

# NLRB Raps Ward's Try To Oust Union

The National Labor Relations Board has ordered Montgomery Ward & Co., big retail store chain, to stop trying to oust the Retail Clerks as collective bargaining agent of its workers at 39 stores and to put into effect the terms of a two-year-old national agreement.

At five stores, the board ordered the company to put contract terms in effect immediately, retroactive to Sept. 1, 1963.

At 34 other locations, Ward was ordered to permit a vote of its employees and, where ratification is voted, make the terms retroactive to the same 1963 date.

The decision affirmed a trial examiner's finding, after 19 months of investigations and hearings, that the company unlawfully refused to bargain with the union at stores in 14 states; conducted an illegal poll among employees as to whether they wanted the RCIA to continue representing them; instigated and encouraged decertification petitions among employees; and refused to put contract terms into effect at any store where a decertification proceeding was pending.

In Chicago, Ward management said it would appeal the ruling, made by NLRB members John H. Fanning, Gerald H. Brown and Howard Jenkins, Jr.

The company was ordered to give backpay to six employees laid off or threatened with layoff because of refusal to give company lawyers copies of their statements given to NLRB officers.

## Pitts Raps Labor Department Move to Drop 'Minimum Wage' for Farm Workers

The U.S. Labor Department now appears to be "waging a war to keep domestic farm workers in abject poverty," state AFL-CIO leader Thos. L. Pitts charged today following disclosure earlier this week that the Department was experimenting in Florida with a procedure that abandoned the requirement that growers at least offer domestic workers a flat hourly

## More Workers Join AWOC Strike

Despite repeated grower efforts to intimidate striking grape workers in the Kern-Tulare County area, the AFL-CIO Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee's protest against sub-poverty level wages is gaining momentum daily with more than 3,000 workers now out.

Grower intimidation and harassment

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Executive  
Secretary-Treasurer

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## State Fed Urges Action on Bill to Let Elderly Keep Retroactive Social Security Pay

Immediate action to eliminate a legal obstacle that presently threatens to make the 7 percent boost in social security benefits enacted by Congress earlier this year look like a cruel fraud to thousands of California's neediest senior citizens was urged by the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO this week.

### Senate Fight on 14(b) Repeal Starts Monday

The opening salvos of the crucial Senate battle to win repeal of Section 14(b) of the Taft-Hartley Act, under which compulsory open-shop conditions are imposed on workers in 19 states, are expected to be fired Monday when Senate Democratic leader Mike Mansfield has

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In the wake of reports that some counties are repossessing federal checks for retroactive social security benefits because present state law requires "outside income" to be taken into account in figuring state old age assistance payments, the state AFL-CIO wired the Assembly Committee on Social Welfare urging enactment of a bill introduced by Assemblyman John Burton to correct the situation.

"Elder citizens receiving public assistance should be able to enjoy the retroactive benefits provided by the U.S. Congress this year," the Federation's Secretary-Treasurer Thos. L. Pitts said.

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## Motorcade To Aid Striking Grape Workers

A motorcade is currently being organized in the San Francisco Bay area to carry food and funds to the striking workers in Delano tomorrow. Participants will meet at the Alameda County Central Labor Council parking lot at 2315 Valdez Street, Oakland, at 8 a.m. Saturday and are scheduled to reach Delano in time for a 2 p.m. meeting at AWOC Headquarters.

The workers need coffee, sugar, flour, beans, rice, potatoes, powdered milk and other similar essential commodities. Donations may be sent to the AWOC Hall at 1457 Elmwood Street, Delano, California.

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# More Workers Quit Vineyards In Delano Area

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efforts to date reportedly include:

- Spraying the pickets with chemical mixtures believed to be insecticides.

- Racing disking machines back and forth near the road to drown out the strikers' appeal to workers in the field to join them and showering the pickets with dust and clods of dirt in the process.

- Evicting workers from farm housing facilities in which many have lived for more than 20 years.

- Sponsoring radio broadcasts in Spanish that claim Governor Brown has said the strike was not "official" when, in point of fact, the State Department of Employment has certified the strikes at more than 20 farms as bona fide labor disputes.

- Riddling picket signs with shotgun blasts and firing guns into the air.

- Attempting to get local authorities to close the strikers' soup kitchen.

In addition, last Friday morning report of a bombing threat forced evacuation of the AWOC's Delano headquarters.

Last Friday AWOC Director C. Al Green sent a wire to Governor Brown noting that the Governor's office had not yet responded to Green's wire of Sept. 11 urging the Governor "to put a stop to the mistreatment of agricultural workers in the Delano area."

In repeating his request for action, Green detailed incidents of harassment and urged an immediate state investigation.

