

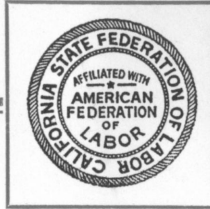
WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

FROM

CALIFORNIA STATE FEDERATION OF LABOR

402 FLOOD BUILDING

151



SAN FRANCISCO,
CALIFORNIA

March 10, 1948

INADEQUACIES OF SOCIAL SECURITY PROGRAM

(CFLNL)SAN FRANCISCO.--The 1946 annual yearbook of the Federal Security Agency reveals a most meagre form of social security in the United States in 1946. Under the Old Age and Survivors Insurance program, the average monthly benefit per family was \$30.09. Furthermore, even this benefit was suspended if the beneficiaries earned as much as \$15 a month. As a result, some persons had to obtain old age assistance to supplement their old age pension or their earnings. The average payment per person under the old age assistance program in December 1946 was \$35.31. Under the other assistance programs, aid was a little larger. The average monthly payment per family under the aid to dependent children program was \$62.23; and the average under the aid to the blind program was \$36.67.

Unemployment insurance activities under the social security program were particularly important during 1946; the first year of reconversion. About 7 million workers filed claims for unemployment insurance, and almost 4½ million claimants received at least one benefit check. The average weekly benefit actually paid was \$18.50; the average duration of unemployment was 13.4 weeks, and some 38.2 per cent of all persons receiving a first payment exhausted their benefits.

As a result of the large number of persons unemployed during reconversion and of the reduced tax rates for employers under experience rating, benefit payments in 1946 were 20 per cent more than the amounts collected under unemployment programs. The report points out that "contribution rates continued to decline under the state

experience-rating provisions. As a result, tax collections in 1946 were 21.5 per cent below the \$1,162 million collected in 1945, despite a slight rise in taxable wages."

In most countries and for most people, social security also involves some form of disability and health insurance, but the Social Security Yearbook points out that in the United States the various programs attempting to meet these needs "compensate only a minor fraction of the total wage loss, estimated at \$5 to \$6 billion annually, experienced by the 2 to 2½ million persons who are disabled on an average day." Workmen's compensation payments are notoriously inadequate, amounting to at best 2/3 of a worker's weekly wage, while only Rhode Island and California have disability programs.

+++

CLERKS UNION SUPPORTS DI GIORGIO STRIKERS

(CFLNL)SAN FRANCISCO.--All products from the strike-bound Di Giorgio Farm in the San Joaquin Valley were declared "hot cargo" by AFL Retail Clerks No. 770 in Los Angeles. The Union informed the 700 food stores under agreement with Local 770 that products from the Di Giorgio Ranch will not be handled by its members. This action followed after the Los Angeles Food Council placed all Di Giorgio brand names on the Unfair List. Other unions are expected to follow suit, demonstrating their support of the 1100 Di Giorgio strikers, members of the National Farm Labor Union and Teamsters Local 87.

The large Italian Swiss Colony Winery in Tarpey, California, was closed down as the Di Giorgio strikers picketed the 17 tank cars containing nearly 300,000 gallons of Di Giorgio wine. Members of the Winery Workers Union, AFL, and the Carpenters Union are respecting the farm workers pickets outside of the winery.

Nationwide publicity for the strikers was received from Harold L. Ickes and Victor Riesel, who have devoted an entire syndicated newspaper column to the issues involved. In his February 27th column,

"Inside Labor," Victor Riesel said: "Somebody ought to tell Joe Di Giorgio his grape farm isn't out of this world ... He ought to go and sit down with his fruit pickers. All they want is a living wage." The California magazine Fortnight buried the last remains of the Associated Farmers "red scare" when they reported that the chief counsel for the Tenney Committee, Richard E. Combs, "said he had made an independent check of the Kern County strike and found no Communist influence, although he said the Commies had tried unsuccessfully to muscle in."

The Di Giorgio strike, now the longest in the history of agriculture, broke out on the 20,000-acre Di Giorgio Ranch on October 1, 1947. It soon became a show-down fight between the Associated Farmers of California and the organized labor movement as to whether the Associated Farmers would rule the Valley, or whether the 250,000 farm workers of California would have the right to organize and bargain for wages, hours and working conditions.

