

Good Housing for Slumbound Fifth of Americans Urged

Delegates representing more than 1.3 million AFL-CIO members in California deplored the fact that although good housing in well-planned neighborhoods is well within the economy's reach, a fifth of the nation's population still remains "slum-bound."

"The social costs of slum housing," delegates to the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO convention in San Francisco declared last week, "reach far beyond those paid directly by the slum dwellers themselves." In such forms as high crime and disease rates, these social costs are shouldered by the entire community, the union representatives said in adopting a policy statement on housing that calls for comprehensive federal and state programs "to place decent housing within the reach of all Americans."

Essential to the solution of the nation's housing problems, the Federation declared, is the provision of long-term, low-interest federal loans at or even below actual cost.

In addition, the Federation's statement called for:

- Construction of at least 2.5 million dwellings annually to bring the housing market within the range of low and middle income families.
- Construction of at least 200,000 low rent public housing units.

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Civil Rights Implementation Seen As Boon to All Workers

Organized labor in California has roundly condemned the "Goldwater-led coalition of racists, right-wingers, and 'right to work' forces, along with the Communist-led and other extremists of the left, seeking to exploit the prejudice and misunderstanding inevitably bred by a 345-year heritage of third-class citizenship."

Fed Seeks New UI Benefits And Financing

Delegates to the state AFL-CIO convention in San Francisco last week charged the State Legislature with permitting "the almost steady deterioration" of California's unemployment insurance program and called for immediate legislation to overhaul the financing provisions of the law to provide a level of benefits sufficient to meet the needs of the state's economy and its jobless workers.

Pointing out that the program's basic objectives of stabilizing purchasing power and aiding the jobless "are being largely denied," resulting in more and more of the costs of unemployment be-

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State Minimum Wage Goes to \$1.30 As FLSA Coverage Is Extended

Although sidetracked for 14 years, an old California tradition will be partially restored on August 30 when the state's minimum wage moves to \$1.30 an hour for most women and minors. This will be the first time since 1950 that the state has recaptured its former long-term superiority over federal FLSA minimums.

For several years prior to 1950, California's minimum rested at 65 cents an hour compared to 40 cents under FLSA. Before that time, the state's unbroken record of higher protections included an 18-year period up to 1938 totally devoid of any federal protection while California's floor under permissible wages rested at a uniform 33.3 cents an hour level.

The state's five cent an hour increase in minimum wage rates for women and

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Medicare and Social Security Needs Stressed

While pledging to continue its "un-remitting fight" to win a medical bill of rights for the aged through a prepaid health program financed under the social security system, delegates to the California Labor Federation's biennial convention last week reaffirmed their support for a medicare program to cover all Americans and called for sharp increases in social security benefits.

"Despite desperate attempts, private insurance corporations have been unable to provide anything but expensive, limited and restrictive aged health care policies, the representatives of AFL-CIO unions throughout the state declared in adopting a policy statement on social security.

The Kerr-Mills program, the statement said, "has been limited to the very poor, and 'only a few of the 31 states participating in that program can provide care for persons of modest means.'"

Asserting that "lack of an adequate prepaid program is a major source of anxiety to the aged and a drain on their families," the state AFL-CIO delegates urged enactment of a complete surgical and hospitalization program under social security to end the dependency and humiliation that compound the pain of serious illness among the nation's elderly citizens.

Among other things, the delegates also called for:

- A boost in the taxable wage base from \$4800 to "at least \$10,000 along with tax rate hikes sufficient to provide adequate benefits."

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The nation "can find neither peace nor the fulfillment of its ideals unless these predatory forces are defeated and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is vigorously enforced and supplemented as the need arises," delegates to the California Labor Federation's five-day convention last week in the San Francisco Civic Auditorium declared in adopting a policy statement on civil rights.

The delegates, representing thousands of AFL-CIO unions throughout the state, warned that "too many Americans have become so accustomed to third-class citizenship in our midst that they are basically incapable of understanding the urgency and fervor of the civil rights struggle swirling about them."

The statement voiced confidence, however, that the nation would recognize that not only the domestic tranquility, "but ultimately the very survival of a

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minors is applicable to 13 of the 14 industry and occupation wage orders in existence under Industrial Welfare Commission procedures. Although the fourteenth order, applicable to agricultural occupations, remains unchanged, the Commission very recently selected a 15-member wage board scheduled to meet on September 29 to study the order's adequacy and to recommend any necessary changes.

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- Expanded urban renewal efforts.
- Metropolitan area planning to avoid balkanizing our communities.
- Creation of a cabinet-level Department of Housing and Community Affairs.

On the state level, the Federation said that "excessive land and financing costs" presently bar about 53 percent of California's population from the housing market. In view of this, there is a "critical need to harness the state's inexpensive credit through Cal-Vet type programs to supplement the limited federal loan funds available," the statement said.

