

Imperial Valley Tempo Mounts

The "showdown" situation in the current efforts of AWOC and Packinghouse Workers to organize Imperial Valley's 11,500 farm workers is continuing to mount, with focus on the winter lettuce crop.

Plans reported for a one-day work stoppage on all crops last Friday were carried out with "tremendous" success, according to union spokesmen in the valley.

Some 1000 workers in 108 autos, 2 trucks and a couple of buses caravanned on Highway 99, demonstrated at the bracero reception center against massive importation of cheap contract labor from Mexico, and also before the headquarters of the notoriously anti-labor Imperial Valley Farmers Association.

(The Association is headed by former Farm Placement Service Director Ed Hayes who was bounced by Governor Brown.)

The demonstration was carried out without incident, an AWOC spokesman said. Some 40 strikers were fired the next day in a retaliatory move, but were promptly rein-

(Continued on Page 4)



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151

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State Legislators Get Labor Proposals To Improve Social Insurance Programs

Some 102 bills embracing comprehensive proposals for liberalization of the state's workmen's compensation, unemployment insurance and disability compensation programs have been dropped into the legislative hoppers this week.

State AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Thos. L. Pitts, in Sacramento for the 1961 state legislative session, which convened last week, said the liberalization measures had the full backing of organized labor.

"These legislative proposals," Pitts said, "reflect the hopes and aspirations of the working people in California for bringing our three basic employee social insurance programs up-to-date."

Included in the measures are proposals to update weekly benefit payments, broaden coverage for unprotected employees, including farm workers, extend the duration period for payments, and generally

remove arbitrary restrictions in the laws which are preventing the accomplishment of the limited purpose of these programs.

"The California Labor Federation convention in Sacramento last August worked out the details of the programs which labor is supporting at the 1961 session," Pitts noted.

The state AFL-CIO leader said he is of the opinion that "the great bulk of the proposals are in line with Governor Brown's call for liberalization of the three social insurance programs."

In his message to the opening session of the legislature last week, Brown said:

"We should make further improvements in the structure of our social insurance programs for unemployment compensation, workmen's compensation and disability benefits."

Unemployment Insurance

The liberalization program for unemployment insurance introduced for consideration of the legislature includes some 53 bills.

Four proposals extending unemployment insurance coverage to agricultural workers, domestic workers, employees of non-profit organizations and public employees have been introduced by Augustus F. Hawkins (D., 62nd Assembly District, Los Angeles).

Basic bills to increase the maximum weekly benefit payments from \$55 to \$70, extend the duration of benefit payments to 39 weeks regardless of the level of unemployment, provide dependency payments of \$5 in addition to the basic week-

20-POINT AFL-CIO PROGRAM FOR CONGRESS

The AFL-CIO Executive Council, meeting in Washington, D. C., last week, called on the incoming Kennedy Administration and the 87th Congress to give swift approval to "vigorous counter-measures" to stem "the gathering economic storm" now being brewed by the third—"and potentially the most severe"—recession in seven years.

With November unemployment at 6.4 per cent, and hours of work lost because of partial unemployment raising this figure to an equivalent rate in excess of 7.5 per cent, the Council warned that if the economy limps along at this rate, the nation will have 5 million unemployed in January, "with a rise to 6 million quite possible."

(Official state estimates in California are that unemployment will increase to almost 8 per cent of the labor force in the first quarter of this year.)

Prompt action was also urged on a wide range of long-stalled progressive legislation. These measures, the Council said, "have already been subjected to exhaustive hearings and thorough debates; what they need now is enactment, not further investigation."

Here is the 20-point program which the Council proposed:

- Federal aid to chronically depressed areas, twice vetoed by President Eisenhower in recent years, "must be delayed no longer."

- "Bold action" on housing and urban

(Continued on Page 2)

(Continued on Page 3)

20-POINT AFL-CIO PROGRAM FOR CONGRESS

(Continued from Page 1)

renewal can help meet one of America's "sores problems" and help put America back to work. Creation of a federal Department of Urban Affairs would insure continuing action.

- Progress on aid-to-education last year was "frustrated by a reluctant Administration and a conservative coalition in Congress." Construction of classrooms will improve education and "help provide jobs for thousands," while aid to teachers' salaries is needed to insure the quality and quantity of teachers.

- Action on a \$1.25 minimum wage and coverage for millions of additional workers "must come soon in order to bring a measure of economic justice to workers and to add to the purchasing power on which economic recovery depends."

- Health care for the aged is "another item of nearly-finished business" for Congress. Noting that Kennedy last year was a principal backer of legislation to put health insurance for the elderly under social security, the Council said, "Congress should proceed at once to pass this sound and humane system for meeting one of the prime needs of our senior citizens." The Council also urged a 10 per cent increase in social security benefits.

