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Weekly News Letter

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Here's How The Vote Went on Final Medicare Bill OK

Both houses of Congress placed their final stamp of approval on the $6.5 billion medicare bill this week and sent it to President Johnson who is expected to sign it before the end of the week so it will become effective in September.

The measure, marking the most significant improvement in the social security system in 30 years, includes an across-the-board seven percent boost in social security benefits.

In the Senate vote on Wednesday on final concurrence, California's junior Senator George Murphy voted against the bill and Senator Thomas H. Kuchel voted for it.

On the House side, which voted on final concurrence a day earlier, the final vote resulted in some interesting switches by members of California's congressional delegation.

Seven congressmen — Mailliard, Bell, Gubser, Hosmer, Reinecke, Talcott and Teague — all of whom voted last April to send the bill back to committee, this week

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Repeal of Sec. 14 (b) Wins House Approval By Vote of 221 to 203

After 18 years and more than 40 bitter, divisive and costly battles, the U.S. House of Representatives voted 221 to 203 Wednesday to cut out the cankerous cause of it all by repealing Section 14(b) of the Taft-Hartley Act.

The action, to eliminate the 44-word section that enabled states to impose compulsory open shop terms on workers and employers alike by banning union shop agreements, culminates years of political and legislative effort by the AFL-CIO as well as concerned civic and religious groups.

All 23 Democrats in California's congressional delegation voted for repeal. The state's 15

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'It's A Blessing'

In the eyes of Father Arturo, a Franciscan priest who has been ministering to the needs of farm workers in 12 central California counties for nearly two decades, the end of the bracero program has been a blessing.

Noting that many braceros deserted and never returned to Mexico he said:

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New Law Sets Up Rehabilitation Unit for Workers Hurt on the Job

Legislation to set up for the first time an administrative agency to see that benefits fixed by law are provided injured workmen in non-contested cases under the state's workmen's compensation program—a goal long sought by the California Labor Federation—has been signed by Governor Edmund G. Brown.

In signing the measure, the Governor said:

"I regret that the measure does not provide for increased benefits for those disabled in industrial accidents.

"Such increases, I believe, are long overdue. But I have been assured by Assemblyman George Zenovich, chairman of the Assembly Committee on Finance and Insurance, that his Committee will devote the interim to a comprehensive consideration of the benefit structure."

The Governor said Zenovich had informed him that "this matter will receive top interim priority by his committee so that the legislature can be prepared to act on its recommendations at an early date."

But the Governor pointed out that the bill, AB 2023, authored by Assemblyman Anthony C. Beilenson (D-Beverly Hills), includes "many major recommendations of the Study Commission on Workmen's Compensation Laws cre-

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Farm Housing Bill Is Signed

A significant step toward providing 100,000 new housing units for domestic farm workers, an item neglected by many grower interests as long as they could count on herding docile foreign workers into shabbily maintained barracks, was taken last week when Gov-

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Funds Needed To Aid State's Farm Workers

The most critical period in the fight to improve the wages and working conditions of California's domestic farm workers is immediately ahead.

Tomato growers in the Sacramento Valley area have already requested some 7,000 braceros and there are indications that a study conducted by the Giannini Foundation at U.C. may be used as an excuse for opening the gates for the mass importation of foreign workers instead of requiring tomato growers to offer a wage sufficient to attract the number of workers they need.

Donations to assist the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee, AFL-CIO, should be sent in immediately—payable to the Farm Workers Organizing Assistance Fund—to the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, at 995 Market Street, Rm. 810, San Francisco.

Here's How The Vote Went on Final Medicare Bill OK

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voted in favor of final passage of the bill.

Rep. Baldwin (R-Contra Costa) was absent at the time of the critical April vote but voted in favor of the bill this week.

California congressmen who opposed the medicare program and boost in social security benefits to the bitter end and voted against final passage this week were Reps. Clausen, Clawson, Libscomb, Smith, Utt, Bob Wilson and Younger.

All 23 Democrats in the state's congressional delegation voted for medicare and the boost in social security benefits both in April and in the final vote this week.

The final vote in the Senate was 70 to 24; in the House it was 307 to 116.

As approved, the measure provides three major benefits:

• Hospital insurance coverage for persons 65 and over under which the patient would be obliged to pay only $40 of the bill for his first 60 days of hospitalization. If his hospitalization exceeded 60 days he would be required to pay only $10 a day toward the additional cost for the next 30 days. Once released from the hospital, the patient is entitled to up to 100 home visits from a nurse, therapist or home health aide under the basic plan.

