



WHITE COLLAR

Office and Professional Employees International Union, AFL-CIO and CLC

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Canada's OPEIU Div. Holds First Convention

The first Convention of the Canadian Division of the Office & Professional Employees International Union was held in Ottawa, March 31 and April 1, being chaired by Canadian OPEIU Director Romeo Corbeil.

Delegates enthusiastically adopted a resolution calling for a contribution of two cents per member per month from the OPEIU per capita tax to be sent to the Canadian Labour Congress as a contribution to CLC's Committee on Political Education (COPE).

The CLC at present is actively supporting candidates, affiliated with the New Democratic Party, for the Canadian Parliamentary election is scheduled for May 22.

Speaker after speaker, endorsing the program, declared that the only method whereby labor will get a fair shake in Canada is through the New Democratic Party, if and when it gains power. Other actions taken by the Convention were:

1. It overwhelmingly defeated a resolution which, in effect,

called for the establishment of an autonomous Canadian OPEIU organization.

2. It established a Canadian Consultative Committee consisting of three Canadian Vice Presidents and seven Regional officers who were elected for three years. The committee will assist Vice Presidents in the areas of education, contract negotiations, public relations, organizing, staff training and union communications.

3. Delegates called upon the OPEIU to establish another Canadian Vice President princi-

pally because of the wide geographic area now represented by the existing Vice Presidents.

4. A resolution was adopted deploring the crushing of civil rights and other anti-union activities by governments in the Argentine, Chile, Nicaragua and Brazil.

5. The Convention fully endorsed a resolution commending Steelworkers Local 6500 and its members in their struggle against International Nickel (INCO) in Canada. The resolution called upon the Canadian Director to issue a strike appeal

for funds for these workers from all Canadian OPEIU Local Unions. Delegates contributed in excess of \$700 as a result of a collection taken during the Convention.

6. Delegates called upon Canadian Local Unions to make educational leave, including trade union education, a major collective bargaining goal.

7. The Convention called upon the Canadian government to set up a more realistic pension plan to provide 75% of pre-retirement earnings and have the plan indexed to the Canadian Consumer Price Index.

Big Data Processing Unit Won by OPEIU in Texas

A major victory in the data processing field was won by the OPEIU in Texas when a unit of 250 office and clerical employees at the headquarters of Agency Records Control, Inc. (ARC), in Bryan-College Station, voted for collective bargaining by a margin of 112-to-102, International Representative Jack Langford reports.

He says the NLRB election climaxed a strenuous and hard-fought campaign in which management used every effort to persuade the employees, without success, to vote against unionization.

The company, which is the leading data processing firm in the nation, provides automated accounting services for insurance agencies in this country and Puerto Rico. It also operates regional data servicing offices in Houston, Tex.; Chicago, Ill.; Hartford, Conn.; Atlanta, Ga., and Los Angeles, Calif.

In another NLRB election in Wisconsin, 65 office employees at Monarch Range, which manufactures stoves in Beaver Dam, voted for OPEIU representation by a 3-to-1 margin. This campaign was led by Midwest

Council Representative Stan Luker. The newly organized group will become members of Local 39 in Madison, Wis.

Local 13 Business Representative Patrick D. O'Toole reports winning a unit of 19 office employees at Schaeffer Mfg. Company in St. Louis, Mo. The vote for OPEIU representation was 14-to-4.

Brewery Yields 31½% Pay Boosts

3-Year Miller Pact Also Liberalizes Fringe Benefits

Across-the-board pay boosts totaling 31½% over three years, with improved fringe benefits were won in a new agreement concluded by Local 9 for its bargaining unit at Miller Brewing Company in Milwaukee, Wis., Business Manager Edward J. Kubicki reports.

The new agreement calls for

a 10.5% wage boost in the first year, and 7% in each of the following two years plus a 3.5% merit increase. The second shift premium was raised to 15¢ an hour (was 13¢), and the third shift to 20¢ from the previous 18¢.

Other gains are an additional holiday, Washington's Birthday, in the first contract year. A new clause makes proration toward fifth and sixth vacation weeks in the calendar year prior to full eligibility instead of the previous arrangement.

Health-welfare provisions, together with insurance coverage, were vastly improved. Major medical was increased to \$50,000, and a new surgical-medical plan provides benefits up to \$10,000 maximum per illness or disability. Retirees will receive the same benefits as active employees, less medicare benefits.

