

## Teachers Back Bill To Merge School Districts

A bill to consolidate California's 1,585 elementary and high school districts into 108 by creating county school districts and allowing 50 chartered cities now maintaining districts to continue them won the unanimous support of the Executive Council of the California Federation of Teachers at a meeting in Los Angeles last Saturday.

The measure, AB 46 (Unruh) would provide \$75 million in new state support in addition to the \$40 million already provided to meet school enrollment growth. The assets and liabilities of the merged districts would be transferred under the provisions of the bill to the new county districts.

Robert Hall, chairman of the CFT's legislative committee, said that the measure would give "California citizens the means to cut the Gordian knot of financial crisis in the public schools without reducing the quality of education their students now enjoy."

It also would provide "a genuine opportunity of increasing the operating efficiency of the schools and of extending equal education for all children in them," Hall explained.

Moreover, the teacher's union spokesman added, it would give citizens "the chance to ease the plight of the small property owner who for years has been groaning under the burden of his tax support of the schools."

According to the state's legislative analyst, "AB 46 would automatically provide substantial tax relief to taxpayers presently residing in most less wealthy districts."

About half of the additional \$75 million

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## Move To Torpedo Fair Housing Law To Go On Ballot; CREA Front-Group Hires Racist

California voters will face a critical moral choice—essentially a choice between first or second-class citizenship for all—either at the June primary or the November general election when they vote on an initiative amendment to the state constitution that would repeal the Rumford Fair Housing Act and prevent the state or local governments from enacting laws to ban or discourage racial or religious discrimination in housing.

## LBJ Signs \$11.5 Billion Tax Cut Bill

President Lyndon B. Johnson signed an \$11.5 billion tax cut bill—the biggest in the nation's history—this week after a Senate-House conference committee resolved differences between the \$11.6 billion Senate measure and the \$11.1 billion House bill in a manner urged by the AFL-CIO.

As a result of the President's action, a \$27 million-a-day cut in federal income tax withholding rates is expected to be reflected in paychecks after March 5.

The conferees agreed to keep the

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THOS. L. PITTS  
Executive  
Secretary-Treasurer

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## State Must Separate Sheep from Goats In Farm Labor Housing Issue, Fed Says

The California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, has called on the state's legislators to separate the sheep from the goats in seeking solutions to farm labor housing problems that—in the absence of effective action—may be compounded by the termination of the bracero program at the end of this year.

In testimony submitted to a state Senate committee on farm labor housing in Sacramento last Wednesday, the Federation said that a distinction must be made between the felt needs of the huge, diversified corporate farming operations and those of independent farmers who depend for their livelihood on the price of their crops.

Why?

Because the interest of corporate farms with their own processing sheds, canneries and frozen food operations are often diametrically opposed to the interests of the independent farmer, according to Thos L. Pitts, the Federation's secretary-treasurer.

While the independent farmer wants

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## Welfare-Pension Sums Rise But 1 in 5 Workers Excluded

Although the assets held in employee welfare and pension benefit plans totaled \$66 billion in 1963 and constitute one of the largest concentrations of investment accumulation in our country, "fully one-fifth of all employees today have no welfare or pension protection of any kind," Secretary of Labor W. Willard Wirtz disclosed this week.

The Secretary's statement, issued in conjunction with the release of the Annual Report to Congress on the Administration of the Welfare and Pension Plans Disclosure Act noted:

"While millions of Americans are enjoying unprecedented protection against accident and illness and old age, millions of others are falling farther and farther behind the rest, enjoying no security, and have a diminishing opportunity to participate in the economic life of the nation. Fully one-fifth of all employees today have no welfare or pension protection of any kind.

"The fact that more than half of all

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## COPE PARLEY MARCH 6

A tri-state area COPE conference to map plans for the forthcoming Presidential election year will convene at the El Rancho in Sacramento at 9:30 a.m. next Friday, March 6. Registration for the conference, which will be keyed to the growing political threat of the radical right and will attract delegates from California, Hawaii and Nevada, will open at 8:00 a.m. Delegate credential forms may be obtained from the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO. Additional delegates may, however, register at the conference.

