



California AFL-CIO News

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THOS. L. PITTS 151
Executive Secretary-Treasurer

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North-Central Area COPE Organized

Key labor officials from throughout north-central California organized a North-Central Area Committee on Political Education at a meeting in Sacramento this week to streamline endorsement procedures for the June 7 primary election.

The meeting, initiated by California Labor COPE, provided an opportunity to iron out problems stemming from the fact that many of the congressional, state senate and assembly districts fall within the jurisdictions of two or more of the eight central labor bodies involved, and to discuss problems related to the reapportionment of the legislature last Fall.

Elected president of the new regional COPE was John Axtel, secretary-treasurer of the Sacramento Central Labor Council. James Pollard, secretary-treasurer of the Solano Central Labor Council was elected secretary-treasurer.

Creation of the regional COPE is designed to help coordinate the actions of the eight central bodies in recommending candidates to be endorsed from a total of 46 congressional and state legislative districts to State COPE prior to the primary convention of California Labor COPE.

The respective jurisdictions

(Continued on Page 3)

If There's A Will, Isn't There a Way?

Senate Rule 22, which repudiates democratic principles by requiring a two-thirds vote of senators present and voting to end a filibuster, is currently the big obstacle to repeal of Section 14(b).

Repeal would restore both to the workers and the employers in 19 states presently saddled with compulsory open shop laws the freedom to decide democratically for themselves what union security clauses they want in their own contracts.

Early last year Senate Resolution 8 sponsored by Senator

(Continued on Page 4)

Non-RTW States' Unions Do Better

Underscoring the fact that workers are hurt both in the pocketbook and in terms of decent working conditions and fringe benefits by so-called "right-to-work" laws, a recent Labor Department survey found that unions have done twice as well in organizing workers in states that do not have such laws.

The deceptively labeled laws don't assure anyone of a right to work. Instead they impose compulsory open shop terms on all workers regardless of the workers' desires.

(Continued on Page 2)

Act Now To Win Repeal of 14b

An urgent call to all AFL-CIO affiliates in California to mobilize every ounce of support possible to break the Senate filibuster currently blocking a Democratic vote by the Senate on repeal of Section 14(b) was dispatched this week by state AFL-CIO leader Thos. L. Pitts.

"Of particular importance,"

Pitts said, "is the support of friendly employers for repeal."

He urged all union officials to check their 1958 "right to work" files for leads to such friendly employers and to then ask such employers to write or wire Senator Murphy urging him to vote for cloture on the grounds that the filibuster is "a shoddy legislative maneuver violating the principles of democracy" because it denies the full Senate the basic right to vote on the bill.

In addition he urged all affiliates to spread the word to their

(Continued on Page 3)

Ad Sales Case Suspect Jailed

One of two men suspected of fleecing California firms out of thousands of dollars for ads in an apparently non-existent paper purportedly "published in labor's interest" was lodged in the Santa Clara County Jail in San Jose this week on a charge of "conspiracy to commit theft."

Jailed in connection with ad

(Continued on Page 2)

Pitts Raps Candidate's Stand on 14b

State AFL-CIO leader Thos. L. Pitts charged GOP gubernatorial candidate Ronald Reagan today with revealing "an appalling ignorance of what the fight to repeal Section 14(b) is all about" and urged him "to do a little more homework instead of parroting everything corporate farm interests tell him about the state's farm labor picture."

Pitts' comments were prompted by statements made by Reagan at a reception for him in the Silver Terrace area of San Francisco last Saturday according to a report in the January 23 Los Angeles Times.

Referring to Reagan's assertion that he opposed repeal of Section 14(b) of the Taft-Hartley Act "because it would let government tell us what we can or can't do," Pitts declared:

"Reagan's statement dem-

(Continued on Page 4)

1936 Farm Labor Pacts Underscore Current Wage Lag

Who says California agriculture can't operate under a union contract?

The truth of the matter is that California farm workers have organized unions and they have operated for several years in California to the benefit of all concerned.

These pertinent facts were recalled recently by James (Jimmy) Matthams of Carpenters Local 1062, Santa Barbara, who served for years as Vice President of the State Federation of Labor from District 6.

Searching through his files recently, Brother Matthams, now 80 but still keenly interested in labor problems, came up with copies of two collective bargaining agreements signed in 1936 between growers in the Santa Maria Valley area and the Fruit and Vegetable Workers Union of California No. 18211, in the first instance, and between growers and the P.I. Labor Union, Inc. and the Mexican Labor Union of Santa Maria Valley in the second case.