Eligible dependent children will be provided coverage through the calendar year they become age 25 (was 22).

Life insurance coverage was raised to a top figure of \$18,000 (was \$15,000); total and perma-

nent disability to a top maximum of \$155 a week (was \$125), and AD&D benefits to a \$160 maximum (was \$120).

Retiree life insurance for the first 12 months following retirement was raised to \$12,500 from \$12,000, and the death benefit was raised to \$2,000 from the previous \$1,500.

The general wage increase and health-welfare improvements are retroactive to March 1. International Representative Billie Adams and Kubicki led the unit negotiating team which included Lee Roy Krupinski, Dick Paulin, Shala Olson, Dennis Hesslink and Dick Breittling.

March C.P.I. at Record High

The U.S. Consumer Price Index in March rose to 209.1, a 1% increase over the previous month, or at a 13% annual rate setting an all-time high.

Meanwhile, Social Security announced that beneficiaries' checks for July will be increased by 9.9%.

See story on Page 2 on corporate profits which are skyrocketing.

Study Says U.S. Pay Rates Have Slipped to 5th Place

Average hourly earnings of manufacturing workers in the United States slipped from first place among the world's industrialized nations to fifth in the five-year period between 1972 and 1977, according to a study conducted by Towers, Perrin, Forster & Crosby, a New York consulting firm.

The study shows that Japanese workers averaged \$6.70 an hour at the end of 1977, based on October 1978 currency exchange rates. In Sweden, the pay was \$6.13 an hour, based on 1976 figures, the latest available.

Belgian workers averaged \$6.10 hourly during 1977, and in West Germany the average pay was \$5.76 an hour. U.S. production workers averaged \$5.63 an hour in 1977.

In 1972, the U.S. stood in first place with an average manufacturing hourly rate of \$3.81, while Japan was sixth with a \$2.86 hourly pay average. Five years later, the Japanese worker's pay had more than doubled, while U.S. average pay had risen slightly less than 48 percent.

Big British Bank Goes All-Out For Unionism

Assigns Two Staff Members to Assist in Expanding NUBE

When a man bites a dog that is news, but when a bank actively joins hands with a white-collar union to enlist its own employees as union members that is really BIG NEWS. But it happens in Britain—not the U.S.A., sad to say.

The giant Midland Bank in Britain has dropped its neutrality on whether or not its employees should belong to a union and is now enthusiastically

encouraging them to do so, according to the National Union of Bank Employees (NUBE).

Under a mutual arrangement, the bank agreed to assign two staff members, one clerical and the other technical, to expand union services to its employees.

The two representatives, who are NUBE members, were recruited from among Midland employees by the union with the bank maintaining their existing

grades and salary progression over a three-year period.

The bank also agreed to pay their moving expenses if a change of residence was necessary to bring them within a reasonable traveling distance of Central London. The function of these union-oriented representatives are:

1. The presentation of individual grievances, both verbally and in writing to the bank so

that they may be handled more speedily and effectively.

2. To assist NUBE bargainers in contract negotiations with the bank.

3. To handle secretarial work in connection with NUBE's Midland Bank committees.

4. To improve the communications facilities available to the union which means better arrangements for circulating

NUBE literature, giving it more access to offices and bank branches, together with the opportunity to address new employees at induction courses.

NUBE, Britain's largest union representing banking and financial employees, has 16,000 members at the Midland Bank. It says Midland employees are now joining its ranks at the rate of 1,000 a month.

WHITE COLLAR

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Rickover Rips Shysters

Shady lawyers and greedy employers for years have been making a farce of the National Labor Relations Act which organized labor has tried to correct through Labor Law Reform—so far without success.

In a recent speech before the N.Y. Patent Law Association in New York, Admiral Hyman G. Rickover, chief architect of the nation's nuclear fleet, takes the legal profession to task for using the same tactics against the armed services in the performance of their duties.

Describing many lawyers as "mercenaries" who worked with defense contractors to delay litigation and file excessive claims against the services, he said "the legal profession is making a great negative contribution to our defense," adding:

"In their quest for money and power, many lawyers seem to have forgotten their obligations. By so doing, they alienate their countrymen, breed distrust of our institutions and those who run them, and undermine the traditional values of honor, humility and honest dealing."