- Immediate action is needed on temporary unemployment benefits for those who have exhausted their payments, plus revisions in the system so that benefits would be at least 50 per cent of a worker's average weekly wage up to a maximum of two-thirds the state's average weekly wage for a maximum of 39 weeks.

- The President should have discretionary authority, "subject to disapproval in each instance by Congress," to temporarily reduce taxes to stimulate the economy. If unemployment passes the 7 per cent mark, the Council urged, the first \$10 of withholding taxes should be forgiven each week for a 10-week period. The Council urged Congress to close "unwarranted tax loopholes," including dividend credits, capital gains "favoritism," excessive business expense deductions, split income provisions and excessive depletion and depreciation allowances.

- Federal programs for construction of hospitals, roads and airports already in being should be expanded by more generous appropriations to provide more employment and to help reduce chronic shortages. As much as \$2 billion in shelved public works projects could be put into effect by federal incentive grants of \$300 million, providing 110,000 construction jobs and 170,000 off-site jobs.

- The Federal Reserve Board should be urged to adopt a truly flexible monetary policy calling for purchase of intermediate and long-term bonds to end the decline in interest rates on short-term securities which has led to the outflow of U. S. dollars to foreign countries. At the same time the FRB membership should be revised "to insure competent representation of all basic functional economic groups in the nation."

- Congress should end the "disgraceful exploitation" of migrant farm workers both for "obvious economic reasons (and) for vastly more important moral and social reasons."

- In the area of comprehensive labor legislation, the Taft-Hartley and Landrum-Griffin Acts "harshly and unfairly" limit workers' freedom to organize and bargain. Major changes in T-H should include elimination of the section permitting "right to work" laws; revision of mandatory injunction provisions; restoration of pre-hearing elections; and realistic modification of secondary boycott and organizational picketing provisions. L-G should be "stripped of those provisions that shackle honest unions" and more effective provisions should be enacted dealing with management misdeeds.

- Situs picketing legislation, thwarted by conservatives last year despite strong bipartisan support, should be passed immediately. "Simple justice demands early action on this measure," the Council said.

- Congress should enact an expanded program of peaceful uses of the atom, including the generation of electric power, plus effective federal laws on radiation hazards and workmen's compensation for atomic workers.

- There is "urgent" need for a program of land and water development on a river basis, plus an adequate program for water pollution control.

- "In the non-economic area, no challenge is greater" than assuring equal rights regardless of race, color or national origin. The "legislative arsenal" in the fight on discrimination needs legislation "clearly supporting and implementing" the Supreme Court school desegregation decision, giving the Attorney General the right to institute civil suits, creating a Fair Employment Practices Commission, and eliminating poll taxes "and other voting restrictions." Completely effective civil rights legislation cannot be expected until the Senate's filibuster rule is changed so that debate can be ended "by majority vote."

- Immigration laws must be "liberalized and humanized" by replacing the present national origins system with one

Mosk Asks Voting Reform

Attorney General Stanley Mosk has recommended abolition of election day reading tests as a criterion for voting. Under Mosk's proposal reading ability would be checked at the time the voter is registered and not in the booth on election day.

He noted that the California Constitution requires that a voter be able to read the Constitution in the English language. Also, the California Elections Code requires that a voter sign an affidavit at the time of registration that he can read the Constitution in the English language.

Mosk stated: "It is reasonable to assume that once a person acquires this skill it is unlikely that he will lose it. Therefore no good reason appears for leaving this as a ground for challenge on election day. Overly zealous poll watchers, and others, can use this device to delay and interfere with orderly voting procedures.

"All of the other grounds for challenge on election day cover situations which may have arisen after the time the voter has registered," said Mosk. "They should therefore remain as grounds for challenge."

During the general election, many Mexican-Americans were challenged at the polls primarily because of their Mexican background.

Mosk stated that he had forwarded proposed legislation covering the matter to Assemblyman Robert Crown of Alameda, Chairman of the Assembly Elections and Reapportionment Committee.

which "sheds the present discriminatory features"; the number of quota immigrants should be increased to 250,000; and there should be specific authorization to allow refugees to enter the U. S. during crises such as the Hungarian one in 1956.

- Present concern over the gold outflow "must not serve as a pretext to end or cripple the mutual security program." While our allies have a responsibility "to carry a fair share of the load," America's responsibility "is as great as ever."

- Legislation is needed to give statutory certification to bona fide unions of federal employees and bargaining rights comparable to workers in private industry.

- Farm legislation is needed to base price supports on production payments aimed at support of the family farm and lower consumer prices, with a "reasonable ceiling" on help for any one farm.

- While restoration of economic strength is paramount, "we dare not neglect our military defenses." The nation needs a defense establishment capable of coping with limited as well as total war.

