

## State Jobless Rate Unseasonably High

A seasonal gain of 87,000 in California civilian employment in May and a smaller-than-usual drop of 18,000 in unemployment were reported this week by the state Departments of Industrial Relations and Employment.

Director of Employment Irving H. Perluss stated that the number of unemployed declined to 305,000 in May from 323,000 in April. This was the smallest April-May decrease since the end of World War II. Continued heavy unemployment of aircraft workers, and also of construction workers despite the spring pickup in that industry, slowed the normal drop in unemployment.

The number of unemployed this May was above the year-ago figure by 71,000. The current figure has been exceeded in May only once in the past ten years—in 1958 when 368,000 were seeking work. The unemployed comprised 4.9 percent of the labor force this May, the same ratio that was reported for the nation. In April, the California ratio was 5.2 percent; in May, 1959, 3.9 percent; and in May, 1958, 6.2 percent.

Director of Industrial Relations John F. Henning reported that civilian employment rose to a May high

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## Consumers Launch Organization To Advance Interest

Some 200 individuals, dedicated to the protection and advancement of consumer interests, converged on Fresno over the weekend, June 18-19, to formally launch the California Consumers Association.

Representing a cross-section of consumer-oriented organizations as well as individual consumers, delegates to the founding convention of the association unanimously adopted a constitution as a fundamental document setting forth the form of the organization and its democratic base for development into an effective instrument on behalf of consumers.

In a series of carefully developed and fully discussed resolutions, delegates outlined the broad areas of consumer demands for legislative and administrative protections, against prevailing practices which are defrauding the buyer of millions of dollars yearly, and presenting hazards to his health and safety.

### BROAD REPRESENTATION

Numbered among the delegates, in addition to dedicated individuals, were representatives from virtually every segment of organized labor,



THOS. L. PITTS  
Executive  
Secretary-Treasurer

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## Pitts Asks 'Urgent' Support of Farm Labor Drive

With the battle lines drawn in the harvest areas of the San Joaquin Valley, Thos. L. Pitts, secretary-treasurer of the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, this week called upon the organized sectors of labor to rally behind the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee against efforts of anti-union, "open shop" farm organizations, led by the notorious Associated Farmers, to use the arm of government to smash the drive of farm workers for improved conditions of life and labor in the fields.

The spectacular mass uprising of farm workers against the accumulation of exploitation and abuse over the years is finding its organizational form through the newly chartered Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee, with headquarters in Stockton.

Although the bulk of the small farmers involved desire reaching

amicable terms with AWOC, the reactionary farm organizations are pressing for use of government agencies both to recruit domestic workers and supply imported labor from Mexico as strikebreakers, under the guise of saving "perishable crops."

Thus far, the State Department of Employment under Governor Brown's Administration has resisted pressures to use the Farm Placement Service as an agency of the growers to assure them a supply of cheap labor. For the first time in recent years, the Department is enforcing the laws of the state and the nation, and is refusing to send domestic workers to farms where a labor dispute is in progress.

Under the provisions of the Wagner-Peyser Act, imported workers are being denied also in situations where domestics cannot be referred because of a labor dispute. Angered by this challenge to their heretofore "dictatorial" control, the Associated Farmers and reactionary farm employers are exerting heavy pressure at both the state and federal level to revert to former policies which have provided corporate farmers with an abundant supply of cheap imported labor to quash the human rights of domestics.

Failing in Sacramento, the anti-union growers this week put together a march on Washington to bring pressure on Secretary of Labor Mitchell to put down the spontaneous revolt of farm workers current-

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# Consumers Launch Organization

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Diego last year by the state AFL-CIO.

"We are all quite conscious of the fact," Gruhn said, "that improvements in wages and fringe benefits are often substantially or totally wiped out through unjustified price increases by employers unwilling to share increased productivity with workers and consumers."

Pointing to the exploitation of consumers by industrial giants with the power of "administered pricing," Gruhn added:

"As the nation's greatest single body of organized consumers working together with other consumers, we must gain a more thorough understanding of present-day marketing practices and embark upon a vigorous execution of our obvious obligations in this area."

"For labor, indifference to this problem can result in increasingly illusory collective bargaining gains, further imbalancing of our inability to consume as much as we produce, and a poisoning of the atmosphere toward unions."