To spearhead a solution for the state's wholly unique housing problems, the statement urged creation of a California Housing and Development Agency. The proposed agency's principal function would be to foster federal legislation to meet California's unique needs, to analyze the state's housing requirements, and to administer state housing programs.

The Commission's orders set forth standards for hours and working conditions as well as wage and overtime provisions. They also provide for meal and rest periods and specify standards regarding seating, lifting, ventilation, lighting, rest room facilities, and other conditions of employment.

The 13 orders undergoing the increase to \$1.30 an hour cover the following industries: manufacturing; personal service; canning, freezing and preserving; public housekeeping; laundry, linen supply, dry cleaning and dyeing; mercantile; handling products after harvest; transportation; amusement and recreation; broadcasting; motion picture; preparing agricultural products for market on the farm; and professional, technical, clerical and similar occupations.

FLSA CHANGES AFFECT 3.6 MILLION

A few days after the \$1.30 state minimum becomes effective some 3.6 million American workers will be affected by FLSA changes pursuant to congressional action in 1961.

For those recently covered employees still subject to only \$1.00 an hour FLSA minimums, the floor will rise to the \$1.15 level as of September 3. This will be paralleled by reduction of their present 44-hour workweek to a 42-hour standard and a requirement that any hours beyond that number be compensated at one and one-half times their regular rate.

Employees covered by FLSA prior to 1961 will remain subject to the present \$1.25 an hour minimum with overtime rates applicable after 40 hours a week. On September 3, 1965, these standards will also apply to those embraced by the 1961 amendments for the first time.

New AFL-CIO Pamphlet On Shorter Hours

National AFL-CIO's continuing campaign to reduce working hours has just been bolstered by publication of an attractive three-color pamphlet entitled "Shorter Hours: To Create Jobs."

Based on material appearing earlier this year in the American Federationist, the pamphlet also includes the text of AFL-CIO's convention resolution and its Executive Council's statement on reduction of hours. In addition, there are four tables dealing

with current statistics relating to this subject matter.

Single copies of the publication are available without cost. Up to 100 copies, the charge is 20 cents each; orders exceeding 100 copies are at the rate of \$15 per hundred.

The pamphlet, identified as Publication No. 135, can be ordered from the Pamphlet Division, AFL-CIO Department of Publications, 815 - 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D. C. 20006. Checks should be made payable to William F. Schnitzler, Secretary-Treasurer, AFL-CIO.

Regional Water Plan Key to Economic Growth

In its recently completed convention, California labor took a swipe at what it called "new concepts of federal-state partnership . . . developed to obtain federal water development funds without the anti-monopoly protections of reclamation law" and declared that a fully coordinated regional approach was apparently the only "effective solution to California's water and power development problems."

Asserting that the enforcement of "anti-monopoly protections" is essential to preclude "unjust enrichment . . . and enhancement of the economic and political power of giant landholders," delegates to the California Labor Federation's biennial convention in San Francisco adopted a policy statement on water resources a week ago calling for revival of the United Western Water Development Plan.

The United Western Plan embodies a coordinated basin-wide approach to federal water and power development.

"Organized labor recognizes," the statement declared, "that the coordinated development of water resources is vital to our economic future and national policies to stimulate economic growth and full employment."

"At the same time, however, if anti-monopoly policies in the distribution of benefits are not fully enforced, such development feeds the land barons and strengthens the centers of economic and political power in the agribusiness community that command the use of braceros and enforce conditions of life and labor detrimental to the farm worker and the small farmer alike," the state AFL-CIO declared.

"There can be no effective war on poverty in our rich valleys to aid farm workers and small farmers unless compatible water distribution policies are enforced to preclude monopoly domination and to achieve diffusion of economic and political power," it added.

Medicare and Social Security Needs Stressed

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- Computation of benefits on years of highest earnings.
- Extension of coverage to all excluded workers.
- Reduction in the minimum age for retirement.
- Protection against short-term as well as long-term disability, and
- Application of an escalator principle to boost benefits as an offset to increases in living costs.

Here's What New Rights Law Does

The key provisions of the Civil Rights Act signed into law by President Johnson on July 2 are as follows:

Public Accommodations — Bans discrimination in establishments offering food, lodging, gasoline or entertainment for the public. Authorizes the Attorney General to seek a civil injunction to prohibit a "pattern or practice" of illegal discrimination and permits him to request a three-judge court to hear the case.

Equal Employment Opportunities — Bans discrimination by employers or unions in hiring, firing, promotions, apprenticeship training and job referrals and sets up a five-member, bi-partisan Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to adjudicate complaints. Although the Commission members, to be appointed by the President, may be appointed immediately, the balance of the employment section of the Act does not take effect for one year.

Federal Funds — Authorizes Federal agencies to withhold funds from any program in which discrimination is found.

