PENSION PLAN WON IN NEW AGREEMENT

Portland, Ore.—Signing of a noncontributory pension plan was announced jointly by the Portland Gas & Coke Co. and the two employee unions involved, the Office Employees International Union, Local 133, and the International Chemical Workers Union, Local 133. (Photo on page 4.)

The pension plan became effective May 1 and will cover approximately 1,130 employees of the Portland utility. For a worker retiring at age 65 after 20 years of credited service, the minimum monthly benefit will be $100, including social security benefits.

The pension program, based on present payrolls, is estimated to cost about $200,000 a year.

Below is the formula for calculating the benefits:

One per cent of the first $3,000 of average annual earnings plus 1 1/2 per cent of any wages over $3,000 multiplied by the number of years of service equals monthly payments.

Accredited service may start at age 30 but not before. During the first three years of the plan employment, and age 65 will be permitted but with no increase in benefits after 65.

An earlier voluntary retirement provision also is included, optional at 55 after 15 years' accredited service but with smaller payments.

Another option allows including of the employee's spouse, which reduces payments but extends them over a longer time.

The new agreements also included higher wage differentials for swing and graveyard shifts, retroactive to January 1.

MAJORITY FOR AFL

Washington—AFL unions won 169 collective bargaining elections in February, the National Labor Relations Board reported.

This was 67 per cent of the 251 elections in which AFL unions took part. The AF of L won 55 for 41 per cent of all union victories during the month.

The AFL took part in and won more elections than the CIO (71) and independent unions (82) combined.

Elections are won only at the ballot box. The only citizens allowed at the ballot box are voters. The only way to become a voter is to register.

Initial OEIU Educational Conference Great Success

Philadelphia, Pa.—Over 100 participants from nearly 60 local unions in the OEIU-sponsored educational conference held in this city were unanimous in their praise of the benefits received by them from the meeting, to say nothing of the enjoyable dinner and entertainment presented the evening of the first day of the conference.

The conference, under the general direction of OEIU Vice President Edward P. Springman, got off to a good start on Saturday morning, April 15, with the keynote address by Pennsylvania State Federation of Labor President James L. McDevitt and AFL Regional Director Henry A. McFarland of the organizational and negotiation assistance that is available through AFL state federation central bodies and the AFL itself. President McDevitt also emphasized need for all of labor cooperating with Labor's League for Political Education.

OEIU President Paul R. Hutchings elaborated on the facilities of the International and how they can be useful in the organizing programs and in solving the collective bargaining problems of OEIU local unions, emphasizing at the same time how, by strategic use of OEIU representatives, they can be of most help to our local unions in their agreement negotiations.

OEIU Secretary-Treasurer J. Howard Hicks expressed satisfaction in the calling of the conference and pointed out the benefits which it could have to the over-all development and functioning of OEIU movement. He illustrated how effective organizing work by local unions aids in broadening and implementing activities of each local union and the International Union.

Professor Irving L. H. Kerroson in charge of the Labor Program at Rutgers University opened the Saturday afternoon session with a short talk on the responsibilities of the local union and the need for developing leadership, followed by an outline of some of the methods used in obtaining good public relations by Rob Roy, director of public relations, Community Chest of Philadelphia and vicinity.

Organizing problems and how to meet them were discussed by a panel headed by Professor Anthony Luchek of the Pennsylvania State College Labor Education Service.

(Continued on page 3)

IMPETUS GIVEN TO WALL STREET DRIVE

New York, N. Y.—The ill-advised action of the New York Stock Exchange to cut down on the usual summer Saturday business contributed considerably to the organizational efforts of OEIU Local 205.

The exchange was forced to backtrack hurriedly when the local flooded its offices with pamphlets pointing out that the "brokerage business is about the only industry that refuses to adopt the 5-day week.

Coincident with its drive to remain open on Saturdays, the Exchange in a program of retraining started a job purgation of nonunion help in the Exchange. Publicity pamphlets by Local 205 exposed this attempt by the Wall Street magnates and forced them to back off.