Citing his own "first-hand experiences" with lawyers, he said they had deliberately prolonged various disputes between contractors and the Navy in order to make more money for the lawyers involved. Beyond this, Admiral Rickover added that "large contractors and their well-paid law firms" had sought to defer or even to avoid reporting large losses to stockholders by dragging litigation out in court.

"Several large shipbuilders were for many years able to avoid reporting such losses," he revealed, "simply by predicting optimistic recoveries from pending litigation, and the longer a case drags on, the greater the likelihood of government people leaving for other jobs, memories fading, and the case finally being settled independent of the legal merits."

At one point in his speech, Admiral Rickover said that "there has been a breach of faith by lawyers—and the public knows it. A recent national poll found them ranked below garbage collectors in public esteem."

Like Admiral Rickover, we feel it's time the American Bar Association began to clean house by disbarring, instead of protecting, these unscrupulous members.

Why U.S. Dollar Falls

The role of American capital in financing foreign competitors of U.S. industries is spotlighted in a recent article in a Japanese English-language magazine, "The Oriental Economist."

The article, entitled "Internationalization of Money; a Survey of Foreign Banks' Loans to Japanese Firms," points out that major American banks are lending heavily to major Japanese corporations. The United States leads in the number of foreign banks having branches in Japan, with 22 of a total of 83, the article reveals.

"It is especially noteworthy that all of Japan's five major steel makers make their appearance among the 10 biggest borrowers," the article notes. "Other leading borrowers belong to such process industries as electric power, shipbuilding and chemicals as well as such service industries as trading and aviation. All of the leading borrowers are representative 'big business' in Japan and are aggressively engaged in international business."

According to the article, Citibank (formerly the National City Bank of New York) is the biggest foreign lender in Japan with 106 corporate borrowers of 500 million yen or more as clients. The second largest is the Bank of America. Chase Manhattan is third.

Before it is too late, these multinational banks must be brought under control. Here we find the root cause of the export of jobs, adverse balance of payments, the decline in the value of the dollar, and the general lowering of living standards for the average American family whose wage scale now ranks fifth for industrialized nations.

See survey on Page 1 which finds wage scales of U.S. workers are now fifth among industrialized countries. Steep decline has occurred in the five-year period, 1972-1977.

Profits Soar As Wages Fall Behind

When the Carter administration announced its anti-inflation guidelines last October, it set a 7 percent limit on wage increases but no controls of any kind on profits or interest rates.

Organized labor, including the OPEIU, protested that the administration plan would prove ineffective as an anti-inflation weapon. It failed during the Nixon administration. Since then Canada has tried it and it didn't work. It has also been tried in Britain and France with the same results.

Events since October have proved that wages and salaries are not the cause of inflation—they are only the symptoms of the malady. Although the administration projected that inflation would gradually be brought down to the 7 percent figure, the contrary is the case. Inflation is now more than double the official projection.

But in the last quarter of 1978, profits of the top 449 corporations and banks soared an incredible 27.7 percent over the previous year, some businesses scored all-time highs. As an example, General Motors in the final quarter of 1978 regis-

