

Mitchell Denies "Bracero" Strikebreakers

The farm labor front in the past week has been marked by a rapid series of developments — almost all favorable to the AFL-CIO Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee.

Last Friday, U. S. Secretary of Labor James P. Mitchell denied the DiGiorgio Corporation use of "bracero" strikebreakers on two pear orchards being picketed by the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee in Yuba County. Mitchell said that granting of the DiGiorgio request for 300 Mexican farm workers would have been "tantamount to supplying alien strikebreakers."

The following day the AFL-CIO organizing committee pulled pickets off the two DiGiorgio orchards because the big farm corporation had upped its wage rates and was meeting AWOC's minimum demands.

Explaining the withdrawal of the pickets, DeWitt Tannehill, AWOC organizer in the Yuba County area, declared DiGiorgio pickers are now averaging \$1.50 an hour. The union sought \$1.10.

"It's a big increase," Tannehill

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State Demo Convention Ends Without Labor Plank; Central Committee Acts to Plug Gap

The state convention of the Democratic party, meeting last Saturday in Sacramento, was brought to a sudden end without a labor plank in its platform.

Working beyond the legal closing hour under a stopped clock to complete its platform, the convention was abruptly adjourned when a quorum call was invoked.

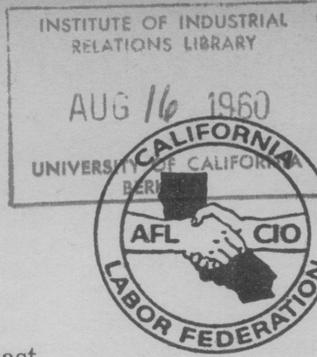
The disturbing omission of the labor plank, along with a number of others, including social welfare, occurred despite efforts of convention chairman George Miller, Jr. (State Senator from Contra Costa County) to keep the convention going beyond a midnight closing hour.

The sudden adjournment left no alternative but for the State Central Committee, meeting the follow-

ing day, to try to repair the damage by adopting a resolution embodying the contents of a labor plank for appendage to the party's platform.

Although a liberal and comprehensive labor policy resolution was actually adopted by the party's Central Committee, for the first time in the history of the State Democratic Party there is no labor plank for

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SACRAMENTO CONVENTION OF FEDERATION DRAWS SPOTLIGHT

With the Sacramento convention of the California Labor Federation a week off, the spotlight on labor activity has begun focusing on the capital city where some 2,000 delegates from all over the state will assemble for the state AFL-CIO's third convention since merger in 1958.

Secretary-Treasurer Thos. L. Pitts said in San Francisco this week that the resolutions deadline on August 1 produced 233 resolutions for consideration of the delegates.

Convention sessions will commence Monday, August 15, and will continue through the week until business has been completed. All sessions will be presided over by President Albin J. Gruhn and will be held in the Memorial Auditorium in Sacramento.

Registration commences on Saturday, August 13, at the Senator Hotel, convention headquarters in the capital city.

The Executive Council of the Federation will meet on the 11th and 12th to develop a broad set of po-

licy recommendations for convention action. These will include the Council's recommendations regarding the 1961 state legislative program of the state AFL-CIO.

A number of statewide craft councils have scheduled meetings in Sacramento on the weekend prior to the opening of the convention on Monday. Resolutions from these meetings will be accepted up to 9 p.m. Sunday evening for convention consideration.

Prominent speakers on both state and national level have been scheduled to address convention delegates during the week-long session. Governor Edmund G. Brown will be the opening session's speaker on Monday, followed in the afternoon by State Attorney General Stanley Mosk and Lieutenant Governor Glenn Anderson.

Other speakers during the week include: C. J. Haggerty, President of the AFL-CIO Building Trades Department and former Secretary-Treasurer of the state AFL-CIO; John F. Henning, State Director of the Department of Industrial Relations; Irving Perluss, state Director of the Department of Employment; Joseph Kennedy, President of the Northern Area of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; Doctor Louis H. Heilbron, President of the state Board of Education; Helen Nelson, state Consumer Counsel; Dr. Glenn T. Seaborg, Chancellor of the University of California in Berkeley.

If the situation in Congress per-

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the party's nominees to run on this November.

