

Unions Must Help Guide Teen Job Drive: Pitts

State AFL-CIO leader Thos. L. Pitts called on labor unions throughout the state today to "cooperate in every way possible with President Johnson's Youth Opportunities Campaign" but suggested that "shop stewards and union officials must stay on the alert to prevent abuses in the program."

"Although the aim of providing work experience for the thousands of 16 to 21 year old job seekers moving into our labor force this month is commendable," Pitts said, "some unscrupulous or anti-union employers may attempt to capitalize on the program by filling regular job opportunities with youths employed at cut-rate wages."

Pitts, secretary-treasurer of the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, noted that President Johnson had indicated the Administration's awareness of this problem when the program was initiated late last month.

At that time, the President observed that the program "will be worthwhile only if it means extra work—training opportunities over and above those which would normally be offered." If it replaces regular job opportunities, Johnson warned, it will be "worthless or worse."

"Trade unionists," Pitts said, "can help the youth opportunities campaign by monitoring YOC programs set up in

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Second Class Citizens?

Fed Raps Proposed IWC Order on Farm Workers; Urges \$2 Minimum Wage

A searing denunciation of a proposed order to improve the minimum wages and working conditions of women and minors in farm work was presented to the State Industrial Welfare Commission in Los Angeles Wednesday by the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO.

Charging that the proposed order "flouts public indignation at the

State's Jobless Rate Dips to 5.8%

California's seasonally adjusted jobless rate dropped from 6.2 to 5.8 percent last month but State Employment Director Albert B. Tieburg warned that unemployment is expected to climb sharply this month as record numbers of young people enter the labor force to seek jobs.

The state's jobless rate, however,

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24-Year Fight Nears End as Solons Ok Repeal of Hot Cargo Act

A 24-year struggle to erase an anti-labor law enacted as a World War II emergency measure in 1941 from the State's statute book finally neared a successful conclusion this week when the Assembly placed its stamp of approval on a Senate-passed bill to repeal the Hot Cargo and Secondary Boycott Act and sent it to the Governor's desk.

Jobless Pay Bill Isn't What It Ought to Be

State AFL-CIO leader Thos. L. Pitts warned the California State Senate this week that AB 518, the principal unemployment insurance bill at issue in the current session which ends at the stroke

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And another labor victory was racked up when Governor Edmund G. Brown signed the California Labor Federation's bill, AB 1274-Mills, to provide trust funds such as those in the building trades with

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Growers' Action Perils Farm Workers' Wages

"The decision made this week by some of California's major growers to abandon use of imported farm workers demonstrates that—given just a slight improvement in wages—there is an adequate domestic farm labor force and buries once and for all the growers' favorite phony claim that U.S. workers won't do stoop labor. But it also indicates the growers are going to continue to try to pay sub-poverty level wages," state AFL-CIO leader Thos. L. Pitts said yesterday.

Commenting on plans announced earlier this week by Salinas Strawberries, the nation's largest strawberry grower, and the San Joaquin Farm Production Association to replace some 2,931 foreign workers with domestics, Pitts said:

"Growers are only required to offer the \$1.40 an hour minimum wage if they want to qualify to use foreign labor. Now that state and federal agencies have done the growers' interstate do-

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Jobless Pay Bill Isn't What It Ought to Be

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of midnight, fails "to shore up our unemployment insurance law" sufficiently to meet its primary purpose—to provide "our first bulwark against a recession or depression."

In a letter sent to all lawmakers in the Upper House Tuesday, Pitts pointed out that the jobless fund balance is at its lowest level in 15 years yet AB 518 provides for no increase in reserves and an inadequate hike in maximum weekly benefits.

On the whole, he warned, the bill is liable to be "interpreted by the press and by the public as a forward step in insuring our state against a depression when, in fact, it is a completely regressive step in a program critical to the unfortunate unemployed in this state."

Here is the text of his letter:

"Gentlemen:

"AB 518, a bill to amend California's unemployment insurance program is on third reading file today (June 15).

"Our home mortgaged debt-consumers debt and personal debts in California stand today at the staggering figure of \$52.76 billion. This is an increase of approximately \$17 billion in the past five years.

"Our legislative purpose in 1965 should have been to shore-up our unemployment insurance law so that it could fulfill its primary obligation to our economy, namely, to provide us our first bulwark against a recession or a depression. The proposed legislation falls short of this important objective of unemployment insurance in two major respects.

"We have, as of April 1965, an unemployment insurance fund balance of less than one year's benefit payments. Our reserve balance, as of April 30, was \$561,188,904. At the very moment when our private debts are at their highest figure in our history, our fund balance in cash is the lowest it has been since 1950; and as a ratio to the five-year moving average of benefit expenditures, the lowest in our history.

