



California AFL-CIO News

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JOHN F. HENNING Executive Secretary-Treasurer

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Henning Cites 4 Priorities for Trade Unionists

Four priorities were spelled out for California trade unionists by John F. Henning, Secretary-Treasurer of the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, in closing remarks to the Federation's Eighth Convention in San Francisco last week.

First, Henning said, the California Labor Federation must "continue to espouse and defend the cause of stricken and embattled unions," citing specifically the cause of Cesar Chavez and the AFL-CIO Farm Workers Union, the Herald-Examiner strikers in Los Angeles and the Independent-Journal strikers in San Rafael.

"It may be offered with logic," he observed, "that it is the primary responsibility of the international organizations to provide such assistance and such direction, such guidance. And this is true. But nonetheless, this organization must act whenever it hears the call of a stricken union, whenever the call involves basic principles of trade unionism or whenever that call involves the liberty of the individual—the one dissenting man in our free society."

Describing the second priority as one "of formidable dimensions," Henning said:

"We must in the Legislature
(Continued on Page 3)

13% of U.S. Unemployed Here

Jobless Rolls Are Still at 30-Year High in California

Despite repeated inferences by both the Reagan and Nixon Administrations that the current recession has bottomed out, California's unemployment rolls remained at their highest level in 30 years last month and the state's jobless rate climbed to 6.5 percent—27 percent higher than the 5.1 percent national average, state and federal

reports indicated this week.

The state's 6.5 percent seasonally adjusted rate for August was the highest in nearly nine years. The last time it was higher was in October, 1961 when it was 6.7 percent, state officials disclosed in response to an inquiry by the California

(Continued on Page 2)

State Fed Delegates Press For Natl. Health Insurance

"Charges for medical care rose by 5.8 percent during three years from 1965 to 1968, or 76 percent faster than consumer prices generally . . ."

That was just one of the facts cited in a policy statement on Social Security adopted by delegates to the California Labor Federation's Convention at the Civic Auditorium in San Francisco last week to underscore the need for a National Health Insurance system proposed by the National AFL-CIO.

Other facts brought out to demonstrate the need for a health insurance system to provide "quality medical care for all Americans" included:

● Nationally the cost of medical care has risen from \$12.1

billion to \$60.3 billion since 1950;

● Daily room charges in some hospitals already exceed \$100;

● 53 million Americans have no hospital care coverage;

● Despite its \$60 billion annual investment in medical care, the U.S. ranks 11th among western nations in maternal mortality rates, 16th in infant mortality and 11th in life expectancy for females and 18th for males.

The delegates also noted that all of the western nations with which the U. S. was compared have national health programs for the vast majority of their citizens at a lower cost per capita than the cost in the United States.

(Continued on Page 2)

Inflation Is Key Issue on Nov. 3, Meany Says

AFL-CIO President George Meany charged the Nixon Administration this week with causing much of labor's problem through ill-advised economic programs and said he believes that inflation will be the prime issue for union workers in the November 3 General Election.

"We've got the cost of living going up . . . and, at the same time, the real spending, the earning power of the blue-collar workers is going down," he said.

"This, I think, will be the gut issue. It's always been the real issue—the issue that hits at the pocket book," Meany said in the course of a TV interview last Monday.

Massive Programs Urged to Meet Cal. Housing Crisis

California's AFL-CIO trade unionists have attacked congressional "foot-dragging" in the housing field and called for "massive public and publicly subsidized housing programs to provide adequate shelter for low and middle-income Americans in both urban and rural areas."

In adopting a policy statement on Housing at the Eighth Convention of the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, at

the Civic Auditorium in San Francisco, the delegates indicated that adequate housing has been put beyond the reach of most Americans because of rising land and home financing costs and pointedly noted that on-site labor costs have "dropped from 33 to 18 percent

of the total cost of home construction" over the past 20 years.

Recalling that Congress agreed in 1949 that the nation needed 800,000 public housing units within the next six years but that only 500,000 units were produced in the next 20 years,

the delegates said:

"We condemn the foot-dragging of the past."

They said a "great and immediate expansion of housing construction is an outstanding need," and added that:

"A sound housing program is an essential element in the nation's effort to eliminate slums and ghettos, to challenge racial discrimination, to support the spread of educa-

(Continued on Page 3)

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13% of U.S. Unemployed Here

Jobless Rolls Are Still at 30-Year High in California

(Continued from Page 1)
AFL-CIO News.

The August, 1970, total jobless figure of 555,000 means that California, for the second month in a row, has more unemployed people looking for jobs than at any time in the past 30 years, a fact that the unusually brief report by the State Department of Human Resources Development failed to mention. The revised total for July was 561,000, 3,000 more than the total announced early last month.

