



THE EIGHT HOUR DAY



In 1867, San Francisco's early unions built a strong movement for a standard eight-hour day. Ship and steamboat crews, plumbers, bricklayers, laborers, stone cutters, farmers, riggers, gas fitters, house carpenters and house painters had all achieved eight-hour contracts by February 1868 when an eight-hour day law was signed by the Governor. A huge torchlight procession in San Francisco celebrated passage of the first state eight-hour law in the country, as shown in this mural panel by Anton Holmgren. However, the law lacked enforcement mechanisms, and when a national economic depression hit California in the 1870s, the eight-hour day law was effectively rendered meaningless as employers increased working hours.



This picture is believed to be reproduced by the California Labor Federation.

The 1933 Federal law governing overtime pay, the Fair Labor Standards Act, mandated nine and a half day after a six-hour work week, and allowed states to pass daily overtime laws. As well, California was among states with regulations allowing for time-and-a-half pay after eight hours of work daily. In 1937, the state's Industrial Welfare Commission overturned the daily overtime regulation, setting time-and-a-half pay and sparking protests across the state. The rule was rescinded a few years later.

WORKINGMEN'S PARTY OF CALIFORNIA

In 1896, a significant part of San Francisco's workforce was composed of Chinese immigrants. Under the threat of a severe economic depression, workers organized the Workingmen's Party of California to demand better wages, shorter hours, and improved working conditions. The party was founded in 1896 and won a victory in the 1900 election, electing James H. Hahn to the office of Mayor. The party's platform included a demand for an eight-hour day, and it was a key factor in the passage of the 1900 law.



1902 EMPLOYERS' SUICIDE TOUR



Workers gathered for a meeting in 1902, during the Employers' Suicide Tour.

WOBBLES

WHAT TIME IS IT?



Founded in 1905, the Industrial Workers of the World or "Wobblies" gained a base in California's fertile valleys, where conditions for farm workers often included bare subsistence wages, no sanitary facilities or water in the fields, and child labor. The IWW also built militant, although usually short-lived, organizations in the mining, timber, and maritime industries. Following passage of the California Criminal Syndicate Act in 1919, many IWW leaders and activists were sent to prison under its provisions. This law was found to be unconstitutional forty years later.

The black cat and scorpion above the clock symbolize the IWW's anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist, and anti-war message, emphasizing the need to organize.

1934 GENERAL STRIKE IN SAN FRANCISCO



UPTON SINCLAIR AND THE CAMPAIGN TO END POVERTY IN CALIFORNIA (EPIC)

I, GOVERNOR OF CALIFORNIA

And How I Ended Poverty

A True Story of the Future

by
UPTON SINCLAIR

This is not just a pamphlet.
This is the beginning of a Crusade.
A Two-Year Plan to make over a State.
To capture the Democratic primaries and
run on old party for a new job.
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(End Poverty) (In California)

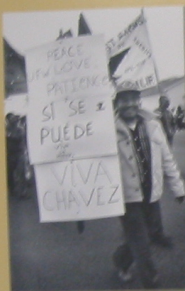
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ADVANCE ALL LETTERS TO: UPTON SINCLAIR

Following the great farm strikes of 1933-34 and the San Francisco general strike of 1934, popular discontent in California crystallized in the form of political action. Novelist and socialist Upton Sinclair launched his crusade to End Poverty in California (EPIC) as the core of his campaign for Governor. Sinclair's candidacy was endorsed by the California Federation of Labor. EPIC clubs were created around the state and thousands of Sinclair's pamphlets describing how to end poverty in California were sold. On August 26, 1934, Sinclair received more votes than all his rivals combined in the Democratic primary for governor. After a negative campaign, Republican Frank Merriam won the gubernatorial election with 49 percent of the

CESAR CHAVEZ AND THE UNITED FARM WORKERS



Farmworkers, like public sector workers, had been left out of the National Labor Relations Act in 1935, and possessed no legal right to strike or to collective bargaining. Valiant efforts to unionize throughout the twentieth century had left no lasting organization. Then the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee, AFL-CIO, and the National Farm Workers Association, led by Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta, merged to form the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee in 1965. In 1976 the legislature passed the Agricultural Labor Relations Act.

These photographs show a march from King City to Salinas and the rally that followed in Salinas, in support of the 1976 UFW strike for the grapes. The second Cesar Chavez is pictured in the photograph to the right.





