• A voluntary insurance plan costing subscribers $3 a month which would cover the bulk of doctors' bills and other costs. Subscribers to the voluntary plan would pay the first $50 of their doctor bills each year and 20 percent of the remainder. The medicare program would pick up the remaining 80 percent.

• A seven percent across-the-board hike in old age survivors and disability insurance benefits. This provision, retroactive to January 1 1965, will benefit about 20 million men, women and children.

The entire program will be financed by a gradual increase in social security taxes during the next 22 years starting January 1, 1966.

Repeal of Sec. 14 (b) Wins House Approval By Vote of 221 to 203

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Republican congressmen voted against it.

Commenting on the victory, state AFL-CIO leader Thos. L. Pitts said:

"The House action is a major victory not only for workers everywhere but for California employers as well.

"This is because it is a step toward elimination of a section that has amounted to an abortive attempt to provoke competition among the separate states to see which state could depress wages and working conditions the most.

"By freeing workers and employers in Nevada, Arizona, Arkansas, Texas and the 15 other so-called 'right to work' states to decide for themselves what form of union security clause they want, Congress will strike a major blow against the poverty conditions that have been aggravated by such laws in most of the states that experimented with them.

"The majority of California's congressional delegation that voted for repeal is to be commended for seeing through the scare talk and distortions of the Birch Society and anti-union employers who attempted to revive the 19th Century sweatshop employment practices that this section has abetted for the past 18 years."

The measure, H.R. 77 now goes to the Senate where it is expected to be referred to a subcommittee of the Senate Labor and Public Welfare Committee chaired by Senator Pat McNamara (D-Michigan) which has completed hearings on an identical Senate version of the bill, S. 256.

Senate approval of the measure which would fulfill a Democratic Party platform pledge made both in 1960 and 1964, is expected. There is hope that the repeal measure may be signed by President Johnson by Labor Day.

The repeal action would nullify the misnamed "right to work" laws presently existing in 19 states.

On the final House vote, 200 Democrats and 21 Republicans voted for repeal. Opposed were 117 Republicans and 86 Democrats most of which were southerners.

Prior to the final vote, Republicans lost a motion to send the bill back to Committee by a vote of 223 to 200 and GOP efforts to cripple the bill by proposing amendments that would have imposed stringent restrictions on unions were ruled out of order.

In testifying at Senate hearings recently, U.S. Secretary of Labor W. Willard Wirtz stressed the fact that repeal of Section 14(b) is a "top priority" goal of the Johnson Administration and said the White House will do everything in its power to get the bill enacted.

Wirtz said the so-called "right to work" laws have led states to battle each other for new industries through promises of low wages and weak unions.

The only way to avoid "disruptive competition" between states, Wirtz declared, is to make "the legal ground rules covering the freedom to agree on union security . . . the same throughout the country." This can only be done, he declared, through repeal of Section 14(b).

Farm Housing Bill is Signed

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ernor Brown signed a bill backed by the California Labor Federation to implement a $3.5 million federal anti-poverty grant to set up farm housing facilities.

The bill, SB 767, authored by Senators Robert B. Williams (D-Hanford) and Virgil O'Sullivan (D-Williams), authorizes expenditure of $185,000 in state matching funds to draw up plans for 10 farm worker housing centers authorized by the grant. The federal grant also calls for five migrant rest stops and improvements at 12 existing farm labor supply centers.

The 10 new centers are to be located in key harvest areas identified by the Farm Workers' Health Service of the State Department of Public Health as areas of severe need for farm labor housing during peak harvest periods.

Each center will include 100 units of demountable temporary shelters with electricity, water and sanitation facilities. They will also include a health clinic, an education unit, and a day care program for children whose mothers are working in the fields.

If properly implemented, the program could result in substantial progress toward eliminating the deplorable conditions California farm workers have had to put up with for years.

Situs Picketing Bill Wins House Unit's OK 7 to 1

A special labor subcommittee has approved a bill to permit "common site" picketing by different unions employed at the same construction site.

The measure, (H.R. 6411) approved by a 7 to 1 vote, would reverse a 1951 Supreme Court decision that held that "situs picketing" was outlawed by a secondary boycott ban in the Taft-Hartley Act.

The subcommittee acted after amending the bill to provide a 10-day "cooling off" period in labor disputes at space and missile bases and weapons centers.

The provisions of the amendment stipulate that a 10-day notice of intent to strike would have to be given to the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, to the government defense agency affected, to any state conciliation agency, to the employers at the site, and to the international union to which the local is affiliated.

In essence, the bill says that picketing by employees of a single employer who is primarily engaged in the construction industry at a construction site would not amount to an illegal secondary boycott even if the picketing results in keeping workers of other employers at the construction site not directly involved in the dispute off the site.

