

King-Anderson Bill Film Available at AFL-CIO Library

A new film on the King-Anderson bill, produced by the National Council of Senior Citizens, has just been added to the AFL-CIO film library.

The film, entitled "For All the Rest of Your Life," dramatically depicts the basic unmet hospitalization needs that a program of medical care for the aged through social security would serve and what it would mean to families and individuals.

It also features highlights of President Kennedy's address to the Senior Citizens convention in Washington last June as well as shots of the caravan of citizens assembling in Washington to urge Congressmen to support the bill. It closes with an appeal to viewers to write letters to their representatives and Senators to urge them to vote for the bill.

The AFL-CIO Department of Education is preparing a short discussion guide for the film which will be available September 16. The 13½ minute, 16 mm. film may be rented for \$3 but groups wishing to do so are urged to get their bookings in immediately because it is expected to be very much in demand.

Copies of the film may be purchased for \$25 from William Hutton, National Council of Senior Citizens, Inc., 1627 K Street, N. W. Washington, D. C.

Film rental requests and/or requests for copies of the discussion guide and a King-Anderson bill leaflet called "Why America NEEDS The King-Anderson Bill" should be addressed to George Guerusey, Assistant Director, AFL-CIO Department of Education, 815 16th St., N. W., Room 510, Washington, D. C. 20006. Film rental checks should be made payable to William Schnitzler, Secretary-Treasurer, AFL-CIO.



THOS. L. PITTS
Executive
Secretary-Treasurer

Weekly News Letter

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Pitts Warns of Special Interests' Plan To Subvert Free Competitive System

"Despite repeated decisions by state and federal courts that so-called 'fair trade' laws are nothing but illegal price-fixing measures, an amalgamation of lobbyists representing some 70 U. S. trade associations is on the verge of getting Congress to pass a bill to let manufacturers fix prices on trademarked products at the consumers' expense," Thos. L. Pitts, state AFL-CIO leader, warned union members and the public at large this week.

"They have draped the old goose in a new garb and dubbed it 'quality stabilization' instead of 'fair trade,' but it still boils down to price-fixing, excessive profiteering, and violation of the basic principle of a free, competitive economic system," Pitts, secretary-treasurer of the California Labor Federation, declared.

The measure (HR 3669), already approved by the House Commerce Committee by a 33-1 vote, is expected to be cleared by the Rules Committee for consideration of the full House any day now. It would revoke the right of a retailer to sell a brand-name product at a

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A Common Mart For Conservatives And Right Wingers

A virtual common market for Americans of an extremely conservative political persuasion was established last month when BIPAC, the Business-Industry Political Action Committee was formed under the aegis of the National Association of Manufacturers.

BIPAC takes its place alongside of the American Medical Political Action Committee (AMPAC) and such extremist right-wing groups as the Americans for Constitutional Action (ACA). The prime objective of all of these groups is to elect conservatives to Congress who could be depended on to weaken or destroy established social welfare programs and to reject any new programs or improvements.

The NAM, which provided a \$100,000 fund to put BIPAC in business or rather in politics, is urging its members and other businessmen to pay \$10 to \$99 for BIPAC memberships. These funds will be poured into political campaigns in support of congressional candidates who will fight what a BIPAC leaflet called a "steadily increasing trend towards centralization of our government and domination of the economy and the individual. . . ."

The political and social philosophy BIPAC can be expected to reflect is indicated by the man chosen to be its executive director, ex-Con-

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Bracero Extension Propaganda Drive Draws Fire at Texas AFL-CIO Parley

Pointing out that California and Texas "have shared the dubious honor" of accounting for the vast bulk of the bracero labor used in the United States, Thos. L. Pitts, Secretary-Treasurer of the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, told delegates to the Texas State AFL-CIO Convention meeting in Houston late last month that the two states also share an urgent

need to build "our educational machinery and our COPE structure to new peaks of strength and effectiveness."

"This must be done—and done quickly—so that our membership and their neighbors can better comprehend the gigantic problems that are increasingly bearing down upon working people from all directions.

"We in California are no more

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Senate Passes Job Training Bill

Confronted by the failure of 25 state legislatures to authorize matching funds to continue the job training program set up by the Manpower Development and Training Act of 1962, the U. S. Senate on Wednesday, approved a \$322

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Pitts Warns of Plan to Subvert Free Competitive System

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price below the price set by the manufacturer.

"This would virtually eliminate price competition between retailers and would require the retailers to sell brand-name products at whatever price the manufacturer thinks the market can bear," Pitts pointed out.