(Continued on Page 2)

Suspect In Ad Sales Case Jailed

(Continued from Page 1)

sales for a paper known as "The State Labor News," which State AFL-CIO leader Thos. L. Pitts has repeatedly warned "is not authorized, endorsed or sanctioned in any way" by the State AFL-CIO or to the best of his knowledge "by any other legitimate labor organization in the state," was George Hermanson, 47, of 1245 Harper, Apt. 19, Los Angeles.

Hermanson was arrested in Los Angeles January 18 on a warrant issued five days earlier by the Sunnyvale Municipal Court in Santa Clara County.

He was being held in lieu of \$11,000 bail pending a preliminary hearing in the Sunnyvale municipal court. The hearing, initially scheduled for last Tuesday, was continued at the request of Hermanson's attorney until 10:30 a.m., February 3.

The second suspect, John Black of 1135 North Ogden, Los Angeles, is still at large but a warrant for his arrest was also been issued.

Pitts, Secretary-Treasurer of the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, has appealed to labor press editors and other trade unionists throughout the state every year for the past three years to send any copy of the State Labor News they encounter to the Federation offices in San Francisco.

"But," he noted this week, "we've never received any and, in view of this, we wonder if such a paper has ever even been published."

Last October 15, in response to inquiries from San Francisco Bay Area business firms, Pitts alerted Better Business Bureaus in key cities throughout the state and issued a press release warning that particularly during the Christmas season "spurious labor papers and ad sales promotion schemes spring up and try to hoodwink business firms into buying ads in papers, yearbooks or other publications as a gesture of good

1936 Farm Pacts Underscore Wage Lag

(Continued from Page 1)

A check of the wage rates set forth in the 1936 contract for such jobs as thinning and hoeing lettuce, which was then pegged at a minimum of 35 cents per hour, against the average of about \$1.40 per hour paid last year indicates that hired farm labor wage rates have increased about \$1.05 an hour.

But in the same period annual average hourly earnings of production workers in manufacturing industries in California have climbed from roughly 66 cents in 1936 to \$3.05 last year, an increase of about \$2.39 an hour.

The widening gap between hourly earnings of farm workers and production workers vividly demonstrates that during the past 29 years the wages of workers in California factories have increased at a much more rapid pace than the wages of farm workers.

Mathams also uncovered a letter sent to the California Farm Bureau Federation January 16, 1937 by the chairman of the Santa Maria Valley Farm Center which noted in part that:

"This is the third year in which we have operated in this district under a labor agreement. At first it appeared as a serious threat to the rugged individualism of our people, but now it seems to work out rather smoothly and is accepted as part of the usual scheme of existence.

will toward the labor movement."

He pointed out that high pressure ad sales techniques are contrary to the code of ethics adhered to by most legitimate labor publications and pointed out that there was no listing in the phone directories for a "State Labor News" in either San Francisco or Los Angeles.

Since then the State AFL-CIO has been cooperating with police and postal authorities in every way possible to expose and curb ad sales schemes that bilk advertisers and unjustly discredit legitimate union publications, Pitts said.

Delano Strikers Need More Aid

Farm workers engaged in the AFL-CIO Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee's strike for union recognition and \$1.40 an hour against Delano area growers still need help.

Donations of food and clothing should be sent directly to AWOC headquarters at 1457 Glenwood Street, Delano. Checks payable to the Farm Workers' Organizing Assistance Fund should be sent to the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO at 995 Market Street, San Francisco.

Preferential hiring of local labor has reduced our relief (welfare) load to a minimum and thus relieved the taxpayers of considerable relief (welfare) taxes. Efficiency of labor has improved and there is a better understanding existing between the employers and the employees. The few exceptions to this are those engaged in the packing business who represent corporations from the outside."

(In the intervening 28 years the outside corporate farm interests referred to above have multiplied their power many times over and, particularly with the revival of the bracero program in 1951, have been

able, to a large degree, to dictate prices to independent growers and depress the wage rates of domestic farm workers.)

The letter went on to call on the Farm Bureau Federation to help establish similar agreements and wage scales in all districts throughout the state where commodities competing with products grown in the Santa Maria Valley are grown. It specifically cited Santa Clara, Alameda, San Joaquin, Sacramento, Los Angeles and San Diego Counties.

