

WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

FROM

CALIFORNIA STATE FEDERATION OF LABOR

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SEASON'S MESSAGE

by

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California State Federation of Labor

Labor can be thankful on this season's holiday for the large and important share it contributed in helping to restore government to the people. The message it sought to convey to the millions of American voters -- of which it is one of the largest segments -- apparently did not fall on deaf ears. It was heard and it was convincing. This was not because labor had an axe to grind, but because the call was a desperate appeal for a program to meet the pressing and critical needs of an anxious people.

What did labor want? Repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act, sure! But that would not have persuaded the millions of farmers, small business men, professional people and others to support the progressive candidates in the election. Labor demanded more: that inflation be controlled; that a program to build homes for the lower income groups be adopted and put into effect immediately; that landlord gouging be stopped and an effective rent control act be enacted.

The establishment of a prepaid medical health plan, a minimum wage of at least 75 cents an hour, social security coverage for all wage earners, increased social security benefits, initiation of adequate adult education, elimination of racial restrictions and enactment of genuine civil rights for all were some but not all of the other objectives for which labor fought.

Who could oppose such urgently necessary and unpostponable wants? Only the privileged minority. This explains why labor was such a potent force in the last election. It was a program for the people, and they responded.

Time and again the organized labor movement has fought for the most progressive social needs. It has been identified with every important campaign to have them fulfilled. The record will bear this out. The record will also substantiate that labor's program extends far beyond its own selfish interests. In this and in this only, does the strength of labor lie in the long run.

There is nothing to be boastful of. A good and necessary job was done. Clear thinking and an awareness of the people's needs were the driving forces behind our achievement. The 81st Congress will take up where the 80th left off. A miserable record has to be expunged, and the mandate of the people must be legislated in its place. This is what we of labor expect of the Congress.

The sharp and rapid shifts in the international scene permit no delay in the stabilization of the home base. A united nation functioning in behalf of the people is the greatest guarantee against an eruption outside. If for this reason alone, the new congress cannot let itself be gerrymandered into unprincipled compromise because of the narrow, selfish and unenlightened factional activity of small cliques who speak for little more than themselves.

Labor will continue to fight for its program and be ever mindful of the community interest. It has grown up to assume this responsibility, and it will continue to exercise it to the very best of its ability.

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LABOR MOURNS THE PASSING OF
JOHN C. LYONS

(CFLNL)SAN FRANCISCO.--Organized labor in California lost one of its best loved and most valuable leaders with the death of John C. Lyons as the result of a heart attack on Friday afternoon, December 10, in Los Angeles. He was fifty-seven years of age.

Services were held at the Church of St. Francis d'Assisi on Monday morning. He left a wife and a daughter. Two brothers and two sisters also survive him.

Active in the labor movement since his young manhood, Brother Lyons early won an outstanding place as a leader and spokesman for labor. For upwards of two decades he was the Business Manager of the Plasterers' Union Local No. 2 in Los Angeles. At the last convention of the California State Federation of Labor at Long Beach in September he was elected one of the Federation's vice-presidents for the Third District. His fellow officers feel his loss keenly, for his wisdom and wide experience would have meant much in the deliberations and decisions of the Federation's Executive Council.

But Jack Lyons was active in behalf of labor in another and very important way, for he served in the state legislature since 1943. A month before his death he was reelected to serve his fourth consecutive term as Assemblyman from the 64th District, in Los Angeles.

His career in the legislature was a distinguished one. Always on the side of labor, striving with intelligence and integrity to win for labor the legislation it needed and desired and to defeat proposals inimical to labor, he also showed a deep understanding of issues which concern and affect all citizens of the state. He was Chairman of the Assembly Industrial Relations Committee, a member of the important Rules Committee, as well as of the Transportation Committee and the Finance and Insurance Committee.

Labor mourns the death of Brother Lyons. It is a large loss. His positions will be taken by others, but his place cannot be filled.

The California State Federation of Labor extends its deepest sympathy to his family and loved ones.

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EMPLOYERS SEEK END TO UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS
DURING LOCK-OUTS

(CFLNL)SAN FRANCISCO.--The eligibility of locked-out employees to receive unemployment insurance benefits, regardless of the cause of the lock-out, has been attacked by an employers' association and is now before the California State Supreme Court for decision. This principle, which was firmly established by the Supreme Court's decision in the famous Bunny Waffle case, was one of labor's hardest-fought and most important victories, and throughout the state labor has been roused by the present challenge to its rights.

Oral argument was heard in the case -- D. R. McKinley et al. v. California Employment Stabilization Commission et al. -- by the Supreme Court on December 7.

The argument of the Sacramento Bakery Employers' Association, which brought the case to the Supreme Court, was as follows: If the employees of one member of the association went out on strike against him and all the remaining members of the association thereupon locked out their own employees, then, in spite of the lock-out, the initial action (the strike) by the employees in the one plant should constitute sufficient grounds for disqualifying all the employees in the other plants.

Deputy Attorney General Charles Johnson argued in support of the decision of the California Unemployment Insurance Appeals Board, which had held, under the Bunny Waffle case decision, that the locked-out employees were eligible for benefits no matter what the initial cause of the lock-out.

This matter, which has as its objective either the modification or complete reversal of the Bunny Waffle decision, is of such importance that a brief amicus curiae was filed by the California State

Federation of Labor's General Counsel, who also appeared and presented oral argument supporting the Deputy Attorney General's position.

The court has withheld submitting the matter and no decision is anticipated, therefore, in the immediate future.

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TEN TO TWENTY-FIVE CENT INCREASES WON
BY AFL UNIONS

(CFLNL)SAN FRANCISCO.--Wage increases won by AFL and independent unions during the period from mid-October to mid-November, 1948, in California ranged from 10 to 25 cents per hour, as reported to the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' Regional Office at San Francisco. In addition, government workers at Salinas, Herlong, San Francisco and Stockton received increases ranging from 10.8 cents to 18.7 cents as a result of the Army-Air Force Wage Board decisions. Individual increases covering over 500 workers are listed below:

Teamsters No. 595, AFL, Food Employers Council, Los Angeles, 10/48, 15 cents, 600 workers.

Fishermen locals (AFL and CIO), San Pedro, 11/2/48, \$60.00 per ton, sardines, 2000 workers.

Southern California District Council of Laborers, AFL, Contracting Plasterers and Lathers Association of Southern California, 10/48, 25 cents, 1250 workers.

Sailors Union of the Pacific, AFL, Standard Oil Company of California, tankers, average 8.9 percent, overtime benefits, 600 unlicensed personnel.

Railroad firemen, enginemen, engineers and switchmen, 11/13/48, 10 cents, nationwide.

Train service employees, bus drivers and yardmasters' unions, Pacific Electric Railway Company, Los Angeles, 10/16/48, 10 cents, 2200 workers.

Masters, Mates & Pilots No. 90, AFL, Pacific American Ship-owners' Association, offshore agreement, 11/3/48, 5.3 percent, over 500 workers.

IATSE, nationwide, 10/29/48, \$10.14 per week, increased auto. allowances.

IAM, Motor Car Dealers & Independent Garage Owners, San Jose, California, 10/15/48, 12½ cents, improved vacations, 500 workers.

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