

# Merry Christmas



## California AFL-CIO News

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Executive Secretary-Treasurer  
THOS. L. PITTS

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### Don't Buy Neuhoff Meats

AFL-CIO President George Meany has called upon all union members and their families to support a consumer boycott against Neuhoff Company meat products branded **Valleydale**, **Frosty Morn** and **Realfoot**.

In a letter to all state and local central bodies Meany pointed out that the Meatcutters and Butcher Workmen are involved in a strike with Neuhoff at three plants over basic trade union issues. The strike began at Clarksville, Tenn. on April 16; at Montgomery, Alabama on September 21; and at Quincy, Fla. on September 28.

Neuhoff employees are seeking union recognition; an end to the Company's widespread unfair labor practices for which it has been ordered to pay some \$70,000 in back pay to workers illegally fired for union activity; and a contract that will correct such shocking inequities as workweeks as high as 50 to

(Continued on Page 4)

### California Jobs Hit November Peak

Total employment in California in November exceeded that of any prior November and the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for the state remained at its lowest level in more than a decade. Total civilian employment, at 7,768,000, represented a 207,000 increase over the comparable year-ago figure.

Since last year the most rapidly growing industries in terms of employment continue to be government, largely due to increases in the field of public education; the services; and wholesale and retail trade. In contrast, the aerospace manu-

(Continued on Page 4)

### CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

by Thos. L. Pitts

This Christmas—after a year in which two great leaders for human rights have been cut down by assassins' bullets and, more recently, after the lives of scores of coal miners in Farmington, West Virginia, have been snuffed out in a tragic explosion that need never have happened if adequate mining safety regulations were on the books and effectively enforced—it seems fitting for all of us to pause from the festivities of the season long enough to reflect on the deeper and more basic significance of this holiday.

After all, Christmas, the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ, also commemorates the social, ethical and spiritual values that He stood for: His just indignation and outrage at the usurious business practices engaged in by the merchants of His time; and His counsel to all to love your neighbor as yourself and be charitable to all.

In a world over-arched by the possibility of a nuclear holocaust, these great universal values are more vital today than ever—vital to ourselves, our children and the society we seek to improve.

Just this year, for example, on the one hand, we can

(Continued on Page 4)

### State AFL-CIO Hits USDA On Sugar Beet Pay Floor

In setting minimum wages for sugar beet field workers, an industry that enjoys heavy federal subsidies, the U. S. Department of Agriculture has repeatedly defined "fair and reasonable" wages in "a way that perpetuates poverty," the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO charged this week.

In testimony presented at a hearing of the USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service in the Federal Building in San Francisco, called in order to establish a "fair and reasonable" minimum wage for 1969, the State Labor Federation called for a boost in the pay floor to at least \$2.25 an hour.

(Continued on Page 2)

### Last IWC Order Upheld as Valid

Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Robert S. Thompson this week found Industrial Welfare Commission Order 10-68, which covers women and minors in motion picture theaters, valid. Thus, the last of the 14 Indus-

(Continued on Page 4)

### Unionized Growers Rebut Charges

Spokesmen for the first two firms to sign contracts with the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee, AFL-CIO, Schenley Industries and the DiGiorgio Fruit Company, this week rebutted charges by officials of the South Central Farmers Committee of Delano that union contracts have brought "chaos" to their farming operations.

The South Central Farmers Committee, as part of its continuing campaign to thwart the growth of unionism in the table grape industry, had charged that the UFWOC had not acted in good faith after signing contracts and that in the particular case of DiGiorgio, the corporation was selling its grape acreage at less than its appraised value because of unionization.

These reports were strongly denied by representatives of Schenley Industries and DiGiorgio. Both stated their relations with the farm workers union had been very good.

Speaking for Schenley Industries, Attorney Sidney Korshak, stated that since organization "wages have gone up upwards of 50 percent," and that this

(Continued on Page 3)

### Tax Reform Vital For Nation's Good

Tax reform is essential if this nation's massive and accumulated social and economic problems are to be overcome, AFL-CIO President George

(Continued on Page 3)

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# State AFL-CIO Hits USDA on Sugar Beet Pay Floor

(Continued from Page 1)

In addition to the Federation, testimony was taken from other labor organizations and the California Beet Growers Association. A number of farm workers also testified.

