

WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

FROM

CALIFORNIA STATE FEDERATION OF LABOR

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ALL ATTENDANCE RECORDS SHATTERED AS FEDERATION'S 46th ANNUAL CONVENTION OPENS IN LONG BEACH

(CFLNL) LONG BEACH.--The 46th Annual (49th Anniversary) Convention of the California State Federation of Labor reveals the tremendous growth of the AFL in California. For the first time in the history of the Federation, the number of badges and delegate folders was insufficient to meet the demand. Over 2,000 delegates had registered by Monday, breaking all previous records.

When President Shelley opened the convention, he not only attacked red totalitarianism, but pointed out that brown and black totalitarianism were equally dangerous and repugnant to the American form of government, and should be combatted with the same vigor. A fitting reply to the threatened offensive by the employers' organization of the 11 Western states, which concluded their conference at Lake Tahoe, was also dealt with in unmistakable and precise language.

After the convention was addressed by the various speakers, highlighted by Acting Governor Goodwin Knight, the Executive Council of the Federation submitted eight statements of policy for the consideration of the assembled delegates.

The first statement dealt with the Taft-Hartley Act. Secretary Haggerty, in summarizing this statement, explained that after one year of operation, the Act has proved to be as unfair, unworkable and harassing as organized labor originally predicted.

The statement summarizes the workings of the Taft-Hartley Act and its pernicious effects upon labor, as well as its discriminatory character. The Executive Board of the Federation recommended:

Return the State Senate to the People . . . "Yes" #13

1. The outright repeal of the Taft-Hartley Law.
2. The defeat of those members of Congress who voted for it.
3. A continued and vigilant campaign to extend and protect the rights of labor in state and national legislatures.

The second statement on housing made a complete analysis of what this problem actually means to the people of this country, and the Council recommended as follows:

1. Immediate enactment by Congress of a comprehensive long-range housing program along the lines of the Taft-Ellender-Wagner Bill, providing for the erection of at least 500,000 units of public low-rent housing.
2. Resumption of Farm Security Administration operation of farm labor camps, or, failing national operation, operation by the state, under the same standards and conditions as provided by the federal agency.
3. Continuation and strengthening of federal rent control.
4. Concurrence in the findings and recommendations of the California Redevelopment Agency.
5. Complete and unified support by organized labor of Proposition No. 14.

In its statement on political action, the Executive Council condemned the 80th Congress for its miserable record and stressed the need for labor to actually exercise its electoral strength by becoming active and alert citizens of this country. The Council recommended concurrence by the Convention in the political platform and endorsements of propositions and candidates adopted by the California Labor League for Political Action at its August 5 meeting.

The policy statement on foreign affairs pointed out that the future status of the American labor movement is closely tied with the continuation of democracy and the growth of free trade unions throughout the world. It slashed away at all fragmentary remnants of

isolationism that have dirtied the thinking of confused people, and advocated a policy of unconditional support of the Marshall Plan as the most effective medium to combat Stalinism.

The next statement discussed racial intolerance. The Executive Council's comprehensive position on this subject is incorporated in the following recommendations:

1. That there be established a permanent Commission on Civil Rights, a Joint Congressional Committee on Civil Rights, and a Civil Rights Division in the Department of Justice.
2. That a Fair Employment Practices Commission be established by the State Legislature to prevent unfair discrimination in employment.
3. That existing civil rights statutes be strengthened.
4. That federal protection against lynching be provided.
5. That the right to vote be adequately protected wherever and whenever circumstances warrant such action.
6. That discrimination in interstate transportation facilities be prohibited.
7. That opportunities for residents of the United States to become citizens be equalized.
8. That strong support be given in favor of legislation admitting 400,000 displaced persons found eligible for United States citizenship, without discrimination as to race or religion.

On power and water, the Council submitted an analysis of the fight that is being waged by labor and all progressive and liberal elements in opposition to the utility interests and their hirelings in the 80th Congress. The Council proposed the following measures to implement and vitalize an effective program against these monopolies:

1. Demand that Congress repeal the Straus-Boke anti-reclamation rider which it passed to serve special interests.

2. Insist upon cooperation of the State Administration and Legislature for unified reclamation of Central Valley, and upon cessation of disruptive tactics by officials and legislature.

3. Support purchase of excess land holdings by the government in order to create a ready market and so to facilitate administration of the 160-acre law, and place excess lands more speedily in the hands of veterans and other farm families entitled to have that opportunity.

4. Encourage measures among constituent unions, central labor councils, affiliated bodies, and through labor journals, which will bring fuller information on this subject to our membership and produce more effective action at that level.

5. Participate actively for more effective organization and action with farmers, veterans, and citizens devoted to common principles of water resource development.

On social legislation, covering workmen's compensation, unemployment insurance and disability insurance, which are of such vital interest to the workers of this state as well as throughout the country, the Council recommended the following measures:

Workmen's Compensation:

1. Elimination of all exemptions in order that all working men may be covered by this Act.

2. Increase of the maximum weekly amount for both temporary and permanent disability payments to \$40 per week.

3. Increase of the maximum death benefit to \$15,000, plus a dependency allowance for every minor during its minority of at least \$20 per week.

4. Payment of the fees of attorneys for the workman by the employer or the carriers without deduction from the worker's award.

Unemployment Insurance and Disability Insurance:

1. Removal of exemptions in order that all working men may be covered.

2. Increase of the maximum weekly benefit amount to \$40 a week.

3. Opposition to the so-called "100 percent federal offset bill."

Federal Old Age Insurance:

1. Increase of maximum monthly benefit amount to not less than \$150.

2. Increase of dependency allowance in the event of death to the amount of not less than double the present amount.

Prepaid Medical Care:

Establishment of a state program providing for adequate prepaid medical care under a system in which a free choice exists between both the patient and the physician.

After some discussion by the delegates on a few phases of these statements submitted by the Executive Council, they were adopted by the convention. This action set the whole tone and policy of the convention for its duration.

For the first time, resolutions were screened earlier than has been the case in the past, because of the change in the Federation's constitution that was made by the convention in Sacramento in 1947, and it is anticipated that the convention will be able to dispose of all of the resolutions submitted to it through debate and deliberation.

An earnest and serious attitude seems to pervade the convention, and a growing awareness is evident among the delegates that labor is facing a great offensive. Judging from the reaction of the delegates, labor will not meet it unprepared.

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