

WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

FROM

CALIFORNIA STATE FEDERATION OF LABOR

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SAN FRANCISCO,
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AFL FARM UNION CRIES FOR HELP IN THE SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY

(CFLNL)SAN FRANCISCO.--In a blistering indictment of the starvation and squalor of San Joaquin Valley labor communities, Ernesto Galarza, AFL farm union leader, this Tuesday claimed that "California's wealthiest relief clients, the corporation cotton growers, have dumped their annual crop of unemployed, impoverished farm workers on the state."

Galarza, Research and Education Director for the National Farm Labor Union, AFL, asserted the growers hope that "sporadic handouts, a trickle of relief funds and occasional soup kitchens, paid out of general taxes, will somehow pull 100,000 indigent workers through until spring."

The Galarza statement recalled that the AFL farm union had consistently fought the importation of Mexican nationals as an obvious attempt to flood the labor market for the economic advantage of the great commercial growers of the San Joaquin Valley.

Highlights of the statement follow:

(1) The National Farm Labor Union predicted last spring exactly what the situation would be in the winter of 1949-1950, but these predictions were smogged out by the complacent reports of state agencies in Sacramento and by spokesmen of the Associated Farmers. These reports maintained there would be no labor surpluses in agriculture this year, so that California would not be affected by the importation of Mexican nationals, and that cotton picking would last well into the winter of 1950. State statistics now reveal there are 35,000 unemployed farm workers in the San Joaquin territory.

(2) Since last summer a wage-cutting offensive led by Associated Farmers top brass has been under way. First came the 17 percent cut in cotton picking, which the NFLU halted by a successful strike. This was followed by wage cuts in

other crops, the most recent example of which is the 10-cent-an-hour reduction imposed on the Filipino workers of northern Kern County. If it were not for the NFLU, cotton pickers alone would have lost more than \$5,000,000 in wages this year.

(3) These wage cuts have been directed by the finance farmers of the state, who refuse to abide by the official policy of California in the matter of collective bargaining.

(4) These cuts have been and are being followed up by wage reductions brought about indirectly by the employment of Mexican nationals, of whom there are probably no less than 50,000 in California.

(5) On the west side of the Valley, the corporation ranches have been systematically substituting this imported labor for local workers, at lower wages. In Washington, D. C., the Department of State has provided the necessary diplomatic support for the wage offensive.

(6) As a result of the Mexican national agreement of August 1, 1949, there has been set in motion a series of displacement waves moving from the border northward. Mexican nationals put to work in Texas displace long-established local families of farm workers who move north and in turn displace others. This chain reaction has created a displaced person problem within California.

(7) The federal government, through congressional action, has turned back the former government labor supply camps to growers' committees which have raised rents. Inadequate enforcement of the state housing laws has long been evident.

(8) These conditions have produced appalling poverty in the San Joaquin Valley. From this poverty have flowed malnutrition, diarrhea, and death for the working families of the most flourishing state in the union.

(9) The National Farm Labor Union has requested a conference with Governor Warren for the purpose of stating its program of immediate reform, which calls for state and federal action to correct the wage, housing, and recruiting crimes that have made the San Joaquin Valley a national scandal.



SENATOR DOUGLAS HITS HYPOCRISY OF
"WELFARE STATE" PROPAGANDA

(CFLNL)SAN FRANCISCO.--Senator Paul H. Douglas (D., Ill.) has delivered another lusty attack on the "welfare state" line being nurtured and fed by the business-controlled press of the nation.

The latest Douglas assault was issued last week through an article by the liberal Illinois Senator in the New York Times Magazine.

"In listening to attacks upon the so-called 'welfare state,' he wrote, "I have been struck by the derisive manner in which these words are employed. The way these are commonly hissed out shows an ignorance of the Constitution, which told our lawmakers to provide for the general welfare."

Douglas charged that "no such derisive overtones were heard when the federal government made lavish grants of land to build railroads or to encourage the marvelous growth of state universities.