"Many of the trade associations pushing this foul bill are the same groups that fight tooth and nail to defeat improvements in social insurance programs, truth-in-lending, truth-in-packaging measures and other public interest legislation. They claim they believe in the free enterprise system but they want to rig the system's operation so that it pays off like a slot machine—handsomely for the house.

"The fact that the National Association of Retail Druggists is spearheading the drive for this special interest legislation should be of especial interest to Californians when they recall that the 1500-member Northern California Pharmaceutical Association was convicted just last year of conspiring to fix the prices of prescription drugs," Pitts said.

The Association, accused by the government of causing the public to pay at least \$12 million more for prescription drugs than it should have, was fined \$40,000.

In upholding the criminal conviction of the Association, the United States Court of Appeals observed that the evidence was "not merely sufficient but was indeed overwhelming."

"The special interest lobbyists are peddling the phony 'quality stabilization' slogan to congressmen by claiming that it is a bill to help the small business man," Pitts said.

"Indeed the lobbyists did such a good job that they got the House Commerce Committee to declare recently that 'we are faced with the proposition that unless the small business man is afforded the opportunity of making a profit by enabling him to compete pricewise . . . we shall find ourselves faced in a few years with a large proportion of retailing concentrated in the hands of a few giant corporations.'

"This is a lot of malarky. You don't improve our free competitive system by bestowing on manufac-

turers the monopolistic authority to impose rigid price controls regardless of the demand for their products," Pitts declared.

"All these fair trade schemes ever do is milk more money out of the wage earners' pockets than the products they purchase are worth in the market place.

"Moreover, the retailer is the last in line to benefit since such authority enables the manufacturer and the wholesale distributors to hike their own profit margins first," Pitts pointed out.

In testifying against an even worse Senate version of the bill, Andrew J. Biemiller, AFL-CIO Legislative Director, warned that the measure would deprive consumers of their "right to shop around for the lowest price" and would result in price increases that would cost consumers an estimated \$14 billion (that \$14,000,000,000) a year.

Instead of protecting small retailers this price-fixing system would destroy them, Biemiller said, because big retail chains are selling more and more products labelled with their own "private brand" names. The big retailers sell these "private brand" products at a lower price than the same product made by the same manufacturer which smaller retailers would be forced to sell at the higher price set by the manufacturer.

Only the big retailers have sufficient purchasing power to force manufacturers to provide them with products under private brand names, Biemiller explained.

If the quality stabilization bill becomes law, the small retailer would not be permitted to cut prices of manufacturer-branded products and therefore would not be able to compete with big retailers who sell the same product under private brand names at lower prices.

The fact that the Senate version of the bill, unlike the draft approved by the House committee, would not exclude prescription drugs from the proposed price fixing system is what makes it worse than the House measure, he added.

"The exorbitant prices of prescription drugs, even under present conditions, has been thoroughly documented by the Kefauver antitrust subcommittee. To turn the final screw on the consuming public by placing prescription drugs under a federal

price maintenance law would be unconscionable.

"We can see no justification whatever for further legalizing monopolistic drug prices at the expense of users who, because of illness, have only the choice of buying or suffering the consequences to their health or even life," Biemiller testified.

Officials of the U. S. Departments of Justice, Commerce and Agriculture as well as the Federal Trade Commission have also testified against the bill but it nonetheless appears to have substantial support in the House.

The Justice Department has estimated that enactment of such a federal price-fixing law could boost prices about 20 per cent on sales covered. This "would cost the American consumer billions of dollars and have a powerful inflationary effect," the Department said.

Noting that Congressional support for the bill appears to be widespread and that President Kennedy has reportedly refused to commit himself to veto the measure, Pitts urged county central labor bodies, local unions and union members individually as well as the general public to appeal to their congressional representatives to oppose passage of any type of price-fixing legislation.

"Such legislation would serve only to subvert our free enterprise system by suspending the laws of supply and demand for the personal aggrandizement of employer groups at the expense of the nation's wage earners and the public in general," Pitts said.

California's representatives on the Rules Committee are B. F. Sisk (D) and H. Allen Smith (R). Letters in opposition to HR 3669 and price-fixing legislation of any sort should be addressed to each of the members of the California delegation as well as to the constituent's own elected representatives.

A resolution calling for repeal of California's Fair Trade Act which was adopted by delegates to the California Labor Federation's convention in Long Beach in August 1962 noted that a State Assembly Committee study had revealed that "the artificial price and profit support of so-called 'fair trade' was costing consumers of California \$350,000,000 on the purchase of just those items now under resale price maintenance contracts in California."