Among other things, the contracts called for hiring preference to be given to local residents; time and a half paid for work on Sundays and eight established holidays; no discrimination for legal union activities; and provision of a complaint board to handle grievances.

Such were some of the terms of work for farm workers in Santa Maria Valley nearly 30 years ago.

But since then corporate agriculture, more concerned with profits than people, more concerned with rotting crops than with rotting human potential, have come to dominate much of California's \$3.7 billion agriculture economy.

And, on a relative basis, the man with the hoe, the workers who harvest the crops, are worse off today than they were at the depths of the nation's worst depression.

Unions Do Twice as Well In Non-'R-T-W' States

(Continued from Page 1)

The survey, conducted by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, also found that the proportion of organized workers in the non-farm work force averaged 34 percent in the 31 states without "right to work" laws but only 15 percent in the 19 compulsory open shop states.

Total U.S. union membership in 1964 was placed at nearly 17.2 million with 14.1 million in unions affiliated with the AFL-CIO, the report said.

On a national basis, about 30 percent of employees were found to be organized, ranging from a high of 43 percent in Washington State to less than seven percent in North Carolina a "right to work" state.

Five states have more than one million union workers, New York leads with 2.5 million and California is second with 1,888,000. Union membership in Pennsylvania was 1,450,000; Illinois 1,394,000 and Ohio 1,148,000, the survey reported.

Deadline For Scholarships Is March 21

Local unions and central bodies planning to encourage their members to have their sons and daughters compete for one of the 16 \$500 awards available this year in the 16th Annual California Labor Federation Scholarship Awards program should spread the word to their members as soon as possible.

To qualify the Federation must receive the student's application from the principal of the student's high school not later than March 21, 1966.

All senior high school students in public, private or parochial schools in California planning to attend a college or university accredited by the Western Association of Colleges anywhere in the United States are eligible.

The awards are made on the basis of the candidate's academic record and score on a **special two-hour exam to be held in competing high schools on Friday, April 15, 1966.**

The exam aims to evaluate the student's knowledge and understanding of labor, business, industrial and governmental problems and his ability to present such information.

A six-page brochure setting forth the rules of the contest, suggested readings, and other resources has already been distributed to all public and private high schools in the state. Interested students should inquire at their principal's office for these details.

Further information may be obtained by writing to: Education Committee, California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, Thos. L. Pitts, Secretary-Treasurer, 995 Market Street, Rm. 310, San Francisco, California 94103.

Thirteen of the 16 scholarships offered this year are sponsored by the following affiliates of the Federation:

Butcher's Local No. 498, Vallejo; Carpenters' Ladies Auxiliary California State Council—Beulah McKay Memorial Scholarship; California Legislative Board of the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen; California State Council of Carpenters;

Act Now To Win Repeal of 14b

(Continued from Page 1)

membership to urge them to write Senators Kuchel and Murphy to vote for cloture and to contact church groups, citizens groups, attorneys, college professors and other friends of labor to urge them to do the same.

Evidence of "grass roots employer support for invoking cloture," Pitts emphasized, is vital if Senator Murphy is to be persuaded to vote for cloture.

Pointing out that the "ultra-conservative and reactionary forces have redoubled their efforts . . . to kill repeal by talking the bill to death," Pitts also urged that wires be sent to Senator Thomas H. Kuchel commending him on his stand favoring cloture and urging him to remain firm in the face of ultra-conservative pressures.

"The labor movement in California must mount an all-out campaign . . . The long and expensive fight over this issue is now coming to a climax. Immediate action is essential if we are to win repeal," Pitts stressed.

This week Senate minority leader Everett M. Dirksen (R. Illinois) thwarted an effort by majority leader Mike Mansfield

California State Council of Culinary Workers, Bartenders and Hotel and Motel Service Employees; California State Council of Lathers—Lloyd A. Mashburn Memorial Scholarship; California State Council of Retail Clerks—Warren G. "Pop" DeSepte Award; Communication Workers of America, Bay Area Council; Los Angeles Building and Construction Trades Council; Los Angeles County District Council of Carpenters; Painters District Council No. 36, Los Angeles—Roderick MacKenzie Scholarship Award; Studio Utility Employees Local No. 724, Hollywood—Henry C. Rohrbarch Memorial Scholarship; and the Western Federation of Butchers.

