

Devoted to the interests of the A. F. of L. and the Working Man

CHARLOTTE LABOR JOURNAL

State-wide Labor Weekly, Presenting Labor News and Views Without Fear and Without Favor

Dedicated to the Continued Industrial Growth of North Carolina

VOL. XIX; NO. 39

CHARLOTTE, N. C., THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1950

Subscription Price \$2.00 Year

FARMERS-AFL JOIN TO WIN LIBERAL CONGRESS

'It's Easier to Look at Stars....'



Washington.—"It's easier to look at stars when your stomach is full," Samuel Gompers, founder and first president of the AFL, said in arguing for a strong trade union movement. The eyes of the founder and the heroic figures around him in the statuary honoring his memory are fixed up—up on the stars. AFL President William Green lays a wreath at the monument to his predecessor on the 100th anniversary of Mr. Gompers' birth, Jan. 27, 1950.

Tobin and Green Given First Stamps



Washington.—Postmaster Jesse M. Donaldson (left) presents albums of the first sheets of stamps honoring Samuel Gompers, founder and first president of the AFL, to Secretary of Labor Maurice J. Tobin, third from left, and AFL President William Green, extreme right. Between the two cabinet officers is House Majority Leader John W. McCormack.

Truman Program At Glance

Washington.—President Truman asked major legislation to achieve many goals favored by the AFL in his annual state of the union message. Following are highlights:

- REPEAL THE TAFT-HARTLEY LAW**—Replace it with a fair law. Establish a labor extension service.
- SOCIAL SECURITY**—Expand the program to provide higher benefits and greater coverage.
- HEALTH**—Establish a system of medical insurance which will enable all Americans to afford good medical care.
- EDUCATION**—Provide federal assistance to states for educational purposes.
- HOUSING**—Extend rent controls another year. Assist cooperatives and other nonprofit groups to build dwellings which middle-income families can afford.
- RESOURCES**—Approve St. Lawrence seaway and power project and the Columbia Valley Administration.
- MILITARY**—Continue selective service in this country. Support Atlantic defense plans.
- ECONOMIC**—Keep the European Recovery Program going without "crippling" cuts in funds. Pass pending measures to put into effect the Point Four program of American technical and financial aid to underdeveloped nations. Approve United States membership in international trade organization.
- TAXES**—"Make some changes in our tax system which will reduce present inequities, stimulate business activity and yield a moderate amount of additional revenue." Specific suggestions will be made shortly.
- BUSINESS**—"Close the loopholes" in the antitrust laws so as to bar "monopolistic mergers." Promised proposals to assist small business and encourage new enterprise.
- FARM**—Pass the Brannan plan with its system of production payments; provide mandatory price supports for products which are major sources of farm income and are not adequately covered.

Excise Taxes Seen Threat To Jobs

Miami, Fla.—Advocating immediate repeal of the wartime excise taxes, the AFL executive council said:

"Large sections of the membership of the American Federation of Labor have registered protests with the executive council against the continuation of the federal excise taxes imposed during the war on amusements, transportation, communications, cosmetics, leather goods, jewelry and many other products.

"When enacted, Congress referred to these excise taxes as temporary war emergency measures. Failure to repeal them since the end of the war constitutes a breach of faith with the American people.

"Today the government stands to tax revenues through the continuation of these excise taxes because of their strangling effect on business.

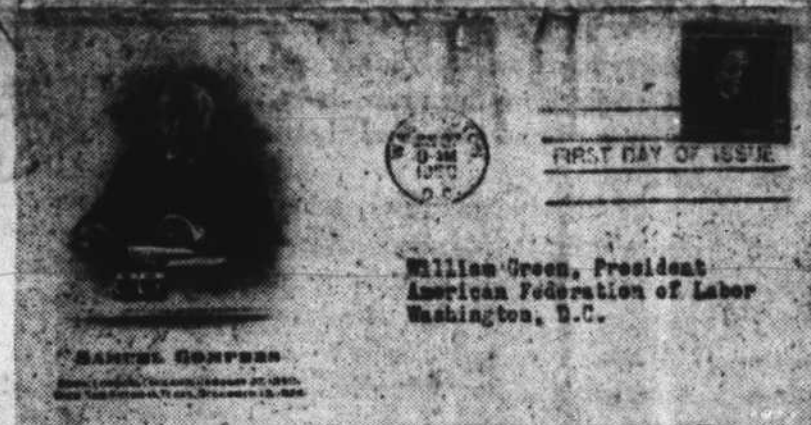
"The executive council desires to go on record as emphatically as possible for immediate action by Congress to repeal the excise taxes so that this unnecessary threat to business and employment can be removed."