	Fourth Quar. 1978	1977 Fourth Quar.	% Change
9 Aerospace	\$ 352,753,000	\$ 233,477,000	+ 51.1
10 Airlines	58,043,000	80,034,000	- 27.5
7 Autos & Equipment	1,096,678,000	997,740,000	+ 9.9
12 Building Materials	196,958,000	132,038,000	+ 49.2
7 Building Supplies	155,663,000	107,753,000	+ 44.5
5 Cement Companies	41,295,000	24,285,000	+ 70.0
21 Chain Stores	191,279,000	139,509,000	+ 37.1
9 Chain Grocers	48,179,000	28,702,000	+ 67.9
12 Drug & Variety	143,100,000	110,807,000	+ 29.1
13 Chemicals	620,071,000	430,414,000	+ 44.1
18 Department Stores	464,576,000	445,921,000	+ 4.2
4 Distillers	76,315,000	63,644,000	+ 19.9
11 Drug Manufacturers	473,455,000	399,641,000	+ 18.5
18 Electrical Equip-Electron	840,771,000	722,815,000	+ 16.3
9 Broad-Line Companies	677,272,000	593,272,000	+ 14.2
9 Specialty Companies	163,499,000	129,543,000	+ 26.2
4 Farm Equipment	23,692,000	154,574,000	- 84.7
27 Food Products	561,962,000	465,740,000	+ 20.7
7 Mining & Non-ferrous Metals	256,515,000	95,308,000	+ 169.1
7 Office Equipment	1,369,483,000	1,081,720,000	+ 26.6
20 Petroleum Products	3,951,548,000	2,880,303,000	+ 37.2
15 Pulp & Paper Products	564,288,000	358,757,000	+ 57.3
18 Steel Manufacturers	450,561,000	140,412,000	+ 220.9
12 Textiles	67,023,000	61,628,000	+ 8.8
19 Tools & Machinery	279,479,000	227,904,000	+ 22.6
109 Other Industrials	1,855,394,000	1,508,998,000	+ 23.0
Total 361 Industrial Cos.	13,750,844,000	10,620,577,000	+ 29.5
11 Railroads	404,909,000	313,862,000	+ 29.5
57 Utilities	1,263,667,000	1,135,082,000	+ 11.3
20 Banks	855,459,000	672,011,000	+ 27.3
Total 449 Concerns	16,274,879,000	12,741,532,000	+ 27.7

tered the biggest profit ever recorded for a private industrial corporation. (See accompanying table.)

Meanwhile, during the same

period, the average weekly wages of workers didn't even increase enough to match inflation. Actually, profits rose four times as fast as wages.

Sea-Land Loses Seattle Dispute Arbiter Finds for 6 OPEIU Members Wrongly Penalized

Grievances of six employees of Sea-Land Services, Inc., at its Seattle, Wash., facility, who were penalized with suspensions for violating company policy through failure to keep accurate time records, were upheld when Local 8 brought their case to arbitration.

After hearing both sides, Arbitrator Philip Kienast ruled that the company must rescind the discipline imposed on the grievants; make them whole for loss of wages, and reinstitute its past disciplinary policy until such time as it negotiates a mutually agreeable change of this policy with the Union.

Local 8 Business Manager Don E. Olson, Jr., who handled the case for the employees, contended that the company had violated its OPEIU agreement with the new policy which it initiated at the Seattle facility on Feb. 6, 1978, without prior negotiation with the Union.

The current Sea-Land agreement is national in scope and covers employees in several facilities across the nation represented by OPEIU Locals. Special agreements applying to individual facilities, or bargaining units, are included as appendices to this national contract, the last appendix making special provisions for the Seattle facility.

The employer argued that the national agreement did not preclude management from "flexibly exercising its prerogatives to meet specific problems at its various facilities," and contended that it was only after its previous "no punch" policy

failed in Seattle that it instituted the new disciplinary procedures there.

But the arbitrator reasoned that the employer's right to promulgate rules is "separable and distinguishable from its right to alter the basic form of its disciplinary policy and procedures," and that it was obligated by "the agreement to re-

frain from making unilateral changes" in the absence of an express agreement by the Union at the national level comparable to that contained in the last appendix covering the Seattle employees.

He retained jurisdiction to resolve any disputes arising over the implementation of his award.

Bills to Bar Hypnotists Spark California Fight

A mass meeting of hypnotists sponsored by OPEIU Hypnotists Union Local 472 and other hypnotic organizations was held in Van Nuys, Calif., on April 22, to mobilize public support in their fight against four bills now before the California Legislature. The bills are designed to outlaw the practice of hypnotism in that state by anyone except a few licensed individuals.

According to Local 472 President J. Bartel, the four bills aim at eliminating Sec. 2908 of the state's Business & Professions Code which now protects the practice of hypnotism. Assemblyman Herschel Rosenthal has introduced bills 1031 and 1072 in the Assembly.

Senators Alan Sieroty and William Craven have introduced bills 706 and 661, respectively, in the Senate.

Hypnotists OPEIU Local 472 is circulating petitions against the anti-hypnotist bills, point-

ing out that they would deprive "a wide variety of people from receiving professional help if they want a psychologist," adding that "union hypnotists now fill the tremendous gap left open by the medical and psychological fields."

Local 472 President Bartel says that "the Hypnotists Union and the Hypnotists Examining Council have stringent guidelines for the schooling and experience of professional hypnotists, whereas licensed people have none." He stresses that if any of the bills become law, it would "drive up the cost of hypnotherapy" and create "a monopoly by power groups" and "special interest."