The colossal series of blunders that produced the omission was closely related to the efforts of a handful of rural legislators and party nominees to water down an agricultural labor plank submitted by a labor platform subcommittee, headed by Assemblyman Philip A. Burton of San Francisco.

The following events led to the fiasco:

1. The platform subcommittee on labor met Friday night and early Saturday morning, at which time the Federation presented its proposals for consideration in the labor platform plank. The plank eventually proposed by the labor subcommittee was both liberal and comprehensive.

2. The labor subcommittee's plank was submitted to the full platform committee by noon Saturday, the day of the convention, well in advance of most of the other platform planks developed by the various other subcommittees.

3. The platform committee did not convene to consider recommendations of its various subcommittees until approximately 8 p.m. Saturday evening, with only four hours left in the day for the platform committee and the convention itself to legally act upon the party's platform.

4. The platform committee chairman announced that the committee would meet in executive session, thereby closing the door to individuals and organizations interested in the work of the platform committee.

5. As the platform convention approached the legal adjournment hour of midnight, those parts of the labor planks dealing with full employment, labor legislation, unemployment insurance, unemployment disability insurance and workmen's compensation were sent to the floor by the platform committee as submitted by its labor subcommittee. These separate planks were read to the convention, but actual adoption was held up because the farm labor

plank had not yet been reported.

6. Rather than sending the farm labor plank to the floor, the platform committee in closed session sent down the agricultural plank instead, holding up the farm labor plank.

7. The agricultural plank, with a few references to farm labor that were moderate and constructive for an agricultural plank, was accordingly adopted by the convention.

8. As the convention waited for the farm labor plank and other platforms, it was apparent that a handful of rural legislators and nominees, with the clock stopped, were contemplating invoking the quorum call. After being stalled on a number of occasions by Chairman George Miller, Assemblyman Bert DeLotto of Fresno County obtained floor recognition and moved the quorum call that adjourned the convention. Thus, not only was the farm labor plank kept out of the platform but the entire labor platform, because it was being held in abeyance pending receipt by the floor of the farm labor plank.

9. When the quorum call was invoked, the platform committee had actually worked over the farm labor plank. With weakening amendments, it was on its way to the floor when the quorum call was invoked.

10. The following day, as the meeting of the State Democratic Party Central Committee was being convened and the omitted labor planks were being reduced to resolution form for adoption by the committee, further attempts were made to weaken the farm labor plank.

11. The California Labor Federation opposed the further weakening amendments, and sought repair of damage already done in the deletion from the farm labor plank of any reference to the agricultural workers' organizing drive, the adverse effect of bracero importation, and the need for strengthening the foreign labor importation law to prevent recognized abuses.

12. The Federation presented its position before a resolutions subcommittee on the matter, and secured reinsertion of all of the above points.

13. As so strengthened, the Central Committee meeting adopted in

resolution form the planks omitted by the platform committee.

Although the resolutions adopted represent a strong liberal policy position on the part of the Central Committee, rural legislators nevertheless remain in position to go back to their farmers at home and boast that they had kept labor's plank for agricultural workers out of the Democratic platform.

There being not a word of the labor plank in the platform, these farm belt senators, assemblymen and party nominees can brush off the subsequent resolutions onto "the liberals of the Central Committee."

FARM LABOR RESOLUTION

Declaring that the welfare of farm workers and the family farmer are inseparable, the state Central Committee's farm labor resolution labelled the plight of the farm worker as "one of the most serious socio-economic issues in America, challenging the moral fibre of this state and nation."

Noting that the efforts of farm workers to improve their conditions through union organization have been hampered by specific exclusions from the protection of basic labor laws and the great bulk of other socio-economic legislation enacted in recent decades, the Central Committee called for legislative action to close the gap both in federal and state law.

Particular action was called for farm worker inclusion under state and federal minimum wage laws, legislation to secure and implement the right to organize and to bargain collectively, unemployment and disability insurance programs, and the full range of other labor laws protecting the health and welfare of workers.

Specific reference was made to the fact that "farm workers are rising against their unfortunate lot and years of accumulated public neglect."

"The preservation of human values and the harvesting of California's perishable crops," the resolution read, "demand that the good offices of the state government be utilized to secure the peaceful settlement of disputes on terms fair to both farmers and workers."