Gruhn called the delegates' attention to the San Diego convention action which declared that "the best interests of labor can be served by expanding cooperation" with other consumer-oriented groups and dedicated individuals in the consumer movement. Specific reference was made to California labor's endorsement of the establishment of the California Consumers Association.

The launching of the association was depicted as "timely" and as providing a "broad base of support for the office of Consumer Counsel," created by the legislature last year.

Helen Nelson, Governor Brown's appointee to the new office of Consumer Counsel, was on hand throughout the two-day founding convention and officially welcomed the formation of the association as featured speaker at a Saturday dinner session.

As one of its first actions, the association commended Governor Brown and the legislature for establishing the Consumer Counsel's office, applauded the accomplishments of Helen Nelson, and pledged full support in carrying out the duties of her office.

As closing speaker at a Sunday

luncheon session, Attorney General Stanley Mosk was given an enthusiastic welcome when he pledged vigorous prosecution of consumer interest through his newly recruited Bureau of Consumer Frauds, headed by Howard Jewel. Demonstrative of consumer problems, Mosk detailed how consumers were being robbed of millions of dollars through the failure of the Federal Power Commission to regulate prices of natural gas producers.

Howard Jewel, who was also present at the convention, discussed the functioning of his Consumer Frauds Bureau and pledged continued cooperation with the Consumer Counsel in the Governor's office.

## OFFICERS ELECTED

Between conventions of the new association, under the constitution, governing authority was placed in the principal officers and thirty-member executive board, elected by the delegates. Top officers elected were as follows:

President, Dr. Peter H. Odegaard, chairman of the Department of Political Science at the University of California, Berkeley; Executive Secretary, Mary Pryor, associate in educational activities with the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor; Treasurer, Clarence Murphy, California Credit Union League; Vice Presidents, Jackie Walsh of the San Francisco Joint Culinary Board, Edward L. Rada of the University of California at Los Angeles, Leonard Krupnick of the Associated Cooperatives of California.

Individuals elected to the Executive Board who are also active trade unionists included Albin J. Gruhn, Susan Adams, Anthony Anselmo, Sam Eubanks, Webb Green, Charles Harding, William T. O'Rear, Gerald D. Rees, Don Vial.

The office of the Consumers Association will be located in the Los Angeles area.

## RESOLUTION ACTION

In resolutions adopted by the convention, consumer demands were reflected in the following:

1. Health care for the aged under the federal social security program.
2. Provision of adequate field staffs in the state Departments of Public Health and Agriculture to provide the protections intended by

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## Hearings Notice

The Assembly Interim Committee on Industrial Relations will hold public hearings in San Francisco, July 7 and 8, in Room 1158 of the State Building, 315 McAllister Street, on four measures of interest to affiliated organizations:

AB 1967 — (Charles Wilson) To prohibit state prisoners from being used to perform personal services for the benefit of state officers or employees, except for household or domestic work connected with the institution.

H. Res. 322—(Sedgwick) To amend eight-hour law for women to permit an employer, during emergency periods and by permit from an appropriate state agency, to have women employees work 9 hours per day for five days a week, with the ninth hour to be paid for at overtime rates.

H. Res. 273 — (Bee) To study all facts and circumstances relating to the hiring and employment of minors by tax-exempt institutions which engage in profit-making business activities.

H. Res. 39—(George E. Brown Jr.) To hear testimony on the treatment of claimants who apply for unemployment insurance benefits.

Affiliates desiring to present testimony or having individuals appear before the committee should immediately contact the committee's secretary, May Virginia Davis, Room 4009, State Capitol, Sacramento 14, Calif.

## More State Jobless

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of 5,953,000, up by 87,000 from April and by 156,000 or 3 percent from May, 1959.

Increases from April were largely seasonal. Of the additional workers, over three-fourths—or 70,000—were in agriculture. Employment also rose seasonally in trade, construction, and services.

On the other hand, April-May employment reductions were reported for manufacturing and government. In manufacturing, the May total of 1,326,000 workers was down by 10,000 from the previous month.

The year-to-year increase in manufacturing narrowed still further in May to 16,000 or 1 per cent as aircraft employment continued to contract and growth slowed in other durable goods industries.



