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U.S. Jobless Rate Dips to 13-Year Low

For the first time since 1953, the nation's seasonally adjusted jobless rate on an annual basis averaged less than 4 percent last year, the U.S. Labor Department reported this week.

The 3.9 percent annual jobless rate posted for 1966 was well below the 4.6 percent average for 1965 and reflected a reduction of about 500,000 in the ranks of the nation's jobless.

Unemployment averaged three million last year compared to 3.5 million in 1965.

On a monthly basis, the December jobless rate of 3.8 percent was just a fraction higher

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Safety Parley Set Feb. 2-3

The annual Industrial Safety Conference sponsored by the State Department of Industrial Relations will be held at the Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles on February 2-3, 1967, Ernest B. Webb, director of the Department and general

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Sam Eubanks Succumbs at 62

Sam Eubanks, a veteran labor leader and Labor Department official, died of a heart attack at his home in Chevy Chase, Md., Tuesday.

Mr. Eubanks, 62, a former vice president of the California Labor Federation, AFL-

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Bargaining Right for Farm Workers Urged at Hearing

Farm workers in California and throughout the nation must be accorded full collective bargaining rights and the benefits of other protective social welfare legislation enjoyed by other workers in order to "end the inhumane relationships which have so degraded workers in agricul-

ture," William Kircher, National Director of Organization for the AFL-CIO told members of a U.S. Advisory Commission on Food and Fiber in San Francisco this week.

Pointing out that the American labor movement has always "vigorously supported" efforts to provide a "decent livelihood" for farm operators and farm laborers alike, Kircher exploded a number of myths promoted by huge corporate farm

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Consumers' Aide's Budget Slashed 45%

Governor Reagan named Mrs. Kay Valory of Lafayette as Acting State Consumer Counsel on Wednesday but, at the same time, the Governor's cabinet secretary, William Clark, disclosed that, effective immediately, the Consumer Counsel staff will be slashed to effect savings of \$50,000 this fiscal year.

The Governor's action was

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End of Bracero Program Hailed As a 'Triumph'

Congressional termination of the bracero program two years ago is clearly a "triumph" but much more still remains to be done, U.S. Under Secretary of Labor John F. Henning told some 500 farm leaders from across the nation at the annual National Farm Labor Conference in San Francisco this week.

In reviewing the experience

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Reagan Fills Third Major Agency Post

Governor Ronald Reagan this week selected his third super agency chief and the Democratically controlled State Legislature filled a newly created post of Washington representative for the State Legislature.

Norman B. Livermore, Jr., 55, former treasurer of the Pacific Lumber Company of San Francisco, was appointed Ad-

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A Jekyll and Hyde Posture?

Growers Push Bill to Bolster Their Own Bargaining Rights

Although some California growers practically throw up their hands in horror at the idea of assuring full collective bargaining rights for farm workers, they seem to undergo a strange Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde transformation when the shoe is on the other foot.

The best, most recent reflection of this unreasonable transformation is provided by the latest edition of one of the State's agribusiness-oriented publications, the "California Farmer," which levels its editorial barrage against big processor lobbyists who are opposing Congressional legislation that would protect the growers' rights to join associations that would bargain collectively

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Drug Firm Aids Farm Workers

Thrifty Drug Stores, the seventh largest merchandising company in California, has announced that it has stopped buying products of the A. Perelli-Minetti Sons firm of Delano such as Tribuno Ver-

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Safety Parley Set Feb. 2-3 In Los Angeles

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chairman of the conference, announced this week.

Keynote speakers at the two-day session will be William Sidell, second general vice president of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America who will present labor's views, and Walter R. Farrell, vice president of Kaiser Industries who will present management's views.

The conference, which is expected to attract some 1,500 top level representatives of management and labor, will review industrial safety problems and recommend measures to reduce the rates of on-the-job injuries and deaths.

Just last month, a state report disclosed that on-the-job injuries during the first nine months of 1966, which totaled 147,886 including 543 deaths, were eight percent higher than during the same period a year earlier.