A Reminder!

When shopping, please don't buy any J. P. Stevens textile products until this anti-union company changes its attitude.

Also, please pass up Coors Beer!

Office Automation Worries Europe's Unions

See Five Million Secretarial and Typist Jobs Lost, or 25% in Coming Decade

It is estimated that the capacity of a micro-computer on one single chip by 1985 will equal that which some 25 years ago required a room full of equipment, according to the International Labor Organization which sees micro-electronics as the "most revolutionary technology of the 20th Century."

The costs have been falling, too. Execution of a computer instruction that cost about \$28 in 1960 was down to about two cents in 1970 and is about two-tenths of a cent today.

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology has estimated that if technological progress in the auto industry had been as rapid as that in the electronic industry, the cost of producing one Rolls Royce would be \$2.50 and the car would run 500,000 kilometers (312,500 miles) on one liter (a quart) of gasoline!

The growing impact of computers and "word processors" on office employment in Europe was the subject of a seminar held recently in Vienna, Austria, sponsored by the International Federation of Commercial, Clerical and Technical Employees (FIET), of which the OPEIU is a member.

A background paper prepared by FIET's Secretariat set the framework for the two-day discussions which reviewed the effects that automation will have on office jobs in the coming decade, particularly the occupation of secretary and typist.

"In view of the relatively low cost of the new technology, in relation to productivity increases experienced," said the paper, "it is expected that most European countries will switch to automated offices in the next ten years, following the experience in the U.S., where the present stock of 400,000 word-processor units is forecast to double in the next three years."

FIET says that independent consultants have made certain surveys in Europe which suggest that productivity of secretaries improves between 25% and 150% using word-processors, with an average of 130% recorded, depending on the type of work done.

The central reason for improved productivity is reduced time in retyping material because of errors, or drafting changes. In addition, routine material can be

reproduced in amended form with only slight retyping required for amendments.

The new technology achieves the storing of greater masses of information electronically, making redundant many tasks currently performed by filing, library and secretarial staffs. Managers and technicians will, therefore, have direct access to material without having to rely on intermediary secretarial or administrative staffs, the paper discloses.

Secretaries, Typists Face Job Losses

Measuring the scope of automation is bound to be hazardous, the paper continues. However, the Siemens multinational German conglomerate estimates that in the Federal Republic of Germany 40% of existing office work could be automated, and this would appear also a reasonable estimate for other European countries, it observes.

While many factors concerning automation may change or cannot be accurately forecast, nevertheless FIET presents some very tentative judgments on office employment in Europe over the next decade:

In European offices the rate of productivity growth could accelerate from its present trend rate of about 1/2% to something like 8% as automation takes place over a ten-year period. If the output rate of growth continues at a past-trend rate of approximately 6%, then employment of office staff could fall by 20% to 25% over the next ten years.

"That could mean that of the 18 to 19-million typists and secretaries in Western Europe, five million could lose their jobs in the next ten years."

The paper cites some examples of the office functions which have now been computerized such as cost accounting, auditing, communication, general administration, purchasing and sales, operations research and planning, resource administration, finance, inventory, payrolls, and personnel.

Estimating that the cost reduction brought about by the development of micro-computers will lead to an expansion of computer sales at the lower end of the size spectrum, the FIET paper adds that "more significantly it will encourage the purchase of micro-computers on a piecemeal basis designed for specific tasks."

However, the FIET paper adds that "the speed of

office automation will depend on a variety of economic and institutional factors. On the economic side, it predicts that countries with the highest labor costs would experience the fastest growth in office automation, since the application of the new technology is primarily labor-saving.

Say Automation Now Social Matter

The paper pointed out that automation to date has largely "taken place on the basis of management decisions," motivated by short-term profit considerations. "In these circumstances, the negative social effects are likely to be ignored, and the possible benefits are unlikely to accrue to working people," it notes.

Consequently, the paper suggests that "trade union strategies must aim to make computerization decisions the result of negotiation between management and unions and indeed to ensure that the whole process, once the decision is made, becomes a joint undertaking at all levels of the enterprise."