The workers are striking for a minimum wage of \$1.40 an hour and 25 cents a box. Prior to the strike which began Sept. 8, growers were offering only \$1.20 an hour and 10 cents a box—substantially less than the \$1.40 an hour that is guaranteed to imported foreign workers currently employed in the state's tomato harvest.

## Dividends for COPE Donors

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# State Fed Urges Action on Bill to Let Elderly Keep Retroactive Social Security Pay

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"It is unfair to allow the state's general fund to take a cut from this benefit increase. The purpose of increasing the benefit schedule was to help fight the poverty confronting many elderly citizens," he declared.

Pointing out that non-indigent older citizens will be allowed to keep the full amount of their retroactive benefit increase, Pitts said:

"Indigent older citizens should be allowed the same right."

The Burton bill (AB 3) would simply permit the state's 172,000 senior citizens who receive social security benefits to get their eight-month retroactive increase in benefits without losing a similar amount in state-county financed Old Age Assistance. A companion measure has been introduced in the Upper House by Senator Eugene McAteer (D-San Francisco).

The retroactive social security benefit checks, averaging \$35 per recipient, were mailed in mid September.

Governor Edmund G. Brown is supporting the McAteer-Burton bills and said that he would also seek to protect all 272,000 aged recipients in the state from losing an annual state-county

financed \$2 cost-of-living increase due to go into effect in December.

Paul D. Ward, State Health and Welfare Administrator, explained that the state law governing the payment of Old Aged Assistance (OAA) requires the State Department of Social Welfare and county welfare departments to consider the federal increase as income and to reduce each recipient's OAA payment by the amount of the social security increase, which comes under the Old Aged Survivors Disability Insurance (OASDI) program.

Ward said the deduction is being made in one of three ways. Either it has been taken out of the recipients' September OAA checks; will be taken out of their October checks; or, in some counties, recipients are being required to sign over the federal-lump sum checks.

But he emphasized that the Governor will NOT seek to permit social security benefit recipients to keep the on-going monthly increase in benefits without reducing OAA payments because to do so could endanger the \$2 annual cost-of-living boost paid to all 272,000 aged welfare recipients not just to the 172,000 who get social security.

"The reason," Ward explained, "is that federal increases in OASDI come along only once every six or seven years. The legislature enacted the annual cost-of-living increase to help the old people out in the intervening years."

"In view of present state fund limitations," Ward said, "the legislature is likely to put a moratorium on the upcoming December cost-of-living increase to avoid what is, in effect, a double increase."

Such a moratorium would hurt the 100,000 California senior citizens who receive old age assistance benefits but do not get any social security benefits, he pointed out.

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Signed on this 17th day of September, 1965, by

THOS. L. PITTS, Editor

## 'Check-Off' Dues Plan for Grower Groups Now Law

Gov. E. Brown recently signed into law a bill creating a mandatory "check off" system of grower association dues payments by buyers and processors.

The bill requires the dealer or buyer of farm products to deduct—when directed by the grower, association or cooperative organization—dues to be paid directly by the buyer to the association.

It also prohibits any provision in any contract prepared by a buyer or dealer which makes such dues deduction ineffective.

Brown said that over the years the bargaining position of farmers in the sale of their products has been "substantially weakened" by changing economic conditions. "This bill will strengthen the position of the growers," he said.

The new law has been described as a dues check off system.

It will make the collection of dues to carry on the work of the association more efficient and less costly, Brown said.

## New Industrial Accidents Division To Remain In S.F.

Headquarters for the Division of Industrial Accidents will remain in San Francisco, Ernest B. Webb, Director of the State Department of Industrial Relations, disclosed last week.

Webb pointed out that AB 2023, a federation-backed bill passed at the 1965 legislative session and signed into law by Governor Brown, refers to the location of the Division only in the phrase requiring that it be "based at and operated from a centrally located city."

Under the new law the Industrial Accident Commission will become the Division of Industrial Accidents with a Workmens Compensation Appeals Board within the Division to handle the judicial functions.

Webb pointed out that the Industrial Accident Commission has been in San Francisco since its inception as a state agency over 50 years ago. Reasons for maintaining the agency in San Francisco, Webb said, were:

1 — San Francisco is the headquarters for the Department of Industrial Relations and all of its Divisions. Staff services such as budgeting, accounting, duplicating and personnel, which are furnished to the Division by the Department, are all located in San Francisco.

2 — A San Francisco location is essential if the Division is to maintain the proper close liaison with other agencies of government.

Only the members of the Workmen's Compensation Appeals Board who review cases from the record and do not take testimony directly will be moved from Los Angeles, he noted.