Sam Eubanks Dies

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CIO, had been chief of technical assistance in the U.S. Labor Department's office of Labor-Management Reports and Pension Welfare Reports since the summer of 1962. His principal duties were in assisting trade unions in complying with federal labor statutes.

In mourning his passing, state AFL-CIO leader Thos. L. Pitts said:

"Sam Eubanks was an exceptionally able and dedicated public servant who, as a trade unionist, had won respect and admiration from both sides of the bargaining table. His death is a deep personal loss to me and a public loss to all—for he had devoted his life to fighting for the workers' welfare."

Mr. Eubanks had served as Executive Vice President of the American Newspaper Guild from 1941 to 1951 and as Executive Secretary of the San Francisco-Oakland Newspaper Guild from 1952 to 1962.

End of Bracero Program Hailed as a 'Triumph'

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of the past two years, Henning pointed out that the wages of the nation's grossly underpaid farm workers rose significantly "as the wage-depressing impact of foreign workers was largely removed" and, contrary to the dire predictions of some corporate farm interests, he noted that the costs of fruits and vegetables has not risen significantly during the past two years.

FOOD COST ISSUE

The U.S. Consumer Price Index indicates that fruits and vegetables rose only two percent since 1964, he said, adding that "not all of the two percent increase could be attributed to labor costs."

On the wage issue, Henning pointed out that between Oct. 1963-64—the last year of the bracero program, average hourly farm wages rose only two cents but that between October 1964-65 they climbed eight cents and between October 1965-66 they rose nine cents.

In California where the hourly wage rate without room and board was only \$1.36 when the bracero program ended, the average hourly rate had risen to \$1.58 by last October, increasing nine cents between 1964 and 1965 and 13 cents between 1965-66.

STATISTICS CITED

Proof of the availability of an ample pool of domestic farm workers was reflected in the concomitant, rise in wages paid domestic workers and the drop-off in requests for braceros from growers.

In the last year of the bracero program, 1964, 177,736 braceros were admitted. This number was cut to 20,284 in 1965 and to 8,647 last year.

In 1964 during peak farm employment, 62,500 braceros were used in California, 15,600 in Texas, 12,800 in Michigan and 7,200 in Arizona.

In 1965, accompanied by significant increases in domestic farm labor employment, this number was reduced to 16,300 in California, none in Texas, none in Michigan, and none in Arizona.

And in 1966 the peak figures

for braceros were 7,350 in California and none in Texas, Michigan or Arizona.

"The increased wages for American workers meant more consumer purchasing power for American industry, agriculture included," Henning pointed out, noting that in California alone some \$50 million remained with U.S. workers as a result of the new farm labor policy.

But, he said, farm workers are still denied full minimum wage protections and unemployment insurance.

Moreover, he declared "any representative showing of U.S. farm labor housing would shock and stun the world's millions who have been told of our affluence and abundance."

And the fact that as recently as 1965 the two million persons employed exclusively in farm wage work were able to find employment an average of only 104 days and earned an annual income of only \$805 demonstrates that much more remains to be done.

Even those engaged in both farm and non-farm work averaged only 102 days of non-farm wage work and 53 days of farm-wage work from which they earned a combined total of only \$1,480, he said.

"The war on poverty still has its front lines in agricultural America," he added.

He urged all participants in the conference to work toward developing more year-round work programs for those who follow the crops and to also help develop industrial opportunities in farming areas to assure jobs during off-season periods.

U.S. Jobless Rate Dips to 13-Year Low

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than the 3.7 percent tallied in November. The jobless rate for adult males last month was 2.4 percent; for adult women 3.8 percent, and for teenagers, 11.4 percent.

The nation's total civilian labor force was 77.3 million on a monthly basis in December, of which 2.7 million were jobless.

Thrifty Drug Co. Acts to Help Farm Workers

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mouth and Eleven Cellars Wine in order to support a boycott initiated by the AFL-CIO United Farm Workers Organizing Committee.

A spokesman for the Thrifty Drug Corporation, which employs more than 8,000 workers and had annual sales last year of more than \$243 million, explained that the firm's decision was based on its view that as a major retailer it has "a variety of legal and moral obligations to the communities in which it operates."

