

Farm Labor Showdown In Imperial Valley

The most massive and crucial battle to date for organization of farm labor is rapidly coming to a head in California's heartland of corporate agriculture.

Utilizing the combined resources of the Agricultural Workers' Organizing Committee and United Packinghouse Workers of America, the AFL-CIO drive to organize Imperial Valley's 11,500 farm workers appeared to be gaining great momentum by the middle of this week.

Union demands include raising the present maximum rate of 90 cents an hour to a minimum of \$1.25 for field workers. Recognition of AWOC as collective bargaining representative for workers in most of the valley's crops is also being demanded along with similar status for UPWA in relation to lettuce cutting and packing workers.

UPWA formerly represented the lettuce packing workers when that operation was performed in sheds.

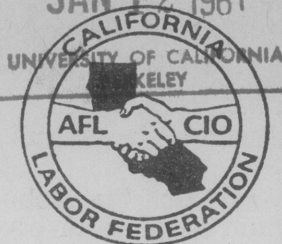
As we go to press more than 1,000 workers, primarily domestics, were expected to attend a meeting at the Callexico Armory on Thursday, Jan. 5, to finalize plans for a one-day work stoppage on the following day affecting all crops throughout the county.

The mass meeting was also scheduled to set the date for an all-out general strike among farm

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THOS. L. PITTS
Executive
Secretary-Treasurer

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LEGISLATURE CONVENED BY BROWN'S CALL FOR "RESPONSIBLE LIBERALISM"

Governor Edmund G. Brown this Tuesday called upon the legislature to continue his twin programs of "responsible liberalism" and "fiscal responsibility" launched two years ago when his Democratic Administration took office.

Brown delivered his annual message to a joint session of the California

legislature, which had convened on Monday to organize itself for the 120 gruelling days ahead. Reviewing what he called six major achievements of his Administration in the fields of water development, higher education, human rights, public health, fiscal matters, social insurance and welfare programs, Brown said "the breakthrough of the last two years leaves no room for self-satisfaction."

He laid before the legislature more than 60 proposals in ten broad fields of legislative activity

Fed Digest of Bills Coming

In the coming weeks, News Letter will again tackle the job of digesting and evaluating the bills introduced into the state legislature which are of primary concern to the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO.

Schedules of committee hearings on bills of interest and other relevant news of the Sacramento scene will also be reported.

This service is designed to keep officers and members of organized labor throughout the state alert to the legislative situation as it unravels.

as the 1961 goals of his Administration.

Labor Legislation

In the field of labor legislation, Brown confined himself largely to general statements concerning the need for legislative "attention to the area involving... labor-management relationships and responsibilities.

"We should make further significant improvements in the structure of our social insurance programs for unemployment compensation, workmen's compensation and disability benefits," Brown said, and asked specifically "that thoughtful action be taken in this

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Final IWC Hearings on Farm Wage Order

The final public hearings on the issuance of a wage order covering minimum wages, maximum hours and standard conditions for women and minors in agriculture have been scheduled by the Industrial Welfare Commission during the first four days of February.

Recommendations on these matters were recently received by IWC from its Agricultural Wage Board. Employee members of the wage board urged a minimum wage of \$1.25 an hour, standard overtime pay provisions and other improvements in working conditions.

Board Chairman Dean Aldrich endorsed an hourly minimum wage level ranging between 80-90 cents, together with other conditions inferior to those recommended by the employee members. Employer members, claiming IWC action would be premature, failed to submit any proposals.

Los Angeles hearings of the IWC will get underway at 10 a.m. on February 1-2, 1961 in the Assembly Hall of the State Building, 217 West First Street.

San Francisco hearings are scheduled to commence at 10 a.m. on February 3-4 in Room 1194 of the State Building Annex, 455 Golden Gate Avenue.

Written statements for the IWC's consideration must be filed by January 20. Such statements should be submitted in 15 copies.

LEGISLATURE CONVENED BY BROWN'S CALL FOR "RESPONSIBLE LIBERALISM"

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session to replenish the state disability fund—now suffering from substantial depletion."

