

THE OFFICE WORKER

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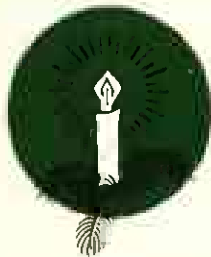
DECEMBER, 1953

17

NLRB Ruling Forces Clerical Workers into Production Unit



Merry Christmas



Happy New Year

From your International Officers to you and the members of your family

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President

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Board Hails Organizational Plan

The Executive Board of the International Union on November 30, received an organizational report by President Coughlin at its meeting in the Hotel Statler, Washington. The members of the Board were enthusiastic in their discussions and comments. They, in turn, reported that the program had generated much enthusiasm in the ranks of our International Union.

It was emphasized that all conferences were looking forward to successful programs in their respective areas. Local unions not yet included in organizational conferences are petitioning for the formation of further organizational conferences.

The need for organizational funds was discussed at great length. President Coughlin reported on his meetings with George Meany, president of the American Federation of Labor, and stated that he was awaiting an answer to his request for money grants for organizational purposes.

The California State Federation of Labor and the Washington State

Federation of Labor have already agreed to make contributions toward the Organizational Conferences in their respective states. Other state federations have indicated that they would be willing to consider contributions toward the furtherance of the program.

The Executive Board instructed the executive officers to explore all possible sources of fund-raising for organizational purposes and authorized them to make necessary arrangements.

President Coughlin and Secretary-Treasurer Hicks reported on a welfare plan to cover the office employees and staff members of the International Union. They further reported that this welfare plan can be used to cover any of the employees of our local unions or any groups represented by our local unions. Details of this welfare plan will be forwarded to each local union in the near future.

A summary of the minutes of this meeting will be forwarded to each and every local union.

In the forthcoming election of the G. E. employes at Lynn, Mass., where the OEIU has petitioned for an election among the clerical employes, the NLRB recently handed down a clarification of the original decision which stated in effect that all salaried and hourly clerical employes who work in the physical proximity of production workers will be included in the production workers unit.

This ruling was handed down notwithstanding the fact that the OEIU has received signed cards from a very large majority of these employes.

The effect of this ruling is to virtually imprison the clerical workers within the production unit. It would be unrealistic for anyone to believe that the four or five hundred clerical workers affected by this ruling will have the right to determine by secret ballot whom they wish to represent them, when they are included in a unit of 20,000 production workers.

This ruling could have very serious consequences in the forthcoming election, since approximately 90 per cent of the OEIU organ-

izing committee will be barred from voting with the clerical workers unit.

It is difficult for the International Union to understand how the NLRB could render a decision where, regardless of the type of work is performed, clerical employes should be forced to vote in a production workers' unit merely because the employer unilaterally determines that their place of employment should be physically established in close proximity to the production workers.

Is the NLRB attempting to deprive clerical employes the right to be represented by a union of their own choice?

President Coughlin Gets "Cabbage"



During the course of the Executive Board meeting, President Coughlin emphasized the need for additional sources of revenue in order to provide the necessary funds for our organizational program. In pointing out this need he referred to organizational funds as "cabbage." Members of the Board, during a recess period, proceeded down to the Washington market place and at the reconvening of the Tuesday session, presented Howard with a large supply of cabbage as in the above picture. This was one of the few humorous incidents during a serious three-day Board session.

Payroll Tax Boost Supported by AFL

Washington, D. C.—The American Federation of Labor is supporting the payroll tax which is scheduled, by law, to increase on January 1 from the present rate of 1½ per cent on employers and employes alike to the rate of 2 per cent. Such an increase is necessary to insure the solvency of the Social Security system and to build up and maintain the trust fund from which old age benefits will be paid to future generations of retired workers as well as those presently drawing benefits.

The AFL stand was explained in a letter that went out under President George Meany's signature on November 12 to all state federations and central labor unions.

Noting that certain members of Congress have recently declared their intention to introduce legislation designed to roll back, retroactively, the Social Security tax rate and to "freeze" it at its present level of 1½ per cent, President Meany states the following facts should be borne in mind:

"(1) To freeze the Social Security tax at its present rate would involve no real savings for workers. Rather, it would serve to deprive them of the benefit of the matching increase in contributions scheduled to be paid by their employers. It is a disguised tax cut for employers, at the expense of the Social Security trust fund and of workers whose future benefits must be derived from that fund. . . .

"(2) It is true, of course, that the scheduled increase in the Social Security payroll tax, while small in amount, may equal or



International officers and Executive Board members are shown in session in Washington. Left to right around the table are: J. O. Bloodworth, Marie Mann, Emily Burns, Bernard H. Cosgrove, Terry Parker, Mary Elder, secretary to Secretary-Treasurer J. Howard Hicks, Secretary-Treasurer Hicks, President Howard Coughlin, Organization Director H. B. Douglas, George P. Firth, Edward P. Springman, John B. Kinnick, Ila E. Howard, Nicholas Juliano, John T. Finnerty and Max J. Krug.

exceed the amount by which a lower-paid workers' income taxes are reduced through the automatic 10 per cent reduction scheduled for next year. This is, however, in no sense a valid argument against the step-up in the Social Security tax. Rather, it offers a good demonstration of the unfairness of a flat percentage across-the-board method of reducing income taxes, which brings large tax cuts to the wealthy, and very small cuts to the wage earner. This cannot be corrected by any retroactive freezing of the Social Security tax rate. The appropriate and fair method of correcting this inequity would be through a revision in the income tax structure to make it more progressive, with—among other things—an increase in personal exemptions, as has been proposed by the American Federation of Labor.