Ralph Wolpert, the firm's industrial relations director, said that although the firm "does not take sides in any labor disputes in which it is not directly involved," the firm "cannot be unmindful of the past and present economic conditions of farm workers compared with the balance of California workers in non-farm jobs."

Noting that the firm's drug stores are "highly unionized" themselves and that several unions had asked Thrifty to stop buying Perelli-Minetti products, Wolpert said that Thrifty "could not be oblivious to the attitude of unions which represent thousands of the company's employees."

Moreover, he added, the company was "not convinced the position of the farm workers union in the Perelli-Minetti dispute was illegal, unworthy, or immoral. It could not therefore, turn a deaf ear to the pleas of the unions," he explained.

During the past two years, the report said, employment in manufacturing has increased by two million jobs. About 25 percent of the new manufacturing jobs developed during the past two years were created in three durable goods industries—machinery, electrical equipment and transportation equipment, the report said.

Reagan Fills Third Major Agency Post

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ministrator of the State Resources Agency which presently includes the Departments of Water Resources, Conservation, Parks and Recreation, and Fish and Game.

At a press conference Wednesday, Livermore said he agreed with the Governor's position on the Northern California Redwood Park issue. Three plans are being considered. One, backed by the Sierra Club to which Livermore belongs, would require acquisition of a sizable tract of private lumber company holdings. A second park plan backed by Senator Thomas H. Kuchel would take less; and a third supported by Rep. Don Clausen would require the least amount of acquisition. Reagan supports the Clausen plan.

William F. Lipman, 41, former chief planner in the State Planning Office, who for the past two years has served as a special assistant for planning to the Assistant Secretary of the Army in Washington, has been selected by state legislative leaders to serve as the Washington representative of the State Legislature's Joint Legislative Budget Committee. Lipman's function will be to keep the Legislature informed on federal programs that have a bearing on or involve state legislative action for implementation.

David Sills, Governor Reagan's son-in-law and an Orange County attorney, has been named to the Republican State Central Committee by the Governor. The Governor also appointed Mrs. Lorraine Mazze of Bakersfield and Mrs. Kay Valory of Lafayette to the committee.

Josiah N. Knowles, 65, who served as co-chairman of Senator George Murphy's Northern California Finance Committee in 1964, has been named as Governor Reagan's Special Assistant in San Francisco. Knowles is a former cattle and hog rancher who retired in 1957 when the formation of Lake Berryessa inundated his land.

A Jekyll and Hyde Posture?

Growers Push Bill to Bolster Their Own Bargaining Rights

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with the processors to improve the prices the growers get for their products.

"Across the nation," the editorial declares, "there have been a lot of 'association-busting' tactics by the big processors who do not want to have to deal with a bargaining group. They much prefer to bargain with individuals."

Pointing out that "some 10 giant food chains market 61 percent of the food sold" and that "the big get bigger and the weak get weaker," the editorial adds that "most of the experts agree that if the farmer is going to better his position in the future, it will have to be through stronger bargaining power."

Horrifying though it may be to some growers, grossly underpaid farm workers in California and throughout the nation long ago reached the same conclusion in connection with their relationship with growers.

Even more interesting, however, are some of the provisions of the legislation that the "California Farmer" is promoting, particularly since the provisions suggest that processors have been engaging in quite a bit of skulduggery against the growers.

For example, S.B. 109 states: "It is declared to be the policy of Congress and the purpose of this Act to establish standards of fair practices required of handlers (processors) in their dealings with producers of agricultural products and their cooperative associations. . . .

