

Reuther Vows Aid to Delano Grape Strike

"You're going to win this strike. We're going to stay with you until you do," Walter Reuther, President of the 1.3 million member United Automobile Workers Union, assured hundreds of striking grape workers in Delano last week.

Addressing a rally of more than 800 cheering grape strikers at the AFL-CIO's Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee's hall in Delano, Reuther said his union will give the strikers \$5,

Strikers Need Aid

If you haven't given yet, give now. If you've already given, GIVE MORE to help the Delano area grape strikers win their historic strike for union recognition and decent wages. Send checks payable to the Farm Workers' Organizing Assistance Fund to the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, 995 Market Street, Room 310, San Francisco, California 94103.

000 a month "for as long as it takes to win this strike." And he presented the strikers with a check for \$10,000, \$5,000 of which was a "Christmas present," he said.

The funds are to be divided equally between AWOC and the National Farm Workers' Association, an independent organization which joined hands with AWOC in the strike shortly after it began.

The UAW leader also promised the

(Continued on Page 3)

Vital Need for National Planning Stressed at Labor Convention

With the labor force now growing about 50 percent faster than in the past 10 years and radical changes in technology wiping out jobs at the same time, the nation urgently needs a national planning agency to sustain the economy's growth and achieve and maintain full employment, the AFL-CIO declared last week in adopting a resolution on the national economy.

Unions Asked to Aid OJT Program

State AFL-CIO leader Thos. L. Pitts urged all affiliated unions and central bodies this week to cooperate "in every feasible way" with an accelerated on-the-job training program now being launched by Governor Brown in an ef-

(Continued on Page 2)

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151

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Wirtz Urged to Include Unions In Talks on Farm Labor Problems

"Constructive efforts to bring a measure of economic justice and security to California's farm workers as well as to the industry itself next year will not be served by playing along with the growers' adamant refusal to meet and discuss problems with the workers' representatives," State AFL-CIO Leader, Thos. L. Pitts, warned this week in criticizing Secretary of Labor W. Willard Wirtz' announced plans to hold monthly meetings with agri-business interests alone.

"The growers for years have turned their backs on every effort by farm workers to win fair wages and working conditions," Pitts, Secretary-Treasurer of the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, said.

"Despite the extreme sacrifices these poverty-plagued workers have repeatedly made just to try to win the same rights as other U.S. workers, government agencies have all too often accepted without question the

(Continued on Page 2)

Christmas Message

by

THOS. L. PITTS

Secretary-Treasurer, California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO

One of the most enduring values of the Christmas season is the sharp focus its advent brings to bear on the progress and hopes of mankind.

This is not happenstance but is a direct result of the spirit long imbued in the season itself — the spirit of man's quest for Peace on Earth, Goodwill toward Men, and all of the potential for good in life that could stem from achievement of that goal.

In a very real sense, the trade union movement was formed of certain basic aspects of the same quest—the quest to end the exploitation of man by man and to affirm the dignity of every individual—all within an abiding spirit of our common brotherhood.

The extent that organized labor succeeds, year by year, in moving toward that goal might very legitimately, be looked upon as its Christmas gift of the year to the future.

This year, with the enactment of the medicare program, the voting rights bill, a redoubling of our war on poverty, more adequate federal aid to education at every level, a better housing program and higher social security benefits, the array of gifts actively fought for and

(Continued on Page 2)

Unions Asked To Help Spur OJT Program

(Continued from Page 1)

fort to ease joblessness among untrained workers in various poverty areas in the state.

The goal of the program which is aided by Manpower Development and Training Act funds, is to find jobs for 4,500 MDTA-OJT trainees by January 31.

Local unions with knowledge of local unemployed workers who might qualify for on-the-job training can help by referring such workers to the local office of the Division of Apprenticeship Standards or to the nearest State Employment Service office, Pitts said.

They can also lend a hand by informing employers with whom they have contracts that organized labor is supporting the OJT drive and urge the employers to contact their local Division of Apprenticeship Standards office for further information.

Responding to an appeal from the Governor for aid in this job-creating campaign, Pitts said:

"The labor movement was born of the sorely felt need to lift workers out of the pit of poverty through higher wages and better education. This same need is still sorely evident in a number of areas of our state and now is no time to lose sight of our initial objective."

In explaining the program, the Governor said the Division of Apprenticeship Standards and the Bureau of Apprenticeship Training, which will assist employers applying for training programs, "will also work with local unions in order to assure that such programs are acceptable and in accord with the terms of collective bargaining agreements."

Letters announcing the campaign are being sent to all firms having 1,000 or more employees as well as to major employers' associations and Chambers of Commerce in key market areas by the Governor's office.

