

WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

FROM

CALIFORNIA STATE FEDERATION OF LABOR

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151

SAN FRANCISCO,
CALIFORNIA



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TUMOR OF REACTION PERILS AMERICA

(CFLNL) SAN FRANCISCO.--The League Reporter, official organ of Labor's League for Political Education, this week mourned and yet explained the failure of the 81st Congress to adopt middle-income housing legislation.

Why did the housing effort fail? It's quite elementary, answers the LLPE journal -- "There are not enough liberals in Congress!"

This sharp reminder came at a time when the American Federation of Labor throughout the nation prepared for the June primaries.

Now this is an old story, but the fundamentals of political life never lose their sting.

The infamous Congressional bloc comprised of Southern Democrats and Reactionary Republicans today holds the balance of American political power.

This bloc has denied and spat upon the majority mind of the American people.

This bloc is deaf to morality. It is blind to principle. It is contemptuous of justice.

This bloc is like some terrible tumor in the body politic. It is a foul growth, and a strange one. It is nourished only by the refuse waters of Big Business.

It is not indigenous to America, for you will find it wherever workers ignore the demands of the ballot and think only of belly -- like oxen chained to the plow.

The American Federation of Labor would slice that growth from the national body. Through Labor's League for Political Education, it would save the whole by removing a part.

But this tumor is rooted deep. It is founded in power, wealth, and privilege.

The remedial knife must slice hard. The cutter must not fail lest the patient expire, as his kind always have when the tumor of reaction has choked the cord of life.

We must nerve the arm of the cutter. We must give him sinew through the national and state LLPE. If we are not of the labor effort, if the cutter stands alone and abandoned, he will fall, the blade within his breast. And the tumor will advance through all the land.

If we would know a liberal Congress, labor must slice in June. There are no remedies for rigor mortis.

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TEAMOS WIN NATIONAL PAY BOOSTS

(CFLNL)SAN FRANCISCO.--Increases in hourly rates and mileage allowances negotiated in 1949 affected more than 215,000 drivers, helpers, and other workers in general local and over-the-road trucking, the U. S. Labor Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics announced this week in Washington.

Most of these workers received 10 cents an hour or more, according to the Bureau's review of all settlements involving 200 or more workers coming to its attention during the year from press reports and other sources.

New or additional employer contributions to union health and welfare plans also figured prominently in 1949 settlements. Under terms of the settlements covered, about half of the workers could look forward to another increase in 1950 or early 1951.

The average increase put into effect in 1949 amounted to approximately 11½ cents an hour.

The range of hourly increases, estimated where changes in mileage allowances were involved, is as follows:

About 27,700 workers -- these are figures based on employment as stated by the associations or the unions involved in the settlements -- received increases of 16 cents or more.

Approximately 12,500 received increases of from 14 to 15.9 cents; 68,000 from 12 to 13.9 cents; 54,500 from 10 to 11.9 cents; 22,300 from 8 to 9.9 cents; 24,000 from 6 to 7.9 cents; and 9,000 received increases of less than 6 cents an hour.

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STATE LLPE QUIZZES PRIMARY CANDIDATES

(CFLNL)SAN FRANCISCO.--Candidates seeking election to federal and state office at the June primaries in California were this week advised to declare themselves on issues of import to the California Labor League for Political Education. Only candidates involved in statewide elections were contacted for this purpose.

Questions to federal candidates touched on such issues as middle income housing, ownership of farm labor camps, an FEPC, importation of foreign labor, and the Central Valley project.

State candidates were quizzed on some 27 points, including the secondary boycott, the closed-shop, unemployment insurance, pension policies, rent control, housing, and reapportionment of the state Senate.

All basic policies adopted in recent conventions of the California State Federation of Labor were included in the questionnaire sheets.

The pre-primary convention of the State Political League will be held in San Francisco, April 17, 18, and 19, for the purpose of endorsing candidates for the June 6 elections.

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TAFT DISTORTS LABOR FACTS -- AGAIN!

(CFLNL)SAN FRANCISCO.--Senator Robert Taft is a cutie. That is, he is intellectually bow-legged.

The Ohio Republican was last week quoted in a revealing interview in the U. S. News and World Report. Purpose of the exchange was to discuss the Ohio political front in 1950.

Taft was asked the following question: "What can you tell us about the money being spent by the different sides in the campaign? For instance, let's take the labor-union funds. Have you any idea how much money they're going to spend in Ohio?"

Answer: "No, I have no idea. Of course, you've heard the statement of President Green of the AFL that he is going to raise \$2 a member, which is about 15 million dollars."

What the Ohio Tory didn't tell was that the 15 million dollar goal of the American Federation of Labor is a national ambition, for President Green has made it abundantly clear that this fund is to be used in Federal elections over the nation.

Thus, Taft was being very coy when he virtually declared the AFL planned to spend such a huge sum to defeat him in Ohio.

His statement was sly and deceptive, like the black legislation which bears his name.

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FARMER PARITY INDEX UP 2 POINTS

(CFLNL)SAN FRANCISCO.--The index of prices paid by farmers, including interest, taxes, and wage rates, rose 2 points (nearly 1 percent) during the month ended March 15, the U. S. Bureau of Agricultural Economics announced this week in Washington. During the same period, the index of prices received by farmers remained unchanged at 237.

As a result, the parity ratio (ratio of the index of prices received by farmers to the index of prices paid by farmers including

interest, taxes, and wage rates) declined one point to 95, the same as December 1949, and the lowest, except for January 1950, since July 1941.

The rise in the parity index resulted from widespread but mostly small price increases in several of the groups of commodities bought for both living and production, according to the Federal report.

Feeder livestock were substantially higher; building materials, food, and feed advanced moderately.

Prices of auto supplies, farm supplies, and seed were a little lower. The production component of the parity index was 2 points higher than last month. However, the net effect of changes in family living items was not enough to raise that index.

Although the index of prices received by farmers was unchanged this month, prices of fruit, cotton, grain, meat animals, and poultry and eggs were higher. These increases were offset by decreases in prices of truck crops and dairy products.

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RAIL BROTHERHOODS SEEK UNION SHOP

(CFLNL)SAN FRANCISCO.--Legislation to authorize the making of "union shop" agreements on the railroads -- a long-time objective of the nation's Railroad Labor Organizations -- was introduced in Congress last week.

The legislation has the unanimous backing of 20 standard rail unions affiliated with the Railway Labor Executives' Association and representing almost 1,200,000 workers on the "Iron Horse."

Under the bill, the Railway Labor Act would be amended so as clearly to permit negotiation of "union shop" contracts.

Such agreements may provide that, as a condition of continued employment, railmen shall become members of the unions representing their class or craft within 60 days after they're hired, or on the effective date of such agreements, whichever is later.