"(3) The increase in the Social Security tax rate is necessary if the trust fund is to remain solvent

and capable of supporting benefit payments in future years. According to the most reliable actuarial estimates, unless the increase is permitted to stand, the Social Security trust fund will not only fail to build up the necessary interest-yielding reserve, but will actually show a deficit by 1960.

"Nowhere else can so much in the way of economic security be obtained by workers at so little actual cost as through their Social Security contributions. The small payroll tax, matched by employer payments, is the source, and the only source, of the many real and substantial benefits derived from Social Security. To keep the contribution rate down to a level below that required, according to all actuarial estimates, for the soundness and self-sustaining nature of the fund would sooner or later spell ruin for the program and for the future security of workers and their families.

"Not only would this seriously handicap our efforts to secure some liberal benefits under Social Security—it would actually endanger our ability to maintain the existing level of benefits. If the advocates of the tax freeze succeed in their efforts, future benefits will depend—not upon a sound, self-sustaining trust fund—but upon annual hand-outs from the Treasury, subject to the whims and political complexion of each succeeding Congress.

"This is a risk which the workers of America cannot afford to take—particularly when there is nothing to gain by so doing except a trifling, temporary and largely illusory postponement of a cost which will have to be paid sooner or later. And the longer it is postponed, the higher that cost will have to be, unless benefits are to suffer drastically. It is our belief that the workers of America should and will accept this necessary increase in contributions, not begrudgingly but willingly, knowing that they are thereby insuring their own present and future welfare and security."

High Jinx on Friday, the 13th, for Local 241



Local 241 in Quebec City, Can., held its first dance and cocktail party on Friday, the 13th, but there was no jinx on the affair. It was an enjoyable evening for all as the picture of the group shows. Eleanor Nicholls was crowned Queen, Brian Kelly was named Prince and Louis P. Martel, minstrel. Among the guests were representatives of Anglo-Canadian Pulp & Paper Mills management and President Alphonse Dubuc of Local 191 at Beupre.

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J. HOWARD HICKS, *Sec.-Treas.*
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Pacific Northwestern Organizational Conference



Organization Plan Welcomed in West

President Howard Coughlin and Director of Organization H. B. Douglas have recently completed a series of meetings with Western local unions. Our organizational plan was received very enthusiastically in all cities visited.

Denver

On his way to Seattle for the purpose of setting up the Pacific-Northwestern Organizational Conference, President Coughlin met with the officers and Executive Board of Local 5 at Denver, Colo., on November 5. This group was headed by Marie Mann, international vice president. These representatives of Local 5 very graciously agreed to meet with President Coughlin at the Denver airport during a short stopover there. President Coughlin gave a brief outline of our organizational plans. All agreed that the plan was sound and was something greatly needed by our organization. The Denver representatives emphasized the need for a conference in the intermountain area as soon as circumstances can permit the establishment of such a conference.

Seattle

Washington State Federation of Labor President E. M. Weston welcomed OEIU President Coughlin and Director of Organization H. B. Douglas at a pre-conference membership meeting of Seattle Local 8 on November 6. Both Director of Organization Douglas and President Coughlin addressed this meeting. Thereafter, at the Pacific Northwestern Organizational

Terry Parker, at left, was elected secretary-treasurer of the Pacific Northwestern Organizational Conference established at Seattle, Wash., and Al O'Brien was elected president. Shown in the group with President Coughlin are representatives of local unions of Washington, Oregon and British Columbia, who unanimously adopted the organizational plan.

Conference, which embraced the local unions of Washington, Oregon and British Columbia, our organizational plan was presented. The plan was adopted unanimously and all delegates present agreed to strongly recommend to their local unions affiliation with the Pacific Northwestern Conference.

Al O'Brien was elected president of the Conference and Terry Parker was elected secretary-treasurer.

During his Seattle visit President Coughlin met with many representative groups. A committee representing the B. C. Electric Office Employees Association, now affiliated with the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada, conferred at great length with President Coughlin on common problems regarding organization, contract negotiations and plans for exchange of information. President Coughlin was most pleased with the cooperative attitude displayed by these Canadian representatives.

Portland

A special meeting with the Portland representatives was held on November 7, at which time much discussion took place with respect to our Portland local's organizational plans. The delegates, headed

by Secretary-Treasurer Jim Beyer and President Arthur Gulley, agreed with the tentative proposal made by President Coughlin for the purpose of resolving some immediate problems of our Portland local.