Toward this end, the Central Committee resolution rejected repressive actions against "human

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stated, "DiGiorgio never paid that much before."

Tannehill said that the workers are getting \$1.10 an hour plus 10 cents a box or a straight 30 cents a box, and he announced that either way a good worker can make as much as \$1.80 an hour.

The pear-picking rates were 90 cents in 1958 and only \$1.00 in 1959.

The denial of braceros by Mitchell and the return to work by the strikers left standing a federal district court order in Sacramento which required the Department of Employment to refer domestic workers through the AWOC picket lines.

This Monday, however, the federal court referred the matter back to the original state Superior Court in Yuba County which issued the referral order to the Department of Employment, on grounds that the federal court had no jurisdiction.

Although the referral back to the Yuba Court was considered an adverse ruling, it left the matter standing as a purely legal issue because the workers involved had been returned to work.

This Wednesday in another action, Secretary of Labor Mitchell also withdrew Mexican Nationals from the Tom Bowers ranch in Gridley where AWOC is striking for better conditions in the peach harvest.

Domestic workers from the Tom Bowers ranch who went on strike were noticeably angered by the continued use of Nationals on the peach ranch. Mitchell said he withdrew the braceros under federal regulations which may be invoked to protect "the lives, health or safety of Mexican workers."

UNION RECOGNITION

Almost immediately after Mitchell's withdrawal of braceros, rancher Tom Bowers agreed to meet with AWOC officials.

Although spokesmen for the rancher did not say whether this meant Bowers would negotiate a contract, the agreement to meet amounted to a de facto recognition

of the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee.

Up until now, most of the big growers and their anti-union organizations have been trying to avoid any semblance of recognition of the union's existence for negotiation purposes.

AWOC has made it clear that it would not remove pickets until Bowers agreed to negotiate a contract.

The developments on the Bowers ranch, however, have been marred to some extent by the Butte County Superior Court. Judge A. B. Ware on Wednesday granted Bowers a writ ordering the State Department of Employment to refer domestic workers to the struck ranch. The order was similar to that issued by the Yuba County Superior Court in the DiGiorgio strike, which was continued by the federal court in Sacramento and which has now been referred back to the Yuba County court.

A "show cause" hearing on Judge Ware's order has been set for August 15. Thus far, the court orders requiring the Department of Employment to act as an agent for strikebreakers have not produced any substantial number of domestic workers who are willing to cross picket lines.

Nevertheless, the court actions remain a major threat to the organizing drive.

HEARINGS POSTPONED

In still another favorable action, Secretary of Labor Mitchell announced on Monday that public hearings on proposals by California farm employers to modify public employment service regulations governing the referral of agricultural workers in labor disputes have been postponed from August 8 until August 22.

The hearings are to be held in Washington.

The postponement was made at the request of George Meany, president of the AFL-CIO. Previously, the hearings were put off from July 21 to August 8 at the request of farm employers.

1960 COPE Handbook

The 1960 COPE handbook issued annually by the National AFL-CIO will soon be off the press.

Orders may be sent to the Committee on Political Education, 815 16th Street N. W., Washington 6, D. C., at the price of \$1.00 per copy (if ordered by unions).

The handbook, a speaker's manual of facts for use during the political campaign, gives background on important national issues and tells what happened to them in Congress. It furnishes talking points for political candidates. It also outlines AFL-CIO policy.

Termed a handy item for union meetings and COPE meetings, the handbook will also be useful when discussing politics with friends and neighbors.

So that it can be kept up to date, the handbook is issued in loose-leaf form. As the issues develop — such as in the August session of Congress — COPE will issue additional material for insertion in the book.

Sears Court Action

A federal district court in San Francisco has ordered Sears Roebuck and Company to live up to its agreement with two Retail Clerks Union locals, and immediately arbitrate the discharge of 144 union members who were fired for respecting a picket line.

Federal District Judge George B. Harris, in a ruling ordering immediate arbitration, by implication vigorously rebuked the company for its conduct and strongly suggested the company has used its theory of "replacements" as a subterfuge for reprisals.