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## Welfare-Pension Fund Assets Climb But One-Fifth of U.S. Workers Excluded

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the nation's funds in private welfare and pension plans is held in only 100 of these plans is a painful contrast of the knowledge that fully one-fifth of our people are living in poverty, without any of the benefits of similar protections against ill health and unemployment," Wirtz pointed out.

"With every new accounting of our massive wealth, there is a corresponding accounting of the national conscience. Unless we use our wealth to meet insofar as we can, the needs of the aged, the ill, the young widow raising a family alone, the poor farm family moving into an urban environment, the young being raised in slums and all of the other disadvantaged Americans, then we remain poor in spirit," he observed.

A report, required by Section 14 (b) of the Act, disclosed that over 22 million persons—not including family members covered by the plan as beneficiaries—now participate in the plans.

"Altogether, a third of our labor force has a stake in plans to provide them with hospital, surgical, or medical care, and to assure them of an income in the event of sickness, accident, disability or unemployment," Wirtz said.

About two-thirds of all welfare plans provide hospitalization. Three out of five provide surgical benefits; 60 per-

cent include life insurance; and 50 percent medical care.

Retirement for age or service provisions is in nearly all pension plans and death benefits are provided in four-fifths of them. Provision for retirement for disability is included in nearly three-fourths of the plans.

The concentration of increases in benefits was primarily to workers in major industries and in metropolitan areas, Wirtz said.

In larger cities, nine out of 10 employees in manufacturing and utility industries received some benefits.

Protection was less frequent and less extensive in smaller towns and cities where few benefits were afforded to employees in marginal industries, local retail stores and service industries. Moreover, such protections "are virtually nonexistent for domestic and agricultural workers," the Secretary said.

"Although a substantial portion of the welfare plans provide hospitalization benefits and some form of medical protection, an estimated 18 million workers have no such financial backstop in the event of sickness or needed hospital care," he added.

The \$66 billion figure does not include government retirement programs, with reserves of over \$40 billion, or Old Age Survivors and Disability Insurance, with another \$20 billion in reserve.

At their present rate of growth the assets of such private welfare and pension plans are expected to reach \$100 billion by 1970.

## Cranston Wins CDC Backing for U.S. Senate Seat

The California Democratic Council, representing some 70,000 Democratic club members in the state, has endorsed state Controller Alan Cranston for the U.S. Senate seat now held by Senator Clair Engle (D.—Red Bluff).

Engle, who underwent brain surgery last year from which he has not fully recovered, claimed he was "fit and able to run for office, to win and to serve" but CDC delegates were evidently unconvinced. In the endorsement balloting, Cranston polled 1,197 votes, Rep. James Roosevelt 727 and Engle ran a poor third with 281.

The day after the balloting, Roosevelt, despite his surprisingly strong showing, threw his support to Cranston and announced that he would seek re-election in the 26th (Los Angeles) Congressional District.

Roosevelt indicated, however, that if Engle should make a dramatic recovery between now and the June 2 primary, he would not hesitate to switch his support from Cranston to Engle.

## President Signs Bill To Cut Taxes By \$11.5 Billion

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maximum tax on capital gains profits from the sale of stocks or property at 25 percent instead of lowering it, as the House bill proposed, to 21 percent. They also agreed to liberalize sick pay tax exclusion benefits.

Present law excludes up to \$100 a week in sick pay from taxation starting with the seventh day of illness or the first day of hospitalization. But the House had voted to prolong the waiting period before sick pay exclusion took effect to 30 days.

The AFL-CIO strongly urged the conferees to amend the bill to permit continued exclusion of sickness or injury benefits which do not exceed 75 percent of a worker's normal pay up to a ceiling of \$75 a week with no change in the present waiting period. This will assist large groups of workers who receive only partial pay when sick.

After 30 days of illness or injury the exclusion would apply to all forms of sick pay or wage continuation with the ceiling rising to \$100 a week as under present law.

