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CALIFORNIA LABOR NEWS

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JANUARY 1999

Mark your calendar

Jan. 29-31: AFL-CIO Organizing Institute, 3-Day Training, Los Angeles. Call (800) 690-0666.

Feb. 17: Childcare briefing, California State Commission on Status of Women, State Capitol, Room 4202 (scheduled), 2:30-5pm. Call (916) 445-3173

March 15-17: Ergonomics Training Project, Oakland. Call (415) 986-3585, ext. 233 or (916) 444-3676.

March 21: California Labor Federation - State Building and Construction Trades Council Women's Conference, Sacramento. (415) 986-3585, ext. 229.

March 22-23: California Labor Federation - State Building and Construction Trades Council Joint Legislative Conference, Sacramento. (415) 986-3585 or (916) 444-3676.

May 3-5: "Building Partnerships VII," Workers' Assistance Program Conference, see page 2.

To list an event, fax to (415) 392-8505 Attn: News, or email calaborfed@calaborfed.org.

Governor Gray Davis appoints union leaders to key posts

Gray Davis's choice to head the top state labor agency made his first stop at the Federation's Executive Council meeting on January 5. Steve Smith raised his right hand and repeated the oath of office read by Secretary-Treasurer Art Pulaski.

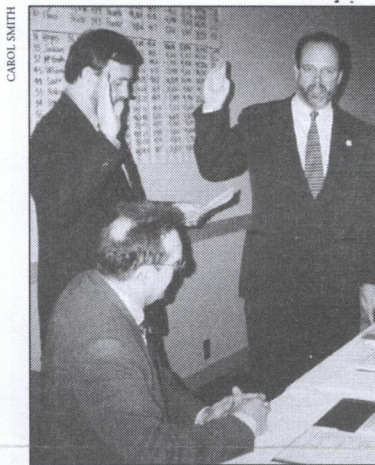
Prior to his leading role in the Davis campaign, Smith managed Californians to Protect Employee Rights (No on Prop. 226).

He spoke with the Executive Council about the Department's mission statement. "We are here to protect and promote California workers on the job," he said. "The best way to do that is through organization." DIR is responsible for California's occupational health and safety, apprenticeship, workers' compensation and labor law enforcement programs.

Smith pledged that the new administration will refocus the Department and work for employees, not against working families.

"We look forward to working with Steve," said Pulaski. "It will be refreshing to work cooperatively with the DIR Director on behalf of workers. We are eager to get started."

The Council peppered Smith with questions about daily overtime pay, prevailing wage, contractor liability, and the enforcement of existing laws. Smith answered most questions, took notes, and pledged to work with labor to fulfill the Department's mission.



Industrial Relations Director Steve Smith takes oath of office at Federation's Jan. 5 Executive Council meeting.

Other key labor appointments include:

Dallas Jones will direct the Office of Emergency Services. He has served as Federation Vice President and Secretary-Treasurer of the California Professional Fire Fighters.

Bill Lloyd, Federation Vice President and SEIU Local 790 leader, holds the newly created position of Director of Senate Relations and Labor Issues.

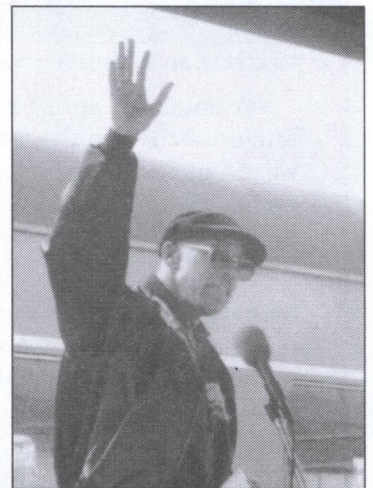
Jane Crawford (not pictured), formerly of the Fire Fighters as well, serves as Deputy Director of Appointments.

Marty Morgenstern, formerly of UC Berkeley's Labor Center, CSEA, and AFSCME, directs the Personnel Department.

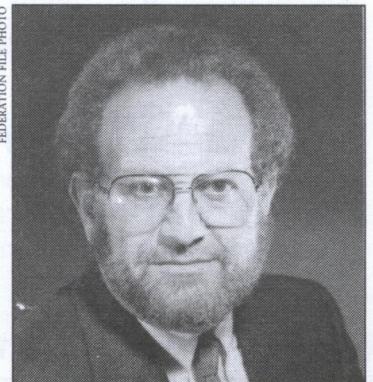
"Congratulations to all," said Pulaski. "Now the real work begins."