Living Wages Defined

"No business which depends for existence on paying less than living wages to its workers has any right to continue in this country. By living wages I mean more than a bare subsistence level — I mean the wages of decent living."—Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Far Right Screams But Senate Unit OK's Test Ban Pact

Despite efforts by the fright peddlers of the radical right to scare the U.S. Senate into rejecting ratification of the proposed limited nuclear test ban treaty, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted 16 to 1 on August 29 to approve the treaty and on Wednesday issued a 26-page report setting forth its reasons.

The Committee concluded after 12 days of hearings that ratification of the pact to ban all except underground tests "represents a net advantage to the United States." The report noted that all but two of the expert witnesses who testified at the hearings found that the risks involved in the treaty were "acceptable" because of the superiority and "number and variety" of the nation's nuclear strike forces.

AFL-CIO President George Meany, the first public witness to testify before the Committee, had asserted that ratification of the treaty "is in the best interests of the country" despite its limitations.

Asserting that organized labor would "welcome the prospects for a reduction in atomic fallout," Meany warned, however, that we must "be on guard against political propaganda fallout from the sundry Soviet maneuvers for peace—on Communist terms."

In the course of his testimony he placed in the Committee's record the resolution adopted earlier in August by the AFL-CIO executive council which urged ratification of the treaty. He said that rumors of secret agreements between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. reflect a "cynical mistrust" of the President that is wholly unreasonable in view of the President's record in dealing with the Communists and pointed out that if the Soviets had developed an anti-missile missile, Krushchev "would not have backed away" in Cuba last October.

Among the shabby, scaremongering tricks the right wingers have resorted to in their attempts to torpedo the treaty are:

—A full page ad in the Washington Post with a bold headline screaming "National Disaster Impending! Senate Ratification of Test Ban Treaty Will Destroy our Country." The ad was sponsored by the Manion Forum, which is operated by Clarence Manion, an ex-dean of law at Notre Dame University who is a member of the National Council of the John Birch Society and an arch enemy of labor unions and most public interest legislation. Beneath the heading was the text of a speech by Rear Admiral Chester Ward (ret) that was carried by the Manion Forum radio network on August 4, 1962. Since his retirement, Ward has been associated with a number of ultra-conservative groups and served as a writer for the

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untouched by these problems than are the working people of Texas. In fact, in some ways we may be more vulnerable in the long run. As an example, our state has no serious long range economic studies under way to explore the problem of the vast unemployment and dislocation that could result from any serious shift in federal spending in the aerospace industries which form such an important sector of California's economy," Pitts said.

Pitts deplored the "fantastic threats and claims" that have been made by and in behalf of the corporate agribusiness interests in efforts to win extension of the bracero program beyond December 31, 1963.

"This hypocritical propaganda barrage is aimed at deluding the public that it will have to pay the price of such action by going without the fruits and vegetables that are commonplace in the average American household today," Pitts said.

For example, he said, California's

American Security Council, a group of retired militarists, businessmen and ex-FBI men who appear to be making a profession out of the threat of Communism.

—The Citizen's Congressional Committee, an off-shoot of racist Gerald L. K. Smith's operation, is conducting a massive petition campaign for one million names which will be three miles in length.

—Young Americans for Freedom, the Goldwater clique in the Young Republicans, is also conducting a petition drive, asserting that Russia has broken 50 of 52 major agreements with the U.S. Interestingly, Senator Goldwater, who has indicated opposition to the treaty, was invited to attend a top-level meeting with Administration leaders on the treaty last week but declined to attend.

—California Congressman James B. Utt, a congressional darling of the ultra-conservatives, beclouded consideration of the treaty ban early in August when he declared that the Russians have supremacy in atomic weapons. Chester Ward, the retired Admiral, was subsequently found to have been the source of authority for Utt's statement. The right-wingers apparently have blind faith in Ward's word since it flies into the face of the position taken by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, our top military leaders, who have endorsed ratification of the treaty.

Director of Agriculture, testifying before a House Subcommittee, charged that the American housewife would have to pay up to four times as much for tomatoes due to the reduced production resulting from increased wages that would have to be paid to domestic workers if the bracero program ended.

This allegation is deceptive, Pitts said, but "not one member of that Subcommittee nor, to my knowledge, any newspaper in the nation, challenged such a grossly misleading statement."

Pitts pointed out:

- 1—That the farmers' canning tomato price in California has been forced down to \$22 or \$23 a ton by the giant canneries.
- 2—That the farm labor expenditures of the large growers in California have amounted to \$10 a ton.
- 3—That the same ton of tomatoes sold at retail well in excess of \$250.