"The proposed legislation provides no increase in reserves. It does juggle money about.

"This is how the juggling is done. While AB 518 inadequately increases maximum weekly benefit amounts from \$55 to \$65, the increased benefit payments are from cuts made by harsh and severe disqualifications for voluntary leaving of employment and misconduct

24-Year Fight Nears End as Solons Ok Repeal of Hot Cargo Act

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lien rights to assure payment of fringe benefits.

The Hot Cargo repealer, SB 551-McAteer, won final Assembly approval Wednesday after Assemblyman Vincent Thomas (D-Los Angeles) who carried the bill for Sen. "J" Eugene McAteer (D-San Francisco) in the Lower House, ably fought off efforts by special interest groups to try to load the bill with amendments and turn it into a state-level Taft-Hartley Act.

On the roll call vote to reject the amendments, the tally was 42 to 27. Final approval came on a 57 to 13 roll call vote.

Section 2 of the 1941 Act, which was passed over Governor Culbert L. Olson's veto, clearly conceded the emergency nature of the law when it stated that "this Act is . . . to ensure during the present critical period of national emergency and intensive armament the unobstructed production and distribution of the products of our factories and fields for the continued protection and preservation of our democratic way of life . . ."

The legality of both primary and secondary boycotts was recognized in California under common law principles in 1908, 1909 and 1925 decisions.

In general terms, hot cargo refers to goods or services coming from a struck firm. Secondary boycotts refer to situations in which one employer's workers refuse to handle the products of another employer because of a dispute between the latter employer and his workers.

In 1947 the California Supreme Court in *re Blaney* declared the entire Act unconstitutional because its sections were "too sweeping, vague and uncertain, and permit the prior censorship of matters protected by the constitutional guaranty of free speech and free press."

AB 1274, the federation's bill, authored by Assemblyman James R. Mills

related to employment. AB 518 calls for increases in eligibility qualifications and a reduction in benefit payments during extended duration. The increases on the one hand are offset by the decreases in benefit payments on the other hand.

"As a whole, gentlemen, we feel AB 518 will be interpreted by the press and by the public as a forward step in insuring our state against a depression when, in fact, it is a completely regressive step in a program critical to the unfortunate unemployed in this state."

(D-San Diego) to assure payment of fringe benefit funds to Trust Funds, amends Section 1812 of the Code of Civil Procedure to read as follows:

"For the purposes of this chapter, an express trust fund established pursuant to collective bargaining agreement to which payments are required to be made on account of fringe benefits supplemental to a wage agreement for the benefit of one entitled to a lien on particular property pursuant to this Chapter shall have a lien on such property in the amount of the supplemental fringe benefits owing to it pursuant to the collective bargaining agreement."

Stripped of the legalese, this means that union trust funds now have a legal right to have an employers's property attached or sold if the employer fails to make the payments to health, pension or other funds he is supposed to make under collective bargaining agreements.

LEGISLATIVE NOTES

DI Coverage for Hospital Workers OK'd

HOSPITAL WORKERS — AB 36-Burton, to provide unemployment disability insurance coverage for hospital workers, has won final legislative approval and been sent to Governor Brown for his signature.

STATE EMPLOYEES — AB 2870-Meyers, a Federation-backed bill to give state employees time-and-a-half instead of straight time for overtime was defeated by a 28 to 26 vote in the Assembly last week. Under the provisions of the bill the State Personnel Board would have determined under what circumstances overtime would have to be granted.

ANTI-POVERTY — AB 1915-Knox, to allow special districts to participate in the anti-poverty program has been sent to the Governor's desk. Last week the Assembly concurred in Senate amendments that limit the districts' authority to performance within the powers conferred on the districts by law.

JOBLESS PAY — AB 883-Zenovich, to require an employer who agrees to pay a worker's unemployment insurance contribution with deductions from the workers' wages to hold such contributions in trust, has been signed by Governor Brown. The bill makes it a misdemeanor if the employer willfully fails to pay or is financially unable to pay such contributions to the Department of Employment.

CAR INSURANCE — AB 1036-Brown, to require automobile insurance companies to tell a policy holder why his insurance was canceled was approved by the Senate Tuesday by 31-4 vote and sent to the Governor for signature. A move to amend the bill to have the cancellation information furnished only if the policy holder requested it was defeated by a 19 to 16 roll call vote prior to final passage of the bill.

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mestic recruiting work for them, reports are already coming in that some growers are attempting to put the A-teams (Athletes in Temporary Employment in Agricultural Manpower) to work at piece rates well below the \$1.40 minimum.

IGNORE PROMISE

"And the growers can get away with this so long as they don't try to qualify for foreign labor because the Labor Department's interstate recruitment standards only require growers to pay prevailing wage rates—not the \$1.40 minimum the youths were promised.