Dallas Jones, Federation Vice President. Director of Emergency Services



Bill A. Lloyd, Federation Vice President. Director, Senate Relations and Labor Issues



Marty Morgenstern, Director of Personnel

Art Pulaski Speaks Out



A new year, A new governor: Many new challenges

I watched with pride as we inaugurated Gray Davis as California's 37th governor on January 5. Surrounded by union members and leaders, I looked out at the faces in the crowd and saw the hopes and dreams of many California working families.

I thought of the long road we had traveled to bring a worker-friendly governor to Sacramento and to increase our majorities in the legislature. In 1998, we faced challenges that our critics and opponents thought we would not overcome.

We proved them wrong by coming together and activating our membership base in dynamic campaigns in June and November.

Now we look to the future and to new challenges, which will prove more difficult in many ways. To recapture the prosperity and the promise that past administrations have stolen from working families, we must move an aggressive legislative agenda in Sacramento and in districts across the state.

As you read on page 3, the Executive Council met immediately after the Davis inauguration and put forward an aggressive, momentum-building legislative agenda for 1999. We will be building this program further as we move toward the Legislative Conference in March. Federation officers and staff will make presentations at central labor councils and meet with labor organizations to create an inclusive program.

We anticipate strong opposition from corporate interests—the wealthy few who labeled a fair minimum wage and health and safety protections “job killers”—and vacillation on the part of many of those we worked so hard to elect in 1998.

A united labor movement, focused and directed on building member-to-member communications and mobilization, can win. We can rebuild prosperity for California's working families and build labor's power for 2000.

We will succeed if we maintain the unity that brought us this far, and if we work together with the intensity and commitment that led to our success in 1998.

Workers' Assistance Program Conference

Building Partnerships VII

May 3-5 - Palm Springs. Job training advocates, union representatives to PICs and Workforce Development Boards, apprenticeship coordinators are urged to attend.

Highlights: AFL-CIO Working for America Institute fiscal management track, California plans to implement Workforce Investment Act.

Info: (415) 395-9091

Ergonomics Training brings skills to members

The Ergonomics Training Project kicked off in 1998, when 28 local union trainers met to strategize about bringing ergonomics training to their members. This year, the Project will continue this work and bring in 20 new trainers from affiliates across the state.

“The knowledge and materials gained from the ergonomics class helped our Local train many members on ergonomic hazard identification and prevention,” says **Glen Sanderson**, Chief Steward of Machinists Local 25 in Ontario.

Workers and unions have been taking action for years to reduce workplace safety hazards. Workers on the job are the people who know best when a job causes strain, stress or pain, and have ideas on how to make work less hazardous. The Ergonomic Training Project gives union members the knowledge they need to work with their employers and make their jobs safer.

California adopted the first ergonomics standard in the nation in 1997. This new standard has limitations and doesn't apply to every employer, but it is a start. The Federation is leading efforts to inform workers about the standard and how to use it, as well as working to strengthen

the standard. Cal-OSHA expects to issue the first citations to employers under the standard in early 1999.

At the national level, the AFL-CIO continues to urge OSHA to develop a national ergonomics standard. Congress prohibited the

Volunteers sought

The **Labor Occupational Health Program** seeks injured workers to participate in a series of group discussions about communications systems in California workers' compensation. The goal is to improve notice letters and factsheets for injured workers about benefits and services. Workers will receive a small stipend for two-hour meetings in Berkeley throughout the year. Call (510) 643-2425 or 7593.

agency from issuing a standard for many years but did not pass any limiting legislation last year. OSHA says it intends to release a proposed standard by October 1999.

While Cal-OSHA and federal OSHA move forward at their pace on the issue, California unions will educate workers to take action directly in their work sites. For more information, call Federation staff **Maggie Robbins** at (415) 986-3585 or **Laura Boatman** at (916) 444-3676.

CALIFORNIA LABOR NEWS

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Art Pulaski, Executive Secretary-Treasurer Tom Rankin, President

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www.calaborfed.org



Executive Council advances Legislative Agenda

The Federation's Executive Council approved an inclusive nine-point legislative agenda to guide work in the next several sessions. The working paper incorporates the National AFL-CIO's federal-level agenda and is circulating through labor organizations for comment. Art Pulaski and Tom Rankin will present the agenda at central labor council meetings leading up to the Joint Legislative Conference in March. Legislative updates, including authors and bill numbers, will be available on the Federation's website.