It said that in some European countries progress is being made in this direction, citing as one example a recent agreement on computerization signed between the Norwegian Employers' Association and the Norwegian Trade Union Confederation.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, there were 3 1/2 million secretaries and stenographers in this country in 1976 as well as one million typists. About two-thirds of the secretaries and one-half of the typists worked in factories, banks, insurance companies, real estate firms and government agencies.

Since office automation is moving faster in this country than in Europe, one can readily estimate that some 40% of this nation's office employees could also be affected in the coming decade if the European projections are on target.

Unlike Europe, however, where the majority of white collar employees belong to unions, those in North America for the most part are non-union. The latter, therefore, should give serious thought to their future job security. Coming technological developments already cast their shadows on the traditional viewpoint on office jobs.

Strange to say, inquiries at the U.S. Department of Labor in Washington indicate that no impact studies are being made in this country on the effects of automation in offices.

Women Lean Toward Unionism

Those With Jobs Feel "Powerless" to Solve Their Problems

Some 80% of the nation's working women are concentrated in lower-paying, lower-status jobs and many feel that to improve their conditions they must join together to present a solid front, according to *Oregon Journal* feature writer Suzanne Richards.

Two important areas of dissatisfaction are the level of earnings and lack of opportunity for advancement. Many see unionism as an alternative to the "powerlessness" they now feel, although only one in five union members today is a woman. But others don't join because, as one clerk-typist expressed it:

"Women don't organize because they fear employer retaliation and are afraid of being labeled a women's libber."

Among women she interviewed was Johnnie Ruth Storer, Portland 11 Business Representative, who said that when women feel they really need help they will turn to unionism, adding:

"Traditionally, women have not been conscious of benefits. But inflation, medical bills, everything nowadays is making

them look at benefits equally with wages. Even if a woman is married and her husband has hospitalization, she needs the extra coverage if she is working."

Storer said she's encouraged about unionism's future among women when she talks to young people, especially young women, because she finds them thinking seriously about lifetime work, retirement plans and the benefits they want.

The *Journal* story said that while many women don't want

another job, they do question why nurses earn only as much as bus drivers, why flight attendants are paid less than the men who scrub the airplanes, and why women office workers don't earn as much as janitors.

Most attribute this to the fact that historically men have defined the values of different jobs. Some feel that equal pay will come only when existing jobs are redefined instead of catalogued as male and female, the article said.

Bank Workers On Strike Arrested, Fined in Spain

The Spanish government arrested 52 striking bank employees and fined them \$3,500 each when they called a work stoppage in support of their wage claims and opposed a proposal extending their work-week from 30 to 40 hours.

The bank employees were given a deadline for payment of the fines or they would be imprisoned again.

Bank unions in Europe, representing 550,000 employees, meeting in London, adopted

a resolution supporting their Spanish colleagues. FIET, the world federation of white-collar employees, sent a strong protest to the Spanish Prime Minister. Its European affiliates also sent similar protests to the Spanish ambassadors in their respective countries.

The Spanish government later informed FIET that it had refrained from further persecution of the bank strikers, although the charges against them had not yet been dropped.

Winter Blizzards Have Delayed Union Reaction

During the heavy snowstorms last winter in Chicago and elsewhere around the country that paralyzed transportation in dozens of cities, the hearts of many employers were even colder.

Hundreds of thousands of workers who were "snowed in" and couldn't reach their jobs because traffic and public transportation was tied up were docked a day's pay. In Chicago, one-third of its bank employ-

ees and those at Sears Roebuck were docked, as well as uncounted tens of thousands of factory workers.

"A lot of employers have a surprise coming when negotiations for a new contract are opened," commented one union officer. "We'll insist on an 'Act of God' clause in the new agreements with the clear understanding that three feet of snow is an act of God."

Big Gains Made in New Domtar Fine Paper Pact

Wage boosts totaling almost \$40 a week per individual, a new dental plan and more liberalized vacations, were won by Local 263 in a two-year agreement renegotiated with Domtar Fine Paper, St. Catharines, Ontario, Local 263 President H. Sutherland reports.

He says a general increase of \$8.40 per week is retroactive to September 1, 1978. Another \$8.05 became effective March 1, 1979. A further raise of \$7.70 becomes effective next September 1, to be followed on

March 1, 1980, by a \$7.35 general increase. The contract also calls for a cost-of-living allowance float of \$8.40 per week.