"Nor could they be detected when the federal government took the lead in construction of roads, in soil conservation and protection from forest fires; in flood control, the dredging of rivers and harbors and the building of levees; or the furnishing of vital information to business and agriculture.

"Why, then, after 150 years, should an honorable word like 'welfare' suddenly become a synonym for the devil. The answer is a simple one. As long as it was the welfare of the propertied classes that was being advanced, the word stood as Holy Writ, but the horrors of the 'welfare state' were shouted from the rooftops when the federal government began to spend money to aid the great groups in our society that had little or no property."



TOBIN SEES BETTER YEAR FOR AMERICAN LABOR

(CFLNL)SAN FRANCISCO.--Secretary of Labor Maurice J. Tobin this week announced that while 1949 was a good economic year, 1950 should be a better one for the country as a whole and for labor.

Tobin stated the New Year is beginning on a more optimistic note than did the year 1949.

He cited the following factors in support of his position:

(1) Twelve months ago, employment was declining and unemployment was mounting at a more rapid pace than could be attributed solely to normal seasonal let-down. Currently, the reverse is true. Since mid-year, employment has been gaining and unemployment receding.

(2) The economic setback which hit many of the major industrial areas in early 1949 did not spread throughout the country. The downturn was confined almost entirely to manufacturing, with side effects on mining and transportation. Important sectors such as trade and construction, however, remained strong. The housing industry, in fact, had the best year on record.

(3) Industrial production is on the upturn, and it is estimated that the total value of new construction to be erected next year will equal the 1949 record of 19 billion dollars.

(4) The amending of the Fair Labor Standards Act, providing a new minimum wage rate of 75 cents an hour, is an achievement which will go far in giving stability to our whole economy. The Wage-Hour amendment becomes effective on January 25, 1950. It will benefit all American workers since it will greatly aid in maintaining the individual worker's income and consumer purchasing power, and will benefit employers by clarifying provisions of the old law. Employers who pay decent wages will derive added protection from unfair competition by those who pay substandard wages. Employers will also benefit from the added purchasing power which will provide new markets for industry.



AFL RADIO PROGRAM HEARD ACROSS NATION

(CFLNL)SAN FRANCISCO.--The American Federation of Labor national radio program got off to a successful start this week as Frank Edwards, AFL commentator, began his nightly series over the Mutual Broadcasting System.

Purpose of the new program is to publicize the story of the American Federation of Labor and to interpret the news of the day in a fair and objective manner.

The program is now being heard through the following California outlets:

San Francisco	Station KFRC	10:15 p.m.	Monday through Friday
Los Angeles	Station KHJ	10:15 p.m.	Monday through Friday
Sacramento	Station KXOA	10:15 p.m.	Monday-Wednesday-Friday
San Diego	Station KGB	10:15 p.m.	Monday-Wednesday-Friday

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PUERTO RICO WORKERS SEEK U. S. WAGE RATES

(CFLNL)SAN FRANCISCO.--The first recommendation for establishment of a 75-cents-an-hour minimum wage rate in Puerto Rico has been received from a special industry committee, representing labor, management, and the public, now considering increases in wage rates in the island.

The recommendation for a wage increase in the shipping industry would bring the present 40-cent rate in the industry up to the 75-cent minimum wage effective under the amended Fair Labor Standards Act on January 25, 1950.

The shipping industry in Puerto Rico includes transportation of passengers and cargo by water and all activities in connection therewith, including, but without limitation, the operations of common, contract or private carriers; stevedoring (including stevedoring by independent contractors); and storage and lighterage operations.

An increase of 5 cents, from the present rate of 25 cents an hour, was proposed for machine-woven textiles (except hard fibre) in the textile and textile products industry. The committee also recommended increases in other branches of the textile industry, and in the vegetable, fruit, and nut packing and processing industry.

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ANSWER THE CHALLENGE OF THE SACRAMENTO BUSINESS LOBBIES

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For details, write C. J. Haggerty, California State Federation of Labor, 402 Flood Building, San Francisco 2, California.

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