



California AFL-CIO News

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THOS. L. PITTS

Executive Secretary-Treasurer

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Labor at the Legislature

From The Capitol Office
Of The Executive Secretary

The pace of the Legislature was noticeably stepped up at the beginning of this week when the Speaker brought the Assembly back into evening sessions on Monday and Tuesday. He went on to admonish the members to tailor their calendars outside the sessions and be prepared for meetings of the House on any day, at any hour, between now and adjournment. He advised the Assemblymen not to make any commitments which could not be changed. A number of controversial issues are still pending with the result that work on the floor will be demanding close attendance.

* * *

The Federation's AB 273 by Assemblywoman Yvonne Brathwaite (D-Los Angeles) was held in the Senate Committee on Public Health and Safety on a divided vote last week. A bare quorum was present for the hearing and a "do pass" recommendation for any bill requires a majority of the total committee membership. Since a quorum is also a majority of the members, a single vote may hold the bill in committee. AB 273 is a consumer protection bill to require labeling of restaurant menus when chemical meat tenderizers are used in preparation of food.

* * *

AB 837 by Assemblyman John Miller (D-Oakland) which is also sponsored by the Federation, is on File for hearing in the Senate Labor and Social Welfare Committee on July 8. This bill, passed by the Assembly, will extend the coverage of agricultural workers under

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Senate Labor Committee OKs Strikebreaker Bill

The Senate Labor & Social Welfare Committee on Tuesday gave a "do pass" recommendation to a bad strikebreaker bill, using the lever of welfare payments to force workers through a picket line.

It is imperative that you contact your State Senator as quickly as you can to urge him to vote against this vicious anti-labor proposal—SB 1213.

Senate Bill 1213 provides that, for aid to families with dependent children, the unemployed parent must not have left his work because of being out on strike. This has the effect of denying welfare to families of those unable to work because of labor disputes.

Voting against sending the bill to the floor were Senators Alfred H. Song (D-Monterey Park) and Nicholas C. Petris (D-Oakland). For the "do pass" motion and for

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Pitts Explodes Myths of Poverty in Legion Speech

A number of popular myths about poverty in America were exploded Monday by Thos. L. Pitts, secretary-treasurer of the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, in an address to the annual convention of the California Department of the American Legion in San Diego.

Senate Passes Fed Bill to Guard Wage Claims

Assembly Bill 252, a California Labor Federation bill, passed the State Senate by a 28 to 0 vote last Friday afternoon and was sent back to the Assembly for concurrence in Senate amendments as a final step on its way to the Governor's desk.

Assemblyman John Foran (D-San Francisco) was the author

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Although Pitts directed the bulk of his remarks to "the continuing existence of poverty in the midst of plenty," he also touched on the ABM controversy and explained the AFL-CIO's position on it.

Noting that "the steady economic progress of the past eight years has cut poverty almost in half," Pitts pointed out that despite this progress "22 million Americans are still poor and an additional 10 million people are near-poor."

The labor leader emphasized that the causes of poverty vary greatly, but, he declared:

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Public Worker RTW Bill to Be Heard July 8

An attempt to put a "right to work" law in California statutes will be heard by the Senate Labor and Social Welfare Committee on July 8 at the Capitol.

The California Labor Federation is in strong opposition to SB 1119, which in its most re-

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State Fed Urges No Extension Of Surtax

California's 38-man congressional delegation was urged by the California Labor Federation this week to vote against extension of the 10 percent federal surtax.

In wires sent to each of California's Congressmen on Monday, the Federation's Secretary-Treasurer, Thos. L. Pitts, explained the AFL-CIO's opposition to the extension saying:

"It is a bad bill because it is a tax increase for working people without meaningful reform on such glaring tax inequities as the oil depletion allowance, capital gains, tax exempt bonds, etc."

Defeat of the extension bill would put pressure on the Ways and Means Committee to develop a loophole-closing tax

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**L.A. Her-Ex Unionists
Need Help—See Page 2**

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Labor at the Legislature

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the California Fair Employment Practice Act.