Referees presently hearing and deciding the injured workmen's cases will, of course, remain in Los Angeles and other southern cities, he added.

### Older Workers Need New Law, Says Wirtz

A federal law is necessary to block job discrimination against older workers, in the view of Labor Secretary Wirtz.

Wirtz told the House Select Subcommittee on Labor "we have explored the possibility of new non-statutory means of dealing with arbitrary discrimination. That area is barren."

About half of all the job openings developing in private industry each year are closed to those over 55,

## Pitts Raps Labor Department Move to Drop 'Minimum Wage' for Farm Workers

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workers to Salinas Strawberries, Inc., a firm that stayed "off criteria" all summer and drove wages down to 82 cents an hour, was "utterly inconceivable" if the Department's criteria mean "anything more than a scrap of paper."

Wirtz' own California Farm Labor Panel had expressed dismay over the 82 cents an hour issue in Salinas strawberries in its August 26 report to Wirtz.

### AN ALTERNATIVE

Citing all three of these decisions as "further blows to domestic farm workers" and "unnecessary and unfair concessions" to agribusiness interests, Pitts urged Wirtz to drop the Florida experiment and boost the state-by-state minimum wage criteria to levels "approximating the average hourly earnings in each state."

Labor Department officials have indicated that the Florida experiment involves requiring growers to offer piece rates that yield an average hourly wage amounting to 130 percent of each state's present minimum hourly rate as established by the Labor Department in criteria set forth last December 19.

The criteria rate in Florida is presently \$1.15 and in California \$1.40. This means that growers would be required to pay a minimum AVERAGE wage of \$1.59 in Florida and \$1.82 in California if the experiment were extended to this state.

### DRAWBACKS

But with the record keeping in the hands of the growers, the possibility of cheating and of keeping inaccurate records is "greatly enhanced" and adequate enforcement is made "virtually impossible," Pitts pointed out.

Such a system "violates the entire principle behind setting minimum wages . . . and conflicts sharply with the Administration's war on poverty program," the secretary-treasurer of the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, said.

In action, even if honest records were kept, the Florida experiment could result, for example, in 90 percent of the workers earning only \$1.25 an hour and 10 percent earning \$4.65 yet the average would be \$1.60.

"How the Department of Labor could sponsor and promote a system in which some domestic farm workers on farms in California for which braceros are destined could be paid less than \$1.40 an hour, is unimaginable unless the Department is now waging a war to keep

domestic farm workers in abject poverty," Pitts declared.

The so-called minimum wage for farm workers applies only to growers who wish to qualify to import braceros. Corporate agricultural interests have succeeded year after year in defeating AFL-CIO efforts to bring farm workers under the Fair Labor Standards and National Labor Relations Acts, an effort the AFL-CIO is currently pursuing again in connection with the present emendments to the FLSA now under congressional consideration.

Similarly, on the state level, there is no minimum wage for male agricultural workers.

Women and minors 16 to 18 years of age, however, are covered by a wage order adopted by the Industrial Welfare Commission that became effective September 15. It requires women workers to be paid \$1.30 an hour and minors \$1.10 an hour. There is no state minimum wage for minors under 16.

## Senate 14 (b) Fight Starts Monday

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announced that he will call the bill up for debate.

Anti-union forces led by Senate minority leader Everett M. Dirksen (Illinois) are set to filibuster on the issue.

At present it is highly uncertain whether sufficient pro-repeal votes can be mustered to limit debate since this would require approval by two-thirds of the Senators voting.

The anti-repeal forces concede, however, that a majority of the Senators favor repeal.

It is therefore urgent that all trade unionists redouble their efforts to rain letters in on the Senate demanding that any filibuster be broken and the Democratic processes of government allowed to function. Relatives of trade union families in other states should be urged to do likewise.

Dirksen told reporters this week that he would even launch a talkathon against the technical motion to bring the bill up for debate.

More than 18 years' experience in states that have imposed the misnamed "right to work" laws on their workers have demonstrated that it results in divisive union-busting tactics by employers, lower wages for workers, and social insurance legislation that is generally inferior to the protections afforded wage and salary earners in non-right to work states.

## Search Underway For Oldest Union Bargaining Pact

The Department of Labor is seeking to uncover the oldest collective bargaining agreement in existence for its year-old Hall of Honor.

"Over a long stretch of years," Secretary of Labor W. Willard Wirtz said, "American labor and management have developed a self-sufficiency for concord and cooperation and turned their backs on industrial discord and strife. We want to honor the benchmark achievements in this historic evolution.

"In the Hall of Honor," we intend to give special recognition to the labor and management parties who have kept alive the oldest collective bargaining agreement in America, one which emerged from the era when industrial struggle was the order of the day."