Improvements were also made in vacations, the new agreement providing four weeks after 12 years, and five after 22, as well as in the Pension Plan. The company agreed to pay full cost of premiums for the dental plan.

OPEIU Council Representative Gilles Beauregard assisted the Local 263 team during the negotiations.



from the desk
of the
PRESIDENT

Labor Movement Opposes Constitutional Proposal

We recently received a letter from AFL-CIO President George Meany informing each International Union and the labor movement in general of the AFL-CIO's opposition to a campaign by right-wing groups to call a Constitutional Convention to construct an amendment to the United States Constitution mandating a balanced federal budget.

Twenty-two states had already called for the Constitutional Convention. Since receipt of President Meany's letter, four additional states followed. Once 34 states have called for a Constitutional Convention, Article V of the Constitution requires the Congress to call this Convention to propose the amendment. In effect, therefore, only eight more states are needed to do the job.

President Meany is urging State Federations of Labor to lobby against this amendment. It is the AFL-CIO position that the economic effects of such an amendment could be disastrous. In addition, there are numerous uncertainties and dangers surrounding the Constitutional process. For these reasons, the AFL-CIO opposes this legislative proposal.

We have not had a Constitutional Convention since the Founding Fathers first met to amend the Articles of Confederation and ended up drafting an entirely new Constitution.

Several attempts, however, have been made to call a Constitutional Convention. All have failed. The most recent campaign occurred in the 1960s when the right-wing attempted to overturn the "one man—one vote" decisions of the Supreme Court. It came perilously close to succeeding. Thirty-three states approved it, only one short of the necessary 34.

Poses Dangerous Threat

The real danger is that any Constitutional Convention could open up the Constitution to any and all issues, no matter how extreme. The threat of a "run-away convention," considering all kinds of extraneous issues such as the "one man—one vote" abolition, income tax repeal and a national "right-to-work" law, is a distinct possibility and would pose a considerable threat to Constitutional stability.

For example, if such an amendment had applied last year, the current fiscal year (1979) budget would have been cut by nearly \$40 billion. Federal programs would be devastated. Unemployment would increase and national security would be threatened. State and local governments would face the loss of federal aid for transportation, housing, education, job programs, law enforcement and all other categories of assistance.

Significant increases in state and local taxes would be required to only partially offset lost federal revenues.

Essential programs for people, such as federal aid to education, enforcement of civil rights and labor laws, funding for CETA, public works and many others, would feel the fiscal axe of this amendment. Key federal research and development programs in health, energy, science, agriculture and defense would be significantly curtailed.

Would Affect Jobs

All regulatory programs in such areas as OSHA, the environment and consumer protection would be severely weakened. All of these cutbacks would immediately and adversely affect employment in the private and public sector.

Unfortunately, we are in an anti-government climate which may lean toward a Constitutional amendment to mandate a balanced budget. The success of Proposition 13 would indicate that voter discontent would lend support to this right-wing effort. At the present time, several states and many local jurisdictions (cities and counties) require balanced operating budgets.

Our task at the moment is to defeat meat-axe proposals which we fear would result from a Constitutional Convention. The organized labor movement, and the OPEIU in particular, could be severely hurt by proposals emanating from a Constitutional Convention. We join with the AFL-CIO in opposing the attempt by right-wing groups to call a Constitutional Convention.

See story on this page asking for volunteers for the AFL-CIO Price Watch Operation in each community. We urge all OPEIU members to join!

Fired Strikers Win Back Jobs

Glass Containers Anti-Union Ploy Backfires

Administrative Law Judge James T. Youngblood rules that Glass Containers Corp. violated the labor law when it refused to sign a contract negotiated with New London, Conn., OPEIU Local 106, and instead fired members of the bargaining unit at its plant in Dayville, Conn., on November 22, 1977, after they called a strike.

He ordered the company to offer reemployment to the strikers in their old jobs, or to substantially similar positions, without prejudice to their seniority or other rights previously enjoyed, and make them whole for any loss of pay or other benefits, with interest,

retroactive to the date they were discharged.

When the unit contract came up for renegotiation, the company kept stalling until the contract expiration date had passed. It was brought out at the NLRB hearing in Boston that a decertification petition was being circulated in the plant with the company's knowledge, although the bargaining unit at that time was unaware of the ploy.