Brown urged two innovations in the social insurance field:

(1) "That persons unemployed because of plant obsolescence or automation be encouraged to undertake occupational retraining immediately." In this connection, Brown called for removal of restrictions in the present unemployment insurance program which permits payment of benefits while retraining only to persons who have exhausted virtually all means of personal support during periods of heavy unemployment.

(2) "That we develop a comprehensive vocational rehabilitation program for workmen unable to perform their former jobs because of disabilities."

No Minimum Wage Recommendations

Brown failed to recommend action on a state minimum wage law.

"While recognizing some of the complex economic problems involved," Brown said, "I continue nonetheless to believe in a basic minimum wage law to include all workers," adding:

"Preferably, there should be a federal law which includes agricultural workers and equalizes the economic impact on producers in all the 50 states, and I favor action in the new Congress as comprehensive as possible and as soon as possible.

"The State's Industrial Welfare Commission also has under consideration the question of minimum wages for working women and children, including those employed in agriculture.

"I am deferring any new minimum wage recommendations to the legislature pending further knowledge of the outcome of these two current efforts to establish an improved minimum wage structure."

Brown gave particular emphasis to the agricultural problem, but satisfied himself by recommending only that the legislature "establish a balanced fact-finding committee to

deal with this situation" in agriculture.

The Governor said that the problem of a minimum wage is an especially difficult one for the great agricultural areas of our state. Agriculture was labelled as the "most troubled labor-management relationship in California."

"Yet," he said, "I call to your attention the fact that despite the occasional work stoppages last summer and fall, very few crops were lost. Few workers and very few farmers were directly affected. Generally, crops were good and wages were up."

Pointing out, however, that the conflict in the fields is continuing, he said that the government "should be ready to act if necessary to protect the public interest or preserve individual rights."

He said his recommended fact-finding committee "should include legislators, representatives of appropriate executive departments, farmers, farm workers and union leaders."

The functions of the fact-finding committee were described as follows:

(1) Make periodic factual reports on disputes and the issues involved.

(2) When convinced that direct government intervention of some kind would be useful to both parties or is necessary in the public interest, it should report its conclusions jointly to the Governor and the legislature.

Brown said, "the public and state government would thus be in a much better position to deal intelligently and fairly with both parties in this complex struggle between natural economic forces."

Other than a separate recommendation for an appropriation of \$115,000 to strengthen "local community health services" for migratory workers, Brown had nothing specific to offer in the current agricultural labor situation.

Water

In the field of natural resources development and specifically water development, Brown repeatedly referred to the action of the state in

adopting his so-called California Water Program embracing a \$1.75 billion water bond issue.

Commenting on the bond issue campaign at the November election, Brown said, "I pledged that the legislature would have one more opportunity to examine the program for possible deficiencies and to suggest possible clarification or improvements."

In his message to the legislature Tuesday, Brown invited the legislature to review his two-price system for preventing monopolization of project benefits, asking that the legislature take a "positive policy position on this problem," while recommending to the legislature support of the two-price system.

The two-price system is considered inadequate by those who have long supported water development for all the people in accordance with sound protections against monopoly and speculation.

Brown also asked the legislature to set forth policies guaranteeing development of recreational facilities and enhancement of fish and game resources within the framework of multiple purpose development projects. Brown also urged the legislature to look to California's long range recreational problems and to act on the five year beach and park acquisition and development program being recommended to the legislature.

Civil Rights

Governor Brown lumped his civil rights recommendations with a number of other problems relating to "growth, change and development in California." Urging the legislature to "move on from the great beginnings of 1958," he recommended that California (1) extend its laws against discrimination in housing, and (2) write clearly into law, the principle that an established pattern of discrimination is a proper basis for disciplinary action by state licensing agencies.

Housing

Concerning housing legislation and the needs of low and middle income families and the aged, Brown recommended "that our State Housing Commission be reconstituted and enlarged . . . to pro-

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vide a comprehensive plan for financing the state's unmet housing needs."

He referred to senior citizens, agricultural workers and low and moderate income families as "now all but priced out of the market."

Brown said that with expert help he felt confident that "this new, broadly representative commission can prepare the way for significant new strides in the complex field of housing and its financing."

The Governor expressed hope the Kennedy Administration in Washington will take meaningful housing action in the meantime.