The growers' spokesman urged that the Department make no change in the present so-called "fair and reasonable" minimum wage of \$1.50 per hour even though stating under questioning that the present farm worker minimum wage of \$1.65 an hour set by the California State Industrial Welfare Commission was being paid sugar beet workers. The farm workers testified that despite the present requirement that a minimum \$1.50 an hour be paid sugar beet workers, they were not getting this amount because farm labor contractors, who act as "middle men," were paying them lesser amounts. They also stated that information regarding workers' rights and the wage provisions of the Sugar Act was lacking and that the Department of Agriculture, farm labor contractors, and others made, at best, minimum efforts to inform workers of their basic rights under the Act.

The Federation's testimony pointed out that the world market price of sugar is under

two cents a pound yet in the western United States the price is more than 10 cents a pound.

"This substantial subsidy has benefited industrial users, processors, growers and consumers — every group but farm workers," the statement, presented in behalf of the Federation's Secretary-Treasurer Thos. L. Pitts, said.

Asserting that the present USDA-established minimum for sugar beet field workers of \$1.50 "is neither fair nor reasonable," the Federation's statement cited a number of examples to underscore this point. It noted, for example, that the current \$1.50 per hour floor is:

- Below the prevailing wage in California agriculture which, according to the USDA's own figures, is \$1.73 per hour without room or board.

- Below the \$1.65 per hour for women in California agriculture.

- Below the \$1.68 per hour "adverse effect" wage growers must offer domestic workers before hoping to qualify to import foreign workers.

- And on a monthly basis, below the amount a married farm worker with three dependents can receive on welfare.

The State AFL-CIO said that a "fair and reasonable wage" for 1969 "must be at least \$2.25 per hour in California" with all sugar beet workers employed on a piece work basis also guaranteed that minimum.

The inadequacy of the \$1.50 figure was further emphasized by the Federation when it pointed out that the average farm worker in California only works about 1,100 hours a year and, at the \$1.50 rate, this yields an annual income of only \$1,650.

"Consider buying children's clothes, paying for shelter, food, utilities, an automobile, and so on on such a wage," the AFL-CIO's statement observed.

"An annual income based on \$1.50 an hour really means poor housing, sporadic meals, squalor and despair. At \$1.50 per hour people work hard — to stay alive. If a farm laborer had health insurance and unemployment insurance the burden would be lighter, but he does not, and it is not," the Federation declared.

It also drew a comparison between the wages paid to sugar cane field hands in Hawaii and sugar beet workers in California.

Noting that the wages of the Hawaiian workers are achieved through collective bargaining, "rather than bureaucratic fiat," it pointed out that the Hawaiian worker's average hourly earnings last year were \$2.80 not counting fringe benefits amounting to another 90 cents per hour.

Turning the tables on a charge often made by California agribusiness interests, the State AFL-CIO said:

"The Hawaiian sugar industry is subject to unfair competition as a result of the great disparities in wage rates which the Department of Agriculture sets."

Declaring that the Hawaiian industry "has prospered, not in spite of adequate wages, but probably because of them" the Federation said:

"How the Department of Agriculture can recognize this and then establish 'fair and reasonable' wage rates that vary more than \$1 per hour from one section of the country to another is beyond comprehension.

"If a climate of hopelessness and want and the perpetuation of poverty are what is meant by 'fair and reasonable,' the Department has done a good job. If, however, it is the policy of the Department to alleviate poverty among sugar beet workers, then minimum wages must be raised considerably, not just another 10 cents a year."

The State AFL-CIO also suggested that the pay floor for sugar beet workers in the future might well be set on a formula basis, subject to public hearings.

Pointing out that the State AFL-CIO's recommended rate of \$2.25 an hour is now about 65 percent of the average hourly manufacturing wage, the Federation suggested that the sugar beet worker's pay floor in 1970 could be set at 70 percent of the manufacturing worker's average hourly wage with the percentage increasing 5 percent each year until 1976 when it would equal the California factory worker's average hourly wage.

Anticipating that sugar beet

growers will claim "that a first-step increase to \$2.25 an hour — or any increase for that matter — will force them out of business," the State AFL-CIO attacked the growers' "ritualized position" and noted that the average hourly earnings of sugar beet field workers have not even kept pace with productivity advances.