The Governor also said that the program "will in no way adversely effect normal apprenticeship efforts" because it is "aimed only at non-apprenticeable occupations."

In fact, the Governor added, the MDTA-OJT drive is expected to help generate new apprenticeship openings.

Under the program employers may be reimbursed for training costs incurred by up to \$25 per week for trainees for training periods of as long as 26 weeks.

Wirtz Urged to Include Unions In Talks on Farm Labor Problems

(Continued from Page 1)

grower's standard reply of 'Bah, humbug.'

"Tiny Tim, the public's conscience, is beginning to drive home to agribusiness interests the simple fact that farm workers, as well as growers, have a right to share fairly in the fruits of the nation's economic progress—and the government has a responsibility to help push, rather than hinder, the drive," Pitts said.

The State AFL-CIO leader said he wrote Wirtz last week calling for action on "two broad fronts" to eliminate barring foreign workers from California next year.

Pointing out that a piece-rate system without a guaranteed minimum hourly wage, such as the Labor Department is experimenting with in Florida citrus "must not be pursued" because it lets growers pay some workers only 30 or

40 cents an hour and subverts "any meaningful 'war on poverty.'" Pitts urged Wirtz to:

1. Boost the so-called "criteria wage" to a level approximating average hourly earnings in each state.
2. Broaden the proposed monthly meetings with growers to include "an equal number of labor union representatives" as well as representatives from minority and other interested groups.

"Farm workers and their representatives in the labor movement have an equal stake in farm labor developments and in proposed policies and plans being considered by the Department of Labor," Pitts wrote.

"To hold monthly meetings with growers alone is clearly unfair. I urge you to broaden these regular monthly meetings to include an equal number of labor union representatives as well as representatives from other interested groups here in California and elsewhere.

"The exchange of information, ideas and concerns at such meetings would benefit all participants," he added.

Christmas Message

(Continued from Page 1)

won with the aid of the trade union movement is bountiful.

And the promise of the extension of such gifts in time to the people of less fortunate nations has been strengthened by the staunch support the labor movement is continuing to give both directly and indirectly to the United Nations, the world's brightest hope for Peace on Earth.

But we also know that even within the golden state of California—let alone the broader reaches of the nation and the world—there are hundreds of thousands of our brothers and sisters, farm workers and urban workers alike, who are effectively crippled and whose children in turn are crippled by inadequate health care, inadequate educational opportunities, and inadequate nutrition and housing.

Much of this crippling of human potential still stems from the exploitation of man by man. In short, from discrimination and from the perpetuation of sub-poverty wage levels.

So it is my fondest hope this Christmas that each of us as public spirited citizens and as dedicated trade unionists will regenerate our resolve to work day by day, energetically and actively at every level within the framework of our free democratic traditions, to sustain and expand the spirit of brotherhood and goodwill now with us throughout the coming year.

Are You Eligible For a DI Refund?

If you worked for two or more employers in California during 1965 who deducted disability insurance taxes from your wages and if you earned more than \$7,400 in taxable wages during the entire year or more than \$5,600 prior to August 1, 1965, you may be entitled to a refund for overpayment.

That's the word put out in a "Notice to Employees" by the State Department of Employment which employers are supposed to post in a conspicuous place in their offices.

Claims for the refund must be filed during the period January 1 through June 30, 1966, and application forms (DE 1964) may be obtained after January 1, 1966, either from the central office of the Department of Employment at 800 Capitol Mall, Sacramento, California 95814, or from any local State Department of Employment Office.

Wages earned in and reported to states other than California may not be figured in refund claims, however.

For further information and assistance contact your nearest State Department of Employment office.

If you have any doubt about your eligibility for a refund, check it out. It may be worth a day's wages or more to you.

Reuther Vows Aid to Delano Grape Strikers

(Continued from Page 1)

farm workers that he would generate union support for a nationwide boycott of grape products from the strike area and demand a Senate probe of farm working conditions as well as an investigation of possible violations of water-use laws.

Rejecting the growers' claim that the strike stemmed from outside agitators, Reuther declared:

"The only outsiders are the strike-breakers being imported from Texas and other parts of the country."

The growers, he said, are "fighting a battle which they can't win."

"This is a part of the same struggle going on in Selma. It is not a fight of grape workers. It is a fight of every American that believes in human decency and social justice," he declared.

After an 8 p.m. press conference, Reuther met informally in a private home with grower representatives but he explained afterwards that the meeting was not to negotiate but just to exchange points of view.

Repeatedly in the course of his tour of downtown Delano and vineyards in the Delano-Earlimart area Thursday afternoon he assured the grape workers that the American labor movement was "determined" to support the strike.

It is, he said, "an important new beginning in the long battle to organize farm workers."