School Desegregation — Authorizes the Attorney General to file suits to compel desegregation of public schools, parks, playgrounds, libraries and swimming pools. He may undertake such action only after notifying the local school board or appropriate authority of the complaint and allowing them reasonable time to take corrective action.

Voting — Prohibits the application of different standards to Negro and white applicants who seek to register to vote and sets up safeguards to assure the fairness of literacy tests. A sixth grade education is specified as presumptive proof of literacy, subject to evidence to the contrary. It also directs courts to expedite voting cases.

Community Relations — Sets up a Community Relations Service in the Department of Commerce which is authorized to seek voluntary solutions of community problems stemming from discrimination.

Civil Rights Commission — Extends its life four years and grants it authority to serve as a national clearing house on civil rights and to investigate vote fraud cases.

The measure also authorizes the Attorney General to intervene in private suits that involve equal protection of the law and directs the Census Bureau to gather voting statistics based on race, color and national origin in areas recommended by the Civil Rights Commission as well as on a nationwide basis in the 1970 census.

The census information could presumably be used as a basis for reducing representation in the House under the

Civil Rights Implementation Seen As Boon to All Workers

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world that is two-thirds non-white pivots on this very issue."

It declared that "the time for slogans and lip service" was past and that now was the time for "specific action and genuine effort at transforming our individual and governmental attitudes in order to bring us abreast of the ideals that we have so unhesitatingly proclaimed and encouraged in every quarter of the globe."

Organized labor's vigorous opposition to the realty interests' segregated housing initiative, (Proposition No. 14), was reflected in the policy statement's assertion that "California's most pressing need in the field of human rights and equal opportunity is the preservation and full implementation of our present state laws." This opposition was later formalized by unanimous convention action calling for "a thunderous NO vote on this morally reprehensible and economically destructive proposition."

In hailing the new Civil Rights Act, the delegates pointed out that its passage marks the "dawning of a new day in which it will be more difficult for unscrupulous employers to play off the workers of one state against those of another" and "ushers in a new era in which organizing the unorganized . . . will become much more feasible."

The statement also declared that the new Rights Act, by broadening equal employment opportunity, will add "irresistible momentum to the drive for a

14th Amendment for states that deny the equal right to vote.

In any criminal contempt case arising under the Act, except voting rights cases, defendants are entitled to a jury trial on demand, with a limit on sentences of six months in prison and a \$1,000 fine.

shorter workweek without any reduction in take-home pay."

Moreover, by insuring the right of all Americans to vote, the new measure "lights the fuse under the almost insurmountable Congressional roadblocks erected by the undemocratically elected Dixiecrat faction," the statement added.

"These obstacles have for years stymied legislation of profound importance to working people in all areas, including those related to job-creating programs," the AFL-CIO representatives asserted.

Necessity Is the Mother of . . .

"Labor unions . . . organized out of the necessities of the situation. A single employee was helpless in dealing with an employer. He was dependent ordinarily on his daily wage for the maintenance of himself and family. If the employer had refused to pay him the wages that he thought fair, he was nevertheless unable to leave the employ and to resist arbitrary and unfair treatment. The union was essential to give laborers opportunity to deal on equality with the employer. They united to exert influence upon him and to leave him in a body in order by this inconvenience to induce him to make better terms with them. They were withholding their labor of economic value to make him pay what they thought it was worth. The right to combine for such a lawful purpose has in many years not been denied by any court. A strike became a lawful instrument in a lawful economic struggle for competition between employer and employees as to the share or division between them of the product of labor and capital . . ."—Chief Justice William Howard Taft.

TV Previews AFL-CIO Film on Labor Day

An easy previewing of AFL-CIO's new film, "When the Day's Work Is Done," will be at the fingertips of virtually all northern California trade unionists as part of Labor Day's TV bill of fare.

The telecast schedule on Labor Day for this outstanding 27-minute film dealing with the community activities of the AFL-CIO is as follows:

Sacramento, KVIE (Channel 6), 7:30 p.m.

San Francisco, KQED (Channel 9), 8:00 p.m.

The film is slated to become avail-

able on a rental basis for \$3.00 from AFL-CIO's Film Division after September 15.

Sale copies, available after September 7, are priced at \$50 to AFL-CIO affiliates and \$95 to non-AFL-CIO groups. In ordering sale copies, checks payable to William F. Schnitzler should be forwarded to George T. Guernsey, AFL-CIO's Assistant Director of Education, 815 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington 6, D. C.

Efforts are currently under way to try scheduling local showings of the film in other parts of the state.

Updated Fact Sheet on Medicare Cites Reasons To Urge King-Anderson Bill OK

A comprehensive fact sheet on medicare which spells out the provisions of current legislation being considered by the second session of the 88th Congress to provide medical care for the aged through social security has been prepared by the AFL-CIO Legislative Department.