* * *

A bill to provide deferred payment tuition charges at the state colleges and university is riding the Assembly inactive file, after having been refused passage by the House. AB 75 was granted reconsideration; the author offered extensive amendments and is currently seeking sufficient support for passage before taking it back onto the third reading file. This is the so-called "learn, earn and reimburse" plan to charge students high tuition, let them defer payment—at a substantial rate of interest—until after graduation. The California Labor Federation is consistently opposed to this roundabout attempt to impose tuition in our state institutions of higher education.

* * *

Another California Labor Federation bill moved a step closer to passage when the Senate Labor and Social Welfare Committee gave a "do pass" recommendation to AB 271 by Assemblywoman Yvonne Brathwaite (D-Los Angeles). The bill now goes to Senate Finance Committee for consideration prior to consideration by the full Senate. AB 271 would prohibit termination of employment because of garnishment of wages for an indebtedness, prior to judgment. The bill has already passed the Assembly.

'Don't Be Caught Dead in a Pine Bluff Co. Casket'

"A tisket, a tasket, don't be caught dead in a Pine Bluff Company casket."

That, in essence, is the appeal being made by the AFL-CIO Union Label and Service Trades Department in behalf of members of a local of the United Furniture Workers of America that have been on strike against the Pine Bluff Casket Company of Pine Bluff, Ark., since March 9, 1969.

Although the AFL-CIO union won an NLRB election by an

Union 'Troops' in Her-Ex Fight Need Your Help Now

For more than 18 months some 2,000 members of 10 labor unions have been locked in a critical labor dispute with the Los Angeles Herald-Examiner that is vital to the union-won protections and benefits of workers throughout California and the nation at large.

The multi-million dollar Hearst Corporation "has shown no effort to engage in meaningful negotiations with the unions" and "continues to produce a newspaper with scab personnel," according to William R. Robertson, director of the Herald-Examiner Joint Strike-Lockout Council.

Over a year ago, a public mediation panel laid the blame for the continuation of the strike squarely at the door of the Herald-Examiner's management.

The unions involved are still fighting and fighting hard to win an honorable conclusion to this dispute and report that the Herald-Examiner circulation has been cut to less than half of what it was before the walkout and that the paper has lost millions of lines of ads.

Meanwhile a number of much smaller papers in the same area have already signed contracts providing printing trades and other newspaper industry workers with wages and fringe benefits well above the Herald-Examiner's last offer.

Thus it's been transparently clear for a long, long time that Hearst management is intent on grinding "the unions into dust" as Robertson puts it.

If workers in California and throughout the nation sit idly by and let this happen they will be jeopardizing their own job security as well as the wage and fringe benefits they presently enjoy, for the fact is that the dispute represents a direct assault on the basic principles of collective bargaining.

To help prevent this from happening, the Herald-Examiner Joint Strike-Lockout Council has just issued an urgent appeal to local unions to ask their members to send individual contributions to help the workers on the picket line. These contributions will augment funds being sent in by their unions. The money is needed NOW.

The Council's appeal also asks you to urge your friends not to subscribe to Hearst Publications and not to purchase goods advertised in the Los Angeles Herald-Examiner.

All checks should be sent to the Herald-Examiner Joint Strike-Lockout Council, 225 West 11th Street, Los Angeles, CA 90015.

Please send a check in whatever amount you can immediately. It's an investment in your future as well as the future of workers throughout our land.

overwhelming majority on January 14, subsequent negotiations during the next seven weeks proved fruitless and the workers, most of them married with large families, were forced to strike.

They are on strike because at present they have no paid holidays, no hospitalization, no pensions, a maximum of one week of vacation regardless of length of service and are paid an average wage of only \$1.70 per hour, according to Joseph Lew-

is, Secretary-Treasurer of the Union Label and Service Trades Department.

"The strike is solid, but the company has imported strikebreakers in an effort to starve out the workers," Lewis explained.

He urged local unions and central bodies to publicize the consumer boycott to aid these workers and to inform funeral homes in their local communities of this situation and seek their support.

Public Worker RTW Bill to Be Heard July 8

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cently amended version would impose the "right to work" shackles on the collective bargaining rights of public employees throughout California.