The other three scholarships are sponsored by the California Labor Federation.

(D. Montana) to bring about a preliminary Senate vote on the repeal measure by forcing a word-for-word reading of the Senate Journal.

The reactionary forces are filibustering even against Mansfield's normally routine motion to call the bill up for debate.

This tactic gives the anti-labor forces two opportunities instead of just one to filibuster against the bill.

In an effort to get the bill brought up for debate, Mansfield had adjourned, rather than recessed, both Monday and Tuesday's sessions since such a procedure gives him a two hour period at each subsequent session to make a non-debatable motion to consider the repeal bill.

It is generally conceded that a majority of the Senate favors repeal but Dirksen has vowed that his coalition of Republicans and southern Democrats will use every rule in the book to prevent the measure from coming to a vote.

Dirksen claims that the issue "is the sovereign authority of the 50 states to legislate in this fashion if they so desire."

This statement obscures the fact that Section 14(b) is the only section in national labor law that permits state laws to supercede federal law in violation of national policy endorsing the principle of free collective bargaining — a policy that is severely compromised by "right to work" statutes.

Symposium Set on Full Employment

"Full Employment — an American Dilemma," will be the subject of the 9th Annual St. Mary's College Executive Symposium at the campus in Moraga in Contra Costa County on February 2-3.

U.S. Under Secretary of Labor John F. Henning and the AFL-CIO's Director of Research, Nathaniel Goldfinger are among the principal speakers at the symposium. About 200 participants are expected.

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(Continued from Page 1)

of seven of the eight central bodies involved were spelled out in the January 14, 1966 issue of the California AFL-CIO News.

The eighth central body in the region is the Kern-Inyo-Mono Central Labor Council. It is concerned with endorsements in the 2nd and 18th Congressional Districts, the 15th and 18th State Senate Districts, and the 6th, 28th and 29th Assembly Districts.

The meeting, chaired by Assistant State COPE Director, Fred C. Smith, was held in the Senator Hotel in Sacramento last Tuesday.

Union Shop Backed In 97% of Votes

Proof of the fact that the union shop was highly desired by the overwhelming majority of U.S. workers was demonstrated again and again and again immediately after the Taft-Hartley Act was enacted in 1947.

The act originally provided for secret ballot union shop elections. But in 46,146 elections conducted by the National Labor Relations Board the first year or so the Act was in existence, the union shop was the victor in 97 percent of such elections.

This proved so embarrassing to the National Association of Manufacturers, the National Right to Work Committee and the U.S. and State Chambers of Commerce which were among the principal instigators of Section 14(b) that Senator Robert A. Taft of Ohio, the late conservative leader who had opposed enactment of Section 14(b) in the first place, made a motion that quietly repealed the requirement for union shop authorization elections.

State Defers Action on 160 Acre Limit

The State Board of Agriculture this week deferred action on an attempt by the Irvine Company and other excess land owners to get the Board to adopt a resolution opposing enforcement of the U.S. Reclamation law's 160-acre limitation in Imperial Valley.

Instead, the Board appointed a committee consisting of board members Ernest E. Hatch of Oroville, Leo J. Giobetti of Merced and Joseph J. Crosetti of Watsonville, with Hatch as chairman, to study the issue and make a recommendation to the Board at a later meeting.

The next board meeting is scheduled February 21 but it is uncertain whether the Committee will have a recommendation at that time.

The Board's action came in the wake of a vigorous protest lodged with Board President Jesse W. Tapp last week by State AFL-CIO leader Thos. L. Pitts.

Pitts had pointed out that the Irvine Company and other big excess land owners were trying to peg their case to an informal ruling issued in 1933 by a lame-duck Secretary of the Interior, Ray Lyman Wilbur.

Wilbur's informal ruling had maintained that private lands in the Imperial Irrigation District were exempt from the 160-acre limitation.

Pitts reminded Tapp, however, that as recently as December 31, 1964 U.S. Department of Interior Solicitor Frank J. Barry had issued a formal opinion reversing Wilbur's position and declaring that Wilbur's ruling was "without legal foundation."

Prior to the decision to refer the issue to a committee, the Board heard spokesmen from the California State Grange, the California Farmer - Consumer Information Committee and the California Power Users Association concur with Pitts' stand in opposition to the move by the excess land owners.

Pitts Raps Reagan On 14b and Civil Rights

(Continued from Page 1)
onstrates such an appalling ignorance about this vital issue that it raises serious doubts about his fitness for any public office, let alone the Governor of the most populous state in the nation.