Wirtz asked that every labor and management organization help in determining the oldest continuous collective bargaining pact in existence—national or local.

The Hall of Honor, opened on June 2, 1964, on the third floor of the Main Labor Building in the Nation's Capital, commemorates memorable achievements in labor-management relations.

The first bronze plaque placed in the hall last year honored "fifty years of constructive contribution to the private democracy of labor-management relations by the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America and Hart, Schaffner and Marx."

This is the only plaque yet unveiled in the hall.

So far, the oldest pact turned up is a collective bargaining agreement, dating back to March 25, 1891, between International Molders and Allied Workers Union, AFL-CIO, and the Manufacturers' Industrial Relations Association.

In his book *The International Molders of North America* published in 1921, Frank T. Stockton call this pact the "first agreement in America between a national trade union and a national employers' association . . ."

Anyone having information about an older continuous collective bargaining agreement — national or local — is asked to notify the Secretary of Labor by writing to:

Hall of Honor  
Office of Information, Publications  
and Reports  
U.S. Department of Labor  
14th St. and Constitution Ave., NW  
Washington, D.C.

## GOP Leader Blasts Birchers

Kentucky's U.S. Senator Thurston B. Morton, the Republican Party's Senate campaign chairman, warned this week that the John Birch Society is "as dangerous as the Ku Klux Klan and the Communist Party" and declared that it is time for the Republican Party to kick the society "right square in the tail."

His views echoed the concern about the activities of far right extremist groups expressed last week by California's senior Republican Senator Thomas H. Kuchel who, in announcing his decision not to run for Governor, de-

clared:

"The tragic fact is that within our California Republican Party is a fanatical, neo-fascist political cult, overcome by a strange mixture of corrosive hatred and sickening fear, recklessly determined to control our party or destroy it.

"Its members label anyone who even mildly disagrees with any of their extraordinary views a Socialist or a Communist or worse. Character assassination is part of their stock in trade," Kuchel warned.

## Factory Workers Wages Climb in L.A. and S.F. Areas

Average weekly gross earnings of factory workers in the Los Angeles-Long Beach and San Francisco-Oakland metropolitan areas rose 5.0 and 4.7 percent respectively between July, 1964, and July, 1965, state statistics have disclosed.

In Los Angeles the factory workers' pay check totaled \$122.29 as of last July and their average hourly rate was \$2.99, the same as a month earlier but 10 cents higher than the hourly rate a year earlier.

The report noted, however, that after deducting taxes and adjusting for consumer price increases, the boost in buying power of the factory worker supporting three dependents was pared down to just 3.0 percent over the year. Price rises since July, 1964, account for the difference in the percentage increase of gross earnings and buying power, it added.

In the five-county San Francisco-Oakland area, the factory workers' gross average weekly wage of \$133.32 was \$2.05 higher than last June and \$5.96 or 4.7 percent above July, 1964.

The report, issued by the Division of Labor Statistics and Research of the State Department of Industrial Relations, also indicated that the workweek in manufacturing averaged 40.9 hours in Los Angeles County or six-tenths of an hour longer than in July, 1964.

In the San Francisco area the workweek was 40.4 hours.

## J.F.K. Opposed 'R-T-W'

"Let me make it clear once again, as I have in the past, that—whatever office I shall hold—I shall always be unalterably opposed to so-called 'right-to-work' laws at any level, federal or state." — John F. Kennedy

## Sen. Rees Enters Race for Congress In Los Angeles

State Senator Thomas M. Rees, (D-Los Angeles) has announced his candidacy for the congressional seat to be vacated by Rep. James Roosevelt in the 26th district in Los Angeles.

Roosevelt, who has already been appointed U.S. Representative to the United Nations Economic and Social Council, is expected to resign from Congress within the next few weeks.

A special election to fill his unexpired term, which runs through 1966, is expected to be called by Governor Brown to be held either later this year or early in 1966.

Two other announced candidates are Los Angeles Councilman Leonard Horwin of Beverly Hills and State Real Estate Commissioner Milton Gordon. TV star Steve Allen is also reported to be considering running for the seat.

## Dividend Payments Climb 9% in 1965

Corporate dividend payments totaled \$11 billion during the first eight months of 1965, running 11 percent higher than the \$9.9 billion paid during the corresponding period last year, the U. S. Commerce Department has announced.

The report, which disclosed that corporate dividends amounted to \$507 million last month compared to \$475 million in August 1964, also noted that increases of 20 percent or more were registered by producers of non-electrical machinery, automobiles, other transportation equipment and non-ferrous metals.

Above average gains were also paid by the textile and leather, trade, finance and electrical machinery industries.