A Senate amendment that would have allowed a tax deduction for contributions to political parties or candidates of up to \$50 for a single person or \$100 for a couple was killed. Organized labor opposed the proposal because it would have principally benefited upper-income taxpayers and could not have been used by persons who did not itemize their deductions.

AFL-CIO efforts to reduce the special tax exemption allowed Americans employed overseas were seriously watered down, and a labor-backed amendment to permit physically-handicapped persons to deduct transportation costs to and from work was rejected.

The new tax law will result in an average tax cut of about 19 percent for individuals and 10 percent for corporations.

The reduction, to take effect over a two-year period, will amount to about \$6.14 billion for individuals and \$1.56 billion for corporations for the 1964 calendar year, with the figures rising to \$9.12 billion for individuals and \$2.36 billion for corporations for the 1965 calendar year.

The law gives the largest proportionate tax cuts to persons in the lower and upper income groups with reductions ranging from 15.5 percent in some brackets to 100 percent for some extremely low income levels.

Over the two year period, however, less than half of the total \$11.5 billion slash is expected to reach the hands of the nation's low income wage and salary earners, some economists say.

## School Districts' Merger Bill Backed

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lion in state support would be made up from budget economies.

Advantages of the "county district plan," which, according to the state's legislative analyst, has been kicked around in the state legislature since 1920, are that it would:

- —Promote efficiencies to pave the way for significant property tax reductions.
- —Eliminate gross inequities in educational opportunities resulting from the current situation in which one district spends \$268 per child per year while another spends \$1,261 per child per year.
- —Eliminate inequities in the tax base which now ranges from less than \$3,000 to more than \$600,000 per child.
- —Stimulate voter interest in education.

Principal opposition to the measure to date, stems from some school administrators and trustee organizations who fear that their jobs will be eliminated. Under terms of California's laws of consolidation, however, such persons will be protected for a year and some of those who cannot be placed in some necessary supervisorial job can always be used as teachers in the classroom, proponents of the measure point out.

## Move To Kill Fair Housing Qualifies; Racist Link Bared

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ist Citizens Council of America, is administrative assistant to Assemblyman E. Richard Barnes (R. San Diego) and publisher of the California Statesmen, which is regarded as an ultra right-wing publication.

Although CREA officials have repeatedly insisted that they do not oppose fair housing and desegregation but only government intervention, their selection of Shearer to spearhead their drive suggests that pro-segregationist propaganda may be extensively employed in the campaign.

An inkling of Shearer's philosophy was bared in The Citizen, the publication of the Citizens Council which has carried frequent articles by Shearer. Here are some excerpts:

"Conservative . . . Republicans have no chance to win the Negro vote, but they do have a chance to win the southern white vote—if the GOP will kick free from the ball and chain of integration.

"Would this be too great a compromise? No . . . because a vast majority of Americans in and out of the south actually favor segregation in one form or another . . . they may not talk for it, but they practice it.

"What Republicans must consider nationally is this question: To what can we make the most effective appeal—to big-city Negroes accustomed to the welfare dole, or to southern conservative segregationists whose views on economic questions are generally in line with the Republican economic philosophy?"

Shearer, who reportedly regards the Rumford Fair Housing Act as "on a par with cancer, TV and leprosy," is also reported to have said that he sees no moral issue involved and claims there is no distinction between property rights and human rights.

In confirming that the Committee for Home Protection had hired Shearer, a CREA official stated:

"The Committee considers him a capable person in the political and public relations field."

Shearer's employer, Assemblyman Barnes, was San Diego director of the right wing Christian Crusade in 1961-62.

No decision has yet been made whether the initiative measure would be voted on at the June primary or the November general election.

Commenting on this decision this week, Governor Edmund G. Brown said:

"There are a great many factors. It will bring out every minority vote in the state of California.

"I will try to weigh the question of whether it would be better to get it over with in the June primary or when all the people vote in November."

## State Must Separate Sheep From Goats In Farm Labor Housing Issue, Fed Says

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to maximize the price for his product, the corporate farm often is interested primarily in keeping the price of the commodity as low as possible to maximize sales volume and profits from canning, freezing and other related operations, Pitts' statement pointed out.