Elected to AFL Council



Miami, Fla.—William L. McPetridge, president of the Building Service Employees' International Union, was elected Thirteenth AFL Vice-President at the midwinter executive council meeting. He fills the vacancy caused by the death of W. D. Mahon, former president of the Street and Electric Railway Employees.

A Gompers' Cover for Illinois



Washington.—Here is one of the many attractive first day covers of the Samuel Gompers commemorative stamp issue. The cover belongs to T. J. Borucki, Berwyn, Ill., a member of Division 231 of the AFL Amalgamated Association of Street and Electric Railway Employees. Mr. Borucki has asked AFL President William Green to autograph the envelope. These covers, without address, sold for 50 cents each and up on the first day. Mr. Borucki's will be enhanced in value by Mr. Green's autograph.

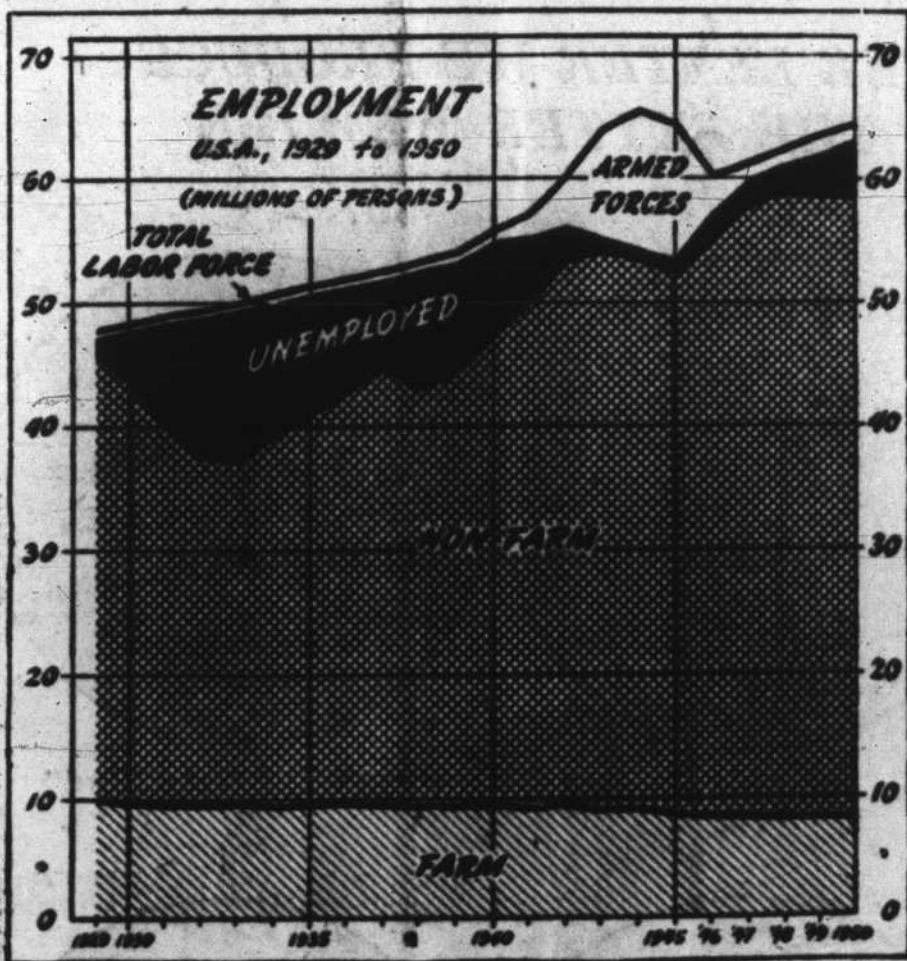
Time Now to Halt Increase in Jobless

Washington.—Now is the time to take preventive action to halt the increase in unemployed workers, the AFL says.

