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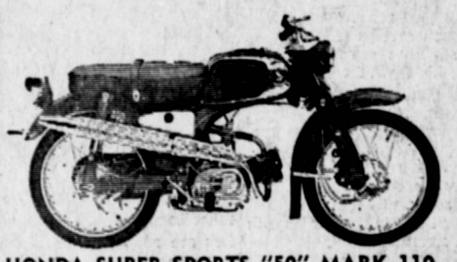

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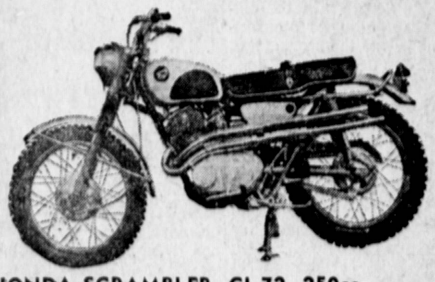

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Assembly Committee Looks At Unemployment Benefits

By VINCENT THOMAS
Assemblyman, 68th District

More than a quarter century has elapsed since our California unemployment insurance law went into full operation. The years have demonstrated its importance to the state's economy, but they have also revealed many perplexing problems which still demand study and solution. The interests of the millions of employes covered by the law, and of the hundreds of thousands of employers who pay taxes to support the system, must be well guarded if the act is to fulfill its purpose.

Once again there are signs of difficulty for the system on the horizon. For the first seven months of this year, unemployment benefit payments totaled $311 million, about $37 million more than taxes and interest paid by employers during the same time. At this rate, the total reserve of $591 million could melt quickly if there were even a minor recession. Conscious of this possibility, the Assembly passed a resolution calling for a detailed study of unemployment financing. The Finance and Insurance Committee will carry out the work.

* * *

UNEMPLOYMENT insurance has always been a stormy petrel, legislatively speaking. Practically every regular session since the statute first went on the books has had its flood of bills to change the benefits, the eligibility conditions, or the supporting tax structure.

Such bills traditionally have aroused controversy. However, over the years the benefits have been increased until now the maximum regular weekly benefit of $55 is equalled by only one other state, and the higher weekly minimum of $25 which goes into effect this fall is the highest in the nation.

An extended benefit duration has also been provided, which goes into effect whenever the jobless rate goves over 6 per cent of the labor force. When this happens, an extra 13 weeks of benefits are made available to eligible persons still unemployed.

* * *

EMPLOYERS NOW pay the full cost of the program, though prior to 1946, employes paid a one per cent tax toward cost of the benefits. This latter tax now goes entirely for disability insurance. California employers now pay at rates varying from 2.2 to 3.5 per cent of payroll for the regular benefit program, and more for administration and extended benefits.

The Assembly resolution calls attention to the fact that these high rates of payroll taxation for unemployment insurance create problems for California employers who compete with those of other states. It cites the fact that present tests of eligibility for benefits may be unrealistic, inadequate and impractical, so that persons not really attached to the labor market are receiving benefits. It directs the Department of Employment to make a more detailed study of the work records and characteristics of benefit claimants, and to estimate the fiscal effects of changes in eligibility rules.

* * *

IN THE announcement of the Committee program for its investigation, it was indicated that questions to be reviewed would include 1) should employes pay part of the costs; 2) should the state general fund absorb some of the costs; and 3) should employers be given special tax offsets if they provide retraining for displaced employes, or severance or early retirement pay for them.

It was said that pressure of work in regular sessions permits no time to give detailed attention to unemployment insurance, but that the interim study would enable thorough examination of its financing, "including the kind of unemployment the program is called upon to alleviate."

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That's a Lot Of Building

Things are booming in Torrance so far as the school district is concerned.

S. E. Waldrip, assistant superintendent of schools for business, gave the following construction report at the monthly meeting of the Torrance Education Advisory Committee:

- South High auto shop nearing completion;
- Torrance High bleachers ready for use;
- Torrance High Annex completed and occupied;
- Torrance High physical education facilities delayed, but will be ready for occupancy by December;
- Joseph Arnold School site nearing completion;
- Joseph Arnold School under construction;
- West High School increments two and three under construction and going up fast;
- Hickory School addition bids received;
- Wood Elementary addition plans completed;
- Three mobile classrooms delayed, but (hopefully) on their way;
- One portable classroom moved to eliminate double sessions;
- School site in Tract 2200 in escrow; and,
- Victor Tract site being studied.

