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Sears Boycott Expanded Statewide, Nationally

The consumer boycott against Sears Roebuck and Company, initiated by the San Francisco labor movement, last week received the full backing of both the state and national AFL-CIO movements.

The boycott against the giant retail firm took on full nationwide scope as the Executive Council of the AFL-CIO, meeting in Chicago, called on "all members of organized labor and their friends not to patronize Sears Roebuck stores until management ceases to interfere with the self-organization of its employees, and until it demonstrates a good-faith acceptance of union security clauses in its contracts."

Almost simultaneously, 2,000 miles away, nearly 2,000 delegates to the Third Convention of the California Labor Federation, meeting in Sacramento, gave their rafter-shaking approval to a resolution calling for firm support of the Sears Roebuck boycott.

In a statement supporting the boycott, the national AFL-CIO Executive Council noted that the trade union movement is becoming increasingly concerned over Sears'

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Pitts Urges Voter Registration at Workshop

Thos. L. Pitts, secretary-treasurer of the California Labor Council on Political Education, this week urged non-partisan cooperation between labor and management at the workshop level in an intensive drive to register California voters before the September 15 deadline.

In an appeal to make democracy work through the ballot box, the state AFL-CIO leader said:

"Labor and management have equal stakes in the survival and effective operation of our representative form of government.

"I am urging all employers in California to cooperate with local labor organizations in establishing procedures in the workshop or at the job site which will encourage all employees to register for the November general elections.

"Specifically, I am calling upon

every labor organization in the state to contact the employers with whom they have collective bargaining relationships to initiate the establishment of these procedures."

Pitts' appeal followed a strong plea issued jointly by Governor Edmund G. Brown and Secretary of State Frank M. Jordan to county clerks and registrars of voters that they aid registration drives throughout the state.

"Today, when people behind the Iron Curtain have lost the right to vote in free elections," the two public officials said, "we ask your cooperation in working to see that every citizen of California shows how much he values his precious right by registering and voting."

"Labor and management also share a responsibility in helping this registration effort," Pitts declared, and added:

"Through the cooperation of labor and management at places of employment, working with county registrars on a non-partisan basis, hundreds of thousands of unregistered workers can be qualified to vote at the November election."

The state AFL-CIO leader said further:

"I agree wholeheartedly with Governor Brown's statement that 'those who fail to register have thrown away their share of stock in democratic government'. But it is a responsibility of all public officials and community leaders to facilitate the registration process."

Pitts pointed out that the American voting record is "shocking" as

LABOR DAY MESSAGE By THOS. L. PITTS

Labor Day, 1960 carries with it mixed blessings for the workingmen and women who honor and are honored by this national holiday.

In the spirit of Labor Day, we pause momentarily to pay tribute to the never-ending struggle of the trade union movement to achieve socioeconomic justice for America's laboring people. We honor also the individual worker for his contributions to the wealth of America.

There is reason for concern over the transformation that appears to have taken place in recent years in regard to the celebration of Labor Day. In its inception, Labor Day was intended to bolster the spirit of the organized worker in his continuing struggle to obtain a more rewarding life for himself, his family and the public at large. As such, its observance was established by the labor movement. Only at a later date was it recognized nationally as a holiday.

Yet, today, we see editorials in our daily press and proclamations issued by many public officials which would have us believe that Labor Day was a creature of legislative enactment, and devoted solely to honor the individual worker

regardless of whether or not he is a member of organized labor.

A warning signal to the trade union movement has been sounded in the transformation of Labor Day celebrations from a display of worker solidarity to a holiday of relaxation and individual family enjoyment, reflecting a creeping complacency which many workers have assumed under the improved conditions of their life and labor, which have been brought about by the trade union movement.

As we celebrate our achievements this Labor Day, therefore, we must remain alert to this disease of complacency that is being bred out of our achievements. We must keep in the forefront not our accomplishments, but our many still

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LABOR DAY MESSAGE

By
THOS. L. PITTS

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unachieved goals which daily challenge the labor movement to an ever higher purpose.