So far the plea has fallen on deaf ears in government and industry.

The accompanying chart shows the dark black pool of unemployed, which had spread widest in the 30s, again expanding after the wartime "full employment." The AFL Labor's Monthly Survey forecasts that this pool will remain at its present width at the height of the chart, representing an average of 51,100,000 unemployed for the whole year of 1950.

"During industrial dull seasons, unemployment would rise considerably above 5,000,000, the figure



SINES NAMED

New York.—Lewis G. Hines, AFL special representative, was appointed by American Legion Commander George N. Craig to the permanent committee of a new organization to combat communism in the United States. The AFL is one of the organizations with a combined membership of 50,000,000 members which joined the new

Edwards On 8 Labor Stations

Washington.—Eight labor-owned radio stations are carrying the news commentary of Frank Edwards, sponsored by the American Federation of Labor, Monday through Friday.

The call letters of 6 Mutual stations were incorrectly listed in the news service of Dec. 23. Their correct listing is: m. M-W-F; WILH, Lowell-Lawrence, Mass., 10 p. m., M-W-F; WREX, Duluth, Minn., 9 p. m., M-W-F; WEBB, Buffalo, N. Y., 10 p. m., M-Th-F; WBPZ, Lock Haven, Pa., 10 p. m., M-W-F; KPDN, Tampa, Texas, 9 p. m., M-W-F. Labor paper editors are again urged to run the list of stations and time for Mr. Edwards' broadcast as a standing feature to serve

Miami, Fla.—The executive council of the American Federation of Labor mapped a legislative program to be supported in the 1950 session for Congress and laid plans for an effective political campaign to elect friends of the AFL program to House and Senate.

Thomas Sees Labor Political Program One Of Big Gains

BY ARNOLD BEICHMAN
New York Correspondent for AFL News Service.

New York.—Norman Thomas, who says he's a failure (that's what he told the writer a few days ago in an interview) was given a testimonial luncheon Feb. 4 which brought out the great names in labor, public life and social welfare.

They came because they thought Norman Thomas has been a success.

Mr. Thomas, the perennial Socialist who's run for about every public office an American can run for from President on down, has gotten a lot of people mad at him at one time or another in a political career that goes back to the first World War.

Some of those people who got mad at him have included trade unionists. Regardless of the reason, trade unionists agree that in the clinches one of the best friends the labor movement ever had is this 66-year-old ex-Presbyterian preacher.

That's why AFL President William Green wrote:

"The masses of the people and their friends in the United States hold Norman Thomas in high regard and esteem. . . I join with those who will be in attendance at the testimonial luncheon given in honor of Norman Thomas in paying him a deserved tribute, in commending him upon his devotion to the principles and policies which he expounded and to express my appreciation of the educational services which he has rendered the people of the nation during his lifetime."

Other AFL international presidents sponsored the testimonial luncheon—John P. Burke, David Dubinski, Hugo Ernst, Earl W. Jimerson, H. L. Mitchell, A. Philip Randolph, Daniel J. Tobin, Max Zaritsky and Arnold S. Zander.

In an interview, Mr. Thomas took a long look around over the past 30 years and said that in his mind the three biggest and most encouraging accomplishments by the trade union movement are:

1. Development of a real political action program.
2. The tremendous progress being made in getting rid of racism.
3. Its strong international point of view, particularly the recently organized International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and the job of the AFL in Latin America.