UP 46% IN 1 YEAR

In commenting on the latest unemployment figures, John F. Henning, executive officer of the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, said:

"The 555,000 jobless workers in California in August represent a 46 percent increase in the ranks of California's unemployed in just the past year. This is an unemployment crisis of the first magnitude.

"Effective action to meet this crisis and ease the plight of the people being ruined by it calls for bold, innovative leadership that puts the people's interests above those of corporate profits," Henning declared.

"Unfortunately," he added, "neither the Reagan Administration nor the Nixon Administration has yet indicated any willingness to push for the kinds of massive state and federal public work programs needed to meet pressing domestic needs in the fields of housing, education, and hospital services which, at the same time, would provide thousands of job opportunities," he observed.

REAGAN SLASHES HIT

Henning said that "instead of expanding state services to meet the needs of citizens, the Reagan Administration has attempted to cut services at a number of regional offices of the State Department of Human Resources Development and earlier this year sought to slash the budget and staffs of the various state agencies most needed to help California's more than half a million jobless workers."

Noting that Reagan issued a press release late last week announcing that the State Department of Human Resources Development was expanding ef-

forts to find jobs for out-of-work aerospace workers in northern California by providing office space and telephones in HRD offices, Henning said:

"While I don't want to disparage any constructive effort the Reagan Administration may take to help these workers, the provision of office space and telephones simply isn't enough.

"The plain fact is that the basic economic policies being pursued by the state and national administrations — tight money, high interest rates, unchecked inflation boiling along at an annual rate of six percent — must be reversed to effect any real relief for California's unemployment crisis. The issuance of press releases that create an illusion of action where no substantive program exists amounts to little less than an attempt to hoodwink the public," he declared.

"Governor Reagan is also apparently fond of playing on voters' fears that people on welfare are cheating or defrauding the taxpayers but the truth of the matter is that the welfare case load has increased nearly 60 percent in California since Reagan took office in no small part because Governor Reagan joined in the Nixon Administration's ill-conceived plan of fighting inflation by cutting back on vital state and federal construc-

tion programs that have wiped out tens of thousands of jobs and forced thousands of once proud and self-sufficient workers onto welfare.

"Moreover it was Governor Reagan's personal opposition to the adoption of a state withholding tax system during his first three years in office until he reversed field earlier this year that caused California to lose nearly half a billion dollars in state revenues since 1966," the State AFL-CIO leader pointed out.

The national jobless rate of 5.1 percent for August was one-tenth of a percentage point higher than the previous month and represented the highest rate since the autumn of 1964. Total unemployment for the nation last month was 4.2 million.

"This means," Henning noted, "that although California has less than 10 percent of the nation's total population, we presently have more than 13 percent of the nation's total unemployed."

Recalling that President Nixon stated during his 1968 presidential campaign that he "strongly disagrees with those who say the only way to stop inflation is to let unemployment increase" and that Nixon spokesmen during his campaign indicated that a four percent level would be the maximum "allow-

able" jobless rate, Henning observed:

"There is little evidence that President Nixon's disagreement with the view has had any impact on the policies being pursued by the national government that have resulted in outlandishly high net profits for banks and big corporations and increasingly sharp distress for workers and outrageously high interest rates for small businessmen."

NIXON FAILURE HIT

He also called attention to a report issued this week by the International Monetary Fund which warned that the Administration's failure to control inflation, which is currently the worst in the U.S. in 20 years, has spread economic trouble to most non-Communist countries and could threaten the stability of the world's money system.

The IMF report said the Nixon Administration is "behind schedule" in its attempts to check rising prices.

The report, which was carried only on the finance pages of most newspapers, said:

"The importance of arresting the U.S. inflationary spiral and restoring price and cost stability can hardly be exaggerated.

"At stake are the checking of the inflationary trend on a worldwide basis, the long-run stability and efficiency of the U.S. economy, the much needed strengthening of the U.S. balance of payments and the sound functioning of the International Monetary System."

WHITE RATE DOUBLES

The national jobless report issued by the Labor Department disclosed that the jobless rate for Negroes, at 8.4 percent, was about one-third higher than a year ago. But it was worse for Whites. The White jobless rate, at 4.8 percent, was 50 percent higher than a year earlier.

Among construction workers, the jobless rate jumped from 11 percent in July to 12.2 percent in August. In August, 1969, it was seven percent.

An even grimmer sign of the deepening recession was reflected in the number of persons out of work for 15 weeks or more. This figure rose to 735,000 in August, nearly double the number a year ago, the Labor Department said.

State Fed Delegates Press For Natl. Health Insurance

(Continued from Page 1)

The AFL-CIO National Health Insurance program would cover all of the American people. It would provide comprehensive benefits, including hospitalization without any limit on the number of days, physicians' services paid in full without deductibles or co-insurance, dental care, vision care, nursing home care, home health services and prescription drugs.