Two Firms Get Contract for Area Project

Supervisors have awarded a contract for the construction of the Frampton Avenue Storm Drain in Harbor City to two firms who submitted identical low bids.

Named to build the project were Len-Sal Corp. and Paul Vukich Construction Co., who submitted low bids of $406,619.60.

The bids were among 10 filed with the Flood Control District and were pegged at nearly $46,600 below the engineer's estimate.

The project will involve four separate lines in Harbor City and is expected to be completed in about seven months. Work will start within three weeks.

AWARD SMILES . . . Outstanding contribution to Chapel Theatre productions the past year was recognized at the theater's eighth annual award dinner-dance held recently at the Jump 'n Jack restaurant. Winners included, (left to right, back row) Rudi Medina, Carolyn Conwell, Rosemary Buell, Phyllis Palmer, Maxine Dessair, Don Gish, Kathleen Briggs, and Tom Lowry. (Front row, left to right) Murray Parvis, Dick Miller, Tony Schroeder, Noel Shire, and Lyle Smith.

Awards for Best Actors Given Here

Chapel Theatre held its eighth annual dinner dance recently at the Jump 'N' Jack restaurant with Dick Miller of Miraleste serving as master of ceremonies.

Guests of honor were Mayor and Mrs. Albert Isen of Torrance and Mr. and Mrs. Sam Steward of Redondo Beach. Mayor Isen, in view of his recent television appearances, was presented a gag award.

Awards and recipients, in order of their presentation, included: best character actress, Carolyn Conwell; best character actor, Lyle Smith; best supporting actress, Maxine Dessau; best supporting actor, Murray Jarvis; and best juvenile actress, Toni Schroeder;

Best juvenile actor, Noel Shire; outstanding achievement for backstage work, Rudi Medina; best producer, Phyllis Palmer; best director, Don Gish; best comedienne, Rosemary Buell; best comedian, Dick Miller; best dramatic actor, Tom Lowry, and best dramatic actress, Kathleen Briggs.

Whitcombe Wins Speech Contest

Competition to find the most humorous speaker in the Rolling Hills Toastmasters Club 139 continued this week with Dave Whitcombe taking top honors.

Whitcombe won the weekly prize with a speech on "Politicians and Poker Players." Glenn Dye was the best impromptu speaker with a short talk on "Atomic Test Ban Treaty."

Walter Niemi was toastmaster of the evening, and Dr. Howard Berk delivered the required new member's "ice breaker" a full week ahead of schedule.

Wade Peebles Panel Member At Seminar

Wade Peebles, city manager of Torrance, will be present on a panel discussion, "Gas Tax Legislation and Street Programs," today during the third annual Municipal Seminar at the Saint Catherine Hotel, Catalina.

E. T. Telford, metropolitan district engineer, will act as panel moderator, with Newt Templin, county road commission, and Rodger O. Ferguson, mayor of Monrovia, completing the panel.

Sunday Crossword Puzzle

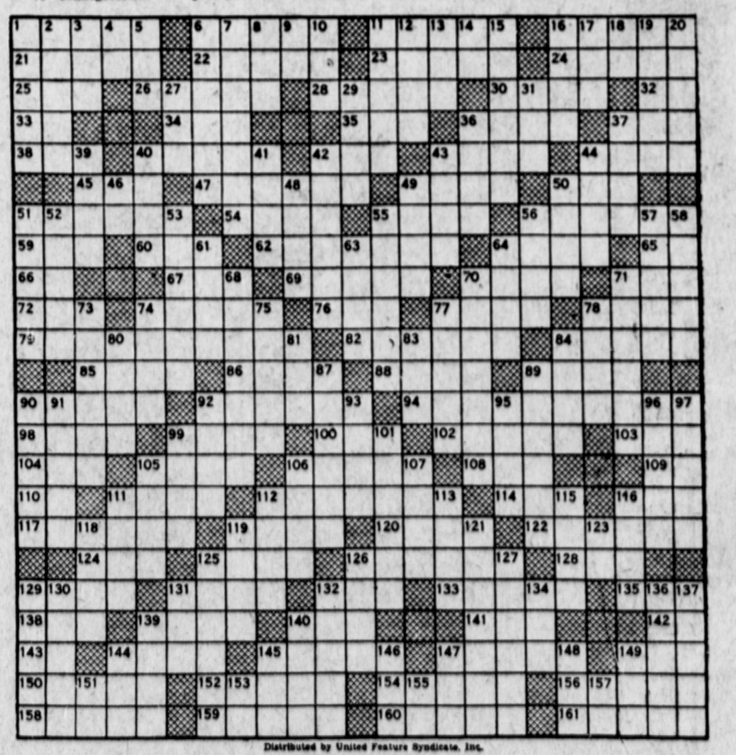
(Answer on Page 12)