But the company lost the decertification election, the real purpose of the stalling tactics, and then notified the strikers that their jobs had been filled by other employees it had hired to

replace them.

In a somewhat similar case involving a Portland, Me., employer, the National Labor Relations Board struck down by a 3-to-2 decision a long-standing requirement that illegally discharged strikers must request reinstatement to trigger an employer's back pay liability.

The Board ruled that a discharged striker is entitled to back pay from the date of his illegal discharge to the date he is offered reinstatement. The historic ruling overturns a 30-year-old precedent.

"A discharged striker is a discharged employee, and entitled to be treated as such, for there is nothing peculiar to a strike which justifies dissimilar treatment," the majority declared. "The nature of the employer's unlawful conduct is not changed by the fact that the employee happens to be a striker at the time of discharge."

Operation Price Watch Seeks OPEIU Volunteers

AFL-CIO President George Meany has appointed Director of Community Services Leo Perlis to organize and implement organized labor's national price watch program, and urges all members to volunteer.

The monitoring program is being organized through state and central labor bodies. In a letter to all Internationals, Perlis says: "Let's show our fellow-Americans that the trade union movement cares enough about price-gouging to do something about it."

Volunteers will be assigned in each community to monitor prices of food, medicines and medical care, clothing, transportation, shelter and utilities, and gasoline and fuel biweekly.

President Howard Coughlin says that the OPEIU will cooperate wholeheartedly with the price monitoring program and urges all Locals in the nation to recruit and assign as many volunteers as possible to work with central labor bodies, adding:

"It will afford our women members, who are constant shoppers, a special opportunity to serve their communities and the American people as a whole in this national effort to pinpoint the major causes of inflation and spiraling prices."

Locals can obtain further information by writing to: AFL-CIO Department of Community Services, 815 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.

\$3,500 Per Member Won at Canadian Paper Firm

Wage gains totaling more than \$3,500 per member, with numerous improved fringe benefits, were gained by Local 488 for its bargaining unit at Boise Cascade Canada Ltd., in a renegotiated two-year contract at Kenora, Ontario.

The new agreement, retroactive to May 1, 1978, calls for a \$74 per month general pay increase the first year. The second year starting June 1, 1979, an across-the-board boost of \$64 a month, or 5%, was obtained.

Fringe benefit improvements included a prescription drug plan paid for by the company;

improved payment for work on Sundays and paid holidays; a more liberal vacation plan providing four weeks after 12 years of seniority and five after 22, and an improved bereavement clause providing two additional days for specific family members.

The OPEIU unit negotiating team included Local 488 President Roger Leroux, Vice President Gary Uhlig, Sec.-Treas. Darlene Sutherland, and Ed Bowman, pension representative. They were assisted by Mid-Canada Council Representative Emil Stencer.

New De Laval Contract Up Pay, Fringe Benefits

Across-the-board wage boosts of 40 cents an hour in each year of a two-year renewal contract, with improved vacations, health-welfare and pension benefits, were gained by Local 112 for its office unit at the De Laval Separator Company in Poughkeepsie, N.Y., Sec.-Treas. Walter Hauver reports.

He says the new agreement yields better major medical cov-

erage, with the company agreeing to pay 50% of the cost of Blue Cross/Blue Shield premiums for employees who retire with full benefits at age 62 with 15 years of service. Benefits are increased by \$1 per month times years of service in each of the two years.

The company also agreed to pay \$10 per day for unused sick leave to a maximum of 15 days.

U.S. Price Index

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics New Base 1967 = 100		
1978	Old	Revised
March	188.4	189.7
April	191.3	191.4
May	191.2	193.3
June	195.1	195.3
(Old Index discontinued after June)		
July		196.7
August		197.8
September		199.3
October		200.9
November		202.0
December		202.9
1979		
January		204.7
February		207.1
March		209.1

Canadian Price Index

Statistics Canada New Base 1971 = 100	
1978	
March	170.8
April	171.2
May	173.6
June	175.1
July	177.7
August	177.8
*September	177.5
(*First decrease since Sept. 1971)	
October	179.3
November	180.8
December	181.3
1979	
January	182.7
February	184.4
March	186.6

If you move, send you old and new address, including zip code and social security or social insurance number to:

William A. Lowe, Sec.-Treas.
815 16th Street, N.W., Suite 606
Washington, D.C. 20006