The program would be financed under Social Security with one-third contributed by the employee, one-third by the employer and one-third by the Federal Government from general

revenues.

In the more general field of Social Security, the delegates called for a boost in the taxable wage base to \$15,000 to provide more adequate social security benefits and urged the use of general revenues to supplement payroll taxes to allow for early retirement after age 60 "for those unable to compete successfully for employment."

The delegates also voiced their support for the recommendations of a Senate Committee that called for a substantial increase in minimum benefits and for provisions to assure the aging "a share in the growth of the economy."

Henning Cites Four Priorities for Calif. Trade Unionists

(Continued from Page 1)

in Sacramento direct the services of state government to the immediate requirements of the working people of California; which is to say that we must bend the services of the state to assist in workmen's compensation, unemployment insurance and unemployment disability insurance.

"But beyond that, we must in Sacramento direct the creative powers of state government to enlarge and enrich the promise of public education, of public health, of public housing, of racial brotherhood, of the integrity of the environment and all of the other comparable areas which affect the living decency of man.

"And this inevitably means that we must stand with those who often are scorned and abandoned.

"This means that we must stand with the poor. This means that we must stand with those who know deprivation because of skin or race or creed. This means surely that we must stand with those who know deprivation because of the blemishes of body or mind. This means that we must espouse always without apology, but with honor, the humanitarian traditions and principles of which we are the heirs."

As the third priority, Henning said:

"It must be the mission of every union affiliated with this organization to expand the realm of affiliation both within the Federation and within State COPE."

Asserting that the first two priorities would be rendered "meaningless" unless the third priority is realized, Henning called for the "fullest" mobilization of the political vigor of the trade union movement in California.

"California Labor COPE was founded to implement the political idealism that is inherent within the American trade union movement. And that must be your mission in the days and the months and the years that follow this convention: to project the influence and the power and, indeed, the resources of our political organization."

Henning said, "there is a fourth priority, apparently at

first measure more difficult to realize.

"But the American trade union movement must be prepared to lead liberal America back to order and democracy.

"We must repair the damage done to the institutions of social protest and to the institutions of social advance. And we must make our liberal brothers and sisters aware that only those who believe in democracy and oppose totalitarianism are qualified to lead the progressive

movements of a free society."

In conclusion, Henning said:

"Finally, brothers and sisters, as we depart we must pledge organizationally and personally to commit ourselves to a nobler America. We are the richest people of history, but we will know relief from the agonies of our time and of our society only through values that money can never buy: compassion; love; peace; brotherhood; and charity of soul. Only through such values will America know

once more a sense of civilization.

"May labor in faithful service live always by those values," he said.

Convention Calls For 'Massive' Push on Housing

(Continued from Page 1)

tion among minority and low-income groups, to make public services more readily available to those who need them, to dampen the fires that feed violence in the 'urban crisis' and to create a decent environment for every citizen."

The delegates' statement also noted that although a bigger proportion of Negroes and other minority groups are subjected to "miserable" housing, "a far bigger number of Whites are poor and in bad housing."

The trade unionists also attacked the upside-down nature of existing housing subsidies and cited a section from a recent report by the National Commission on Urban Problems to drive home the point:

"We often subsidize the richest people in the country," the report said. "About 3½ times as much in housing subsidies goes to those with middle or higher incomes through income tax deductions than the amount of the subsidies that go to the poor for housing.

"In a recent year, the upper 20 percent of income groups got twice as much in housing subsidies as did the lower 20 percent. . . . Based on Lincoln's principle that government should do what private citizens cannot do or cannot do as well themselves, and on the principle that aid should go to those who need it most, the strongest case can be made for helping those at the bottom of the economic ladder," the report said.

In recognition of the inability of municipal governments to finance housing programs adequately, the delegates urged "massive increases in financial support of housing by state and federal governments as necessary contributions to community well being."

They also called for adequate funding of public housing programs, including the financing of Cal-Vet homes.



JUST A BEGINNING — Cesar Chavez, Director of the AFL-CIO United Farm Workers Organizing Committee, gets a heartfelt kiss from Ruth Compagnon along with an on-the-spot collection of \$1,106.60 to help California farm workers win union protections. Mrs. Compagnon, Secretary of Waitresses Local 639 of Los Angeles and a delegate at the California Labor Federation's recent convention in San Francisco, fought for a wage order for farm workers as a member of the State Industrial Welfare Commission during the Brown Administration. The delegates' donation was taken up in a box urging Labor's friends to support another long vital battle to protect workers' rights, the consumer boycott of the Los Angeles Herald-Examiner. The State AFL-CIO delegates voted an additional contribution of \$10,000 to the UFWOC and urged all union officers to contribute \$5 per month as long as necessary to win the historic battle in California fields.



