

UNITED MINE WORKERS OF AMERICA

By W. A. BOYLE, PRESIDENT

As we enter the year 1967 we are plagued by the same problems that existed in 1966.

Inflation is still a very real factor of our economic life. Price increases continue to occur, raising the cost of living for the average citizen and hitting hard at the purchasing power of those on fixed incomes.

The cost of the conflict in Vietnam continues to be a terrible burden upon our Nation, not only from the standpoint of human misery, but the drain on our economic resources which we are committing to its prosecution.

Unemployment among the poor, the handicapped, and the disenfranchised remains at a high level in a Nation with the lowest unemployment in many years.

Education—the one real answer to poverty—has not been given the resources which it needs to bring to all Americans an educational level required in our modern society.

The rehabilitation of our cities and the eradication of our pockets of poverty have not kept pace with the growth of the economy so that a growing gulf separates Americans of means from those who live in destitution and want.

Manpower development is a critical national need, with shortages of skilled persons impeding national progress.

But, the unsolved problems of 1966 are not the only ones which we face in 1967.

Soft spots are beginning to appear in the economy. A decline in auto production, an alarming increase in inventories, and a leveling of activity in the private sector point to the possibility of a flattening of the business cycle.

Political decisions in the field of national resources—most notably in air and water pollution—threaten economic dislocation in the energy industries and retardation in the progress of those American industries dependent upon cheap and abundant energy resources.

Postwar reconversion following the Vietnam conflict portends a period of readjustment which could become serious if not handled with care.

Decisions in the wage-price field could do much to turn America away from the freedom of the marketplace which has made this Nation great.

Fiscal decisions based upon questionable economic logic could well hinder the advance of the national economy.

We, of course, must view all of these things against the backdrop of American economic strength. Our Nation's economic capability is beyond the imagination of man and the progress we have made is