The Federation's statement also emphasized the difference between union and non-union wages when it pointed out that sugar processing workers are protected by unions while field workers are denied collective bargaining rights. The difference this makes, the Federation said, is:

"Workers in cane sugar refining are paid \$3.64 per hour and sugar beet processing workers \$2.71 an hour plus fringe benefits; sugar beet field workers are paid a minimum of \$1.50 per hour with no fringe benefits."

In addition, the Federation's statement observed:

"Processing workers have relatively steady employment; Yet both groups are employed in the sugar industry, both have families to support, both live in the same country and often the same state. One works under the conditions of free labor, the other has little or no say in the conditions of his labor."

In concluding, the State AFL-CIO urged the Department to remember that "it has the responsibility of bettering the lives of some very poor people."

## Illinois City Enacts Law To Ban Scabs

Danville, Ill., has become one of a hundred municipalities in the United States and the eighth in Illinois to enact a law banning the import and hiring of professional strikebreakers.

The ordinance, passed by the city council, makes it illegal to "recruit, procure, supply or refer" any person who customarily and repeatedly offers himself for employment to replace a worker involved in a labor dispute.

## Oakland's CEP Goes On

The Concentrated Employment Program at Oakland has been refunded for another year to aid 1,000 hard-core unemployed. The Labor Department gave the program \$3.9 million.

## Stamp Honors Union Teacher John Dewey

The late John Dewey, the world renowned philosopher and educator who was the founder and No. 1 member of the American Federation of Teachers has become the second American trade union leader to be honored on a U.S. postage stamp.

Dewey's picture appears on a recently printed 30-cent stamp.

The first trade unionist to appear on a U.S. stamp was Sam Gompers, the founder and first president of the American Federation of Labor.

# Tax Reform Vital to Solving Nation's Problems

(Continued from Page 1)

Meany has stressed in an article titled, "Labor Looks at Government Finances", which appears in the current issue of the academic journal, "Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science."

Noting the impact of rapid and radical changes in technology, urban growth, and race relations on the nation, Meany points out that severe and persistent problems have been created because "millions of people have been leaving depressed rural areas of declining job opportunities to seek their future in the cities," while at the same time millions of people have been moving from cities to the suburbs and industry has been leaving central city areas for the suburbs as well. Because of these significant social and economic changes, investment in new facilities

and services by all levels of government, however large it appears in dollar terms, has obviously not been adequate to meet the backlog of national needs.

As a result, Meany points out, education and public transportation have deteriorated in the nation's largest cities, air and water pollution have become major problems, and housing for lower income groups has been grossly inadequate. Reflecting these facts, a significant segment of the nation shares little in the national prosperity.

While observing that states, cities, and private industry can play a role in overcoming these problems, "the key to the national complex of social and economical problems is federal government policy, funds and planned programs over the next 10 to 20 years — with state and

local government initiative and additional funds to carry through the nationwide efforts at the local level," Meany said. In this regard, the AFL-CIO President pointed out that the AFL-CIO's position is that:

- The federal government must be the employer of last resort and create jobs for the unemployed and the seriously underemployed in providing needed public services.

- The government also must be the landlord of last resort, building and rehabilitating housing that poor people can afford.

Turning attention to the nation's need for tax reform, Meany said that while the growth of the national economy will generate additional revenues to gain broad public support for greater federal expenditures the public must be convinced of the fairness of the nation's overall tax system. The fact is that the nation does not now have an equitable tax system even though the federal tax system is far superior to that of most state and local governments.

Specifically, Meany proposed "elimination of those gross inequities that impose full tax rates on workers' earnings while there are various loopholes that permit wealthy people and corporations to escape payment of full tax rates and, in some cases, to escape from paying any federal taxes at all."

The AFL-CIO leader also called for reform of state and

local tax policies, consolidation of small local government jurisdictions, and for a federal tax credit for state income tax payments in order to encourage states to base the tax systems on the "ability to pay" principle.

Observing that there has been a growth in interest among economists for a block grant, "no strings" turnover of federal money to the states, Meany stated that "since unconditional grants would not be tied to specific programs, there is no assurance they would not be used for less urgent or even wasteful purposes." In opposing such a use of federal tax revenues the AFL-CIO President also went on to point out neither the enforcement of federal civil rights legislation or federal labor standards could be assured under this approach.

Meany's article concluded by noting that while this nation has the manpower, the skills and the productive ability to achieve solutions to the nation's many social and economic problems, its unwillingness to do so reflects the lack of a firm political majority committed to the need for such changes and improvements.