It should be borne in mind by every trade unionist that the distortion of the meaning of Labor Day that has taken place has had its sequel in the field of labor legislation in the attempt to sever the individual worker from his union under the guise of preserving individual rights. Time and time again, while pretending to protect the individual, the forces of reaction have viciously attacked labor unions, as such, and have attempted to categorize our organizations as "predatory" and unconcerned about the interests and betterment of the membership.

Accordingly, we have seen the enactment of the Taft-Hartley Act at the national level, followed by the passage of "right to work" measures in many states throughout the nation. It is clear that the real objective of these enactments, compounded by the far-reaching provisions of the Landrum-Griffin Act, passed last year, is to destroy the unity of organized labor and bring disgrace and discredit on the very organizations of the working-

man which have contributed so immensely to the strength, prosperity and wellbeing of our country.

Unfortunately, to many workers, the vast achievements of organized labor in raising living standards are today being taken for granted as the natural product of our economic order. This deception has set in as the bitter struggles of the past against intolerable wages, hours and working conditions have given way to the security of collective bargaining contracts with wages, hours, working conditions and fringe benefits undreamed of by the first groups of organized labor who proclaimed the observance of Labor Day some 78 years ago.

It is understandable that the anti-labor agitators seeking a return to earlier days of industrial dictatorship over the lives of working people should be focusing their attention on workers who have entered the labor force under modern day standards, and who have never known the struggles of the past. It is ironical, indeed, that the far-reaching improvements achieved by organized labor, which have benefited equally the great majority of unorganized employees, should become the base for distortion and

exploitation by the enemies of labor.

In the field of socio-economic legislation, our accomplishments have likewise benefited the unorganized and the public at large as much as the organized workers. We rightfully take pride in this elevation of the public good above the narrower, more immediate interests which anti-labor forces would paint as the image of labor. At the same time, however, we must be mindful of the vulnerability of large sectors of our labor force and population to the slick propaganda emanating from the motivation manipulators who are today hired by the industrial giants to brainwash the public and turn individual workers and consumers against the labor movement.

This Labor Day finds the trade union movement at the crossroads. The attack against us has two facets —on the one hand, through legislative restrictions, our enemies are seeking to isolate labor organizations as individual groups of workers, separate from one another, in order to destroy our effectiveness as an economic force for the broad distribution of America's wealth. On the other hand, once our organizations are isolated, our enemies reserve the public mind for their own exploitation to blacken the image of labor and thereby lay the base for undermining even the narrow area to which they would confine our activities.

Labor's response to these attacks must lie in our determination to press ahead with the positive programs of organized labor designed to keep American liberal and progressive.

In California, therefore, we again dedicate ourselves this Labor Day to revitalizing our drives to secure the implementation of far-reaching programs embracing the entire scope of economic, social and legislative action enunciated by the Third Convention of the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, which met in Sacramento, August 15-19, 1960.

In our relations with the general public, we reject categorically the public relations concept that we must "create" an image of our movement. Our image is what we are, a dedicated movement seeking the advancement of the conditions of life and labor for the working-

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Pitts Urges Voter Registration at Workshop

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compared with many other countries. Here is the percentage of voters who turned out in recent elections abroad:

Austria	95 %
Italy	93.8
France	89
Turkey	87.7
West Germany	86
Greece	85
Indonesia	85
Israel	82.8
Denmark	80.6
Korea	80
Norway	79.3
England	78.7
Japan	75.8
Finland	72
Canada	67

The highest percentage of voter turnout for America, Pitts said, was in 1952 when 62.7 percent went to the polls. The civilian population of voting age was then 98,133,000. Of this number 61,552,000 actually voted.

