

# WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

FROM

## CALIFORNIA STATE FEDERATION OF LABOR

402 FLOOD BUILDING

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SAN FRANCISCO,  
CALIFORNIA

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### METAL TRADES STRIKE THREATENS TO BECOME A SHOWDOWN BECAUSE OF CMTA'S UNYIELDING POSITION

(CFLNL) SAN FRANCISCO.--The AFL Molders, who struck April 7, are still stalemated with the California Metal Trades Association because of the latter's refusal to increase its offer, although the Molders were willing to compromise by reducing their requested increase of 25 cents per hour to 15 cents. The employers' offer still stands as originally submitted -- 10 cents for the mechanics, 9 cents for the semi-skilled group, and 8 cents for the helpers.

Even though the Molders cut their original request practically in half in an effort to avoid a decisive struggle with the employers, the CMTA has so far refused to budge an inch from its original stand. This stubbornness can be interpreted only as meaning a desire on the part of the employers to destroy the unions' collective bargaining power.

The Boilermakers are still meeting with the employers, under the auspices of conciliators. The latest offer made to this union was  $11\frac{1}{2}$  cents an hour increase across the board, without any retroactivity. The employers also offered the Machinists an increase of from 10 cents an hour for helpers to 12 cents for journeymen, with no retroactivity. The Machinists' Union rejected the offer because there was no provision to make it retroactive to April 1, the expiration date of their contract with the employers, and also because the offer did not provide an across-the-board increase of 12 cents an hour for all workers.

The Molders are determined to fight this issue through to a finish and have mobilized all of their forces to meet this arrogant challenge of the CMTA.

The character of the negotiating policy of the employers indicates an offensive against labor by the CMTA, and this may be considered as the unfolding of a pattern that will undoubtedly be imitated by other employers.

The Federation is watching developments closely and is prepared to support the Molders and other striking workers in this fight.

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LABOR URGED TO SIGN HOUSING PETITION AND  
SUPPORT IT IN EVERY WAY

(CFLNL)SAN FRANCISCO.--The initiative constitutional amendment being circulated by the California Housing Initiative Committee has pleasantly surprised everyone by managing to obtain 260,000 signatures, and its backers will now make a concerted last-minute drive to obtain an additional 60,000 at least to qualify the measure for the November election. They will need the additional signatures to make up for the bad ones that will be discounted after they are precincted.

The California State Federation of Labor is unqualifiedly supporting this petition, which seeks to provide decent housing for those now excluded from the housing market. There is only a short time left for the obtaining of these signatures, and every member of every union is requested to be sure to sign one of these petitions and to get his friends to do likewise.

It is imperative to qualify the measure, which will undoubtedly be voted favorably upon by the citizens of California, as it will be the greatest contribution toward solving the present housing crisis. The initiative is designed to provide for construction of 100,000 rental dwelling units in California, through the efforts of local housing authorities and private non-profit housing associations assisted by a state agency.

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CHANGES IN CALIFORNIA EMPLOYMENT, WAGES AND REAL EARNINGS  
SINCE 1940 REVEALED IN NEW STUDY

(CFLNL)SAN FRANCISCO.--By December 1947, California employment was 48 percent over 1940; average hourly earnings in manufacturing industries were nearly double, but real spendable earnings had increased less than eight percent for the single worker and less than 18 percent for the worker with three dependents. These are some of the major conclusions of a monograph, Wages in California--War and Postwar Changes, recently published by the University of California's Institute of Industrial Relations.

Employment in the state has shown virtually a steady increase since 1940, with only a minor slump following the end of the war. The pattern of employment, however, showed a marked war-time change, with manufacturing employment nearly tripling. The total number of workers in manufacturing reached its wartime peak in 1943 when 1,191,000 persons were employed, 632,000 of this number in shipbuilding and aircraft industries. From then until February 1946, manufacturing employment declined. By the end of 1946, overall employment had risen above the wartime peak, and the employment pattern was again similar to that of 1940, with California having a larger proportion of workers in trade, service and transportation industries and smaller proportions in agriculture and manufacturing than the United States as a whole.

By V-J Day, gross average hourly earnings in California manufacturing industries had increased 65 percent over 1940. Overtime pay, shift premium pay and the movement of workers into higher-paid industries accounted for a sizeable part of this increase. The slump in average hourly earnings after V-J Day was only temporary, and by the end of 1947 earnings in manufacturing were 98 percent above the 1940 level.

However, this increase in money earnings since 1940 did not necessarily mean that California wage earners were nearly twice as

well off. After adjustments were made for the higher cost of living and increased taxes, the real spendable earnings for single workers in manufacturing industries were seen to have increased less than eight percent, and for workers with three dependents the increase was less than 18 percent.

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#### CORPORATE EARNINGS ARE HIGHLY FAVORABLE

(CFLNL)SAN FRANCISCO.--Judging by 430 reports tabulated by the National City Bank of New York, industry earned 23 percent more profits in the first quarter of this year than last. Although the earnings were not uniform, they were nevertheless highly favorable in the aggregate.

The bank's report stated that profits were approximately 2 percent below the 1947 fourth quarter. The most striking gain of a year ago was registered by the oil industry, with the net income of the 21 oil companies covered by the study more than double, by reaching \$237,397,000 compared to \$116,454,000 a year before. Next most spectacular increase was made with earnings up to \$35,834,000, from \$22,652,000 a year before.

Electrical equipment and radio, covering 13 companies, jumped to \$46,630,000, from \$34,526,000 the previous year. Impressive gains were also scored by machinery and autos, textiles, chemicals and drugs.

Declines were shown for food products, steel and service industries. In considering losses as well as profits, it must be remembered that the 1947 fourth quarter was phenomenal as far as profits were concerned. Any comparison made, therefore, of earnings showing an even greater profit indicates the favorable conditions of corporate earnings, and tends to minimize the losses registered.

The consensus of opinion in financial circles leans to the bullish side on business prospects for the balance of the year.

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BUILDING TRADES WAGE RATE ADVANCE SLACKENS

(CFLNL)SAN FRANCISCO.--After a number of sharp wage rate increases in the last six months of 1947, advances in union scales during the first quarter of 1948 for building tradesmen of 9 western cities slackened considerably, according to a report released by Max D. Kossoris, Regional Director of the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

For the three-month period ending April 1, 1948, increases were reported only in Denver, Phoenix, Portland and Salt Lake City, for the 7 trades covered by the Bureau's survey.

Southern California as well as northern California are in the process of negotiating new contracts.

Current scales compared with a year ago show advances of 10 to 16 percent in all cities except Spokane.

The cities covered in the survey were Butte, Montana, Denver, Colorado, Los Angeles, Phoenix, Arizona, Portland, Oregon, Salt Lake City, San Francisco, Seattle and Spokane.

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OBSERVE "I AM AN AMERICAN DAY" SUNDAY, MAY 16

(CFLNL)SAN FRANCISCO.--The membership of the American Federation of Labor has been called upon by William Green, President of the American Federation of Labor to participate in the observance of "I Am An American Day" on Sunday, May 16.

Pointing to the attack upon our freedom and liberty and constitutional rights by the introduction of anti-labor legislation, President Green stated: "It seems most fitting and appropriate that we enter into the observance of 'I Am An American Day' in spirit and in purpose."

Labor should join with civic groups and patriotic organizations in making the observance as impressive as possible.

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