

# WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

FROM

## CALIFORNIA STATE FEDERATION OF LABOR

402 FLOOD BUILDING

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SAN FRANCISCO,  
CALIFORNIA

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### 1948 HELLER FOOD BUDGET SHOWS LOW PAY GROUPS HARDEST HIT

(CFLNL)SAN FRANCISCO.--The weekly food budget for an unemployed man, his wife and two children amounted to \$19.33 in September, 1948, according to the Heller Committee for Research in Social Economics of the University of California. This sum represented an increase of 10.5 percent during the last year.

The weekly food budget for higher paid families of four has increased less than that for unemployed families as shown by the following:

<u>Group</u>	<u>Weekly Cost</u>	<u>Percentage Increase</u>
Executive	\$29.32	6.1
White collar	24.64	8.9
Wage earner	25.48	9.5
Unemployed	19.33	10.5

The Committee concludes that costs have risen disproportionately to the ability of people to pay. Prices of the more expensive and luxury food items have increased less than those of the inexpensive and essential foods.

An example of where "cheap foods" have increased more than expensive ones is in meats. Between March 1939 and September 1948, sirloin steak went up 160 percent, bottom round 208 percent, and hamburger 277 percent.

Every single food priced by the Committee had gone up at least 50 percent between March, 1939 and September, 1948. Flour increased

138 percent, but bread had gone up only 58 percent; fresh milk cost 77 percent more, but canned milk cost 151 percent more, while butter marched way out of sight with a 206 percent increase.

The Committee also found that economies to be gained from bulk purchases were practically negligible. Special sales, on the other hand, did offer savings.

The present report of the Heller Committee is the first part of a comprehensive report on all family budget costs. Similar studies have been made each year for many years. The budget is based on "the commonly accepted standard of living" necessary to healthful and reasonably comfortable living.

The report is available from the University of California Press, Berkeley 4, California, at \$1.00 per copy.

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REVEREND TONER PREDICTS BOOTLEG CONTRACTS  
UNDER T-H ACT

(CFLNL)SAN FRANCISCO.--Reverend Jerome Toner, author of "The Closed Shop," in an article for "The Journal of Political Economy," June 1948, stresses the fact that bootleg contracts providing for a closed shop are likely to occur under the Taft-Hartley Act. He states:

"The battle of the closed shop versus the Taft Act may determine the success or failure of the Taft Act, as well as the future of unions in the United States. With the legal protections and the 'bootlegal' potentialities of the Act, closed-shop contracts, now covering approximately 4,500,000 employees -- more than 30 percent of all employees covered by collective-bargaining contracts -- may not, and probably cannot, be destroyed, outlawed, or abolished by the Taft Act."

Reverend Toner questions whether the Taft-Hartley Act will be able to remove centuries of closed-shop customs and traditions. He points out the many ways in which a union alone or with an employer may circumvent the Act. The most effective method, and one which, according to him, is entirely legal, is for union men, individually, to refuse to work with non-union men. This method has been used for years and years in Great Britain, where the closed shop is a common practice, although no closed-shop provisions are included in union agreements.

Unions together with employers have several other methods of circumventing the T-H Act on the closed shop, according to Reverend Toner, who points out:

"To avoid the closed-shop restriction of the Taft Act on future collective-bargaining contracts, employers and unions whose closed-shop experiences and relationships have been mutually satisfactory and profitable -- and they are far greater in number than any poll indicates -- will effect 'bootlegally' informal understandings and agreements. Some will effect them extra rather than contra 'bootlegally' by appointing the union as their personnel director without any instructions as to who shall be hired; by making gentlemen's agreements without any evidence in the written contract; by hiring with regard to seniority in the union; by maintaining union hiring halls, which Senator Taft seems to have approved for the West Coast shipping industry; and by establishing other similar devices."

Reverend Toner compares the Taft-Hartley Act to the Smith-Connally War Labor Disputes Act, which Ball and Taft termed a failure, and wonders if future senatorial critics will make the same criticism of the Taft-Hartley Act.

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INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS CONTINUE TO TAKE HIGH TOLL  
OF HUMAN LIVES

(CFLNL)SAN FRANCISCO.--Sudden death as a result of an industrial accident came to 495 California workers during the first nine months of 1948, according to a report released by Paul Scharrenberg, Director of Industrial Relations.

Although the number of deaths is 59 less than last year, which totaled 554, little comfort is to be derived from this year's figure. It is true, as the report points out, that employment this year was higher than in 1947, and that therefore the decrease in industrial fatalities assumes a certain significance, but a decline in the ratio of industrial deaths to the number employed cannot be consoling to the victims and their dependents.

In addition to those killed, the report states, "more than 105,000 workers suffered disabling industrial injuries in California during the first nine months of this year.

Deaths resulting from vehicular accidents numbered 168 during the nine-month period. Most of these were collisions involving motor vehicles, but included were 27 deaths resulting from airplane crashes, and 12 from falls from motor vehicles.

"Thirty-eight workers died as a result of injuries received in falls from elevated work places such as scaffolds and roofs."

The report points out that among the industry groups, manufacturing accounted for the largest number of fatal accidents, with a total of 139. Within this group, the lumber industry registered the highest number of deaths, 56. Food processing came next, with 20 fatalities. Construction, with 86 fatalities, ranked next to manufacturing.

All but 8 of the 495 workers fatally injured were males. Two boys under the age of 18 years and 20 men over 65 years old are included in this total."

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EMPLOYMENT RECORDS ESTABLISHED BY FOUR MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES  
IN CALIFORNIA

(CFLNL)SAN FRANCISCO.--Four manufacturing industries in California established new employment records in September, according to the Division of Labor Statistics and Research of the State of California. The four industries were apparel, printing and publishing, lumber, and stone, clay and glass. These industries employed more workers in September than at any other time in the history of the state.

The iron and steel industry also set a new peacetime record, with employment at the highest level since January 1944.

Total employment in nondurable goods manufacturing was at an all-time high, and in durable goods was at the highest level since the war.

Employment in the manufacture of nondurable goods rose to 395,300 in September 1948, from 370,400 in August and 362,000 in September 1947. Part of the increase above a year ago was the result of the later canning season this year. In the previous year, peak employment in the canning industry was in August.

In durable goods plants, the number of wage and salary workers increased for the fourth consecutive month, reaching 404,300 in September, 3,800 above the preceding months and 21,500 above a year ago.

The combined effect of these increases, according to the report, brought total employment in all manufacturing industries to a record peacetime total of 799,600 wage and salary workers in September, compared to 744,800 in September 1947 and 742,600 in September 1945.

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