

Conflict Between State, Congress Seen on Laws

By VINCENT THOMAS
Assemblyman, 68th District

As members of the California Legislature, our work is frequently complicated by the necessity of keeping a weather eye out for the activity of Congress in fields in which we are also laboring. This is particularly true with respect to governmental services which are jointly financed by state and federal funds, or in which cooperation is based on other factors of mutual concern. On most occasions, no problems arise, but once in a blue moon, we find trouble because of conflicting action.

It now looks as though we could be headed for difficulty in the field of unemployment insurance because of conflicts between changes in our California Unemployment Insurance Code enacted into law at the recent 1965 general session, and pending federal legislation which has administration backing, and is now literally being rushed through Congress. Some provisions of the proposed federal law would completely nullify important modifications contained in our new law.

THE COMPLEX program of changes made by our new law was carefully worked out by the Assembly Interim Committee on Finance and Insurance. Months of patient negotiations with representatives of employers and labor, and with spokesmen for the Department of Employment were required to develop the balanced plan of increased weekly benefit amounts, stricter eligibility provisions, and slightly higher taxes on covered employers. The bill which became law was passed in the Assembly by a vote of 60 to 8, in the Senate by 37 to 0.

Our new law increases the maximum weekly benefit amount from \$55 to \$65. The minimum earnings required to qualify for benefits is raised from \$600 to \$720. The disqualification for voluntarily quitting a job, or for discharge for misconduct is changed from a postponement of benefits for five weeks to a requirement that an applicant subject to either disqualification must earn at least five times his weekly benefit in new work before he can be paid any benefits. The tax on employers was changed to a new scale from 1.8 to 3.7 per cent of taxable wages.

THE PROPOSED federal law was introduced late in May, but was not expected to be discussed this year. Unexpectedly, late in June, the House Ways and Means Committee announced that hearings on the bill would start early in August, and imposed new and rigid limitations on those wishing to testify. California proponents and opponents of the bill are appearing as this is being written.

The bill would bring large segments of farm and related labor into the system, and force the employers to pay taxes totaling 4.25 per cent of wages. The 350,000 California employers now under the law would have their federal tax jumped 37 1/2 per cent in 1966, and another 86 per cent in 1967. The measure would also force the states to meet its standards of eligibility, weekly benefit

Hangar Session Slated Tomorrow

Lloyd Lichner, executive secretary of the Soaring Society of America, will show films and speak to members of the South Bay Hangar Session tomorrow at 7:30 p.m.

The session will be held at the Torrance Recreation Center.

Sailplanes will be displayed by Gene Hamm and Ted Misheimer.

TO MEETING

Dr. J. H. Hull, superintendent of the Torrance Unified School District, has been authorized to represent the district at a conference of superintendents of cities of 100,000 to 300,000 in Little Rock, Ark., Oct. 19 through 22.

amounts, and maximum disqualifications, or penalize their covered employers with the loss of their credits for state taxes against the federal taxes otherwise due.

MAXIMUM weekly benefits would be set at 50 per cent of wages in 1967, 60 per cent in 1969, and would jump to 66 2/3 per cent in 1971. The

bill, if enacted, would thus knock out both the raise in qualifying earnings and the stricter disqualifications which we just put into our state law.

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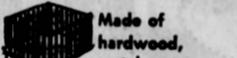
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