Mr. Thomas' relationship with the labor movement goes back to a long time ago when he decided that socialism is "the way out." He fought for the share-croppers in Arkansas, the silk workers in New Jersey, textile workers in the south. In fact, wherever there was an unpopular cause or a "lost" cause, Thomas was to be found as he is today, picketing, lecturing, writing, orating and organizing.

He may be a socialist, but to him it is even more important to say that he is a democratic socialist because to him democracy comes before everything else. He is a veteran in the struggle against Communist and Fascist totalitarianism.

generally considered the danger point," the AFL said.

"Such a prospect calls for serious consideration and planning. Now is the time to take preventive action. If unemployment is to be no more than the 2,100,000 average in 1947 and 1948, then jobs for 61,000,000 will be needed."

The AFL says that the prospective decline of business after mid-1950 "will test the ability of our free enterprise system to maintain 'full' production and employment."

"Our economy is strong and healthy," the AFL says. "We face in 1950 not a depression but another business readjustment which need not be disruptive if we take

The council:

1. Called for passage of a moderate-income housing law to permit cooperative home building because 1949's record home-building year failed to meet the needs.
2. Urged continuation of an effective rent control program until the housing shortage is eliminated.
3. Planned greater cooperation with farm and rural voters who are showing increasing sympathy for labor's point of view on federal legislation for labor, farmer and small business.
4. Made the primary political job one of getting voters registered.
5. Demanded immediate congressional action to repeal federal excise taxes imposed during the war on many consumer items.

The council laid plans for the 1950 political campaign confident that "the farm revolt will help us." Joseph D. Keenan, director of Labor's League for Political Education, said many members of Congress who voted for the Taft-Hartley Act were seeking removal of or diminution of farm price-support legislation. He asserted that the Democrats favored price support. His own conclusion, fortified by frequent visits to rural areas, was that farmers were turning away from the Republican party in some localities.

Mr. Keenan also said that while national and state farm organizations had approved labor's proposal toward cooperating with labor on the political field, "we are getting cooperation from farm leaders and farmers on the county level."

"We expect this cooperation to increase as time goes on and the farmers see that they have much in common with labor," he added.

In a tour of the South just completed, Mr. Keenan formed the impression that labor-farmer cooperation could succeed in electing six to nine friendly Representatives from that area.

Excerpts from his report to the administrative committee of Labor's League follows:

"1950 finds organized labor needing 5 additional U. S. Senators and 15 additional members of the House who are friendly to labor."

"The chief political problem of the 1950 off-year as far as labor is concerned is to register the vote and to get the vote out."

"The second most important problem is to make sure that the friends of labor that won in the 1948 victory are reelected. In 1948 labor had so few friends that the campaign was largely devoted to getting the 'ins' out. In 1950 labor has to fight a more defensive battle because in an off-year it must hold its friends and must show that it can defend its friends who have supported labor in the House and the Senate. For example, of the 22 Democratic Senators up for election in 1950, 18 are friends of labor and only 4 are anti-labor. Of the 13 Republican Senators up for election in 1950 three (Aiken, Vt.; Morse, Ore., and Tobey, N. H.), are friends of labor and 10 are anti-labor. Thus of the 35 Senators up, 12 are friends and 14 are anti-labor."

"The dangerous Byrd-Taft-Dierker-GOP bloc in the Senate can be smashed in 1950 if labor can defeat Cappelhart of Ind.; Donnell, Mo.; Hickenlooper, Iowa; Milliken, Col.; Taft, Ohio; Wiley, Wisc. In addition, there is a fair chance that if the campaign is well handled that Gurney of S. D. could be defeated. The outcome of these particular Senate races depends on what is the most important issue in the 1950 election—the farm issue. At present there is more political activity and discussion in rural areas than there is in urban areas—because of the farm issue."

"The farmer is active politically because he is worried. Farm income dropped about 5 per cent in 1949 and another 10 per cent in 1950. A further drop of about 10 per cent is indicated in 1950. Meanwhile, the prices of things the farmers buy have only dropped 3 per cent. In addition the farmer is worried about farm surpluses and when the 1950 election takes place on Nov. 7 one more giant crop will be added

(Continued On Page 3)