1. Restore daily overtime pay

2. A Living Wage for California

Codify prevailing wage law. Raise minimum wage to poverty line with indexing. Living wages in state contracts modeled on Los Angeles, Oakland, San Jose ordinances.

Establish Childcare Development CORPS to improve childcare quality and compensation.

3. Advance the Right to Organize

Prohibit use of state funds to interfere with organizing drives. Enhanced speech protections for picketers. Support national efforts to educate representatives about

benefits and barriers to organizing.

4. Education

High-quality educational standards for students and teachers. Safe and orderly schools. Sufficient funding for education at all levels, including early childhood and preschool.

5. Quality Health Care For All

Health care coverage for uninsured and low income Californians. Effective "Patients Bill of Rights" for HMO members at state and federal levels.

6. Create Jobs with a Future

Corporate tax credits: Guarantee good jobs and community investment.

Stop the underground economy: Stricter penalties and enhanced enforcement of employment laws. Joint liability for labor contractors.

Build infrastructure: Roads, bridges, mass transit, schools.

Train workers for tomorrow's jobs: Workforce Investment Act implementation, apprenticeships and workforce investment programs.

Majority vote of legislature to pass state budget. Majority vote to pass local bond or

tax measures. Public campaign financing.

7. Family Income Protection

Protect Social Security.

Expand unemployment insurance coverage and increase benefits. Increase state disability insurance benefits. Increase workers' comp insurance benefits, improve system effectiveness.

Severance pay for downsized workers. Ensure workers' comp and state disability insurance for immigrant workers. Permit employees to use sick leave to care for ill children. Paid family medical leave.

8. No Second-class Workforce

Stop "independent contractor" abuse so that working families receive benefits. Health and pension benefit parity for part-time workers. Protect older workers against age discrimination.

9. Health & Safety

Cal/OSHA reform for stronger enforcement of health and safety laws. Improve ergonomics standard to reduce repetitive stress injuries. Establish worker centers to build skills base among rank and file.

FROM THE LABOR NEWS WIRE

Three California Teamsters elected to national office

Congratulations to newly elected national Teamsters officers from California: Federation vice president **Chuck Mack**, western



region vice president; **Jim Santangelo**, western region vice president; and **Randy Cammack**, vice president at large.

Contra Costa IHSS workers vote union

Home care workers voted 94% yes for union representation by SEIU Local 250, one of the largest organizing wins in Contra Costa history. "Members struggled for a union against a county bureaucracy that fought basic workplace rights and dignity at every step," says organizer **Dana Simon**. The win follows organizing victories by SEIU and AFSCME around the state.

Home care workers in Los Angeles are next, with an election slated later this year.

DAVID BACON



Labor, environmentalists rally in Oakland Dec. 2.

Kaiser Aluminum - Maxxam protest

250 union and community activists rallied in Oakland December 2 to support **Steelworkers** on strike at Kaiser Aluminum plants in Louisiana, Ohio, and Washington State. Unionists were joined by environmentalists opposing Maxxam Corporation's destruction of the redwood forests in northern California. Maxxam is the

major stockholder in Kaiser Aluminum. 3,000 Steelworkers struck in September over

management plans to cut employment by 30%.

CalPERS uses pension clout

Persuaded by Federation legislative advocate Lisa Ecks, USWA

strikers, and the Rose Foundation for Communities and the Environment, the CalPERS board voted in December to sponsor a shareholder resolution requiring Maxxam Corp to elect its officers every year, allowing closer community oversight. The state pension fund owns more than 700,000 shares of Maxxam and Kaiser Aluminum.



Women's Conference Planning proceeds

Federation vice presidents joined State Senator **Hilda Solis** and Speaker **Antonio Villaraigosa** at the National Women's Political Caucus reception in Sacramento.

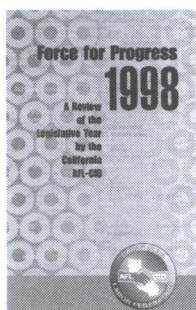
Preparing for the Federation's March 21 Women's Conference are vice presidents **Andrea Brooks**, AFGE; **Janett Humphries**, SEIU; **Dolores Huerta**, UFW; and **Miguel Contreras**, Los Angeles County Federation. For registration information, contact **Amanda Guma**, (415) 986-3585 x229.