This situation vitally affects the ability of both the independent farmer and the farm worker to purchase housing, the AFL-CIO said.

A profit statement released recently by the DiGiorgio Fruit Corporation, disclosing that this "integrated" farming complex realized a 400 percent boost in profits in 1963 over the previous year **DESPITE LOSSES FROM CALIFORNIA FARM AND WINE OPERATIONS**, "dramatically illustrated" this situation, the state AFL-CIO said. The profit statement noted that "record sales by S & W Fine Foods," a DiGiorgio subsidiary, was one of the principal factors contributing to the record earnings.

"There is every reason to believe that depressed market prices at the farm level are precisely what the doctor ordered as far as the DiGiorgio-type integrated operators are concerned. . . .

"To the integrator, volume is the key to success particularly in the processing and distribution ends of the establishment. This type of operation usually handles the produce marketed by the smaller growers in addition to its own farm production. The key to volume lies in the area of lower prices in order to facilitate sales. In turn, the principal guarantee of low prices is the creation of a cheap supply of labor and, as we all know, the primary agent employed for this purpose has been the bracero program."

Essentially, Pitts' statement said, the DiGiorgio Corporation's profit statement means that corporate agriculture can and does "earn handsome profits even when farm prices are at levels ruinous even to the most efficient of the smaller scale non-integrated growers. Putting the matter the other way round, it means that most farmers are profoundly dependent upon decent market prices for their produce while the DiGiorgios are only concerned in a peripheral manner."

Hence, the Federation's statement explained "the farmer who is not blessed with a cannery, packing shed or frozen food plant and who does not perform a middleman's function with regard to his neighboring producers" should recognize that the higher the cost of hired labor to the DiGiorgio-type farm the more his own labor and the commodity he produces will be worth.

In short, the independent farmer—the vast majority of farmers in the state—would benefit substantially by an increase in farm labor wage rates.

"If he thinks about it, such a farmer

would quickly realize that if braceros or any other type of hired labor became available tomorrow at ten cents an hour, it would spell his doom rather than his salvation in short order," the Federation pointed out.

"The simple mechanics of the marketplace are such as to dictate that lower wages available to integrated agribusiness will be converted almost overnight to still greater expansion, depressed farm commodity prices, bankruptcy for his variety of grower (the non-integrated) and a bonanza for the farmers who labor daily on Montgomery Street," the statement explained.

In summary, the income problem assumes "the key role in relation to coping with both the housing problem and the matter of assuring an adequate and dependable labor supply to agriculture," the Federation's statement asserted.

These are some of the "harsh economic facts" that must be understood in seeking solutions for farm labor housing problems, the state AFL-CIO said. Other pertinent facts cited by the Federation included:

- —A 1962 study by the Governor's Advisory Committee on Housing Problems found that more than 80 percent of farm worker families lived in dwellings that could not be considered adequate by present standards of health, safety and comfort.
- —Assuming that 75 percent of the 117,500 year-round hired domestic workers were heads of families, the study indicated that "the industry would barely be able to meet the housing needs of 17 percent of its permanent work force, let alone the additional housing of the local temporary domestic work force averaging 95,500 and an average non-local domestic work force of 30,700."
- —Despite the fact that almost all state housing policy has been directed (heretofore) to the problems of the so-called migrant worker, this group of 30,700 workers made up only about 12 percent of the total domestic hired work force. Almost 70 percent of these were intrastate migrants, the study indicated. (This raises the point that if prevailing depressed farm wage rates were nonetheless sufficient to attract nearly 70 percent of the migrant workers needed from the state's domestic work force, a substantial increase in wage rates might well produce an interstate migrant labor surplus.)
- —The median income of families headed by a general field worker came to only \$2,207 annually.
- —About 1.6 percent of California's

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## Farm Labor Housing Issue Cited As Essentially a Low-Income Problem

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99,232 farms sustained approximately 38.6 percent of all hired farm labor costs in the state.