"In other words," Pitts observed, "of the more than \$250 paid by housewives for a ton of tomatoes, about \$10 or less than four per cent are accounted for by the wages received by farm workers. Even if the ending of the bracero program resulted in a 100 per cent increase of the value of farm workers' wages and fringe benefits and the entire costs were passed on to the consumer—an assumption, incidentally, that by no means follows—it would mean that the supermarket cost of a 2-pound can of tomatoes would rise by one cent above its present 25-cent level."

Yet, Pitts observed, just a few weeks ago the United States Senate by voting 62-23 to extend the bracero program another year indicated that it preferred to be fed fiction than to ferret out the facts.

After reviewing some of the historic differences in the economic development of the two states and asserting that these differences accounted in part for the fact that the promoters of right to work legislation were successful in Texas but failed to sell their scheme in California, Pitts warned that despite these differences organized labor in both Texas and California may face some "serious reversals nationally and at the state levels in public policy . . . unless we really attack the unfinished jobs ahead of us—organization, education and political action—with a new burst of vigor and insight."

In the course of its convention the Texas delegates approved a special assessment of five cents per month per member for 20 months to beef up its COPE program. The special assessment is intended to raise at least \$120,000 for political education activities.

March for Jobs and Freedom Leads To Listing of 10 Civil Rights Demands

At the conclusion of the impressive civil rights march on Washington on August 28 in which an estimated 50,000 union members participated, the civil rights leaders met with President Kennedy to press for immediate action on a broad program to provide "jobs and freedom," the theme of the march, for all. Here are the 10 demands that resulted from that historic meeting:

- 1—A comprehensive civil rights bill from the present Congress, including such items as access to public accommodations, adequate and integrated education, better housing and protection of the right to vote.
- 2—A federal Fair Employment Practices Act barring discrimination in employment.
- 3—A massive federal program to train and place unemployed workers.
- 4—Withholding of federal funds from all programs in which discrimination exists.
- 5—Authorization for the Attorney General to seek injunctions on behalf of individuals whose rights are violated.
- 6—A national minimum wage act that will give all Americans a decent standard of living. (Government surveys show that anything less than \$2 an hour fails to do this. The present federal minimum wage is only \$1.25.
- 7—Extension of the federal wage-hour law to cover millions still unprotected.
- 8—Desegregation of all public schools in 1963.
- 9—A stronger executive order prohibiting discrimination in all housing programs supported by federal funds.
- 10—Enforcement of the 14th amendment—reducing Congressional representation of states where citizens are denied the right to vote.

Senate Passes Job Training Bill

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million bill to permit the federal government to pay the full cost of the program during the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1964.

The action, taken by voice vote after rejection of Republican efforts to delay or alter the bill, may rescue the jobless retraining program which would otherwise be all but completely terminated on June 30, 1964.

The MDT Act originally called for states to split the costs of the retraining program in the third year of its operation but only four states have thus far voted funds to start the 50 percent matching phase. The 25 states that failed to

do so will not meet again until 1965 and are unlikely to call special sessions to act on the issue.

Expansion of the program, which is aimed at easing the nation's mounting unemployment, is part of President Kennedy's omnibus civil rights program. Senate passage of the bill represents the first action taken by either House on any aspect of the civil rights package.

In urging approval for the measure, Administration spokesmen said that the retraining program was just attaining a pace that assured success in meeting its goal of 400,000 trainees in its third year of operation.

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gressman Laurie C. Battle of Alabama. Battle once campaigned on a racist platform against Senator John Sparkman. His votes as a congressman were generally against the interests of working people.

In a printed statement addressed "to American management," BIPAC described itself as "the new force in politics" and asserted that its aim is to "protect the principle of individual freedom" and "to represent the competitive, free enterprise viewpoint.

The new organization will devote the bulk of its energies and financial resources to races for seats in the House of Representatives although "proper consideration" will also be given to critical Senate races, the statement said.

The selection of candidates would be based on "proven standards of performance" such as the potential candidate's position of leadership, voter appeal, the effects of his race on another contest, the psychological by-products of his victory or defeat, the marginal nature of his district and above all, the candidate's political and economic principles, the statement explained.

A tentative membership scale of dues calls for top corporation people to kick in \$99 a year, second rank officials such as vice presidents \$25 a year, and others \$10.

BIPAC is expected to concentrate its efforts in marginal congressional districts where the edge of victory in the past has been five per cent or less, or in sparsely settled states where relatively small campaign contributions might have a significant impact.

Since Battle said he hopes to enroll members in the "hundreds of thousands," BIPAC may have a pretty substantial slush fund by the time next year's Presidential election rolls around.

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