State Legislators Get Labor Proposals To Improve Social Insurance Programs

(Continued from Page 1)

ly benefit, and establish a sound system for financing unemployment have been dropped in the hopper by Assemblyman William A. Munnell (D., 61st Assembly District, Los Angeles).

A long list of other key measures have been introduced by Assemblymen Jesse M. Unruh (D., 65th Assembly District, Los Angeles) and Edward E. Elliott (D., 40th Assembly District, Los Angeles). Among these U. I. bills are the following:

- Provide for retroactive payment of benefits during present one week waiting period when unemployment period lasts beyond seven days.

- Remove harsh provisions on eligibility for benefits and disqualifications.

- Provide for extended benefit payments when unemployment in the state is 3 per cent instead of the present 6 per cent.

Another important bill amending the U. I. Code would establish retraining benefits for those employees who have been displaced by automation and other technological developments. The author is Assemblyman Jerome R. Waldie (D., 10th Assembly District, Contra Costa County).

Liberalization of unemployment insurance is considered a key issue at the 1961 session, with official estimates for unemployment ranging as high as 7 to 8 per cent this year.

Disability Insurance

Some 18 measures embracing disability insurance liberalization have been introduced by Assemblyman Robert W. Crown (D., 14th Assembly District, Alameda County).

In the benefits structure, the disability proposals would conform a maximum weekly benefit of \$70, a 39-week duration period, the payment of dependency benefits, and other related proposals to the liberalization program for unemployment insurance.

Disability benefits are payable to employees who are unable to work because of illness or accident unrelated to their employment. The program, established in 1947, is a part of the Unemployment Insurance Code and is intended to complement the unemployment insurance program.

One of the major problems in the disability insurance program at the 1961 session will be the financing of the state program in relationship to so-called voluntary plans underwritten by private carriers which are permitted under state law.

A number of bills introduced by Assemblyman Crown would eliminate all subsidies to private carriers from the

state fund, and would make the voluntary plans truly competitive with the state program.

Workmen's Compensation

Workmen's compensation proposals introduced number 31 bills. All of the liberalization measures are being carried by Assemblyman Jerome R. Waldie (D., 10th Assembly District, Contra Costa County).

These include the following among basic proposals:

- Increase the weekly benefit for both permanent and temporary disabilities by removing the present arbitrary restriction on average weekly earnings which limits the amount of compensation for wage loss which an injured employee may receive under the 65 per cent wage loss standard in the law. The Waldie measure would establish a top benefit of \$150 to avoid a drain on the funds by high priced executives. At present, weekly benefits for temporary disability are held to \$65, and \$52.50 for permanent disability.

- Provide dependency benefits at the rate of \$5 per week in addition to basic weekly benefits.

- Establish a workable program for rehabilitation of injured workers who are unable to return to their former employment, and who today have no assurance of receiving such training.

- Liberalize the death benefit payments to surviving widows by converting the present arbitrary and limited compensation formula to a life pension based on the wage loss compensation rate for temporary disability, payable to a spouse and dependent children until death or remarriage.

- Provide for retroactive payment of benefits in the waiting period whenever a disability extends beyond one week and abolish the waiting period altogether in cases of hospitalization.

- Liberalize the so-called permanent disability rating schedule so that permanently disabled employees may realize a rate of compensation commensurate with the degree of permanent disability.

- Provide for full freedom of choice of doctors by injured workers.

- Improve administration of the law to prevent insurance carriers from hamstringing payment of benefits due to injured workers.

More To Come

Other measures embracing the full scope of programs supported by labor are also being dropped into the hopper this week.

News Letter in future issues will cover their introduction and authors.

IAC Appointments

Governor Edmund G. Brown recently announced the appointment of former State Senator J. William Beard of El Centro and the reappointment of Daniel F. Del Carlo of San Francisco to the Industrial Accident Commission.

Beard, 40, succeeds Sherman W. MacDonald of Woodside, whose term expires January 15, 1961. He was elected to the Senate in 1956 and defeated in the primary last June, although endorsed by State COPE.

Del Carlo was appointed earlier this year to fill out the unexpired term of John J. Synon. His appointment to a full four-year term will be effective January 15, 1961.

A Democrat, Del Carlo is on leave from his post as secretary-treasurer of the San Francisco Building and Construction Trades Council.

Compounding of Sales Tax Abuses To Be Fought

The State Consumer Counsel and the State Board of Equalization have agreed to work together on a program designed to develop tightened sales tax regulations that would remedy certain practices inequitable to consumers.

Consumer Counsel Helen Nelson, recently appearing before the Board, said her office has received complaints from many aggrieved consumers who deem themselves the victims of a subtle form of over-taxation. Two common abuses cited by Mrs. Nelson were:

1. Application of the sales tax to each taxable item separately instead of to the accumulated total of taxable items.

2. Collection of a tax where none is legally due.

She also demonstrated how the widespread use of an unofficial table of rates often hikes the tax substantially beyond the 4 per cent rate authorized by the regressive sales tax law.