A representation election held last month by the NLRB among the 130 some employees of the graphic unit of the New York Stock Exchange resulted in a landslide victory for OEIU Local 205, which local presently holds bargaining rights for other clerical employees of this Exchange.

Recent election in this local union with the New York Curb and Cotton exchanges have resulted in similar results for its members.

The Street knows now that its local is not to be discounted, and the employers know that their best interests are closely allied with those of Local 205.

65 Cents Inadequate

Boston, Mass.—Albert L. Mokab, member of OEIU Local 6 and AFL, representative on the Minimum Wage Board for office, clerical, technical and similar occupations for the state of Massachusetts, has together with other labor representatives dissented from that Board's recommendation of a minimum wage of 65 cents for these occupations.

The state's minimum wage law requires the establishment of a wage that is "fair and reasonable value of the services rendered and sufficient to meet the minimum cost of living necessary for health."

The labor representatives point out that the increased cost of living since the establishment of the 60-cent minimum in 1946 would justify a substantially higher minimum; that the 65 cents now recommended, at the same time adding that the original 60-cent minimum was too low and therefore, contrary to the intent of the statute.

ALL THIS—AND CONGRESS, TOO?

Washington—Westinghouse Electric Corporation last year made the highest profit in its 64-year history.

President Gwilym A. Price, in breaking the latest business success story of the month, also took time to complain that the Truman tax policy is "throttling the incentive to invest in American industry."

The Westinghouse net profit in 1949 was $67.3 million. In 1948 it was $55.7 million. The increase in per cent is more than 20 per cent.

Hey! Just what does big business want from the American way of life? All this—and Congress, too?
Profits High

Profit levels are so high generally that most corporations are able to increase wages this year. This is the conclusion of an AFL study.

The AFL has urged local unions to seek wage increases of 10 to 15 cents an hour or more this year to raise consumer purchasing power, keep the nation’s industrial machine turning at full speed, and restore full employment.

Reports just published show that profits in the first quarter of 1950 are up $1,000,000,000 from the fourth quarter of 1949.

The Standard & Poor’s outlook of April 10 gave the earnings outlook for 1950 as 10 per cent above 1949 in 147 industries: building, chemicals, coal, tin containers, electrical power, gold mining, meat packing, natural gas, paper, radio and television, railroads, rayon yarn, beer, sugar, tires and rubber goods.

Little change is expected in 38 other industries. Declines of 10 per cent or more are expected in only 10 industries. This is another indication that workers have good reason to believe companies can pay higher wages in 1950 as production by reason.

Workers should carefully examine their companies financial position before going into negotiations for they may be in an industry which is making higher profits now than last year.

Political Education

Does political education accomplish anything?

Talking about the story of the Kerr natural gas bill, the history of this legislation reveals the importance of political education.

Late in January, the House passed the natural gas bill with little debate. The vote was 183-131, not close at all.

Then consumers’ groups, co-ops, farmers, small businessmen and mayors of many cities started pointing out what the natural gas legislation meant.

Senators and Representatives heard from their constituents. And the Congressmen began to give natural gas more attention.

Launched the House passed the natural gas bill came up in the Senate. Soon after Senators began discussing the measure, it became clear that this legislation faced a tough battle.

The bill was amended, weakened, weakened, weakened, weakened.

As a result of political education by workers—such as LLPE carried on—farmers and small businesses are trying to get wage increases of 10 to 15 cents an hour or more this year to raise consumer purchasing power, keep the nation’s industrial machine turning at full speed, and restore full employment.

The FTU conducts its activity on two fronts—abroad and within the Iron Curtain.

The FTU carries on the work of the Free Trade Union Center in Exile. It engages in cooperation with all democratic trade unions who have been persecuted by Soviet Communism in two ways—

Go slow.

Keep your faith.

The first means to work, produce, harvest as little as possible and as slowly as possible. The second means that there is no hope that any day the Iron Curtain countries will be liberated from Soviet mastery. Until then—keep your faith.

