

steel union federation to its convention. While in Japan, they visited the most modern of its steel plants, the Ohgishima facility of NKK Nippon Kokan Corp.

Two in this USWA party, Robert J. Petris, director of USWA District 38, and Al Marnati, president of USWA Local 2869, Kaiser Steel, Fontana, Calif., were interviewed about their experiences by a STEEL LABOR reporter upon their return from Japan.

"What general impression did you gain about Japan's steel industry during this visit that you didn't have before?"

Petris: "It's unbelievable! The way they are making steel at the new works we visited appears to me to be at least five to 10 years ahead of anything we can build here in America even if we start right now."

Marnati: "Where I work, Kaiser Steel in Fontana, it's one of the more modern mills in America. The big mill I visited in Japan is ahead in every way of anything we

have at Kaiser. We're way behind and I don't know why."

"You, Mr. Petris, worked in the Bethlehem plant in Seattle. How would you describe the Japanese way of making steel with what you experienced as a worker and now as a union director?"

Petris: "Whatever else, the biggest single difference is the kind of engineering, plant technology, the size of the blast furnaces and the computerized processes that they employ compared with what I was used to working with and what I see here in America today. They must pour far more money into the steel business than our American companies do. I don't see how we can compete with such a modern steel complex with our worn-out facilities."

"Are you saying that they make steel at a lower unit cost than we do?"

Petris: "I'm not an economist, but when I see a

Md. Rep.: Build Counterpole for "Era of Prosperity"

Maryland legislative delegate Casper Taylor (D-Allegheny-Washington counties) released a press statement on June 12 calling for the formation of a progress oriented counterpole to "maximize the thrust of Maryland's economic and industrial development."

Taylor cosponsored, with the U.S. Labor Party, a resolution calling on the federal government to expand the Export-Import Bank and increase the production of nuclear energy (HJR-95), which passed the Maryland legislature and was signed in May by Governor Lee. Since this time, Delegate Taylor has emerged in Maryland as a leading spokesman on energy and economic policy.

In the press release reprinted below, Delegate Taylor urges the legislature to work with private sector leadership in energy and economic policy, including cabinet-level participation by labor, industry, and energy experts like the Fusion Energy Foundation.

"I see these three steps as necessary to the implementation of Governor Lee's Five Part Strategy for Economic Development. For success, the executive Branch, the legislative branch and private sector leadership must work together."

Step one is a proposal to President Hoyer and Speaker Briscoe that a conference on "Energy, Industrial Development and Environment" be held for the new legislature prior to the 1979 session. "The legislature must be exposed to private sector leaders in industry, energy and environmental programs in order to properly legislate for a future of sound growth."

Step two is a proposal to the Department of Economic and Community Development regarding the cabinet-level council on the economy. In a letter to Secretary Cahan Delegate Taylor said "I would hope that those executive-branch leaders involved in economic development, environment, energy and transportation will be joined in a cabinet-level council by pro-

portionate representatives of the Legislature and a representative of the Chamber of Commerce, the AFL-CIO, The Metro Center, the Fusion Energy Foundation, the Greater Baltimore Committee and the Regional Planning Council." Delegate Taylor argues that the private sector and the legislature must be a part of the economic effort from "the top down" if Maryland is to pull together all of its talents and resources.

Step three is a proposal to President Hoyer and Speaker Briscoe that the scope of the Joint Committee on Energy be expanded. Delegate Taylor states "from my experience as a member of the Energy Committee I see an opportunity for the legislature to address the issue of energy in a broader context. When the committee dealt with HB1164 (the air quality control standards bill) it was dealing with energy in a context involving environment, and economic/industrial development. The experience made us aware that energy legislation necessarily has major impact on economic development, the economy in general and the environment. The technical and scientific community must be a part of this legislative effort. Since the committee combines both Senate and House members as a standing unit, its mandate should be enlarged to the "Joint Committee on Energy and Development."

Governor Lee acted correctly in signing HB1164 relaxing air quality standards to match the federal standards. He also acted correctly in proposing the Five Part Strategy for Economic Development. It has the potential for creating a new era of sound growth and prosperity in Maryland. "In my judgment, the above three steps are necessary to unify all branches of state government with the private sector to insure our success in expanding industry and jobs, and enlarging the tax base so the individual tax burden is reduced."