

WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

FROM

CALIFORNIA STATE FEDERATION OF LABOR

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GOVERNOR WARREN PARDONS MENDOCINO PICKETS, SAVES FOUR AFL MEN FROM SAN QUENTIN

(CFLNL) SAN FRANCISCO.--Governor Earl Warren last Friday granted executive clemency to four American Federation of Labor unionists imprisoned since July in the Sonoma County jail in Santa Rosa for picketing activities during the long strike against the redwood lumber industry of Northern California through 1946, 1947, and 1948.

The Governor's action meant a full pardon for Brothers John Bundte, Robert Moore, William Philips, Jr., and George Sherrard of the Lumber and Sawmill Workers Union.

They were released from the Sonoma County jail this Monday upon completion of their six months' sentence for alleged riot and assault with a deadly weapon.

If Governor Warren had not acted, they would have entered San Quentin upon completion of their stay in the county jail.

As members of the Lumber and Sawmill Workers Union, these men were exercising their right to picket in Mendocino County when disturbances were alleged to have occurred at the Hollow Tree Lumber Company, Hollow Tree, on January 30, 1947, and at the Richardson Lumber Company, near Willits, on February 4, 1947.

In these alleged clashes, the four defendants were declared to have been guilty of: (1) riot; (2) assault with a deadly weapon. The assault charge was founded on the alleged throwing of rocks by the defendants.

The total cost resulting from the alleged assaults with deadly weapons (that is, the rocks) consisted of an amount not in excess of \$150 in damages to automobiles of strikebreakers.

Only two persons sustained any personal injuries in the dispute. These injuries were mere abrasions which caused no loss of work whatever.

Additionally, trial testimony failed to prove that the four defendants were guilty as charged, but only that they were part of a picket line of 30 men from which the rocks allegedly came.

Yet, in spite of these facts, the defendants were sentenced: (1) to 180 days in the county jail on the riot charge; (2) to 1-10 years in San Quentin prison for "assault with a deadly weapon."

The legal defense of the men was paid for throughout by the California State Federation of Labor, and together with the Redwood District Council of Lumber and Sawmill Workers, and the General Office of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners, the Federation provided every possible legal and welfare assistance.

California State Federation of Labor attorneys appealed the case to the United States Supreme Court, but to no legal avail.

The 1949 convention of the Federation voted unanimously to continue full efforts to obtain the release of the prisoners. C. J. Haggerty petitioned every local and council in California to appeal to Governor Warren for the granting of executive clemency, the only avenue open after the United States Supreme Court action.

Prior to the 1949 convention, the prisoners expressed complete confidence in the efficiency of their defense as directed by C. J. Haggerty, and by officials of the Redwood District Council of Lumber and Sawmill Workers and of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America.

The commutation of the sentence to time served marked a major victory for the California State Federation of Labor in particular, and for labor in general.

Governor Warren is to be congratulated for his correction of the miscarriage of justice which imposed such fantastic sentences upon these men.

LABOR DELEGATES ATTEND EMPLOYMENT CONFERENCE

(CFLNL)SAN FRANCISCO.--Over 100 officials from AFL unions throughout the state of California attended Governor Warren's Conference on Employment, held in Sacramento, December 5 and 6. As a result, labor was represented in practically all the 16 sections into which the Conference was organized, and Secretary-Treasurer C. J. Haggerty was chairman of the section on the construction industry.

Throughout the Conference, the AFL urged a program in which the state and federal governments would take an active part in maintaining consumer purchasing power in order to stimulate the demand for additional goods and services, and thus bring about full employment at high income levels. Such a program is essential to make it possible for private industry to operate successfully and in the best interests of the American people.

AFL representatives pointed out that an economy in which wages, living standards and conditions of employment steadily advanced and improved is the one most conducive to sustaining a high level of employment. The efficacy of government action to stimulate employment and combat unemployment has already been proved during the depths of the great depression, and it is clear that spending by government, and subsequently by private industry, during the war years, was responsible for the elimination of the unemployment existing at the end of the 'thirties.

Labor delegates insisted that all persons at the Conference give specific attention to forecasts that unemployment in the state will amount to 600,000 before next spring, or a number equivalent to 13 percent of the civilian labor force. The detailed program advocated by AFL delegates at the Conference included the following points:

A broad and expanded system of social security at both the state and national level.

A continued and expanded public works program, with aid to localities by both state and federal agencies.

Full use by localities of existing legislation, particularly in the field of housing.

A revision of the tax structure at both the state and federal levels, to reduce sales and excise taxes and raise additional revenue from the income tax.

Encouragement of free collective bargaining in order to maintain industrial peace and bring about higher wages and greater productivity.

A state full employment act, similar to the federal Employment Act of 1946, which would provide for a periodic review of the employment and unemployment situation in the state.

Specific measures needed to assist the unemployed at the present time, including a fair employment practices commission and an expanded relief program for those persons not eligible for unemployment insurance or county relief.

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MORE THAN HUNDRED DELEGATES ATTEND FEDERATION MEET ON DISABILITY RATINGS

(CFLNL)SAN FRANCISCO.--More than 100 AFL union delegates attended a permanent disability rating conference called last Friday in the San Francisco Labor Temple by the California State Federation of Labor in cooperation with the State Industrial Accident Commission.

Purpose of the session was to discuss a newly proposed schedule for rating permanent disabilities.

Robert Haggard, superintendent of the state rating bureau, explained that the schedule currently in effect was introduced in 1914 and that no revisions have been made since that time, despite the growth and complexity of California industries.

Following lengthy discussion on proposed changes, the delegates voted unanimously to submit the new schedule to their respective unions for careful analysis, after which they would advise C. J. Haggerty, Secretary of the California State Federation of Labor, of their recommendations.

All such suggestions must be in the Federation office by January 13, 1950.

The delegates voted to hold another meeting on January 20, 1950, at 10:00 a.m., in the Labor Temple, San Francisco, for final presentation of facts to the Industrial Accident Commission.

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GOVERNOR CALLS SPECIAL SESSION OF LEGISLATURE

(CFLNL)SAN FRANCISCO.--A special session of the California legislature has been called to convene December 12 and deal with problems of pensions, lobbying, sex crimes and school finances.

Under Article XXV of the Constitution, the counties were relieved of approximately 9 million dollars in pension costs. Since Article XXV has now been repealed, the counties will again have to raise this amount.

Major pension benefits lost with the repeal of Article XXV are as follows:

Persons between 63 and 65 are no longer eligible for old age security. It is estimated that ultimately 23,000 pensioners would be in this class.

Liberalized personal and real property provisions made some 5,600 persons eligible for old age security.

Liberalized residence requirements for persons aged 65 and over made 8,200 persons eligible for aid.

Finally, and most importantly, the elimination of the responsible relatives' clause made 74,900 persons eligible for aid.

Altogether, it was estimated that the provisions of Article XXV had they continued in existence until June 1951 would have increased the number eligible for pensions by approximately 48 percent.

Other changes made by the repeal of Article XXV included the elimination of the Director of Social Welfare as an elected officer and the return to the legislature of full power to change pension amounts and administration. Also, as indicated above, the administration of old age and blind security is now returned to joint state-county administration, with the counties paying administrative costs.