Tacoma

On November 6, Business Representative Calvin Winslow and the Executive Board of Local 23 at Tacoma graciously extended an invitation to Brothers Coughlin and Douglas to be in attendance at a special meeting called in honor of their visit. After presentation of a general outline of our organizational plans for the Pacific Northwest, a discussion ensued as to the Tacoma potential and possibilities. Our executive officers were much impressed with the interest displayed by the representatives of the Tacoma local.

Riverside

President Coughlin and Director of Organization Douglas presented our Organizational Conference plan to the delegates present at a conference meeting held in Riverside, Calif., on November 8. This Conference covers all of local unions in the states of California and

Arizona. Of the 16 local unions, 15 responded and were present.

The local unions unanimously adopted the Conference organizational plan as presented by President Coughlin and Director of Organization Douglas. Many area problems were discussed in detail.

Subsequently, John Kinnick was elected president of the Western Organizational Conference and Anita Amado was elected secretary-treasurer.

Hollywood

Leroy Patterson, president, and Max Krug, business representative of Hollywood Local 174, extended an invitation to President Coughlin to address the Hollywood local on November 9. A well-attended meeting listened to our president outline the many social gains that have been attained by organized labor. He stressed the fact that white collar workers throughout the United States are the classification of workers making up the large number of "free riders" today. He emphasized the great need for unionization of clerical workers in Los Angeles and throughout the country, if we hoped to retain the wonderful gains for our membership already attained by Local 174.

San Francisco

On November 10, President Coughlin addressed the membership of Local 3. He urged them to use the resources at their disposal to bring about the unionization of clerical workers in San Francisco.

Oakland

President Coughlin addressed the combined Executive Boards of Locals 2, 29, 30 and 243. He outlined the organizational plans of the international union through the

(Continued on page 4)

Western Organizational Conference Formed



Representatives of local unions of the states of California and Arizona are shown at the meeting in Riverside, Calif., which adopted the organizational conference plan presented by President Coughlin and Organization Director Douglas and established the Western Conference.



Anita Amado, chosen secretary-treasurer of the Western Organizational Conference.

Organizational Plan

(Continued from page 3)

establishment of area Organizational Conferences throughout the country. He emphasized the need for affiliation and active participation by all of the local unions in the Bay area. He stated, in effect, that unless all local unions accept their responsibilities and participate in organizational campaigns regardless of jurisdictional grants, unionization of clerical workers in the Bay area will suffer.

"Unless our program is successful," he said, "wage rates you have already attained for your members will be imperiled when economic conditions have produced unemployment to the extent that clerical workers will be available for work at lower wage rates."

Representatives of the groups present expressed confidence in the program and indicated that successful results would be obtained in the Bay area.

Representatives of Locals 30 and 174 met with President Coughlin on November 12 and tentatively

City of Hope Receives Donation



OEIU President Coughlin and other guests at a dinner in Los Angeles honoring Teamster President Dave Beck in connection with collection of \$153,000 for the medical center, City of Hope. At Coughlin's right are Supervisor John A. Ford and Sheriff Eugene Biscailuz. At his left: Tom Ranfod of the Central Labor Union, Movie Actor Pat O'Brien and John Doolittle, business representative of Local 30. Seated at extreme right are Leroy Patterson, president of Local 174, and Vice President Max Krug.

agreed to a jurisdictional line of demarcation to be presented to the next International Executive Board meeting.

Thereafter, Business Representative John Doolittle of Local 30, President Leroy Patterson and Business Representative Max Krug of Local 174, and President Coughlin attended a dinner at the Ambassador Hotel in honor of Teamster President Dave Beck. At this dinner the City of Hope presented a Torch of Hope to President Dave Beck. President Beck announced that a total of \$153,000 was collected by the Teamster movement on behalf of the City of Hope. He also promised that the amount of money collected for this National Medical Center at Duarte, Calif., would total one million dollars in the next seven years.



John Kinnick, elected president of the Western Organizational Conference at Riverside, Calif.

Portsmouth Workers Give Vote to OEIU

George Firth, International Vice President, continued his winning ways at the Pike County Atomic Energy Plant, Portsmouth, Ohio, with another victory as a result of an NLRB election conducted December 7. More than 100 office workers voted for OEIU Local 308 at a ratio of more than 5 to 1.

Contract negotiations for the office employees of the Peter Kiewit Company and the Grinnell Company are presently being conducted by Vice President Firth at Portsmouth. The addition of the Reynolds-Newberry office workers brings the total of unionized clericals at Portsmouth to approximately 1,000.

Renews Ordnance Works Contract

Donald A. Morgan, secretary-treasurer of Local 293, reports improvement in the contract with the Badger Ordnance Works, Badger, Wis.

A general wage increase for all employees, reduction in the probationary period from 90 to 60 days; prorated vacation if an employee voluntarily resigns after completing one or more years of continuous service; improved sick leave provisions and automatic salary progression every 13 weeks after completion of the probationary period are some of the improvements won.

Arthur J. Lewandowski of Local 9 assisted in these negotiations.