SB 1119 was introduced as a "right to work" measure affecting agricultural workers. Recent amendments expanded this bad bill to make it worse by taking in public employees.

Labor is united in opposition and it is urgent that this position be brought to the attention of the committee members with the strongest possible emphasis before the actual hearing date, as well as at that time.

Senate Passes Fed Bill to Guard Wage Claims

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of AB 252. The measure re-establishes the priority of employees' wages in claims against the consideration for sale or transfer of an alcoholic beverage license.

Federation representatives steered the bill through committees in both houses and overwhelming passage in the Assembly, as well as the more recent Senate vote favoring the proposal.

AB 252 was presented to the Senate by State Senator George Moscone (D-San Francisco).

Strikebreaker Bill Moves Out Of Senate Unit

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SB 1213 were Senators Howard Way (R-Exeter), president pro-tem of the Senate; Clair Burgener (R-LaMesa), author of the bill; John Nejedly (R-Contra Costa) and John Harmer (R-Glendale).

Testifying in opposition to SB 1213 before the committee were representatives of the California Labor Federation, the Teamsters and a spokesman for blind welfare recipients.

Pitts Explodes Myths of Poverty in Legion Speech

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"Contrary to a widely held misconception, the poor are not idlers." In fact, 60 percent of poor people are in families headed by an employed person and one-third are in families where the breadwinner is employed throughout the year.

To provide further dimensions of the problem, Pitts noted that:

- 25 percent of poor families are headed by women.
- 75 percent are white but proportionately far more Negroes are poor than whites.
- 40 percent are children.
- 20 percent are 65 or older.

These facts, taken from the latest available detailed government figures, make it clear that the claim that the poor are poor because they don't want to work is just a myth, he said.

The facts are, Pitts asserted, that:

"They are poor because they cannot find all-year, full-time jobs or because their employers do not pay them even subsistence level wages."

The AFL-CIO, he said, is convinced that "no one program can wipe out poverty," whether it's the guaranteed annual income, the negative income tax or the family allowance plan.

"Instead," he said, "we need a concerted assault on poverty . . . (that takes) . . . into account the many reasons why people are poor."

Specifically, he called for:

- A commitment to a policy of full employment.
- A large scale public service employment program to provide real jobs in hospitals, health facilities, schools, parks, recreation centers, and libraries for workers who can't land public or private jobs because of lack of education, skills, training, or other reasons.
- A hike in the federal minimum wage floor to \$2.00 per hour and extension of coverage to millions now denied it.
- Enforcement of anti-discrimination laws.
- Adequate education opportunities for all children.
- A nationwide federal employment service.
- Decent housing for low-income families.

- A comprehensive national health insurance plan.
- Adequate day care centers for working mothers.
- Social services to meet family and personal problems of the poor.

In addition, he said, "the AFL-CIO believes millions of families could be removed from poverty by expanded social insurance coverage and higher social insurance payments," for workers hurt on or off the job or suffering unemployment.

And noting that "the elderly are still the poorest people in our society," he said that social security benefits should be raised at least 50 percent.

Turning to the nation's public welfare program, he pointed out that welfare payments are "at poverty levels" in most states.

To assure uniform treatment of recipients and adequate financing throughout the country, the welfare program should be administered and largely financed by the federal government, Pitts said, adding that standards of eligibility and payments should be based solely

on need and determined on a national basis.

"Such a broad-gauge, adequately financed attack on poverty will help to heal many of the divisions that now face our country," he declared.

In spelling out the AFL-CIO's position on the ABM controversy, Pitts pointed out that the AFL-CIO has "consistently supported the goal of a strong national defense," and has never "joined in attacks upon the efforts of any administration to carry out this solemn responsibility."

Noting that the President urged Congress early this year not to abandon work on a limited ABM system and declared that such a system is "essential for the national security" and also "essential to avoid putting an American President, either this President or the next President, in the position where the United States would be second, rather than first, or at least equal to any potential enemy," Pitts said.

"The AFL-CIO believes that the President's declaration em-

bodies a sound doctrine of national defense. While we recognize that there can be honest differences of opinion over a particular method of assuring maximum security for our country, we emphasize that there can never be a good argument for our country not having the best available national defense."

