

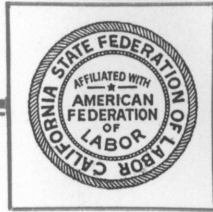
WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

FROM

CALIFORNIA STATE FEDERATION OF LABOR

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SAN FRANCISCO,
CALIFORNIA

April 28, 1948

CENTRAL VALLEYS PROJECTS CONFERENCE MAPS FIGHT AGAINST POWER AND WATER SHORTAGES

(CFLNL)SAN FRANCISCO.--Approximately 800 delegates, representing farmers and organized labor throughout California, assembled at the mass convention of the Central Valleys Projects Conference in Sacramento at Governor's Hall on Saturday, April 24. Keynoting the convention, George Sehlmeier, Master of the State Grange and Chairman of the Central Valleys Projects Conference, emphasized the threat to employment and agriculture as a result of the deepening power crisis brought on by the PG&E.

C. J. Haggerty, Secretary of the California State Federation of Labor, delivered the principal speech, reviewing the fight that has been waged against the power utilities, which have sought to circumvent the full development of adequate water and power for the benefit of agriculture as well as the urban centers.

The gathering decided to set up a permanent investigating committee to probe the expenditure of funds by unknown persons, corporations and the Treasury of California, and to bring to light subversive and disruptive activities against development of the state's power resources, to demand that the Public Utilities Commission explain why it did not warn the state of the power crisis a year ago. It reaffirmed its position to continue to fight for the construction of multiple purpose power and water installations by the Bureau of Reclamation of the Department of the Interior rather than by the Army Engineers, and for retention of the 160-acre limitation; to bring suits against PG&E to refund "stand-by charges" running into millions of

dollars paid by the farmers for power they never received. The PG&E was scored time and again as being an obstructive monopoly, serving its own economic interests rather than the general welfare of all the people in the state.

C. J. Haggerty addressed the morning session in which he outlined the main phases of the development of the fight for state power and the objectives for which the Conference should strive.

A great number of the delegates represented AFL trade unions throughout the state of California who are vitally interested in this fight for cheap water and power.

It is hoped that as a result of this convention, the Central Valleys Projects Conference would be resuscitated to become an active and functioning body, moulding as well as mobilizing all the forces in the state of California to oppose the present efforts to emasculate the Central Valleys Projects development.

The new Executive Committee elected by the Convention will undoubtedly implement the decisions that were reached. Future meetings will be held by this body, with the likelihood of another huge convention some time in the future.

GEORGE KIDWELL, OUTSTANDING LABOR LEADER,
PASSES AWAY

(CFLNL) SAN FRANCISCO.--George Kidwell, outstanding pioneer of the labor movement in the San Francisco Bay area, died Monday, April 26, at the age of 64, after a long illness.

He had been a member of the American Federation of Labor since 1899, and for several decades was Secretary of Bakery Wagon Drivers, Local 484. During the Olson administration, he became the Director of the State Department of Industrial Relations. He also played a prominent part in the 1934 general strike, which was an outgrowth of the 1934 maritime strike.

Kidwell is survived by two daughters, Georgia Kidwell and Mrs. Frank Pestana, and one son, Warren Kidwell.

The funeral services are planned for Thursday, April 29, at Gray's Funeral Parlor, Divisadero at Post Street.

The California State Federation of Labor considers the passing of George Kidwell to be one of the severest losses that the organized labor movement has suffered in many years. His contributions to labor and the invaluable services he rendered are too numerous to specify. Practically every activity that has been associated with the progress of the labor movement in California found Kidwell having a positive relation to it. His wisdom and years of experience will be sorely missed, and his death is a decided and irreplaceable loss.

IMPORTANT DECISIONS RENDERED BY CALIFORNIA UNEMPLOYMENT
INSURANCE APPEALS BOARD ISSUED

(CFLNL)SAN FRANCISCO.--Two important decisions released by the California Unemployment Insurance Appeals Board, dated April 9, dealt with trade disputes of far-reaching significance to members of organized labor.

In Benefit Decision No. 4826, Case No. 7947, the Board held that where employees were laid off work and subsequently, after non-union employees were hired, a picket line was established by the former employees, that the unemployment that resulted following the picket line was not due to voluntarily leaving during a trade dispute.

The Board further ruled, however, that if an offer to return to work is made by the employer to the union employees, a refusal to return to work upon receipt of the offer constitutes a leaving.

Counsel for the California State Federation of Labor is of the opinion that this decision of the California Unemployment Insurance Appeals Board is tortuous legal reasoning and contrary to the statement in the decision issued by the Board, which was as follows: "This decision makes it apparent that the phrase, 'left his work,' must be construed broadly to apply to a refusal to continue the individual's usual work for reasons connected with a trade dispute."