"Section 4. It shall be unlawful for any handler knowingly to engage or permit any employee or agent to engage in the following practices:

"(a) To interfere with or restrain, or threaten to interfere with or restrain, by boycott, collusion, or any unfair or deceptive act or practice, any producer in the exercise of his rights to join and belong to an

association of producers; or

"(b) To discriminate or threaten to discriminate against any producer with respect to price, quantity, quality, or other terms of purchase of agricultural commodities because of his membership in or contract with an association of producers; or

"(c) To coerce or intimidate any producer or other person to breach, cancel, or otherwise terminate a membership agreement or marketing contract with an association of producers; or

"(d) To pay or loan money, give anything of value in excess of the true market value of any agricultural commodity which is being purchased, or offer any other inducement or reward to a producer for refusing to or ceasing to belong to an association of producers; or

"(e) To make false reports about the finances, management or activities of associations of producers or interfere by any unfair or deceptive act or practice with the efforts of such associations in carrying out the legitimate objects thereof; or

"(f) To conspire, combine, agree, or arrange with any other person to do, or aid or abet the doing of, any act made unlawful by this act."

Penalties for violation of the Act are set at three times the damages sustained plus reasonable attorney fees for the grower and a fine of \$1,000 or a year's imprisonment for the violator.

Pretty interesting legislation, eh?

But it could be improved. For instance, just by substituting the word "grower" for the word "handler" in the first sentence in Section 4 and the words "farm worker" for the word "producer" or "producers" in subsections (a), (b), (c), (d), and (e) would, along with a few editorial changes, mark a significant forward step toward the establishment

Consumer's Aide's Budget Slashed 45%

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taken in the face of a statewide drive initiated last month by the Association of California Consumers which urged the Governor either to retain Mrs. Helen E. Nelson or to select someone nonpartisan, with no connection with business or industry.

The \$50,000 slash in personnel amounts to about a 45 percent cut in the total budget of the Consumer Counsel's office.

The fact that the Governor named Mrs. Valory as only Acting State Consumer Counsel gave rise to speculation that the Administration may subsequently seek to eliminate the office altogether.

In the past, the Consumer Counsel's office, which was created in 1959, has worked closely with the California Labor Federation to help win enactment of legislation to protect consumer rights. The Consumer Counsel also served as a clearing house for county district attorneys on consumer fraud issues.

Among other accomplishments, the Consumer Counsel's office helped substantially in winning enactment of a Federation-initiated bill to ban deficiency judgments on household goods and other measures to curb the arbitrary cancellation of auto insurance policies by insurance firms and to protect consumers from deceptive or fraudulent TV repair practices.

Prior to the current budget cutback, the Consumer Counsel's office had been credited with saving California consumers \$2 for every penny spent to operate the office. Its budget had been \$110,000.

of fair practice standards for growers to accord farm workers.

Or, for that matter, how about just adding a section stipulating that producers of agricultural products and their cooperative associations shall deal with their farm workers as they would have the handlers or food processors deal with them—precisely as stipulated in this Act?

Steel, Copper Price Hikes Get Scant Notice

Despite high earnings last year, the moguls of the nation's steel and copper industries announced price boosts last week that could contribute to inflationary pressures in the nation's economy but which provoked only a mild verbal rebuke by an administration spokesman.

Commenting on a two-cent boost in copper prices from 36 cents to 38 cents a pound initiated by the Phelps-Dodge Corporation and dittoed by Anaconda, Gardner Ackley, chairman of the President's Council of Economic Advisors, said the copper companies should have been able to continue the price restraint they showed last year because of their "excellent financial results."

He also urged steel companies that have not yet joined in the 2.7 percent mark up of tubular steel prices initiated last week by the Jones and Laughlin Steel Corporation to refrain from doing so. But there was no indication that the administration was planning any actions to seek a rollback in the price boosts.

The fact that these price boosts were noted, for the most part, only in the finance sections of the daily press, serves in part to corroborate a recent statement by U.S. Secretary of Labor W. Willard Wirtz to the effect that price increases have violated federal guideposts much more than wage hikes.

In an address to the 19th annual meeting of the Industrial Relations Research Association in San Francisco late last month, Wirtz said that the mass media had, for the most part, presented "the less than half-truth that it was American labor's insistence on wage increases that broke the guideline."

Wirtz pointed out that a worker who got only the 3.2 percent pay hike in 1966—the percentage recommended by the discredited guidelines—has less purchasing power than he did a year earlier.