"Far from letting the government 'tell us what we can and can't do,' repeal of 14(b) will assure workers in all 50 states instead of just 31 of their right to decide for themselves what union security clauses they want in their contracts.

"It is the continued existence of Section 14(b) that lets state governments dictate to workers and employers alike what they can or can't do that is at issue," Pitts said.

"Section 14(b) licenses the imposition of compulsory open-shop terms on all workers and employers in states that adopt the deceptively labeled 'right to work' laws.

"Such laws have been enacted principally in the southern states to prevent workers from receiving a fair day's wage for a fair day's work," the Secretary-Treasurer of the California Labor Council on Political Education explained.

"All the movie moguls' gift to the Republican Party needs to do to prove this to his own satisfaction is to look at the substandard labor laws and social insurance programs that exist in most of the so-called 'right to work' states today," Pitts added.

In response to other questions at the reception, Reagan also revealed that he was "torn" on the issue of whether states should have "right to work" laws.

"Since it's only the existence of 14(b) itself that promotes 'right to work' laws and Reagan opposes its repeal, it's pretty obvious how very slightly 'torn' Reagan is on this issue," Pitts observed.

The Los Angeles Times story also reported that Reagan:

● Indicated opposition to federal action to spur job opportunities in areas like Watts saying that such problems could best be solved by mobilizing industrialists and the people

themselves to set up training programs.

● Argued that recent civil rights legislation amounted to just "empty promises" and that the AFL-CIO-backed 1965 Voting Rights Act was unnecessary because the federal government already had authority to require the registration of Negro voters in the South.

● Called for "exploring" the idea of charging tuition in the (state) universities.

● Disagreed with a questioner that imported Mexican labor "was cheap labor" and maintained that "we in America have educated ourselves to a level so there aren't that many people who want to go out in the field and make a living. . . ." "History shows," Reagan added, "that this happened to the Romans and they had to get people from the outside where the jobs meant a step up." Commenting on these stands, Pitts declared:

"By suggesting that civil rights legislation was unnecessary, that we should compromise our insistence on adequate free public education opportunities for all, that job creation should be left to the whims and beneficence of industrialists, and by ignoring the fact that there is a wage shortage, not a labor shortage, in connection with farm employment, Reagan bares himself as a man who has been insulated so long by opulence that he thinks everybody lives that way.

"He appears to be totally out of touch and unsympathetic with the day-to-day problems confronting the millions of Californians in the low and moderate income groups.

"It might help create a little more constructive dialogue between our two major political parties if this self-styled 'citizen politician' would do a little more homework instead of parroting everything the corporate farm interests tell him about the state's farm labor picture," Pitts said.

"For instance, since he last brandished a catsup bottle on TV, the Canner's League of California has reported that stocks of processed tomatoes

If There's A Will, Isn't There a Way?

(Continued from Page 1)

Paul Douglas (D-Illinois) was introduced to change Rule 22 to require just a simple majority vote, instead of a two-thirds vote, to let the full Senate get on with its business. Although an adverse report from the Rules Committee hangs over it, S. Res. 8 is still on the Senate calendar. And all existing rights to consideration and action are still in effect.

President Johnson, certainly one of the most experienced and effective Senate leaders to ever become Chief Executive, is pledged to repeal 14(b). So is the Democratic Party.

Yet press reports this week describe Senate maneuvers on 14(b) as a "sham battle," implying that only a show was being staged and that defeat for the repeal measure was in the cards.

But trade unionists can't buy shams. We still believe that where there is a will, there's a way. So let's get on with it, and repeal 14(b).

Dividend Payments Hit \$19.5 Billion in '65

Cash dividends totaling \$19.5 billion and representing a 10.25 percent increase over 1964 were paid by U.S. corporations last year, the U.S. Commerce reported this week.

Last month, alone, dividend payments totaled \$3.9 billion, more than 10 percent higher than the dividend payments made in December, 1964.

Just to provide some idea of the magnitude of last year's dividend payments, they amount to more than 17 percent of President Johnson's proposed \$112.8 billion budget for all federal programs at home and abroad.

are substantially larger than a year ago, and that there is ample catsup on hand even though the domestic workers who harvested the crop received wages averaging less than one-half of the state's average weekly wage in factory employment," Pitts pointed out.