Pitts also noted that just last month the national AFL-CIO adopted a policy statement on the ABM which declared that:

"The President of the United States, as our nation's Commander-in-Chief and as the one primarily responsible for our country's foreign policy, should be supported in fulfilling his duty to determine — in consultation with scientists, military experts, the Congress and other constitutionally appropriate authorities — the most effective ways of meeting the vital defense needs of our country."

The national AFL-CIO statement also pointed out that:

"Failure to be militarily prepared does not lead to peace."

Costly Health Plans Not Always Best, Labor Study Finds

The health plan that costs the most isn't necessarily the best.

This was just one of the conclusions reached by Dr. Lester Breslow, professor of Health Services Administration at UCLA who led an intensive nine-month study paid for by the California Council for Health Plan Alternatives to develop a method to evaluate union health plans.

The grading system, unveiled at a CCHPA meeting in Los Angeles last week, assigns points to a health plan according to how well the plan stacks up in its scope of benefits, coverage of members and dependents, quality of care protections, control of out-of-pocket expenses and the strength of administrative arrangements to carry out the plan.

Known as the Health Insurance Grading System, it could prove to be the most potent tool the unions have yet developed to control the cost and quality of health care that un-

ion members and their families get.

Dr. Breslow, who is also President of the American Public Health Association and former state director of Public Health, reported that nine plans in different parts of the state had been graded and none scored more than 735 points out of a possible 1,000.

More important, however, he said, was the discovery that one plan with a monthly premium exceeding \$40 had scored only 470 points while four plans costing less than \$40 per month had scored all the way up to 708 points.

"Obviously a health plan is not better than another just because it costs more than the others," he said.

"While it is generally true that high priced plans scored better than low priced plans, our grading system shows that with more careful buying, many unions could be getting a lot more health protection and care than they now receive for

the same amount of money."

And that's precisely what the California Council of Health Plan Alternatives, an organization composed of labor organizations throughout the state was set up to do — to get better health care for the union members' dollars.

The Council's next step will be to develop standardized plans at different premium levels so that unions can adopt the plans and put them out to bid in a way that is genuinely competitive.

Unions or trusts interested in further information about the grading system or about participating in the development of more effective health plans should contact the Los Angeles office of CCHPA at 846 South Union Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90017 (213) 386-8551.

The California Labor Federation's representative on the CCHPA's executive committee is Ernest B. Webb, the State AFL-CIO's Director of Social Insurance.

Salinas Girl Wins 'Ability Counts' Essay Contest

"Some men see things as they are and say 'why,' but I dream of things that never were and say, 'why not?'"

"This famous line by Irish author George Bernard Shaw is the clue to the answer to the question, 'what should employers know about handicapped workers?'"

"Why not employ the handicapped individual? Is his handicap such a great disadvantage that disability, not ability counts? Only the interested employer can answer these questions, for it is the attitude of professional workers, employers, legislators, and the general public toward disabled persons that deeply affects both the welfare of those who are disabled and the future of rehabilitation itself."

That's how Elisa Nerez, a 17-year-old senior at Alisal High School in Salinas began the essay that won her top honors in the annual statewide "Ability Counts" Contest sponsored by the Governor's Committee for the Employment of the Handicapped.

The essay, which reflected a keen perception of the basic wants and needs of handicapped individuals, also won her a round-trip, first-class air fare from Monterey to Washington, D.C. to take part in the annual meeting of the President's Committee for the Employment of the Handicapped last month.

In addition she received \$100 for expenses on the trip. Both the air fare and the expense money is donated annually to the statewide winner by the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, as part of the labor organization's efforts to broaden public understanding of the employment capabilities of disabled workers.

Miss Nerez also received a certificate of merit signed by the chairman of the President's Committee for the Employment of the Handicapped.

At Alisal High, she was student body secretary, a four-year member of the California Scholarship Federation and a National Honor Society winner. In college, she plans to major in mathematics and eventually go into teaching or an allied field.

State Fed Opposes Surtax Extension Without Reforms

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justice package.