- Less than five percent of the state's 99,232 farms employed 61 percent of the hired farm workers, indicating that the corporate farms whose interests are best served by keeping commodity prices low, are the greatest users of the cheap bracero labor.

To come to grips with the farm labor housing problem, the Federation told the committee that it must first be recognized for what it is—a low-income problem.

**"The fulfillment of urgent rural housing needs for low income families, therefore, can only be realized as a result of more liberal mortgage terms and through an imaginative approach**

## Radio-TV Stations' Sale Concentrates Ownership

A group sale of 11 radio and television stations that, according to E. William Henry, Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, "unquestionably adds to ownership concentration in the broadcasting industry" was formally approved by the FCC by a five to one vote last week.

Four of the stations involved in the sale are in California—a TV station in Bakersfield and two radio stations and a TV station in San Diego. The stations are: KERO-TV, Channel 23, Bakersfield; KFMB-AM, KFMB-FM and KFMB-TV Channel 8, San Diego.

Time-Life Broadcasting Company, Inc., a subsidiary of the publishing company which acquired KOGO-TV as well as KOGO-AM and KOGO-FM in San Diego in 1962, is the new owner of the Bakersfield station.

The purchase raises Time-Life's chain to six TV stations, five AM and four FM radio stations.

to public housing," Pitts' statement declared.

He suggested a vast expansion of the "below-market interest" program in the 1961 Housing Act to make it more applicable to the needs of rural communities and to permit development of single family dwelling units on an ownership as well as rental basis for moderate income groups by eligible non-profit organizations, limited dividend corporations and public agencies.

But since half of California's farm families have incomes "ranging downward from the \$2,000 level annually, even such an expansion "would still leave monthly payments and rentals for decent housing beyond the reach of a great many of these workers," Pitts noted.

In view of this, he suggested that the equivalent of subsidies to public housing projects be made available directly to families to provide a broader choice to meet individual and community needs.

In addition the Federation urged creation of a State Housing and Development Agency with the authority to proceed directly or through corporations chartered by the state to carry out the development of housing and community facility programs by mutual agreement with rural communities.

The Governor has opened the current special session to permit creation of such an agency, but not with the authority and responsibilities recommended by the Federation.

Such an agency's functions should also include rehabilitation and Code enforcement in unincorporated areas, encouraging creation of bodies such as community service districts authorized to borrow and to develop adequate community facilities; providing technical expertise for preliminary planning regarding community facilities; and offering bond guarantees for low interest loans for community facilities developed.

**"Nothing warrants greater priority than the creation of a State Housing Agency with authority equal to the housing challenge," the Federation's statement declared.**

## Rules To Protect Workers From Radiation in Effect

Federal standards to protect workers against the harmful effects of radiation exposure have been issued by U.S. Secretary of Labor W. Willard Wirtz.

The standards, which apply to federal supply contracts under the Walsh-Healey Public Contracts Act, provide for uniformity in caution signs, labels and signals; instruction of personnel; posting of regulations and procedures; storage of radioactive materials; waste disposal; and notification of incidents.

They are intended to provide protections from health hazards resulting from industrial use of such radiation sources as isotope radiation gauges, industrial X-ray machines, particle accelerators, high voltage electronic vacuum tubes, and natural isotopes. The new regulations go into effect today (Feb. 28, 1964).

Application of the new regulations in states having regulatory agreements with the Atomic Energy Commission will be considered at 10:00 a.m. on April 13 in the U.S. Department of Commerce auditorium in Washington, D.C. California is one of six states now having such agreements with the AEC.

To avoid dual federal regulation, agreements with the AEC-licensed operations that are in conformance with applicable AEC regulations will be considered in compliance with the new standards, the Labor Department said.

### ON UNDERSTANDING LABOR

**"To remember the loneliness, the fear and insecurity of men who once had to walk alone in huge factories, beside huge machines—to realize that labor unions have meant new dignity and pride to millions of our countrymen—human companionship on the job and music in the home—to be able to see what larger pay checks mean, not to a man as an employee, but as a husband and as a father—to know these things is to understand organized labor."**—Adlai Stevenson.

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