# HOUSING CONFERENCE DRAWS FOCUS ON UNMET NEEDS OF WORKINGMAN

Six hundred individuals and organization representatives who participated in the first statewide housing conference held in Los Angeles, June 13-15, were presented with an array of facts on the failure of the richest state and nation in the world to provide adequate housing for its low- and middle-income families.

The failure of the nation's housing programs to meet these needs was clearly the dominant issue at the three-day meet, cutting across speeches and workshop sessions.

## JOHN F. HENNING KEYNOTER

Keynoting the conference, Director of Industrial Relations John F. Henning stated that "our posture of benevolence and dedication rests in mysterious conflict with the housing realities which face millions of Americans in the space age of 1960."

Henning outlined the problem in terms of the spread of urban blight; farm labor housing approaching a "legacy of slave shanties"; low income and most middle income families priced out of the housing market; millions being denied access to adequate housing because of race and color; and an aging population that is "prisoner of the housing problem."

"The struggle for improved housing," Henning said, "cannot be separated from what must be society's endless pursuit of economic, social and political justice."

The Director of Industrial Relations added:

"To measure housing needs of the American people without respect to the economic, social and political maturity of the nation is to squander time and talent.

"We breed . . . (in urban slums) the anger and the crimes of impoverished people. We breed here the terror of barbarian habits and tastes. We breed here the shame of America. . . .

"Programs which merely shift an abandoned tenantry from one slum to another fail the American future."

"For (low income millions) . . . we must again renew the promise of low cost public housing projects — projects of architectural imagination, projects offering the privacy of separate dwellings — projects worthy of a free people. For dis-

placed millions, there is no other answer."

## HOUSING EXPERT ABRAMS

Housing expert Charles Abrams of New York City, member of the Board of Directors of the National Housing Conference, speaking at a featured first-day luncheon session, critically examined the housing problem from its beginning to the present time.

He pointed out that the federal government has failed to grapple effectively with the problem of slums and slum living. "The time is ripe, after twenty-five years," the housing expert said, "to re-examine all of our housing problems in the United States and each state. A master plan of housing is needed."

Abrams reviewed the housing programs of New York State as pointing to the areas for California action, without waiting on the federal government to come to grips with its outdated program geared essentially to upper-middle and upper income groups.

The experience of New York, Abrams pointed out, is "that the use of public credit is the key to low cost money and to ample money."

"What the experience also indicates," Abrams added, "is that New York City and New York State have not confined their operations to federally-aided projects, but have recognized that housing is a tripartite obligation."

Abrams attacked concentration of housing programs on tearing down slums when there is a housing shortage for those most in need of adequate accommodations. In such periods of shortages, the housing expert urged the adoption of programs in the state to build homes for the unfortunate millions of families priced out of today's market, and to clean up the slums as these homes are provided.

The conference was addressed by Governor Edmund G. Brown at a banquet held on the evening of June 14.

Indicating that his Administration is planning to take action, Brown said:

"Seventeen months ago when I took office, it became clear to me that many of our state problems had

reached critical proportions.

"This conference is a project of my determination to cope with one of the oldest and toughest of these problems.

"Housing urgently requires our immediate attention. It is a grim and tragic paradox that the wealthiest nation in all history is not providing adequate shelter for the majority of our people.

"Twenty-two million Americans live in slums. Our home building volume today is less in terms of population than in 1950. The number of non-farm starts has declined 20 percent since 1950. We are barely taking care of the demands created by a growing population and by new family formation. Meanwhile we are not replacing our existing stock of homes as they deteriorate and become useless."

"The Housing Act of 1949 calls for a 'decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family.' More than a decade later we are far from achieving that goal."

Addressing the conference delegates, Brown added:

"I count on you as public-spirited citizens to help me in banishing apathy, and building both for California and our nation the kind of homes and cities in which all Americans can be proud to live.

## PANEL DISCUSSIONS AND WORKSHOPS

Conference participants were given wide choice of discussions and workshops session covering: governmental assisted low income housing, urban renewal, special housing, inter-governmental relations, minority problems in housing, housing for the aged, employee housing in agriculture.

The conference itself took no position on recommendations for action. Each major topic area reported to a plenary session its discussions and in many instances its findings and recommendations.