State Controller Alan Cranston, a member of the Board, proposed that the Board staff and Mrs. Nelson's office work jointly on corrective legislation that might be presented to the present session of the state legislature.

FORM 3547 REQUESTED

JLC Makes Year-End Rights Survey--'61 Break-Through Seen

1961 will bring more promise and performance of civil rights achievement in America, a Jewish Labor Committee year-end survey shows.

The organization, representing some half million Jewish workers in the AFL-CIO, works through 17 field offices throughout the United States and Canada in the human rights field. Its National Trade Union Council for Human Rights is headed by Charles S. Zimmerman, vice president of the ILGWU and chairman of the AFL-CIO's Civil Rights Department.

The JLC survey took cognizance of "an increased national tempo to rip down the barriers of racial and religious discrimination." The survey cited the election of a Catholic as President of the United States, the selection by Senator Kennedy of two Jews to the Cabinet and of prominent Negroes to other high federal posts as indicative of "a new spirit that will sweep the 60's in proportions undreamt of even by the most ardent proponents of civil rights."

The survey showed that American labor had made deep inroads in eliminating vestiges of discrimination within its own ranks. The survey said that in 1960 Negroes have been offered apprenticeship training in New York City's plumbing industry; that the first Negro electrician ever hired on a federal construction project in Washington, D. C. is working after being processed through Local 26 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers in the capitol, and that J. C. Daniel, a Negro, was elected President of Local 18, Hod Carriers and Common Laborers Union in Houston, Texas, which is one of the largest integrated locals in the Southwest with some 1800 members.

In addition, it pointed to the Oregon Building Trades, Metal Trades and Service Trades Councils working with that state's Apprenticeship Council to train Orientals and Negroes, who have since become tool and die makers, optical technicians, auto mechanics, body and fender repairmen, carpenters and brick masons.

The American Federation of Musicians, in 1960, the survey showed, merged separate locals in Miami, Jacksonville, Baton Rouge, Memphis, Nashville, San

Francisco, among other areas, including a local in North Carolina, in order to end segregation.

The survey stated that it was "the American labor movement that first recognized the student sit-in movements in the South and these efforts won immediate support from AFL-CIO President George Meany and other high ranking officials of organized labor. When the sit-in movement needed an atmosphere of support most, the American labor movement demonstrated its solidarity with that cause and continues to give it."

Regional offices of the AFL-CIO, as well as local unions, have added Negroes and other minority group personnel to responsible positions throughout the nation in ever increasing numbers, the survey indicated.

The JLC survey contrasted labor's efforts in getting Fair Employment Practices measures passed in 16 states, including California, through the years with attempts to frustrate such legislation by employer groups.

The survey turned to the national scene and predicted that while "any violent change in the Rules of the Senate to assure that filibuster will be curtailed is so far remote, there is confidence in the ranks of those who urge such rule changes that some progress will be made and that a change in the rules is within the realm of immediate realization." In the same vein, the survey said that the House Rules Committee will be enlarged to enable a more equitable debate on civil rights legislation.

Turning to immigration, the JLC survey pointed out that a change in the discriminatory national origin quota systems embodied in the current McCarran-Walter Immigration Act "will be undoubtedly changed by either a direct assault or compromise—the result of which will be the elimination of this undemocratic section of the law."

In the field of education, the JLC survey said that 1960 "began what 1961 will continue: a frontal assault by labor and allied groups on segregation in schools on the national, state and local levels."

Farm Labor Front

Imperial Valley Tempo Mounts

(Continued from Page 1)

stated as a result of quick union action.

According to AWOC, the "mounting tempo" of the situation in Imperial is evident in the number of deputies and special agents from the sheriff's office patrolling the area. Reports place the number at more than 400, with growing evidence of open intervention on the side of growers against organizing activities.

As an example, a union spokesman said that qualified domestic workers seeking employment at the gates of giant growers who are using large numbers of braceros have been "advised" to leave the premises by armed deputies.

Widespread violations of the "gate hiring" rights of qualified domestics when seeking employment by bracero users are being vigorously protested by the union.

Under the requirements of Public Law 78, braceros must be taken away from a grower who refuses to "gate hire" domestics seeking employment. According to AWOC, U. S. Bureau of Employment Security officials are "dragging their feet" and not enforcing the "gate hiring" requirements even in cases where the individual domestic appears at the gate with a referral slip from the state Farm Placement Service.

A mass meeting of Imperial Valley workers has been called for Sunday, January 15. AWOC Director Norman Smith and President Ralph Helstein of the Packinghouse Workers will be present for the union strategy session.

At last week's meeting before the one-day demonstration, an open strike date in the lettuce harvest was set for the week starting on January 16.