Consumer Counsel

Governor Brown gave high praise to the work of his Consumer Counsel, Helen Nelson, pointing out that "the first year of operation of the office . . . has fulfilled the expectations which we had in creating it in 1959."

Legislative action in a number of areas, Brown said, has been spotlighted by the Consumer Counsel's activities. He specifically referred to legislation requiring better labeling of hazardous substances as one of the number of proposals which will be submitted to the legislature as a result of Mrs. Nelson's work.

Taxes

Asking the legislature to face the "stern demands of fiscal responsibility," Brown warned that revenues for the current fiscal year were falling slightly below estimates because of the current economic recession.

He said, however, "I see no reason to recommend new taxes" and that "continued frugality and economy in government will enable us to meet our commitments without new revenues."

He went one step further by saying that the state is now "in a position to repeal the sales tax on prescription drugs—a tax that weighs most heavily on the aged and the afflicted."

Public Health

In the field of public health, Brown declared his Administra-

tion's goal to be "every California family should have adequate access to medical care of high quality."

In working toward this goal, Brown said he has been "greatly aided" by his Committee on Medical Aid and Health.

To meet a higher proportion of California's need for doctors through its own educational institutions, Brown asked for the establishment of a "new medical school in San Diego."

He said that his Committee's report "leaves no doubt that we must bring some order into the current patchwork development of health facilities." Accordingly, he recommended legislation "for the regional planning of hospitals and other medical facilities," with representation on the planning body by physicians, hospital executives and the public.

Also in line with his committee's recommendations, Brown asked for "new legislation . . . establishing minimum standards" for health insurance programs and "the possible inclusion of a system of grade labeling so that policies can be purchased more intelligently."

In this fashion, Brown thought that health insurance policies could be brought under proper regulation.

In other fields of public health, he urged the legislature "to apply new concepts to the problems of the mentally ill." Brown stated, "I am especially concerned that we provide more facilities and improved treatment for the retarded." He advocated extending the development of day care facilities begun last year.

Turning to traffic safety as another public health problem, Brown said he proposed to send the legislature "a detailed program of recommendations for legislative action" later in the session.

Education

Brown labeled the field of education as an area "where we have done well, and yet must do better."

To improve the quality of education in the primary and secondary schools, the Governor urged:

(1) Legislative adoption of new requirements for teaching credentials which have been proposed by the State Board of Education and State Department of Education, reducing the types of credentials from 40 to a basic 5, and requiring that primary and secondary teachers have a "major in college in an academic subject."

(2) Curriculum changes "which will emphasize 'solid' subjects and minimize the wasteful fringe courses." Within this framework he asked also for additional aid for special programs for "gifted" children.

(3) Establishment of a "statewide testing program," to measure the effectiveness of our schools, as recommended by the Citizens Advisory Commission.

Specific legislative proposals were also made to increase the monthly allotment from the State Bond Fund for schoolhouse construction, and for a small appropriation to "help speed the school district reorganization process."

Concerning higher education, Brown spoke of the need to "consolidate the achievements of the Master Plan (enacted last year) and make certain that it is operating as intended."

In a further proposal, Brown asked the legislature to face up to the problem of equalizing "state aid in relation to the countywide tax base, rather than on a district-by-district basis."

Administration of Justice

In this broad field of legislation, Brown asked the legislature to designate 1961 as "Fight Narcotics Year." He expressed support for his Narcotics Commission's recommendation of a 22-point program "to achieve a sharp reduction in the sale and use of narcotics in California." This program includes:

— Longer terms of imprisonment for narcotics offenders.

— Treatment of addiction as a communicable disease with quarantine of addicts in detention hospitals.

— Clarification of the necessity for providing relief from some of the restrictions of the "exclusionary rules" which have prevented law enforcement officials from us-

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ing illegally obtained evidence against narcotics users and pushers.

Social Welfare Programs

Major emphasis in this area of legislation was given to senior citizens who, Brown said, must be given workable programs so that they "may live in health, in dignity, and in security."

Steps in this direction were urged to:

(1) Provide for cost of living increases in the old-age assistance program, with application to the blind and disabled as well.

(2) Modification of the relatives' responsibility law in the old age assistance program to remove the requirement of any contribution from relatives having a monthly income of less than \$1,000.