A vote on the extension bill had been scheduled for Tuesday of this week. Initially, House Speaker John W. McCormack announced on Tuesday that it would be postponed until at least the week of July 7. But on Wednesday, in a dramatic reversal of the previous day's announcement, a vote on the full surtax extension bill was rescheduled for next Monday, June 30.

AFL-CIO legislative director Andrew J. Biemiller pointed out that prospects for real tax reform would be "severely diminished by passage of the extension measure."

The bill, being pushed by the Nixon Administration aided by both Republican and Democratic leaders in the House, would extend the present 10 percent surtax for the remainder of 1969.

This would mean that individuals would pay more taxes this year than last because the 10 percent surtax rate applied for only nine months of 1968.

The extension measure, drawn up by the Ways and Means Committee, would also reduce the surtax rate to five percent for the first six months of 1970.

'Fairness Doctrine' Rules Upheld

The U.S. Supreme Court has unanimously upheld two key parts of the Federal Communication Commission's "fairness doctrine," which requires radio and TV stations to present both sides of important issues.

The decision, rendered June 9, directly contradicted the broadcast industry's contention that the "fairness doctrine" rules hamstringing its liberty to speak out strongly.

On the contrary, the court's decision declared that the rules "enhance rather than abridge the freedoms of speech and press protected by the First Amendment."

The unanimous opinion stressed the responsibility of those holding government broadcast licenses to serve the public. The decision, handed down by Justice Byron R.

In an apparent "attempt to snare votes," Biemiller said the House committee bill exempts persons with below-poverty incomes from taxation and also would repeal the seven percent investment tax credit.

Although the AFL-CIO supports these features, organized labor is opposing the bill because it "makes no attempt to close any of the loopholes by which many millionaires and other wealthy people completely escape taxation," he explained.

Moreover, those who benefit by tax loopholes won't be paying any surtax on their exempt income. Workers whose income comes from wages will be paying a higher tax rate than last year but there won't be any percentage increase for corporations which have enjoyed record-shattering profits," he pointed out.

The AFL-CIO has repeatedly during the last few months urged Congress to consider the surtax only if such extension were accompanied by meaningful tax reform. But instead the House Ways and Means Committee's measure amounts to nothing more than a tax increase that dampens the hope for real tax reform, Biemiller said.

White, said:

"It is the right of the viewers and listeners, not the right of the broadcasters, which is paramount."

The two FCC sub-rules at issue in the case were the "personal attack" rule that requires stations to give free time to any person or group whose honesty, character, or integrity has been attacked over the station's facilities, and the "political editorial" rule which requires stations that endorse or favor one political candidate to give that candidate's opponents a chance to respond.

Press reports of the decision said that these requirements do not apply to news coverage, commentary, interviews or analysis done in the course of news broadcasts.

A Brief Look at Nixon's Record Since Election

Since the election of President Nixon on November 5, 1968, prime interest rates charged by commercial banks have jumped from 6½ percent to 8½ percent — a 40 percent increase in just seven months.

During the same period the Nixon administration has made it clear that it opposes any reduction in the 27½ percent oil depletion allowance or any limit this year on the millions of dollars in subsidies paid to farmers for not growing crops.

In addition, the Nixon administration has announced plans to practically scuttle the Jobs Corps program — one of the few programs offering any hope of a better life to the nation's ghetto youths — and called for cutbacks in funds for other desperately necessary domestic programs, including a slash in the proposed boost in social security benefits from a 13 percent increase to just 7 percent.

Court Upholds Union's Right To Critical Info.

A union's right to the information it needs to decide whether to pursue a grievance has been upheld in a ruling by the U.S. Court of Appeals in Richmond, Va., against the General Electric Company.

The ruling, the fourth legal setback in recent weeks for GE on unfair labor practice charges brought by the AFL-CIO International Union of Electrical, Radio, and Machine Workers, directed GE to carry out an NLRB order to let the union make its own time studies at the company's distribution transformer plant at Hickory, N.C.

The IUE had asked permission in 1966 to bring in its own industrial engineer. When management refused, the union filed an unfair labor practice charge.