The Board's ruling is far from a liberal and broad construction, but instead is very stringent and definitely in favor of disqualification. Furthermore, the Federation counsel is of the opinion that this radical construction of a refusal of reemployment as a leaving of employment is without any basis in law or in fact. Having determined that the individuals were unemployed and eligible for benefits, it is not possible to conclude upon what basis the Board rests its opinion that the offer of reemployment is a leaving of work which the Board has already found to be non-existent.

In the other Benefit Decision, No. 4827, Case No. 8161, the Board stated: "In Benefit Decision 1796-4061, this Board stated that 'in the absence of evidence to the contrary, work offered behind a picket line may be presumed to be a position vacant due directly to a trade dispute.' In view of the failure of the employer to present evidence to overcome the determination of the Department, it is not necessary to rely upon this precedent as a ground for decision in the instant case. We make no finding, therefore, as to whether that decision is applicable to the factual situation presently before us."

According to the Board's own thinking, as revealed in the above-quoted statement, a long-standing precedent has been established with respect to this question. Nevertheless, the Board not only does not reaffirm it, but infers that perhaps if another case arose on that point, it might question or even reverse this precedent.

These decisions indicate an ever narrowing interpretation of the trades disputes section of the Unemployment Insurance Act. It is hoped, however, that as far as the first decision is concerned, court action may succeed in obtaining its reversal.

CALIFORNIA EMPLOYMENT MISCELLANY

(CFLNL)SAN FRANCISCO.--Factory employment in California decreased by less than 1 percent between February and March, according to Director of Industrial Relations Paul Scharrenberg. The State's industrial plants had 465,700 wage earners on their payrolls in the midweek of March, compared with 468,800 in the corresponding week of February.

According to the report, "Power and material shortages during the month were reflected not so much in reductions in the number of persons employed as in decreases in hours worked and earnings."

Greatest losses in employment between February and March were recorded by the food, ship repair, furniture, iron and steel, and rubber industries. Partly offsetting these decreases were significant gains in automobile assembly and in stone, clay, and glass products.

Despite the employment decline between February and March, the number of wage earners at work in California plants producing non-durable goods was at the highest March level in the history of the state.

In the San Francisco Bay industrial area, manufacturing plants dropped 1700 production workers from their payrolls between February and March. Factory employment decreased from 114,900 to 113,200, a decline of $1\frac{1}{2}$ percent. The responsible factor for the employment reduction was the shipbuilding and ship repair industry, in which close to 2,000 yard workers were laid off.

Power and material shortages reported by a number of plants resulted in reductions in hours worked and payrolls.

In the Los Angeles industrial area, the number of production workers decreased by 1700, from 242,400 in February to 240,700 in March. The largest declines occurred in the food and furniture manufacturing industries.

SECURITY LOAN DRIVE UNDER WAY

(CFLNL)SAN FRANCISCO.--The Security Loan Drive of the United States Treasury Department, which began April 15, will continue through June 30. The purpose of the drive is to increase the sale to individuals of U. S. Savings Bonds. Every dollar invested in U. S. Savings Bonds will help the government in its fight against inflation. At the same time, these dollars will be earning interest for the owners to help provide future homes, education for children, and old-age security.

The Treasury Department proposes in the coming months to increase the participation in payroll savings plans from 5½ million persons to 11 million. There are approximately 22 million workers and salaried employees eligible for payroll savings. It is hoped that at least 50 percent of these individuals will participate if they are urged to give this matter the consideration it deserves.

The American Federation of Labor, the California State Federation of Labor and other affiliated bodies have endorsed the Security Loan Drive. President Green, in a statement issued before the National Conference for the Security Loan Drive in Washington, D.C., March 18-20, stated as follows: "Therefore, it is incumbent upon all of us to protect and strengthen the home front in order that America can remain powerful enough to halt the aggressive tide of Soviet expansion and prevent another war from engulfing our world."

CALIFORNIA STATE FEDERATION OF LABOR EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING, SAN FRANCISCO, MAY 1-2

(CFLNL)SAN FRANCISCO.--The quarterly meeting of the Executive Committee of the California State Federation of Labor will convene at the Hotel Whitcomb, San Francisco, May 1-2.

A review of the state reapportionment campaign, as well as the political education activities, are among the important points on an exhaustive agenda which will be considered by the Council.

Other problems which will be discussed: Central Valleys Project, the recent session of the State Legislature, the various initiative measures to be voted upon by the people in the coming election, and numerous other items that have accumulated in the past quarter.

Results of the meeting will be reported as usual in the Quarterly Bulletin which will be mailed to all of the affiliates.

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