(3) Establishment of a new maximum in the old age assistance program of \$165 a month, instead of the present \$115 so that special needs and problems can be met fully.

Brown expressed hope that the cost of meeting these special needs could be substantially reduced through a careful program of state legislation to take advantage of the federal law passed last year. The federal law provides additional funds for medical care for the aged on a public assistance basis rather than on the social insurance principle.

While expressing the hope that the Kennedy Administration and the new Congress would broaden the inadequate program passed last year, by adopting social insurance health care medical benefits for the aged, Brown asked the legislature to take interim action to "do whatever it can afford in using the present law in the interests of California and its senior citizens."

Brown recommended full use of the federal funds that had been made available for present medical care programs for the aged currently receiving public assistance. Regarding the new category of medical indigents who are not receiving public assistance, the Governor

said that new legislation would be required.

But even here, Brown said that "because the state can afford to provide the required matching funds only for the cases of gravest need," the initial extension to the medically indigent should be limited to those "chronically-ill aged persons who have incomes of less than \$2,000 a year, but who do not now receive old age assistance from the state."

Regarding the state's categorical aid program for the permanently and totally disabled, Brown asked for a redefinition of this category of aid to remove the present law's harsh restrictions on eligibility.

In other areas of "concern for the aged" Brown recommended state provision of a small appropriation to encourage wider development of community centers and other facilities for senior citizens.

The Governor urged action to end the wasteful trend towards discrimination against older citizens in matters of employment. He asked that the state declare its firm "opposition to such discrimination and instruct the Department of Employment to carry out this sensible and humane policy."

Concerning the much attacked Aid to Needy Children program, Brown asked the legislature to "take a hard, yet sympathetic look at the Aid to Needy Children program." The object of the state, he said, should be the "saving of children first, the saving of money second."

Finally, in the field of social welfare, Brown proposed a joint legislative-executive commission to study the entire area.

Other Major Action

In other major fields of legislative action, Brown called for:

(1) Establishment of a "blue-ribbon commission" promised during the general election to study the problem of reapportioning the state senate.

(2) Implementation of his Administration's programs for reorganization of state government, based on the Hoover Commission formula allowing proposals by the Governor

CONFERENCE NOTICE 'Review of Landrum-Griffin'

An educational conference designed to review the 1959 Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act after one year of operation has been set for Friday, January 13, in the Venetian Room of the Fairmont Hotel, San Francisco.

The one-day conference is being sponsored by the Institute of Industrial Relations at the University of California, Berkeley. A registration fee of \$5 includes lunch.

Following registration between 9 a.m. and 10 a.m., the conference will open with an address, "One Year of Landrum-Griffin," by John L. Holcombe, Commissioner, Bureau of Labor-Management Reports, charged with the responsibility for administering Landrum-Griffin in the U. S. Department of Labor.

Holcombe's presentation is to be followed by a question and answer period in the morning and in the afternoon by a panel discussion on "Administration of Landrum-Griffin Act."

The panel participants will include Attorneys Roland Davis, John P. Jennings, P. H. McCarthy, Marion B. Plant, along with Commissioner Holcombe and Franklyn Elias, Area Director of the Labor-Management Reports Bureau in San Francisco.

Advance registration checks should be made payable to the Regents of the University of California, Department of Conferences, U. C., Berkeley.

For further information, call John Hutchinson at the Institute of Industrial Relations, THornwall 5-6000, extension 2571.

to take effect unless vetoed by the legislative body.

(3) Implementation of recommendations by his Metropolitan Area Problems Commission, including authority of cities to initiate annexation proceedings and formation of multi-purpose metropolitan service districts under the so-called California Plan.

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workers at a later date if such action proves necessary.

A joint statement issued by AWOC director Norman Smith and UPWA international representative Clive Knowles declared:

"The one-day work stoppage is designed to demonstrate to the growers and the public that the two unions are determined to exhaust every reasonable course of action to achieve orderly negotiations in preference to an all-out strike."

Union officials made it clear that they have contacted every governmental agency concerned with the situation in an effort to solve the dispute without resort to strike action.

The growers, on the other hand, are displaying little disposition toward handling matters in this manner. They have entirely ignored the efforts of the state conciliators to bring about a peaceful solution by denying that a labor dispute exists.

