

# WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

FROM

## CALIFORNIA STATE FEDERATION OF LABOR

402 FLOOD BUILDING  
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SAN FRANCISCO,  
CALIFORNIA

August 31, 1949

### COMPREHENSIVE AGENDA CONFRONTS FEDERATION'S

#### 1949 CONVENTION IN LOS ANGELES

(CFLNL)SAN FRANCISCO.--More than 2,000 delegates jammed the Shrine Convention Auditorium this Monday for the opening of the 1949 convention of the California State Federation of Labor.

Delegates were welcomed by Thomas Ranford, president, and William J. Bassett, secretary of the Los Angeles Central Labor Council.

Following addresses of greeting by Mayor Bowron and other civic officials, the convention was officially called to order by President John F. Shelley.

Shelley then reviewed the Federation's success of the past year and pointed to the desperate need for continued political and economic action.

The principal speech of the opening session was then delivered by Governor Earl Warren.

Other addresses delivered during the week found high officials of labor and government appearing before the convention.

Joseph D. Keenan, national director of Labor's League for Political Education, hit the political keynote of the convention in his speech of Wednesday afternoon.

Climax of the convention speeches was that of William Green, president of the American Federation of Labor, who reviewed, in his fiery message of Thursday, the vital economic and political role which labor must play in American life.

Major concern of the convention during its first days was the consideration of the statements of policy presented by the Executive Council.

The first of these statements dealt with the need for an all-out political action campaign prior to and during the 1950 elections. To finance this campaign, the Executive Council urged that trade union members in California contribute \$2.00 to the national Labor's League for Political Education and three cents per member per month to the California Labor League for Political Education.

All local unions were urged to conduct an intensive campaign to register their members and to select and promote candidates for public office, as well as to cooperate with public and civic organizations in their localities.

A hard-hitting denunciation of the Taft-Hartley Act was presented to the convention, together with the demand for the reenactment of the Wagner Act.

The Council pointed out that labor had been successful in defeating many proponents of the Taft-Hartley Act in the 1948 elections and that a well-planned and coordinated program prior to 1950 should result in the repeal of this iniquitous act.

The Council also urged an increase in the federal minimum wage to \$1.00 and its extension to all workers. These legislative activities are to be coordinated with an intensive organizing campaign among all unorganized workers in the state of California.

One of the most important recommendations of the Executive Council was for an immediate boycott of all private disability plans. The Council pointed out that under the present disability plan the state has accumulated what amounts to an annual profit of 25 million dollars, and there is little doubt that the profits of the private carriers have been as large if not larger than those of the state.

In an effort to retain their profits, the private carriers have opposed all liberalization of social security legislation in Sacramento and have combined with employer groups on anti-labor legislation.

Pending amendments to the disability law, boycott of the private plans is the most effective weapon available to labor in the state to curb the power of the insurance carriers.

Other social security recommendations urged the passage of a national prepaid medical care plan, an increase in federal old age and survivors' benefits, an increase and liberalization of the federal grants-in-aid old age assistance program, a federal program of disability insurance, amendments to the federal unemployment insurance law to require increased benefits, and liberalized administrative standards, and finally, the extension of social security benefits to agriculture, domestic service, and the self-employed.

Unemployment, the Executive Council declared, is a major problem now confronting the labor movement of the state of California and requires immediate action, including specifically the planning and construction by local, state and federal authorities, of public works including low-cost housing, schools, hospitals, water works, etc.

The Council also pointed out that an increase in social security benefits and payments to farmers would increase consumer demand and stimulate production.

A revision of state and national tax policies to promote a more equitable distribution of our national wealth was also recommended.

Rent control, the Council declared, must be continued and strengthened, and all moves towards decontrol should be opposed by county, state and federal officials.

In the field of housing, the Executive Council stressed the need for additional low rent public housing, as well as union action to secure funds already available under the 1949 housing law. It

also urged the passage of the Sparkman-Spence bill to provide housing aid for middle income groups.

In connection with water and power, the Council urged the continued development of the Central Valley Project under the Bureau of Reclamation and the settlement of the Colorado River dispute by the U. S. Supreme Court.

Education, the Council declared, was a prime concern to the trade union movement throughout the country, and hence federal aid to education based on the relative needs of the various states is extremely necessary. A worker's education program is also of crucial importance.

In a comprehensive statement on civil rights the Council favored a fair employment practices commission, abolition of the poll tax, an anti-lynching law, the elimination of discrimination wherever it may exist.

The Council also condemned the operating methods of the House Un-American Activities Committee and congratulated the California Senate Fact-Finding Committee on its reformed methods of procedure. In a concluding statement on civil rights, the Council condemned all totalitarian ideologies.

Highlights of the statement of foreign policy included continued support for the Marshall Plan, the CARE Program, the International Labor Organization, and AFL action through the United Nations. Labor's primary concern on foreign policy is and will be the promotion of peace, prosperity and free trade unionism throughout the world.

In a final statement, the Executive Council presented recommendations on the propositions appearing on the November 8, 1949, ballot. It urged a Yes vote on Proposition 1, to provide additional funds for school construction purposes.

The continuation of the more liberal benefits and administrative standards for old age benefits now contained in Article XXV of

the Constitution should be continued, the Council felt, and a No vote on Proposition 2, the repeal measure, was therefore urged.

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OOPS! WE PLACED THE WRONG EMPHASIS

(CFLNL) SAN FRANCISCO.--In our Weekly News Letter review of the recent apple surplus situation in Sebastapol, Sonoma County, we quoted the AFL Cannery Reporter as holding growers' greed primarily responsible for the surplus.

Actually, the Cannery Reporter fixes first and positive blame on the processors who exert a rigid control on grower operations in the Sebastapol territory.

In short, the growers are not free to determine their own conditions of sale and distribution.

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SAFEGUARD YOUR UNION: BUY UNION LABEL GOODS

(CFLNL) SAN FRANCISCO.--The union label is your guarantee of union made goods produced under fair wages and working conditions in shops under contract with affiliates of the American Federation of Labor.

The week of Sept. 3 to Sept. 10 will be observed throughout the country as Union Label Week and requires a renewed campaign by you, your fellow workers and your family.

As a worker and as a consumer you can help your fellow unionists in other trades by demanding the union label on the goods you work on and the things you buy. When you ask for the union label, you remind the clerk and ultimately the management of the store that you stand behind the principles of the American Federation of Labor and of free collective bargaining.

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