What this is boiling down to is a situation in which the federal government is recruiting child labor to undetermine the wages and working conditions of adult domestic farm workers," Pitts charged.

"A number of the members of these teams are only 14 to 16 years old, and are not covered by any minimum wage law. Those 16 to 18 can be put to work for as little as \$4 a day under current state law," he explained.

Pitts, secretary-treasurer of the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, said the Labor Department is currently investigating cases involving three A-teams in the Salinas area, one of which "packed up and went home in disgust Tuesday night and two others that are threatening to leave because of phony promises made by growers or their agents to lure them from their homes in Los Alamos and Terramarillo, New Mexico."

MIGRANT SURGE

Noting that state officials at Arizona and Nevada border points have reported "an unusual upsurge of migrant families" moving into California during the past month in search of farm work, Pitts said:

"This flood of out-of-state workers will simply compound the state's already excessive jobless and welfare problems because the likelihood is it will depress wage rates just as they were beginning to rise toward living wage levels.

"While the California Labor Federation is pleased that the growers finally at least tacitly concede that adequate domestic labor is available if wages and working conditions are improved, California's farm labor problem cannot be solved until the growers are obliged

Don't Use Up Your Vacation for Reservist Stint

If you are a reservist or a National Guardsman and plan to participate in any kind of military summer camp this summer, don't let your employer talk you into using up your vacation time to do it.

The Universal Military Training and Service Act stipulates that National Guardsmen and Reservists must be granted leave if they ask for it and employers cannot require them to use up their regularly earned vacation time.

This is the word from Robert L. Shelby, Regional Director of the U.S. Labor Department's Veterans' Re-employment Rights Bureau.

Noting that more than 40,000 Californians are expected to take part in some kind of military training this summer, Shelby said:

"When he returns promptly to his job, the Guardsman or Reservist must be reinstated with the same seniority, status, pay rate and vacation rate he would have had if he had not been away from his job."

Further information may be obtained from Shelby at 450 Golden Gate Avenue, Room 10428, San Francisco, Phone: 556-6215.

to compete for their labor force on the same basis as any other U.S. industry—and this means paying commensurate wages and fringe benefits.

"In short, it's time for both federal and state agencies to stop serving as the growers private personnel recruitment service and direct all their energies to the strict enforcement of the few flimsy regulations currently on the books to protect domestic farm workers.

"If they don't, California's general taxpayer will be forced to further subsidize the growers' sub-poverty level wage rates next winter through increased welfare costs," Pitts warned.

\$3.3 Billion Public Works Bill OK'd in U.S. Senate

A \$3.3 billion, five-year public works and economic development bill aimed at creating jobs and boosting incomes in the nation's distressed areas won Senate passage last week by a 71 to 12 vote.

It now goes to the House where the Public Works Committee has completed hearings on similar legislation but not yet acted on it.

'Produce Prices Due to Weather, Not Lack of Labor'

A key official of the U.S. Department of Agriculture repudiated grower claims that current higher prices for fresh vegetables stem from lack of a foreign farm labor supply and predicted that prices will nosedive below last year's levels soon because of increased production this year.

George L. Mehren, U.S.D.A. Assistant Secretary, said that the fact that retail vegetable prices are currently averaging about two percent higher than last year is principally due to the weather.

Within the next eight to 10 weeks, however, Mehren said, production will be about five percent above last year and retail prices should decline accordingly.

In fact, he told a meeting of the Grocery Manufacturers of America at White Sulphur Springs, W. Va.:

"Prices already are coming down."

To illustrate his point, he pointed out that when lettuce was in excess supply early this year, the growers suspended shipments to market to boost prices.

Similarly he said, weather caused the California strawberry crop to mature late and all at once. Such a situation "would strain even a perfect labor situation," he pointed out.

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private industries to see that they don't usurp regular job openings or deteriorate into a facade for undermining the wages and working conditions of regular workers.

"Some conservative newspapers and employer interests like to try to promote the idea that labor unions should exist to supply labor at whatever wages and working conditions industry cares to offer.

"But the truth is that labor's prime goal is to protect and improve the worker's lot. This purpose must be kept in focus and a fairly fine degree of judicious judgment brought to bear on efforts to create extra jobs for youths this summer," he declared.

"In the long run, the exceptionally high teenage jobless problem cannot be met in any meaningful way unless bold steps are taken immediately to spur the creation of permanent jobs and achieve full employment for all," he added.

State's Jobless Rate Dips to 5.8%; Now 25% Above U.S.

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was more than 25 percent higher than the national rate which fell from 4.9 to 4.6 percent last month, the lowest national level in seven years.

In actual numbers, the ranks of the unemployed in California fell from 437,000 in April to 408,000 in May, some 8,000 more than in May, 1964 when the state's jobless rate was 5.9 percent.