Publications of Interest

The Living Wage: Building a Fair Economy lays out the economic and political background for the living wage movement, a national groundswell moving local government to hold contractors accountable. Ordinances in Los Angeles, Oakland, and San Jose require corporations receiving public monies to pay a wage above the poverty level. Authors Robert Pollin and Stephanie Luce explain the benefits and analyze the effects of implementation. Call the New Press at (800) 233-4830.

Which Direction for Organized Labor? is a collection of essays on the future of unionism in an environment of free trade agreements, dwindling membership, declining influence. Contributors include Bill Fletcher, AFL-CIO education director and California Labor Federation strategic planning facilitator, Michael Eisenscher, Stewart Acuff and Wade Rathke. Call Wayne State University Press at (800) WSU-READ.



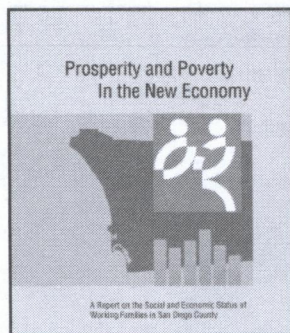
Force For Progress, 1998, labor's voting record for California legislators, will be available early in 1999. The publication documents legislators' votes on key issues and is an important resource for legislative accountability. Affiliates receive one complimentary copy, and additional copies can be ordered at a cost of \$2.00 for shipping and handling from Greg Castillo, **California Labor Federation**, 417 Montgomery St., #300, San Francisco 94104.

The Face of Working San Diego

The Center on Policy Initiatives, a labor-associated research center, will release **The Face of Working San Diego** later this year. The project highlights workers' experiences in labor and community organizing and will be publicized in a series of town hall meetings.

Since its incorporation in 1997, the Center has brought researchers and organizers together to support justice for workers. The Center joins labor, community activists and academics to work on public issues that impact working families.

"This is our taxpayers' association," said **Don Cohen**, Center founder and COPE director for the San Diego - Imperial Counties Central Labor Council. "Corporations and labor's opponents have their think tanks and studies. Our Center is about the challenges facing working families every day. It makes the academics more relevant and gives us greater stature to engage in meaningful work on economic development



strategy."

The Center conducts three other projects: a regional economic analysis to identify job creation and employment trends, particularly post-welfare reform; an investigation of corporate subsidies and taxpayer investment in poverty wages; and economic trainings based on the AFL-CIO Common Sense Economics program focussed on local action.

Private foundations have provided start-up funding for the Center, and Cohen maintains responsibilities at the central labor council while leading staff at the Center part-time.

To order, call (619) 277-4538.

PBS to air Part 4 of Our Town series beginning Jan. 26



Video of the San Jose living wage fight

Our Town, produced by **We Do the Work** and featuring humorist Will Durst, looks at communities that are banding together to make a difference for working people. Part four looks at several communities around the country, including San Jose and the living wage campaign sponsored by labor.

Kits for group viewing and discussion are available from the Working Group at (510) 268-9675 or on the web at www.pbs.org/livelyhood.

The program premieres on KQED San Francisco on Jan. 26 at 10 pm, and on KCET Los Angeles on Jan. 29 at 10 pm. For other stations, check local listings.

Federation, Employment Law Center present Welfare-to-Work Seminars

With the passage of federal welfare reform, and implementation of California's CalWORKs program, adults on welfare are required to participate in "work activities" virtually from their first day in the program. With the threat of sanctions and time limits looming over their families, many recipients will be vulnerable to violations of worker protections and civil rights. In addition, low-wage workers are at risk of displacement by a "free" workfare labor force required to participate in training and community service jobs.

Join community, legal and labor activists for a one-day seminar on employment rights and civil rights advocacy for people in welfare-to-work programs. Participants will receive extensive resource materials including the *Advocates' Guide to Employment and Civil Rights Protections in Welfare to Work Programs*.

SAN DIEGO
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SAN FRANCISCO
TBA

For more information, contact Jodie Berger or Stephanie Proctor Miller of the Welfare Advocacy Project at the Legal Aid Society of San Francisco's **Employment Law Center, (888) 864-8281**.