## Unionized Growers Rebut Charges

(Continued from Page 1)

"isn't causing us any real economic problems."

Korshak, who represented Schenley in negotiations with the UFWOC, went on to note that "Wages were so low before that we felt the workers were certainly entitled to the additional money and fringe benefits."

The President of the DiGiorio Fruit Company, Max O'Neill, said that the company's land in the lower San Joaquin Valley is selling for about the same price estimated by government appraisers and went on to state that the union contract was not a factor in the company's sale of the land.

In addition, rebuttal of the charges made by the South Central Farmers Committee was voiced by spokesmen of two other unionized vineyards. Treasurer Al Haft of Paul Mason Vineyards noted that the new guaranteed average wage negotiated between the Company and the UFWOC amounted to an increase of about 50 percent over the wage level paid before the union represented the workers. Haft went on to state that "we have resolved all of our major problems and the minor ones aren't bothering us. They're to be expected in a new contract."

A spokesman for Almaden Vineyards voiced a similar conclusion. The firm's labor relations representative, George Morrison, stated that "actually, we've had a fairly decent relationship with the union since we signed our first contract in August, 1967." Morrison, after pointing out that charges that the UFWOC is not a responsible union are completely off base went on to note that his company had recognized the union after it had submitted cards from a majority of the workers asking that it be their bargaining agent. The company official estimated that if there had been an actual election "about 85 percent (of the workers) would have voted for the union."

In short, spokesmen for four of the leading growers now under contract with the AFL-CIO's United Farm Workers Organizing Committee indicated what has been long known about industrial relations in the United States: that when unions and management meet in a climate of good will productive and peaceful relations benefiting both sides are a result.

Perhaps, the South Central Farmers Committee will learn a little from the words and experiences of these unionized growers. But then, maybe, that's too much to ask.

## Labor's First Enemy

"Poverty was our original enemy from the time the first trade union was established. It will remain the enemy until it is exterminated from American life.

"The United States is not faced with a choice between guns or butter. The extermination of poverty is not 'butter'—it is muscle, muscle to make this free land stronger, in spirit and substance, in the struggle against communism and every other form of tyranny. When we fight to end poverty in America, we are fighting for the cause of human liberty throughout the world—for the aspiration of all mankind." — AFL-CIO President George Meany.

## Population To Top 20 Million in 1969

California's population is expected to total 20,154,000 by July 1, 1969, a State Department of Finance study indicates. The state's population climbed 477,000 between July 1, 1967 and July 1, 1968 to a total of 19,662,000.

The state's population is expected to rise to more than 22 million by 1973 and to 26 million by 1980, according to the department's report titled "Estimated and Projected Population of California, 1960-2000."

## Women's Rights

An Executive Order of President Johnson prohibiting discrimination against women employed by federal contractors and subcontractors has gone into effect. The order required equal employment opportunity for women in areas like recruitment, job conditions, training, wages and retirement.

# CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

(Continued from Page 1)

look with some satisfaction at the enactment of truth-lending legislation. But, on the other hand, we must deplore the failure of our elected representatives to extend bargaining rights to farm workers to help end their long exploitation.

As trade unionists, regardless of our particular religious faiths, we all know that the struggle for social justice for all proceeded at a snail's pace for generations. Only in the past century or so have many basic gains been won to protect the rights of millions—though by no means all—workers.

We know too, that a technological revolution is now rushing upon us that holds out hope of greatly accelerating the pace of that progress.

But this potential can be realized only if we all commit ourselves to reach out beyond the narrower concerns of our own private lives to work actively and constructively in our own neighborhood and community and in the legislative councils of our local, state, and national government to affirm for all the social, ethical and spiritual values that this day commemorates.

This Christmas it is my warmest wish that in the days and months ahead all of us will commit ourselves selflessly to this task.

For only by a continual affirmation by all of us of the essential brotherhood of all mankind can we ever hope to achieve lasting peace and good will on earth.

## California Jobs Hit November Peak

(Continued from Page 1)

facturing complex of aircraft, missiles, electronic equipment and instruments has lost about 30,000 jobs since peak employment was reached at the end of 1967.