In order to vote in the November election, the following must register:

1. Anyone who did not vote in the November 1958 general election, and who has not since registered.

2. Anyone who has moved since the primary election in June of this year.

3. Anyone whose name has been changed through marriage or court action.

4. Anyone who will be 21 by November 1960, the date of the general election.

5. New citizens who have acquired their citizenship by August 10, 1960.

Special registration procedures are also available in the presidential election for anyone who does not meet the state residence requirements, but who moves to California by September 15, 1960, and could have voted in his previous state at the November election.

Sears Boycott Expanded Statewide, Nationally

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deliberate, union-busting methods. It recalled that Sears was "the outfit that put the notorious Nathan Shefferman into business." And it added:

"When Shefferman's illegal anti-union activities were exposed by the McClellan Committee, Sears publicly apologized and pledged it would never again resort to such tactics. Yet today it has intensified its aggressive war against unions on a nationwide basis."

The Council referred to the firing of 262 employees in Sears' San Francisco locations for refusing to cross the picket lines of the Machinists. It cited a St. Louis case where Sears fired members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and replaced them with strikebreakers, after they had refused to give up their jobs and transfer to a service company.

In other locations, the Council went on, Sears has refused to renew union shop clauses in agreements with the Retail Clerks and has rejected the modified union-shop provisions accepted by its major competitor Montgomery Ward.

"The Executive Council is convinced," the statement said, "that Sears Roebuck and Company is engaged in a calculated and concerted effort to deprive its employees of their rights to union participation."

In Sacramento, the California AFL-CIO convention heard firsthand reports of Sears' attacks on union members who honored the Machinists' picket lines, and the boycott that was spreading rapidly through the state and the nation. Rules were suspended to allow time to place the whole story on the convention record.

The resolution unanimously approved by the convention charged that the company's actions were aimed at eliminating its employees' unions as "part and parcel of the company's long-standing antagonism to unions and to fair and responsible collective bargaining."

Convention delegates to the state AFL-CIO meeting called for full reinstatement of the fired employees, reestablishment of good faith collective bargaining, and an end to the company's attack on its employees' unions.

Earlier, the Sears Roebuck boycott drew worldwide attention when a strong protest against Sears' anti-union policies was cabled to the President of the giant retail concern by Erich Kissel, General Secretary of the International Federation of Commercial, Clerical, and Technical Employees. This white collar secretariat has 2.5 million members in free democratic unions in 32 countries all over the world.

In still another significant development last week, a State Department of Employment referee overruled Sears Roebuck's vigorous protests and awarded unemployment insurance benefits to employees discharged by Sears for refusing to cross Machinist picket lines.

The Department referee rejected Sears' claims that employees had not been fired, but merely "replaced." He pointed out that they were removed from the payroll, handed their vacation pay and severance allowance; they did no work for which Sears owed them wages, and, hence, they were unemployed.

The referee also discarded Sears' insistence that the severance allowance disqualified the employees. Since allowance was payable at the discretion of the company, and only where service had been satisfactory, it was in the nature of a bonus for prior service, and not chargeable against benefits.

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man within the framework of the public welfare.

We do not seek to create images in competition with the virtually unlimited funds that industrial giants are plowing into the field of public relations. Rather, it is by day-to-day implementation of the broad scope of the policy actions emanating from our membership through democratic representation at our policy-making conventions that organized labor seeks public backing and support.

We place confidence in the public's ability to separate fact from fiction, and to see through the false images which the traditional ene-

Installment Buying Pamphlet Mailed

Standing orders of affiliates for the State Attorney General's new pamphlet on installment buying were filled this week out of the Federation's San Francisco office.

Announcement of the availability of this pamphlet was made in June, at which time each affiliate was sent a sample copy with an order form.

Designed for distribution to union members, the pamphlet explains the rights of consumers under a new state law regulating installment contracts and revolving charge accounts enacted by the state legislature last year.

More than 200,000 copies of the pamphlet, entitled "Know Your Legal Rights... When You Buy on Time," were mailed out this week to affiliates who have ordered copies for distribution to their membership.

The pamphlet has a two-fold purpose:

(1) To help the consumer decide whether he wants to spend the extra money it soaks to buy on time, and if so, (2) to help the consumer determine that the seller is complying with the Unruh Act regulating purchases under installment contracts and revolving charge accounts.