Cutting across most sessions, however, was the problem of financing housing under terms which would turn loose America's know-how in programs geared to meeting needs.

Findings of the various workshops and panel discussions can be obtained from the state Housing Division chief, Lowell Nelson, whose agency put together the conference. More than fifteen labor representatives participated in the various workshops as panelists.

FORM 3547 REQUESTED

## Pitts Asks 'Urgent' Support of Farm Labor Drive

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ly going on in the valley, where crops are maturing for harvest.

In a release this Wednesday, Mitchell acknowledged meeting with California fruit and vegetable growers on "problems concerning the referral of domestic and Mexican National farm workers in the harvesting of their crops in California." However, Mitchell appeared to offer no immediate aid or comfort to the reactionary grower representatives. He promised to take their complaints and recommendations under study and "report as soon as possible."

The effect of Mitchell's action has been to uphold the Brown Administration in its administration of the laws.

In the meantime, Mitchell has announced that, at the request of William Schnitzler, secretary-treasurer of the AFL-CIO, he will soon be meeting with AFL-CIO representatives to discuss the same problems.

Recognizing that what the federal and state governments do in the present situation could make or break AWOC's organizing drive, Pitts has called upon local labor movements in the state to move against the "heavy pressure" being exerted in Sacramento and Washington "to defeat agricultural workers' efforts to obtain bargaining recognition and decent wages and conditions."

Pitts is urging appropriate wires to responsible public officials to: (1) Support the agricultural workers' efforts to obtain rights long enjoyed by other workers; (2) continue the denial of domestics and "braceros" as strikebreakers where disputes are in progress; (3) prohibit government agencies from participating in any actions giving aid and comfort to growers' anti-labor tactics; (4) use the good offices of

government to bring about voluntary negotiation meetings to settle disputes between farmers and the union in the interest of all concerned.

On the latter point, the reactionary growers are trying to avoid at all costs any situation that would encourage negotiations and recognition of the union organizing drive. The anti-union growers are insisting that the revolt of farm workers is only a plot of the "union bosses" to deny them imported Mexican Nationals.

A so-called California Farmers Food Emergency Committee has also been formed by the anti-union growers to recruit workers who will cross AWOC's picket lines when a dispute is in progress.

## Support for Lunch Counter Sit-Ins

San Francisco labor joined with other community groups last week in a leadership conference on the subject of the lunch counter sit-ins in the South and support for these campaigns in the city of San Francisco. The conference was organized by the NAACP branch.

George Johns, secretary of the San Francisco Labor Council, gave one of the major addresses, his topic "Economic Resistance, a Valid and Effective Technique". Johns compared the sit-ins against the Woolworth, Kress and other chains by the NAACP to the labor movement's recently announced boycott of Sears Roebuck.

Participating as discussion leaders for the panels were the following trade unionists: Jennie Matyas, ILGWU representative; Marie Bruce, representative of the Communications Workers Union, and William Becker of the Jewish Labor Committee.

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the state's pure food and pure drug laws.

3. Enactment of a state cosmetics law, to provide adequate protection for consumers of cosmetics.

4. Legislative action to forbid the use of food additives known to induce cancer when normally ingested by man or animal.

5. In endorsing the Bureau of Consumer Frauds, called upon district and city attorneys to cooperate fully with the Bureau in prosecuting and driving from the state "the chiseler, the bunco artist, the living room racketeer and others who prey upon the consumer in California."

6. Urged the passage of both state and federal legislation for effective and enforceable laws to require the full disclosure to the consumer of the true costs of consumer credit.

7. Called for repeal of so-called fair trade legislation, "which should more properly be called price-fixing."

8. Called on the state legislature to consolidate responsibility and to strengthen programs to enforce laws relating to weights and measures; urged repeal of all laws permitting packaging to contain weights and measures smaller than those specified on the label.

9. Voted support of legislation to provide adequate protection for consumers in the field of service repairs, and specifically instructed the Executive Board of the Association to take action to implement this resolution.

10. Commended Governor Brown, Attorney General Mosk and William Bennett of the Public Utilities Commission in their efforts to resolve unfair natural gas pricing in favor of consumers.

11. Called upon the Fair Trade Commission and Congress to investigate fully the matter of consumer exploitation through "administered prices."