The measure specifies, however, that the exemption from the secondary boycott ban would not cover disputes involving a labor union representing employes of an employer at the site who was **not** engaged primarily in the construction industry.

An identical measure (S. 1655) has been introduced in the Senate by Senator Pat McNamara (D-Michigan), but no hearings have yet been scheduled. McNamara is chairman of the Labor Subcommittee of the Senate Labor and Public Welfare Committee.

In urging enactment of the bill late last month, U.S. Secretary of Labor W. Willard Wirtz pointed out that during debate on the Taft-Hartley Act of 1947 "almost every reference to boycotts involved plant and retail situations" and the apparent lack of concern at the time with the construction industry or common situs picketing on construction jobs stemmed from a lack of full understanding "of the unique characteristics of the construction industry."

Wirtz said his testimony amounted to a recommendation "that there be corrected now, without delay, what has long been recognized—by a sizeable majority of the representatives of diverse political and economic groups—as an inequitable restriction on the right to strike and picket peaceably."

Enactment of the situs picketing bill is one of the AFL-CIO's top legislative goals in the 89th Congress.

New Law Sets Up Rehabilitation Unit for Workers Hurt on the Job

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ated by the legislature two years ago."

"In so doing it makes substantial progress in the field of workmen's compensation and its administration," Brown declared.

The measure, which calls for a major reorganization of the Industrial Accident Commission, provides for:

- Separation of the administrative and judicial functions of the Industrial Accident Commission, with judicial functions to be vested in a seven-member Workmen's Compensation Appeals Board. An administrative director is to supervise staff, prescribe administrative rules and regulations, appoint independent medical examiners and carry out other administrative duties. These changes are designed to improve adjudication, reduce the number of disputed claims and reduce litigation, the Governor explained.
- Improvement in the quality of medical care furnished injured employees.
- Creation of a voluntary program of vocational rehabilitation for employees unable to return to work.
- Provisions for prompter payment of disability benefits and earlier notification to recipients of their benefit termination date.
- Expansion of the injured employees choice of physicians.

Present workmen's compensation law permits the injured employee to change physicians only once and requires the employer or his insurance carrier to nominate only three physicians for the injured employee to choose from. AB 2023 requires that five physicians be nominated and that the five must be approved both by the administrative director and the medical director of the state program.

Five of State's 8 Key Areas Suffer High Joblessness

Five of California's eight major manpower areas are now suffering "substantial" unemployment, the U.S. Labor Department reported this week.

The latest addition to the list, each of which contains at least one city of 50,000 or more, is the San Bernardino-Riverside-Ontario area.

It joins Fresno, San Diego, San Jose and Stockton. Each, the report said, are saddled with jobless rates ranging between six and nine percent.

In addition, the city of Oakland is listed as a city with "substantial and persistent unemployment."

Smaller California areas suffering "substantial and persistent" or "substantial" joblessness include: Modesto, Santa Cruz, Ukiah, Yuba City, Bakersfield, Eureka, Merced, Redding, Santa Rosa, Alturas, Crescent City, Grass Valley, Hollister, Madera, Placerville, Sonora, Susanville, Weaverville, Yreka, Lakeport, Mariposa and Willows.

All of these communities are eligible for special assistance under various federal programs relating to government contract awards redevelopment area assistance, public works and small business loans.

Truth in Credit for Charge Accounts

A less specific version of a measure sponsored by the state AFL-CIO to give purchasers advance information about the credit rates they are charged on revolving charge accounts has been signed into law.

The measure, AB 2350, authored by Assemblyman Charles Warren (D-Los Angeles) who also introduced the stronger, Federation-initiated bill, AB 1228, requires applications for revolving accounts to contain a printed statement of the interest rate credit buyers will have to pay and describe the balance on which the credit charge will be figured.

Hopefully, this will help workers get more mileage out of wage gains won at the bargaining table by requiring that they be informed about credit rates before they sign contracts for revolving charge accounts. At present this information need not be given the consumer until his application is confirmed by the seller.

The new "information in advance" law, which becomes effective July 1, 1966, while a step in the right direction, does not go far enough in alerting consumers.

The Federation's bill would have required any document dealing with a loan involving interest to state the principle and interest payable separately in individual columns.

Two Supreme Court Rulings Threaten To Place Unions Under Anti-Trust Laws

Potentially far-reaching restrictions on free collective bargaining are written in two critical opinions handed down by the U.S. Supreme Court.

The rulings appear to be in direct conflict with established Congressional policy holding that unions do not come under the anti-trust laws.