"It may take time, but if we stick together we will eventually gain social and economic justice for the farm worker as we did for the workers at Ford, General Motors and the other big companies."

Throughout the day he was repeatedly mobbed by crowds of jubilant strikers shouting: "Viva Reuther" to which he responded: "Viva la Huelga!" (the Spanish word for "strike").

The Choice Is Ours

"We can decide whether we shall be a Mississippi or a California. We can decide whether we shall have first class or second class education, first class or second class highways and whether our mountains, beaches, forests and streams shall be conserved for the pleasure and utilization of all.

"And those decisions, in the arena of politics and public policy, are fundamental to our economy and to employment—to true full employment of both our working force and our other great resources in both the private and public sectors."—Gov. Edmund G. (Pat) Brown.

Vital Need for National Planning Stressed at AFL-CIO Convention

(Continued from Page 1)

growing needs in the fields of housing, community facilities and public services on a state-by-state and metropolitan-area-by-metropolitan-area basis.

- Utilization of this inventory by the federal government to "provide plans and programs to meet specified requirements, within specific periods of time to help achieve and sustain full employment.

- A faster increase in wages and fringe benefits to broaden and strengthen consumer purchasing power.

- A general tax cut to benefit low and moderate-income families along with an end to the continued collection of federal income taxes from persons who the federal government itself already defines as poor.

- Membership on the Board of Governors and other advisory boards of the Federal Reserve system for representatives of all sectors of American society including organized labor.

- An effective nationwide U.S. employment service.

- Creation of a technological clearing house to gather information on technological changes and their effects on the welfare of the American people to serve as a basis to develop public and private programs to adjust the economy to the disruptive impact of spreading automation.

OTHER ASPECTS

Among other things the resolution also called for extension of the Fair Labor Standards Act to millions presently uncovered and boosting the federal minimum wage to \$2 an hour; additional federal standards for the unemployment insurance system to extend the duration and raise the level of benefits; reduction of the workweek to 35 hours with no reduction in weekly earnings and double time paid for overtime work to discourage unnecessary overtime and encourage the hiring of additional workers. All of these issues were covered more extensively in separate resolutions.

The AFL-CIO delegates emphasized that improved policies in recent years have not corrected the basic lack of balance between the economy's rapidly rising ability to produce and the lagging increase of consumer buying power.

Between 1956 and 1964, they pointed out, the real compensation per hour of all employees in the private economy rose approximately 2.3 percent a year—far behind the 3.3 percent annual increase in the private economy's output per man hour.

LAG CONTINUES

Noting that this lag is continuing this year, the AFL-CIO said this makes it

all the more difficult to achieve, let alone sustain full employment.

This is why the AFL-CIO cannot go along with the Administration's efforts to hold the line on wages through its so-called wage-price guidelines.

AFL-CIO economist Nate Goldfinger pointed out that corporate profits have climbed twice as fast as wages since 1961 and said:

"There is no question about our accepting these wage guidelines—they are wrong. And we are going to do all we can to raise wages, fringe benefits and increase consumer purchasing power."

OUT OF LINE

In addition to the fact that the guideline system "just isn't working out," Goldfinger said that they are also out of line with labor's general stand in opposition to government interference in collective bargaining.

At present the recommended guideline increase is 3.2 percent but the government is expected shortly to announce a higher guideline of about 3.4 percent.

But the average increase in output per man-hour is closer to 3.6 percent and even if the government were to set the wage guideline at 3.6 percent it would not compensate for the lag in wage increases over the past nine years.

IUD Advocates Pension Pools

Pooled pension funds to cover employees in small plants with 10 or 20 workers was advocated by the AFL-CIO Industrial Union Department's 6th Constitutional Convention.

It was estimated that several hundred thousand union workers might be covered under such a program.

Difficulties have long been encountered in negotiating pensions systems with small employers because of the cost factors. A study of the IUD proposal has been under way for more than a year.

A group of life insurance companies would administer the programs, with one company keeping the records to keep costs low, and the others underwriting the risk.

The portable pension concept was discussed at length in the Sept. 17, 1965 Newsletter story covering the convention of the National Foundation of Health, Welfare and Pension Plans, Inc. in San Francisco. A 23-page pamphlet titled "Portable Pensions" is available free from Commerce Clearing House, Inc., 351 California St., San Francisco.

Survey Finds Less Than One-Thirtieth Of 1% Fraud in State's Welfare Cases

Welfare fraud, the traditional bugaboo in public assistance to needy families, has literally disappeared as a problem of any statistical significance in California.

State Director of Social Welfare Jack Wedemeyer has reported that a "Recipient Fraud Survey" conducted by the Research and Statistics Division of his Department over a period of 15 months (July 1964 through September 1965), via reports compiled in all counties, bears out this conclusion.