The AFL has backed the 1100 Di Giorgio strikers through its State Federations, its International unions and local unions by contributing financially, and supplying them with food and clothes. Northern California AFL unions plan to come to the Tent Cities and the government labor camps near the vast Di Giorgio holdings and bring additional and much-needed relief into the homes of the 1100 strikers and their families.

///

STATE COUNCIL AFL LOCAL TRANSIT EMPLOYEES
FINISH CONVENTION IN SAN DIEGO

(CFLNL)SAN FRANCISCO.--Delegates representing 1100 AFL local transit employees in California went on record in their convention at San Diego, California, as seeking a 30 per cent wage increase for all union members, and a uniform 40-hour work week for all street car and bus companies in the state.

Secretary-Treasurer D. D. McClurg, of the Street, Electric Railway and Motor Coach Employees State Council, announced that the

convention unanimously ~~adopted~~ these goals for local union negotiating committees when ~~present~~ contracts ~~are~~ opened next month.

"Our unions have expressed their fixed determination to resist the application of the unjust Taft-Hartley labor law to transportation systems in California cities," McClurg declared. "We intend to carry on an enthusiastic political and legislative campaign in cooperation with the rest of the American Federation of Labor movement to restore free collective bargaining for all wage-earners, and to extend its benefits to employees of publicly-owned transportation systems," the labor spokesman said.

An adequate pension system for street car and bus company employees ranked high on the list of improved working conditions which the AFL union will seek to negotiate with their employers.

State Council officers elected by the convention to head the organization for the coming year include: President, L. W. Mathew; Secretary-Treasurer, D. D. McClurg; Vice-Presidents, Jerry O'Connors, Harlan D. Curl and Fred Watson.

+++

AMERICAN OVERSEAS AID--UNITED NATIONS APPEAL FOR
CHILDREN CAMPAIGN ENDORSED BY AFL

(CFLNL)SAN FRANCISCO.--American voluntary agencies have formed American Overseas Aid and have joined with the United Nations Appeal for Children for the sole purpose of bringing some relief to those left destitute by war, particularly children. The Labor League for Human Rights (AFL), the official relief arm of the American Federation of Labor, is proud to be a member of the American Overseas Aid--United Nations Appeal for Children.

President Green, President of the American Federation of Labor, stated in a letter to Mr. Lee Marshall, National Chairman of the organization: "I am confident that the appeal of this organization will meet with a ready and generous response from the eight million members of the American Federation of Labor and their families." As President

of the American Federation of Labor, he endorsed the campaign and called upon the membership of the American Federation of Labor to give it generous support.

The American Overseas Aid-United Nations Appeal for Children is a federation representing twenty-six major private American foreign relief agencies and the American share in the world-wide United Nations Appeal for Children.

Matthew Woll, President of the Labor League for Human Rights, has addressed a letter to all National and International unions, State Federations of Labor and Central Labor Councils requesting their response to this worthy appeal. The campaign stresses that in no aspect has war so terrible an aftermath as its devastation on the lives of children. All over the world children are pleading for the bare necessities of life--for the right to live, to grow up and to become healthy, useful members of society, the society that will become the world of tomorrow.

The Federation joins in this appeal and calls upon the affiliated unions to give it their fullest cooperation.

///

BUILDING TRADE RATES IN SAN FRANCISCO AND LOS ANGELES AMONG FIRST EIGHT LARGE WESTERN CITIES

(CFLNL)SAN FRANCISCO.--Wage Scales in the building trades of San Francisco increased more than in most large Western cities in 1947, and the rates in Los Angeles increased more than any other large Western city in the same year, according to a report issued by Max D. Kossoris, Regional Director of the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The average increase in the several trades in San Francisco was 13.7 per cent from January 1947 to January 1948. Among 8 other cities the amount of increase ranged from 3.8 per cent for Portland to 16 per cent in Los Angeles. Although the increase in the union scale exceeded that in many of the other Western cities, the current scale itself is not generally higher.

The largest increase in building trades wage rates in San Francisco in 1947 was 56.3 cents, secured by the bricklayers. A 25-cent increase was obtained by the carpenters, electricians, painters and plumbers.

The largest increases in building trades wage rates in Los Angeles during 1947 were secured by the bricklayers and the painters, 37½ cents and 35 cents per hour respectively. An increase of 25 cents was obtained by the carpenters, electricians, plasterers and plumbers.

///