Bargaining Right for Farm Workers Urged at Hearing

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interests and urged the Commission members to include at least six basic recommendations in its report to President Johnson. Specifically, he urged the Commission to call for:

- 1—Extension of the National Labor-Management Relations Act to cover farm workers.
- 2—Full coverage for farm workers under the minimum wage, maximum hours and child-labor provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act.
- 3—Unemployment insurance coverage for farm workers.
- 4—Coverage for farm workers under all state workmen's compensation laws and other state legislation enacted to raise the status of those who work for wages.
- 5—Termination of all labor-import programs.
- 6—Greater efforts at all levels of government and by private groups to improve farm-labor recruitment methods, housing standards, educational opportunities and health protections.

To puncture the myth cultivated by huge corporate farm interests that higher labor costs would destroy the family farmer, the AFL-CIO spokesman noted:

"Improvement in the deplorable earnings and working conditions of farm laborers hardly can be viewed as a menacing threat to the costs of the family-owned-and-operated farm. On the contrary, the ability of a minority of our farms—generally the largest and most profitable ones—to operate low-wage sweat shops, directly threatens the well being of the family farmer to compete against them.

"As long as the big agricultural producers are able to maintain substandard wages and working conditions, they enjoy an unfair advantage

over competing family-operated farms because they get one of the elements of production costs at bargain rates. The degradation of hired farm labor inevitably lowers the value of the labor of the farm family and, hence, this family's income," he explained.

To back this up, he pointed out that a mere six percent of the nation's farms accounted for 76 percent of total expenditures for hired labor and that half of the nation's farms used no hired farm labor at all.

And in testimony corroborating the California Labor Federation's long-held position that the only shortage in California agriculture has been a shortage of wages, not of labor, Kircher noted that the "tremendous gap" between the farm worker's hourly pay and the hourly pay of most other U.S. workers has been widening instead of narrowing for the last half century, except during the last three years.

Between 1910 and 1914, the average hourly wage of farm labor was 67 percent of the average factory wage; by 1945 it was only 47 percent and in 1965 it was only 36 percent, he pointed out.

And as recently as October 1966 the average cash hourly wage for all domestic farm workers including many with substantial skills was just \$1.18 for the nation, ranging from \$.95 in the south to \$1.57 in the Pacific Coast states.

Even if the Pacific Coast farm workers could find year-around employment, their average annual income would barely top \$3000, a poverty wage, he noted.

Moreover, he added, the growers claim that they must oppose unionization because they cannot withstand a strike at harvest-time is unreasonable because it thwarts efforts to bring the rule of law into the employer-employee relationship and leaves farm workers with no alternative but to strike.

In answer to the corporate

farm lobbyists' repeated claims that agriculture just isn't suitable for collective bargaining, Kircher pointed out that "through cooperative union-management arrangements, construction workers and many other workers are secured for service in every part of the nation, when and where they are needed. There is no reason it cannot happen in farm labor," he said.

Cesar Chavez, Director of the AFL-CIO United Farm Workers Organizing Committee and Henry Munoz, Jr., speaking in behalf of Hank Brown, president of the Texas State AFL-CIO, also testified at the day-long hearings at the Mark Hopkins Hotel.

Chavez reviewed the circumstances that brought about the continuing 16-month old strike against Delano growers. He noted that the contract negotiated last year with the Schenley Corporation which provides a \$1.75 hourly wage has greatly reduced labor turnover at the corporation's vineyard and has assured the firm of an ample supply of workers.

Similarly Munoz testified on the obstacles to farm worker organization in Texas.

Labor members on the President's National Advisory Committee on Food and Fiber include: Frank Fernbach, assistant director of Research of the AFL-CIO and Leon Schachter, an international vice-president of the Meat Cutters union.

The San Francisco hearing was the last of seven hearings conducted throughout the nation. The Commission is expected to complete its report and submit it to President Johnson sometime this summer.

Less Bias in Unions

"There is less discrimination today in labor unions than in most other organizations including churches, schools, clubs and fraternities." —U.S. Secretary of Labor W. Willard Wirtz.