The measures (H.R. 3920 and S. 880) would enable working people to prepay—with matching employer contributions—the cost of hospital care and hospital-related services during their retirement years.

The current bills, sponsored by Congressman Cecil R. King (D-Calif.) and Senator Clinton Anderson (D-New Mexico), would provide the following health benefits to all persons 65 years of age and over, comprising some 18 million senior citizens:

- A choice of 45 days of hospital care with no cost to the patient or 90 days of hospital care with a maximum \$90 deductible or 180 days of hospital care with a maximum deductible equal to 2½ times the average cost of one day's hospitalization.
- Skilled nursing home services, after transfer from the hospital, up to 180 days.
- Outpatient hospital diagnostic services, as required, subject to a \$20 deductible amount for each diagnostic study.
- Home health services, up to 240 visits during a calendar year, to include nursing care and therapy.

While the King-Anderson legislation does not pay doctor's bills, the extent of benefits its passage would assure is far superior to any benefits currently available under private hospital insurance plans for the cost involved.

The fact sheet points out that medicare coverage for persons eligible under social security or the railroad retirement act would be financed by an increase of one-quarter of one percent in social security and railroad retirement taxes paid by employers and employees.

The maximum that any individual would pay in additional contributions for health benefits would be \$17.16 per year. The \$17.16 figure represents the one quarter of one percent increase on \$5,200 in annual earnings, the earnings base proposed in the King-Anderson legislation.

The fact sheet also points out the inadequacies of the Kerr-Mills program which was enacted by Congress in 1960.

"Only a fraction of the needy receive assistance" under the Kerr-Mills Medical Assistance for the Aged (MAA) because "many states have been unable or unwilling to provide their share of

funds, to set proper benefit standards and to set up the administrative machinery for the Kerr-Mills program," the fact sheet explains.

It also points out that the Kerr-Mills approach "does not help the retired person whose income is enough to keep him going under ordinary circumstances but who cannot afford the cost of a serious illness and cannot afford private health insurance that will give him any genuine degree of protection against major health costs."

Half the state programs restrict MAA eligibility when yearly income exceeds \$1,500 for an individual and \$2,000 for a couple. Two-thirds deny benefits when a couple's money assets exceed \$1,300.

Far from being the ogre that the American Medical Association and the nation's insurance industry tries to depict, congressional provision of medical care for the aged through social security would afford private insurance firms an opportunity to "develop coverage to supplement the basic hospital and related benefits for the aged provided through the medicare program."

As has been repeatedly pointed out, while both of these special interests lobbied long and loud against enactment of a social security program back in the thirties, few of their own members would deny the need for such legislation today.

Additional copies of the fact sheet may be obtained from the AFL-CIO Legislative Department, 815 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.

Checks and Balances

"The same rights of organization which rest with employers rest also with those whom they employ. Modern life has permitted wealth to consolidate itself through organization into corporations. Workers have the same inalienable right to organize according to their plan for their common good and to bargain collectively with their employers through such honorable means as they may choose.

"We believe . . . that democratic participation of workers in the councils of management . . . will not only increase efficiency as the knowledge and experience of workers will be available to management, but it will also prevent many of the tragedies such as irregularity of employment, and speed-up which are the consequences of the operation of industry from the viewpoint of management alone."—The Central Conference of American Rabbis.

Fed Seeks New UI Benefits And Financing

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ing shifted to the general public through rising social welfare costs, the union representatives adopted a policy statement on unemployment insurance calling for legislation that would:

1. Boost the taxable wage base from \$3,800 to "at least \$7,500" to provide adequate benefits.
2. Repeal the present individual firm "merit rating" system which, the delegates charged, "has degenerated into a highly sophisticated tax dodge for certain employers" at the expense of the program's benefit structure.
3. Provide benefits equal to two-thirds of average weekly wages, with annual escalation provisions. (By the time the 1965 Legislature convenes, this would require a maximum weekly benefit of \$80.)
4. Provide dependency benefits of \$7 per week for the first dependent and \$5 for each additional dependent, with a top allowance of \$37.
5. Provide retroactive jobless pay for the present one-week waiting period if unemployment exceeds seven days.
6. Permanently increase the maximum benefit duration period from 26 weeks to 39 weeks.
7. Extend coverage to all wage and salary workers presently excluded, including agricultural and domestic workers, employees of non-profit organizations, and state and local public employees.

The policy statement also declared that the state AFL-CIO would continue to support the establishment of federal standards for state unemployment insurance programs "to assure a minimum adequacy level of benefits and to remove unemployment insurance as a pawn between the states for seeking competitive advantage in the attraction of industry through reduced benefit costs."

"Those who scream the loudest about the cost of California's program on a competitive basis are the very people who oppose federal standards to eliminate any possibility of competition," the trade unionists pointed out.

**Register to Vote
Before
September 10th**