ACROSS

1—Lawful
6—Hornlike skeletons of marine life
11—Body organ
16—Laments
21—Omit in pronunciation
22—Essence
23—Ardent
24—Assault
25—Provide crew
26—Subject of composition
28—Style of painting
30—Metal
32—Three-toed sloth
33—Guido's low note
34—Canine
35—Cover
36—Egg-shaped
37—Snake
38—Corded cloth
40—Fasten again
42—Employ
43—Cook slowly
44—Poker stake
45—Native metal
47—All
48—Part of leg
50—Mohammedan name
51—Continued story
54—Supercilious person
55—Fish sauce
56—Named
59—Emmet
60—Allow
62—Word game
64—Card game
65—Roman gods
66—Pronoun
67—Skill
69—Grunt
70—Meadows
71—Transgression
73—Ship's clock
74—Stable attendant
76—Silkworm
77—Close securely
78—Healthy
79—Huge
82—Newspaper executive
84—Man's name
85—Seines
86—Stumble
88—Paradise
89—Bellow
90—Diminishes
92—Harvested
94—Nutritious
95—Urge
99—Clayey earth
100—Weaken
102—Growing out of
103—American essayist
104—Free of
105—Wooden pins
106—Strip of leather
108—Man's name
109—Symbol for tantalum
110—Man's nickname
111—Transaction
112—Strikes out
114—Bitter vetch
116—Conjunction
117—Measure of time
119—Woody plant
120—Powdered soapstone
122—Sea ducks
124—Garden tool
125—Trinket
126—Harbinger
128—At present
129—Quarrel
131—Rugged rock
132—Sailor (colloq.)
133—Female horses
135—Posed for portrait
138—Unit of Latvian currency
139—Post
140—Burma tribesman
141—Golf mound
142—Title of respect (abbr.)
143—Indefinite article
144—Body of water
145—Heavy wire
147—Vapid
148—Female ruff
150—Species of pepper
152—Grave robber
154—Satiated
156—Cooks in hot fat
158—Slant
159—Wear away
160—Heavenly bodies
161—Rips

DOWN

1—Nocturnal mammal
2—Puff up
3—Alcoholic beverage
4—Paid notice
5—Permit
6—American author
7—Beginnings
8—Fabulous bird
9—Part of "to be"
10—Fall behind
11—Fairy
12—Shortening
13—Mature
14—Compass point
15—Impelled
16—Kind of fabric
17—Girl's name
18—Exists
19—Fewest
20—Stem
27—Poem
29—Otherwise
31—Uncooked
34—Pertaining to the ear
37—Dye plant
39—Harbor
40—Actual
41—Sicilian volcano
42—Courteous
43—Son of Noah
44—Singing voice
46—A state (abbr.)
48—Electrified particles
49—Narrow, flat board
50—Ventilates
51—Canonized person
52—Go in
53—Becomes aware of
55—Gratify
56—South African dialect
57—Roman magistrate
58—Roadside restaurant
61—Walked on
63—Blood
64—Fright
65—Horn blowers
70—Pertaining to the lion
71—Petty ruler
73—Warded off
74—Obtains
75—Wall painting
77—Gravestone
78—Warmth
80—Encounter
81—Drink slowly
83—Girl's name
84—Cornbread
87—Instrument for pounding
89—Retreat
90—Journeys forth
91—Dwell
93—Anger
95—Challenge
96—Masculine
98—Moving part of motor
97—Periods of time
99—Pinochle term
101—Idle talk
105—Sheet of glass
106—Sow
107—Fruit
111—Chimney carbon
112—Haul
113—Shut noisily
115—Transgressions
116—Tidings
118—Short talk
119—River duck
121—Commotion
123—Note of scale
125—Span
126—Call
127—Fears
129—Thick slices
130—Jury list
131—Container
133—Article of furniture
134—Lamprey
136—Mohammedan noble
137—Lock of hair
139—Burrowing animal
140—Praise
144—Vigor (colloq.)
145—Cry like dove
146—Worm
147—Music: as written
148—Newt
149—Inlet
151—Preposition
153—Period of time (abbr.)
155—Near
157—Note of scale



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