35% of Nation's Mothers Work

"Economic necessity" is the main reason why mothers of young children work, according to a Labor Department study.

The Department's Women's Bureau, in a publication entitled, "Who Are the Working Mothers?" gives this profile:

- They are 9.5 million of the 25 million women workers in the United States as of last year. They are 35 per cent of all mothers of children under 18.

- With relatively few exceptions, they need the money their earnings provide. Of the working mothers, 17 per cent had husbands who made less than \$3,000 a year; 25 per cent had husbands with incomes between \$3,000 and \$5,000.

- In families with a husband present, about three out of 10 mothers work; with no husband, the proportion is almost six out of 10.

During the past 25 years, the report shows, the percentage as well as the number of working mothers has increased sharply.

There were only 1.5 million working mothers in 1940 and 4.6 million in 1950. Since 1940, the percentage of mothers in the labor force increased about three times as rapidly as the percentage of all women workers.

Factors which influence a mother to seek work, the report noted, include the availability of a job to a person with her education, training or skills and the hours of employment.

"For the great majority of working women with young children," the survey showed, "economic need is the most compelling reason. This need, in large measure is determined by the husband's earnings and the regularity of his employment. The higher his earnings and the greater the security afforded by his job, the less likely the wife is to work. In fatherless homes . . . the compulsion on a mother to seek work is obviously great. . . .

"In this most affluent of nations, half of all families headed by a woman live in poverty."

"Established fraud cases, resulting in convictions by District Attorneys," he said, "actually amount to a fraction of 1/30th of 1 per cent of the total Aid to Families with Dependent Children caseload.

"The notoriety and attention that fraud convictions draw is understandable, but also unfortunate in keeping alive the popular impression that cheating is widespread," Wedemeyer noted.

PATTERN EMERGES

The pattern that emerged from the 15 months fraud survey, he said, is this

1—An average of 600 "suspected fraud" cases in the AFDC program (out of 137,000 families) are turned up monthly by social workers in the 58 counties.

2—About three-fourths of the suspected cases are found by special investigative units, established by county welfare to departments, to be clear of actual fraud. The other one-fourth are referred to the District Attorney in the county.

3—The referrals are further reduced by 50 per cent or more, on the average, as "no case" by the District Attorney; with the ultimate result that less than 10 per cent of the "suspected fraud" cases originally turned up result in convictions.

IT'S INFINITESIMAL

"And bear in mind," Wedemeyer said, "that even the suspected cases—90 per cent of which don't check out—only represent about one-half of 1 percent of the 137,000 families receiving AFDC assistance at any given time. The actual proven fraud is virtually infinitesimal; certainly so small as to lay to rest the persistent fable that the welfare rolls are shot through with scheming free-loaders."

Suspected and proven fraud in the other categories of aid, he said — old age, blind or disabled recipients — are even smaller in number.

Walsh-Healey Act Updating Urged

The AFL-CIO called on the Labor Dept. to make the Walsh-Healey Public Contracts Act "a meaningful program once again" by promptly updating prevailing wage minimums for firms selling goods to the government. The action was taken in a resolution adopted by the AFL-CIO Convention in San Francisco last week.

The resolution also urged Congress to bring the law up to date through an amendment enabling the Secretary of Labor to include the value of fringe benefits in determining industry minimums.

Fringe benefits do figure in prevailing wage computations under the Davis-Bacon Act and the recently-adopted Service Contracts Act, the convention noted, and should apply in Walsh-Healey determinations as well.

All three laws, the resolution urged, "must be effectively administered and enforced. Government contracts with private industry should not be a reward to those employers who pay wages below those prevailing in the industry. Contracts should be awarded to those who pay fair wages."

The resolution noted that the Labor Dept. had held up Walsh-Healey wage determinations because of court challenges. But the court cases have been decided, the convention noted, and "there is no excuse for not reactivating the determination process."

Socialism?

"I'm pretty weary of hearing every new program labelled 'socialism.' It's not 'socialism' to help the people with sound, fiscally responsible measures. Most new federal programs rely on state and local government cooperation to be implemented. All these levels of government can and do work harmoniously to help the people. This is how it should be. The federal government has a crucial role to play. Its resources are needed to do things for people state and local governments by themselves can't do. The federal government is a friend of the people, not an enemy as so many of its critics try to make the people think."—Sen. Thomas J. McIntyre. (D.-New Hampshire).

Fed Council to Meet

The Executive Council of the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, will hold its first meeting of the new year on Wednesday and Thursday, January 19-20, 1966, in Santa Rosa, starting at 10:00 a.m. The site of the meeting will be announced later.