His ruling was hailed in San Francisco as strong evidence that the union had been right in claiming Sears had violated its obligation under its collective bargaining agreements. But it was also viewed with some reserve, in view of the many remaining means of delay open to the company.

San Francisco Labor Council Secretary George Johns, while hailing the ruling in this phase of the controversy as a victory, warned that the boycott of the Sears Roebuck Company would have to be intensified, if the company is to be diverted from the inevitable delays and evasions that it will undoubtedly seek.

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beings seeking to improve their conditions of life and labor."

Other points of the resolution included:

- Enactment of programs to secure for farm workers and their families decent housing and the right to share in America's wealth through the provision of facilities for health, education and welfare.

- Improvement of job placement services for domestic workers and the establishment of a permanent California Agricultural Labor Resources Committee.

- Reform in the foreign labor importation programs to the end that the foreign labor "should be imported only where the need has been conclusively demonstrated, and then only at wages and working conditions which protect the imported laborer, prevent undermining of domestic standards, and give meaningful effect to the prior right of employment of domestics."

The goal of the Democratic party was declared to be the rebuilding of the domestic labor supply and "to provide dependable and skilled labor supply and "to provide dependable and skilled labor to harvest the state and nation's agricultural crops by raising the conditions of life and labor of farm workers to a level of parity with workers in non-agricultural industries."

OTHER LABOR ITEMS

In another resolution, the Central Committee moved to fill the labor platform gap in the following areas:

- Pledged support of full employment policies for California, including passage of a state full employment act patterned after the 1946 law on the federal level.

- Supported extension of the state FEP law to cover discrimination because of age; expansion of employment placement services for older workers; improved rehabilita-

tion and retraining services for the handicapped and the aged.

- Backed the national Democratic platform pledges to repeal the "excesses" of the Taft-Hartley and Landrum-Griffin labor laws. Specifically, the state Central Committee urged outright repeal of Taft-Hartley and substitution of a measure based on the Wagner Act; complete repeal of the House Landrum-Griffin amendments in the new labor law.

- Regarding state labor legislation, the Central Committee opposed so-called "right to work" legislation, and all other laws designed to restrict labor union activities; called for repeal of the state's so-called Jurisdictional Strike Act and enactment of legislation to provide democratic machinery for the implementation of organizational and collective bargaining rights in intrastate commerce; enactment of a state anti-injunction law based on the principles of the federal Norris-LaGuardia Act.

- Called for broad liberalization of the state's workmen's compensation, unemployment insurance, and unemployment disability insurance programs. The comprehensive nature of these recommendations were aimed at restoring to full operation all three of the basic wage-loss compensation programs.

- Called for enactment of a state minimum wage of \$1.25 per hour for men as well as women and minors.

The labor policy resolutions adopted by the state Central Committee were worded in a manner to "be deemed a part of the platform adopted by the state convention of the Democratic Party of California." They also called for their printing and distribution as part of the state platform.

Legally, however, the party convention and the state Central Committee are two separate bodies.

FEDERATION CONVENTION DRAWS SPOTLIGHT

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Nelson Cruikshank of the AFL-CIO Social Security Department will fly to Sacramento on Tuesday, August 16, to address the delegates on the Forand bill situation.

Fifteen statewide propositions on the November ballot will also be before the convention for action. The most controversial among these are Propositions No. 1 and 15 relating to the proposed state \$1.75 billion water bond program and the reapportionment of the state Senate, respectively.

Last week in Long Beach the State Building and Construction Trades Council rejected an appeal by Governor Edmund G. Brown that the building trades endorse the water program. Despite Governor Brown's effort to secure an endorsement on the basis of the jobs the program would create for the building trades, the delegates referred an endorsement resolution without action to its executive board.

The focus of attention on the water issue has now turned to the Federation convention where last year's policy action will be up for full review.

The San Diego convention last year blasted the \$1.75 billion water program as a "blank check" lacking basic legislative policy protections governing both the distribution of benefits and the rights of workers involved.

A subsequent meeting of the Federation's Executive Council in March this year recommended continued opposition to the state water program, based on findings of a special Executive Council Committee on Water after meeting with the Governor and reviewing his administrative policy declarations advanced in lieu of calling a special legislative session.

The entire matter, however, is up for review in Sacramento.