The unions had earlier communicated with the Imperial Valley Farmers' Association in El Centro requesting negotiations covering all the field workers in the valley. The principal crops presently being harvested are lettuce and carrots. The valley's farm labor force consists of about 2,500 domestic workers and 9,000 braceros.

The current hourly rate of 83 cents to 90 cents an hour in Imperial Valley, inadequate as it is, represents a significant rise in wages paid in that area during recent years. There is little question that this belated increase was put into effect as part of the statewide movement this year to try to appease agricultural workers with slight improvements in order to forestall union organization.

The one-day work stoppage is being coupled with various demonstrations to focus public attention on the conditions suffered by farm workers. These will include caravans of several hundred cars to El Centro, Calexico, Holtville, Brawley and other communities.

A delegation is to lodge a formal protest against the use of 9,000 braceros while thousands of domestic workers and their families go hungry. Plans have been made for demonstrations in front of the growers'

association office in east El Centro, for picketing of Farm Placement Service offices in the various towns, for another mass meeting in Calexico, and possibly a demonstration at the border.

Loudspeakers and signs carried by farm workers are being used to urge any workers in the fields who have not been contacted previously to walk off in protest against the growers unyielding position.

The Imperial Valley supplies the major portion of the lettuce marketed in the nation during January and February. In a San Francisco Chronicle story earlier this week, an Imperial Valley Farmers' Association spokesman was quoted as saying:

"The union is shooting craps with the American public's lettuce supply."

A spot survey of public reaction uncovered much more humor than anxiety on the part of the average consumer over this pronouncement.

Although the growers' association is protesting inability to pay \$1.25 an hour, the fact is that they paid even more years ago before the braceros came to dominate Imperial Valley agriculture.

An article in the January 1, 1961 issue of Brawley's **Imperial Valley News Press** more accurately suggests the real stake involved for the grower-shippers in their effort to drive domestic workers out of the picture. In part, the article states:

"Growers traditionally have used domestic crews sent in by labor contractors who field pack lettuce on a piece rate basis. They get 28 cents to 36 cents a carton and their hourly pay can range from 80 cents to as high as \$3.00 depending on whether it is first cutting or a later cutting."

Noting that the growers liked to use these locals "because they work faster than the braceros and are paid to produce," the **News Press** story continued:

"One problem that arose, however, is that the prevailing wage is based on what domestics get, and a prevailing wage survey can be made arbitrarily at any time or place."

"Braceros further are required to get the prevailing wage, so if the domestic crews were surveyed at a particular time and are found to be averaging \$2.00 an hour or more,

AFL-CIO Investment Department Set Up

In announcing the establishment of AFL-CIO's Department of Investment, President George Meany named Alexander Bookstaver of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union to head up the new operation as its director.

The subject of trade union investments was given special attention at the California Labor Federation's recent conference on economic growth in San Francisco.

The new department was authorized last August by the AFL-CIO executive council during its Chicago meeting. In establishing this new function of the AFL-CIO, the council stated that a realistic educational program would help channel union reserve funds into government insured and guaranteed loans for home construction and mortgages.

The council noted that the nation's great social need for decent housing had remained unfulfilled during the extended tight money situation and showed no immediate signs of improvement.

The current allowable interest rates on government insured and guaranteed mortgage loans appear adequate, the council declared, but the discounts demanded by lenders from the face amount of mortgages have raised effective rates to usurious levels in many areas.

While helping to build necessary homes, the council noted that investment of union funds in the mortgage market would add a degree of stability to the building and construction field. In addition to these contributions to the community's well-being, such investment practices could bring about a more adequate return on union funds.

Bookstaver will assume his new duties on January 15. He has served ILGWU since 1956 as an investment and real estate consultant. Prior to that time, he had been a vice president of New York's Amalgamated Bank as part of his 25 years of banking experience.

then the braceros would have to be paid and back paid at that rate."

Union spokesmen point to the vast deterioration in earnings and job opportunities for domestic workers which have resulted from the situation described in this article.

They cite it as a classic illustration of the grave injury inflicted upon thousands of domestic workers in Imperial Valley alone through the abuse of the bracero importation program, together with the lack of collective bargaining representation.