On the employment side, total civilian employment in California last month totaled 6,805,000, up 111,000 from a month earlier and reflecting an increase of 185,000 or 2.8 percent since May, 1964.

Good weather and the settlement of northern California metal trades work stoppage contributed to this "relatively large April-May gain," Ernest B. Webb, Director of the Department of Industrial Relations said.

For the first time in a number of months, manufacturing had slightly more workers last month than a year earlier.

The state's total civilian labor force, comprised of the employed and the unemployed seeking work was 7,213,000 in May, 193,000 more than in May, 1964.

For the nation as a whole, some 3.3 million were jobless last month compared to 3.6 million a month earlier, with most of the reduction in unemployment occurring among persons who had been jobless for 15 weeks or more.

The non-white jobless rate of 7.6 percent last month was still nearly double the rate for white workers. The non-white rate has averaged 8.5 percent compared to 4.3 percent for white workers during the first five months of this year.

Total U.S. employment in May was 72.4 million and the nation's total civilian labor force last month was 75.7 million.

The Labor Department, which for the first time, announced seasonally adjusted jobless rates for white and non-white workers, also published rates for full time workers—4.4 percent—and blue collar workers—5.3 percent.

San Francisco Bay Area—The seasonally adjusted jobless rate in the five-county Bay Area dipped from 5.2 percent in April to 4.9 percent last month as joblessness dropped from 64,000 to 62,500. In May, 1964, 64,400 were unemployed in the Bay Area. Total Bay Area employment at 1,211,300 was 14,400 above a month earlier and reflected an increase of 34,800 or three percent since May, 1964.

Los Angeles—Unemployment in Los

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piece rates; reporting time pay; and meal and rest period provisions.

On the wage issue, the state AFL-CIO said:

"The Commission can justly be accused both of dereliction of duty and of discriminating against women and minors" if it adopts the proposed \$1.25 minimum.

Workers in the 13 other industries where the Commission has issued orders have already been guaranteed a minimum of \$1.30 for nearly a year, the state AFL-CIO observed. Imposition of a five-cent-an-hour wage differential "between workers in agriculture and (those) in other industries would amount to the most blatant form of discrimination" against farm workers, the AFL-CIO statement said.

\$2 MINIMUM URGED

The Commission's own yardstick for the minimum needs of a self-supporting woman, the so-called "Minnie Budget," would call for a minimum wage of more than \$2.50 an hour, the Federation pointed out. It urged the Commission to revise the proposed order to require "a guaranteed minimum wage for all workers of at least \$2 an hour."

Noting that the Commission's own wage board had recommended a minimum of \$1.30, Pitts' statement declared:

"The Commission has apparently succumbed to the terrific pressures exerted by the agribusiness lobby. This lobby has only one aim—to hold wages in agriculture to the lowest level possible, regardless of the consequences to the health and welfare of the affected workers."

On the piece rate issue, the state AFL-CIO said the Commission's proposal that growers be required to pay women and minors piece rates that yield to only 80 percent of the women and minors "not less than the hourly rate

of \$1.25" (\$1.10 for minors) would place "a blackjack of coercion" in the hands of the employer and permit a foreman to discriminate against workers he "dislikes or who complain that working conditions are inadequate."

Piece rates must be based on a wage that yields the hourly minimum to the least efficient worker if the incentive principle on which piece rates are based is not to be subverted to give growers "total control over piece rate setting," the statement said.

On the reporting time pay issue, the Commission's Wage Board had recommended that each day women or minors are required to report for work and are given less than four hours' work, they be paid for four hours at their regular rate of pay. But the Commission's proposed order cut this back to two hours. The existing order provides for a minimum daily wage for women and minors on piece rates of only \$4.

The Federation pointed out that the proposal to cut back reporting time pay to a maximum of two hours' work, which at \$1.25 an hour would only amount to \$2.50, would weaken workers' protections in this area and result in not even covering their transportation and lunch expenses for reporting to work. It urged acceptance of the wage board's recommendation of four hours' pay in such instances.

The proposed order's wording on meal periods would authorize less desirable conditions than are already afforded all other workers under the Commission's jurisdiction. It would permit an employer to work a woman or minor six hours instead of five without a meal period.

DOUBLE STANDARD

This is "an obviously inequitable double standard," the Federation said, and urged that it be amended to coincide with the other orders.

In addition to an oral presentation by Michael Peevey, state AFL-CIO Research Director, the Federation submitted a 17-page statement calling for 15 instead of 10 minute rest periods every 2½ instead of every 3½ hours and urged a number of other improvements in the order regarding such issues as washing facilities, toilets, and record keeping.

The Commission is scheduled to hold a second hearing in Fresno on June 18 and to announce its decision on further revisions in the order in San Francisco on June 24.