to discuss and resolve their position on both short-term and long-term energy policy.

The meeting opened with a brief, but concise, statement on policy by James Ingersoll, Vice-President of the Chicago-based Borg-Warner Corporation and President of the International Trade Club of Chicago. He attacked Carter's energy proposal, and especially the suggestion of a four-day week, as a "foot in the door for the destruction of free enterprise" which must be vigorously opposed. The rest of Ingersoll's statement and the general mood of the entire meeting was pro-development, anti-conservation and zero-growth and explicitly anti-Carter.

The second policy statement was made from the floor by Mitchell Hirsch, representative of the U.S. Labor Party, who received a friendly welcome from the meeting. Hirsch stressed the immediate necessity of the meeting going on record in opposition to all measures initiated by the Carter administration which would result in cutbacks in production, layoffs, and conservation that

would lead to negative economic growth. Hirsch asked the meeting to endorse a long-term development proposal, backed up by a reorganized banking system which could extend credit for both short-term and long-term energy production and a crash program for fusion power research.

The final result of the meeting was a resolution that the Illinois Chamber of Commerce would: 1) Call for at least temporary lifting of unneeded restraints on sulphur dioxide Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) restrictions; 2) Increased use of coal on a standby and short-term basis where coal was available and conversion to coal not a problem; 3) Call for relaxation of environmental restrictions on shutting down afterburners of hydrocarbons; 4) Short-term diversions of small amounts of natural gas for hospitals and "human requirements" would not be opposed.

The most important resolutions agreed upon were to oppose any four-day week or other federally mandated cutbacks and to seek the establishment of a production oriented national energy policy. The group also determined to lobby strongly with the Illinois Congressional delegation on all these resolutions.

Energy Development Memorialization Bills Advance

The nationwide effort to reorient U.S. energy policies back toward the program of growth and development of new high-technology sources prevalent until the late 1960s advanced significantly when a memorialization bill embodying the U.S. Labor Party's energy development program was read into the Washington State Senate Jan. 20. The bill, designated Senate Joint Memorial No. 102 (see text below) and referred to the Senate Energy and Utilities Committee, was introduced by Sen. Kent Pullen (R-Kent) and is being co-sponsored by the Energy Committee's chairman, Sen. Ted Bottiger (D-Pierce Co.) along with three other members of the Committee, Sens. August Mardesich (D-Everett), the former Senate Majority leader, Bob Lewis (R-Yakima), the minority assistant floor leader, and Max Benitz (R-Yakima). Since the four comprise a majority of the Energy Committee, the memorial will almost certainly be reported out to the full Senate, where it is also expected to pass. The memorial will then be sent to the House.

The memorial's chances for passage have been greatly enhanced, in the view of veteran Washington political

observers, by the offensive launched by Washington Gov. Dixy Lee Ray against Naderite environmentalists. Ray followed her recent denunciation of the environmentalists as "people haters" with an attack last week on the National Environmental policy act.

Ray called for amendments to the act which would require environmental intervenors to pay for the costs of environmental impact studies that are granted by the courts, and would place a statutory time limit on the delays to energy projects and industrial construction caused by such studies. She also asked for court penalties against defeated intervenors commensurate to the losses caused by delays to projects. These amendments would eliminate the stalling tactics employed by Naderites that have disrupted U.S. industrial growth since NEPA's enactment on Jan. 1, 1970.

At the same time, a memorial similar to that introduced in Washington was filed in Connecticut by Sen. Richard Bozzute (R-Watertown), Jan. 26. Filing of memorials is expected as well in Colorado, Oregon, and Vermont.