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for California in November of 4.4 percent, while still far above the national average of 3.3 percent, was at its lowest level since August 1957. The total number of unemployed workers was 350,000 last month, a slight decline even though the work force has increased, from the level one year ago.

In the Los Angeles area, total employment rose by 13,000 over the month of November to an all time record for the month of 3,123,400. However unemployment also rose as a large number of workers entered the labor market looking for Christmas season jobs.

From November 1967 to November 1968, total employment in the Los Angeles area rose by 60,100 or 2 percent—a slower rate of growth than that experienced by the state as a whole. The slower growth rate reflects the fact that manu-

facturing employment is now a soft spot in the Los Angeles job market because of the decline in aerospace industry employment over the past year.

The decline in aerospace employment reflected continuing lay-offs brought about by reduced manpower requirements in commercial aviation production and the continued decline in space programs. The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in November 1968 for Los Angeles of 4.1 remained unchanged from the October figure but was below the 4.3 rate of November 1967.

In the San Francisco-Oakland metropolitan area total civilian employment for November also set a new record for the month. Civilian jobs in the Bay Area totaled 1,369,200 an over-the-year gain of 35,500 or 2.7 percent—a rate of increase equal to that for the state as a whole. Wholesale and retail trade, the services, and government employment accounted for most of the job increase over the past year although there were also strong employment gains in air transportation and in finance.

November unemployment of

## Last IWC Order

(Continued from Page 1)

trial Welfare Commission orders which went into effect on February 1, 1968, and have been under strenuous court attack since then has been upheld. One month earlier, in November, the Third District Appellate Court in Sacramento had upheld the validity of the three Industrial Welfare Commission orders setting minimum wages and working conditions for farm workers and workers in related industries.

The decision by Judge Thompson means that in the case of women and minors working in motion picture theaters the minimum wage of \$1.65 an hour for women and \$1.35 an hour for minors and student workers must be paid, retroactive to the effective date of the order, February 1, 1968.

How many of women and minors covered by the order who have worked in the motion picture industry over the past 10 months will receive the retroactive pay due them is, of course, questionable. However, the Division of Industrial Relations, whose job it is to enforce the wage and hour regulations set forth by the Industrial Welfare Commission, stated this week that any questions regarding the upheld order and the retroactive pay requirement should be directed to the Division either at its San Francisco headquarters or to any of its 19 district offices.

## Off-The-Job Deaths

Three out of four deaths and more than half the injuries suffered by workers in 1967 occurred off-the-job, according to the National Safety Council.

Workers injured off-the-job cost their firms 70 million man-days in 1967 compared to 45 million man-days lost by workers injured on-the-job. The NSC pointed out, however, that part of the difference in totals stems from the fact that workers spend more time off the job than on it.

55,400 remained unchanged from one year ago. The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate of 3.9 percent for November was below the state of 4.4 percent, although up slightly from the October low of 3.8 percent.

## Don't Buy Neuhoft Meats

(Continued from Page 1)

100 hours, wage scales 50 cents to a \$1.50 an hour below that of competing organized plants in the same area, inadequate job security, holidays, vacations and health insurance.

Besides the three brands noted above, Neuhoft also produces scores of private brands put up for various stores under special orders. Meats put out by the Neuhoft Companies must always show U.S. Department of Agriculture inspection marks under the following inspection numbers: 34, 250, 414, 576, 731, 840, 922, and 1778.

In urging strong support of these workers, Meany observed that "these strikers need and should have the complete support of the entire labor movement."

## What Labor Wants

"What does labor want? It wants the earth and the ~~fullness~~ thereof. There is ~~nothing~~ too precious, there is ~~nothing~~ too beautiful, too lofty, too ~~enobling~~ unless it is within the scope and comprehension of labor's aspirations and wants. . . .

"We want more schools and less jails; more books and less arsenals; more learning and less vice; more constant work and less crime; more leisure and less greed; more justice and less revenge; in fact, more of the opportunities to cultivate our better natures, to make manhood more noble, womanhood more beautiful, and childhood more happy and bright." — Samuel Gompers, 1893.

## \$2 Billion Coverage by Labor's Ins. Co.

Union Labor Life Insurance Company, organized labor's own insurance company, now has more than \$2 billion in insurance in force.

ULLICO, founded 41 years ago, is owned by local unions, state affiliates and national and international unions of the AFL-CIO. Its directors include 24 national officers of AFL-CIO unions.