It is being distributed under an arrangement worked out with the Consumer Frauds Section of the Attorney General's office by the Federation's Standing Committee on Community Services.

The law's enforcement is dependent upon consumers being aware of its existence and their legal rights when they buy on time.

There is no charge for the Attorney General's pamphlet outlining these rights.

A limited supply may still be available through the Attorney General's office for those unions which failed to respond to the initial request for orders.

mies of economic and social justice would thrust upon the nation as a means of destroying the purpose, the functioning and the effectiveness of the great American trade union movement.

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Senate Kills Social Security Aged Medical Care

The United States Senate this Tuesday dealt a death blow to the hopes of the aged for the enactment this year of health care benefits with dignity under the federal social security program.

By a vote of 51 to 44, the upper house rejected the Kennedy-Anderson amendments, backed by the AFL-CIO, which would have added Forand-type amendments to an omnibus social security bill reported to the Senate floor by the upper house finance committee.

Instead, the Senate passed, 89 to 2, the finance committee-approved bill containing "pauper's oath" medical care benefits, which would provide totally inadequate benefits to a new category of medical indigents completely outside of the social security system.

The approved medical care provisions are a "cleaned up" version of the provisions contained in the omnibus social security bill approved by the House of Representatives prior to the recessing of Congress for the political conventions.

Under the approved medical care provisions, the federal government would provide aid to the states for "bailing" out benefits to medical indigents under standards determined by the states. Not even these benefits would be available, however, if states do not provide matching state funds or fail to adopt a "pauper's oath" medical care program.

Rejection of the Kennedy-Anderson amendments followed earlier defeat of a Nixon-backed amendment which would have provided somewhat broader benefits than the Senate-approved measure in keep-

ing with the Eisenhower Administration's "medicare" voluntary insurance plan.

The Nixon-backed amendment would have required state action and matching funds with a choice of three types of limited benefit plans available to those who would qualify, depending upon their income status.

As we go to press, the omnibus social security bill containing the "pauper's oath" medical care benefits is in conference committee between the House and Senate. It is reported that the House will yield to the minor changes made by the Senate.

In the meantime, some 736,000 recipients of social security in California who would have received benefits under the Kennedy-Anderson amendments have been effectively denied a health care program which would have given them benefits as a matter of right under social security.

The rejection by the Senate of the social security approach means definitely that the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO will push for a "little" Forand-type measure in California at the next session of the legislature, under the state disability insurance program.

Delegates to the state convention of the California Labor Federation in Sacramento last week approved the following statement on the medical care issue:

The pressing, almost completely unmet health care needs of the aged, and the overwhelming evidence of the failure of negotiated health and welfare and other voluntary plans to provide for their needs has been established in Statement

of Policy VIII, calling for immediate Congressional action.

In the event Congress fails to act, we in California labor cannot ignore our responsibility to the thousands of aged persons who have contributed so immensely to the wealth of this state. Despite the superiority of a federal program, which we will continue to press for, our conscience dictates that if Congress fails the aged this year, we must press for action by the 1961 session of the California legislature.

We have also outlined in Statement of Policy VIII what constitutes adequate and comprehensive health care for the aged. Such a program, based on the principle of social insurance and the provision of benefits as a matter of right, is entirely feasible for establishment under the state disability insurance program, which is a social insurance system.

The program which we will seek to incorporate under the disability law will embrace the following broad principles:

1. Establishment of a separate fund under the disability insurance program, based on a one per cent contribution of employers on their taxable payrolls covered under the disability insurance law.

2. Provision of benefits to all those over the age of 65 who have retired with a reasonable coverage base under the disability insurance program.

3. Comprehensive benefits to include both in-patient and out-patient care.

4. Provision for full benefits for the spouse and/or dependents of eligible persons.

5. Full freedom of choice for the beneficiaries in selection of physicians and other medical services.