MEET THE STATE AFL-CIO'S EXECUTIVE COUNCIL—Here are most of the members of the Executive Council of the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, who were reelected to two-year terms at the Federation's Eighth Convention in San Francisco August 31-September 3, 1970. In the front row (from left) are: Vice Presidents Richard K. Groulx; Leonard Cahill and Harry Finks; General Vice President Manuel Dias; Executive Secretary-Treasurer John F. Henning; Secretary-Treasurer Emeritus Thos. L. Pitts; President Albin J. Gruhn; and Vice Presidents Max Osslo; M. R. Callahan; Joseph P. Mazzola; and Thomas A. Small. In second row (from left) are: Vice Presidents Sigmund Arywitz, Kenneth D. Larson, William G. Dowd, Ray M. Wilson, Lloyd Lea, Ray S. Mendoza, Edward T. Shedlock, Willbur Fillippini, John A. Cinquemani, Anthony J. Bogdanowicz, and Steve Edney. In the top row (from left) are: Vice Presidents G. J. Conway, C. A. Green, Stanley Lathen, Joseph R. Garcia, H. D. Lackey, Morris Weisberger, Chris Amadio, and Howard Reed. Other members of the 37-member Executive Council unable to be on hand for the group photo due to other pressing business were Vice Presidents John L. Dales, Joseph H. Seymour, G. A. McCulloch, Paul L. Jones, Joseph Angelo, Richard W. Hackler, Jerome Posner, and Fred D. Fletcher. All were elected for two-year terms extending to the Federation's next convention to be held in Los Angeles in 1972.

Fed Delegates Call for Stronger Bargaining Laws

Warning that "forces intent on crippling . . . the trade union movement are rampant throughout the nation," delegates to the California Labor Federation's Eighth Convention in San Francisco declared last week that the assaults "by those using the weaknesses of the National Labor Relations Act to further the purposes of their own special interests" must be "firmly repulsed and positive legislation strengthening the free collective bargaining process must be enacted."

The delegates, more than 1,200 strong, approved a policy statement on Labor Legislation which reminded the general public that the Wagner Act of 1935 "was followed by a five-fold increase in union membership, by shrinkage of violence on the streets, by infrequent resort to strikes as a means of settling disagreements, and by the spread of collective bargaining."

But it noted that the legal status the Wagner Act gave to collective bargaining "is never free of attack from interests that would impair it in ways to cripple the power of organized labor to protect its members' interests."

And as an example they cited Section 14(b) of the Taft-Hartley Act enacted in 1947

which allowed states to prohibit employers and unions from entering into union-security agreements that require all covered employees to become union members even though federal law requires unions to protect the rights of all covered workers.

To improve the rights of all workers as well as the free collective bargaining process, the delegates' statement called for federal legislation to:

- Repeal Section 14(b) of the Taft-Hartley Act;

- Extend the protections of the National Labor Relations Law to farm workers, agricultural processing and transportation workers;

- Improve labor-management relations procedures in government service, including the institution of appeal and mediation procedures;

- Broaden the public employees' right to collective bargaining;

- And strengthen the Fair Labor Standards Act by raising minimum wages and extending its coverage.

The statement was amended by action from the Convention floor to call for fighting for union shop protection for U.S. postal workers.

The statement also attacked the practice of conferring fresh

government contracts upon employers who willfully and repeatedly violate the National Labor Relations Act and the unequal penalties imposed upon employers and employees for infractions.

On the state level, the delegates called for legislation to:

- Outlaw professional strike-breakers;

- Set up collective bargaining procedures for intrastate workers; including workers on farms and in hospitals and public employees;

- And set standards for hours and wages in California sufficient to provide a decent standard of living for all California workers which recognizes that living costs in California are generally higher than in other states.

Among other things, the delegates affirmed their support for National AFL-CIO efforts to establish a \$2 federal minimum wage but emphasized that they would continue to press for a \$2.25 state minimum and a 35-hour workweek "as consistent with our state's technology and economy."

They also called for legislation to guarantee collective bargaining rights for public employees, farm workers, household domestics and employees

of "non-profit" organizations and pledged their support to the National AFL-CIO efforts to win enactment of a strong occupational health and safety law.

In addition they called for "adequate staffing of the Division of Industrial Safety and for strong enforcement of all safety laws and regulations."

Recognizing that "the economic processes of collective bargaining are inseparable from the political processes through which public decisions are made," the policy statement on Labor Legislation also pledged the State AFL-CIO's support to moves to strengthen the political process.

Specifically, the statement called for support of proposals to:

- Let each income taxpayer designate a contribution of \$1.00 from his tax be assigned to the political party of his choice.

- Require radio and TV stations to sell time to candidates for office at their lowest commercial rates and to donate "a reasonable minimum of time to provide voters and candidates equal access to each other."

- Provide a "reasonable allowance of free postage to party nominees."