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Low Restaurant Wages Documented

Less than \$1.25 an hour is earned by about 45 per cent of women restaurant workers in California, according to a survey performed by the State Division of Labor Statistics and Research.

Women engaged in culinary occupations averaged earnings of \$1.28 an hour. This included the value of meals but not tips. Less than \$1.00 an hour was earned by 2 per cent of these workers while 43 per cent earned from \$1.00 to \$1.25.

When the value of meals was excluded, the cash hourly earnings of women workers in the restaurant industry averaged \$1.13.

Published in the Department of Industrial Relations report for the month of December 1960, the survey covered 143,440 workers in restaurant occupations. Of this total, women constituted 51 per cent. Male workers accounted for 46 per cent while minors represented 3 per cent of the total.

Male restaurant workers averaged \$1.67 an hour, including meals, or \$1.55 after the value of meals was excluded.

The average earnings of minors came to \$1.22 with meals or \$1.09 without.

An hourly differential of 31 cents for women restaurant workers between the San Francisco Bay area and the Los Angeles-Long Beach metropolitan area was revealed by the survey.

Women employed in the San Francisco Bay area received cash earnings averaging \$1.39 an hour. Cash earnings for the women in the Los Angeles-Long Beach metropolitan area averaged only \$1.08 per hour.

Lowest earnings for women in the state were in the Fresno area, where they came to \$1.03, excluding the value of meals.

Nearly half of all the restaurant

STATE CIVIL RIGHTS CATALOGUE ISSUED

A complete catalogue of California statutes relating to civil rights was issued today by Attorney General Stanley Mosk under the title of "Equal Rights Under the Law."

The publication serves as a ready reference listing under the subjects of employment, housing, business services, education and government practices, with key statutes under the separate codes. Copies are available without charge for distribution to individuals and organizations requesting them.

The reference catalogue was compiled under the direction of Mosk and assistant attorney general Franklin H. Williams.

In the foreword to the catalogue, Mosk declares:

"In the past few years California has joined the growing list of states which provide statutory support to

the constitutional promise of equal protection and opportunity for all citizens.

"In employment, housing, business services and public facilities, our legislature has substantially broadened the opportunities available to all regardless of race or religion.

"While we can be proud of these statutes, in cold fact, laws are only printed documents. Whether they become living expressions of constitutional guarantees translated into realistic experiences will be determined by you, the citizen. Knowledge of the law and compliance with it are vital prerequisites for these to be meaningful."

Legal remedies and responsibilities are listed, with the State Department of Justice being ready to assist whenever it is appropriate or desirable.

Weldon's PJs A Nightmare For Unionists

Conscientious trade union members losing sleep over the mounting unemployment situation will trouble their minds even more if they find themselves inside a pair of Weldon pajamas, cautions the Union Label Department of the AFL-CIO's Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America.

ACWA is in the process of intensifying its nationwide consumer education program relating to the non-union products of the Weldon Pajama Co., Inc.

Weldon's pajamas were declared "unfair" by the Union Label Committee of the State AFL-CIO's Executive Council during its Dec. 3-4 meeting in San Fran-

employees in the state were employed in the Los Angeles-Long Beach metropolitan area. Meals consumed on the job added about 16 cents to the total hourly earnings of these workers.

The Bay area contained about one-fourth of the state's restaurant workers. Meals consumed on the job enhanced the value of earnings by about 15 cents an hour.

cisco.

A major manufacturer in this field, Weldon has bitterly fought the efforts of its workers to unionize for some 12 years. The struggle has now come to a head with the union's current drive to organize the firm's plants in Pennsylvania.

Weldon pajamas were formerly made in Gulfport, Mississippi, where its employees designated ACWA as their collective bargaining choice in an NLRB election. Due to the company's refusal to bargain over a two-year period, a contract was never signed and the plant has since been closed.

ACWA is appealing to consumers not to buy pajamas made by non-union, low-wage labor under substandard working conditions. Such conditions threaten the decent living standards of all workers.

The AFL-CIO unit is reminding the public that union standards have increased the purchasing power of union members and made them better consumers. It is urging all shoppers to use this "right to buy" by purchasing only union-made sleepwear.

For sweeter sleep, don't buy Weldon Pajamas.