Associate Justice Arthur J. Goldberg made this point in sharp dissents in which he declared that the majority opinion "ignores the discredited judicial attempt to apply the anti-trust laws to legitimate collective bargaining activity" and "flouts the clearly expressed Congressional intent that the labor of a human being is not a commodity or article of commerce."

In one case involving the United Mine Workers the AFL-CIO submitted a "friend of the court" brief supporting the UMW position.

The second case was the Amalgamated Meat Cutters versus Jewell Tea Co.

In both cases, the Supreme Court upheld the unions' appeal against lower court decisions but in each instance the majority opinions have widespread implications relative to unions and the anti-trust laws.

In the UMW case the union was fighting a lower court verdict levying triple damages against the UMW for damages resulting from a national contract with the Bituminous Coal Operators.

A smaller coal company claimed that the UMW and the larger operators "conspired" to set wage standards to force them out of business.

In the majority opinion, Justice Byron White held:

". . . we think that a union forfeits its exemption from the anti-trust laws when it is clearly shown that it has agreed with one set of employers to impose a certain wage scale on other bargaining units.

"One group of employers may not conspire to eliminate competitors from the industry and the union is liable with the employers if it becomes a party to the conspiracy. This is true even though the unions' part in the scheme is undertaking to secure the same wages, hours or other conditions of employment from the remaining employers in the industry."

RESTRICTION NOTED

This decision, Goldberg said, "will severely restrict free collective bargaining."

Both Justice Goldberg and the AFL-CIO, in its brief, expressed another deep concern.

This was the fundamental question of moving the courts into the arena of free collective bargaining.

The AFL-CIO's brief declared: "The devastating practical implications of subjecting the institution of collective bargaining to the whims and speculations of local juries are alone enough to condemn it."

At present some 80 to 90 per cent of all collective bargaining contracts in the nation are the result of national agreements or pattern bargaining. If the courts open to question the "motives" of both unions and employers in reaching these contracts, juries will move into this heretofore free collective bargaining arena. Union attorneys are concerned because this could tear apart the entire fabric of labor-management relations.

STABILITY ENDANGERED

Goldberg expressed the same fear.

"To apply the anti-trust laws at this late date to such activities," he declared, "would endanger the stability which now characterizes collective bargaining in the coal industry and other basic industries with similar collective bargaining histories.

"It is in recognition of this fact that Congress has on a number of occasions refused to enact legislation that would curtail industry-wide bargaining or would make the anti-trust laws applicable to collective bargaining activity."

Goldberg suggested that Congress should enact new legislation to clarify its intent in this area.

In the Meat Cutters case, in which the union secured an agreement with supermarkets in Chicago setting hours of work, the court said, in effect, this is ok but if labor and management went any further they would be subject to the anti-trust laws.

Fire Fighters Work Week Cut to 54 Hours in S.F.

A two-hour cut in the 56-hour workweek of fire fighters has been authorized by the San Francisco Fire Commission.

Under the new 54-hour week which is already in effect, fire fighters receive an extra day off every 12 weeks. The workweek reduction was the first in 17 years. In 1948 their workweek was cut from 62.7 to 56 hours.

'It's a Blessing'

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"Most of them leave families—usually with from six to twelve children.

"There are 100,000 children on the streets of Mexico because their fathers don't come home," he said, "and there is no welfare program for them.

"Here we had the braceros. In Mexico they still have the 'rateros'—children who became pickpockets to steal the money to live because their fathers deserted them."

And north of the border, many braceros left other children to be supported by U. S. taxpayers, he pointed out.

"One man," Father Arturo recalled, "asked to have his 'marriage' blessed. I investigated and found he had five 'wives' in five different states, all with children."

This, he said, is "a side of the bracero program that you seldom hear about."

And it's one of the reasons why opposition to any labor exportation program is growing within the Mexican government itself.

Acclaimed AFL-CIO Film Billed for Labor Day Weekend

A special AFL-CIO film documentary on leisure time that won critical acclaim when it premiered on nationwide television will be re-released for showing over the Labor Day weekend.

Arrangements for presenting "When the Day's Work is Done" are now being made with commercial and educational television stations in areas where there are heavy concentrations of union members.

The half-hour film examines the ever-increasing leisure time that has come from shorter workweeks and longer vacations and salutes union members who utilize their after-work hours for community betterment.

Scenes of union activities in California, New York, New Jersey, West Virginia, and Washington, D.C., are shown as well as community projects in Florida, Louisiana, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Connecticut. Among these are construction of health facilities, community cultural projects, disaster aid and programs for the very young and very old.

The film also covers achievements realized from the millions of dollars donated each year by union members to united fund appeals, as well as the uses made of labor-donated service aids, such as mobile Travelers Aid and Red Cross disaster units.