The purveyors of these slogans are a group of men, trade unionists, who have gathered together in Paris under the name of the Free Trade Union Center in Exile.

They include recognized representatives of trade union movements in Bulgaria, Rumania, Yugoslavia, Lithuania, Estonia, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland.

These representatives are men who fought totalitarianism of the domestic Fascist variety and now face the Iron Curtain. Some of them have been imprisoned, tortured, and killed.

Visiting America to help the Free Trade Union Center in Exile, is a group of men who are fighting for the right of men to work and to live.

Support the FTU. Give to the FTU.

We, the Office Worker, Official organ of the OFFICE EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION.

NEW BUDGET BOOKS


These publications can be secured from the University of California Press, Berkeley 4, Calif. Their titles and cost are: (1) Quarterly and Cost Budgets for Three Income Levels—$1.25; (2) Quarterly and Cost Budget for a Single Working Woman—$1.00; (3) Quarterly and Cost Budget for Dependent Families or Children—$1.00; and (4) Food for Four Income Levels—$1.00.

Oh for the Life of an Editor

Getting out this newspaper is no picnic.

If we print jokes, people say we are silly.

If we don’t they say we are too serious.

If we stick close to the office all day, We ought to be around hunting material.

If we go out and try to hustle, We ought to be on the job in the office.

If we don’t print contributions, We don’t appreciate genius; And if we print them, the paper is filled with junk!

If we edit the other fellow’s write-up we’re too critical; If we don’t we’re asleep. If we clip things from other papers, We are too lazy to write them ourselves.

If we don’t we are stuck on our own stuff.

Now, like it or not, some guy will say We swiped this from some magazine. *We did!*

FREE TRADE UNIONISM

Free Trade Unionism Only

Hope Against ‘Reds’ in Europe

New York. — The slogans of Europe’s democratic trade unionists who have been persecuted by Soviet Communism are two:

Go slow.

Keep your faith.

The first means to work, produce, harvest as little as possible and as slowly as possible. The second means that there is no hope that any day the Iron Curtain countries will be liberated from Soviet mastery. Until then—keep your faith.

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"Labor is the only hope in Central Europe. It is the only dynamic institution and we are grateful truly to the AFL, particularly to Jay Lovestone and Irving Brown for their cooperation in helping us set up our Center in Paris."
One-third of a Nation

Remember that phrase? It's one many of us will never forget, but this time it can have a bright and cheerful meaning, for one-third of the Nation is YOUNG.

Our country has 46 million children under the age of 18. That's more children than we've ever had before, and still they come. Last year 3,000,000 babies were born, more than any other year except 1947 when the national birthrate set its highest record to date.

More and Better

Will all these children grow into healthy adults? Can we meet this challenge of more children—for whom all of us want a better life?

One way: The Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth scheduled for December. Held every 10 years, the first Conference met in 1909. Out of it came the Children's Bureau, improvements in foster care and a mothers' pension movement. At the 1919 Conference, important child health and welfare standards were framed and the demand for child labor laws speeded up.

This year the Conference will tackle mental health, establish guides for the development of the whole child. During the first half century, physical health was all important, but we have learned that a sound, healthy child is emotionally and mentally healthy, too.

For the first time, young people are taking part in this Conference. Work has been started, state committees have been formed. Find out who heads your state committee; be sure labor is represented on it. You will want a part in this conference, so the children are what they are meeting about.

Speaking of Babies

The pamphlet heading the best seller for the present is entitled "Infant Care." Last year more than 2,000,000 copies of this successful treatise were sold. Half of all new mothers in the country bought one.

Margarine

Unless your state has laws against it, you can buy margarine already colored on July 1. Also, wherever you live, you should get it at a lower price and by the quarter pound if you prefer it that way.

The federal tax of 10 cents a pound on colored margarine is reduced on June 30 along with other licensing fees designed to keep margarine white. It will be interesting to see whether the margarine people pass this saving on to consumers.

Women in office

Says Congresswoman Helen Gahagan Douglas, currently running for the Senate: "I do advocate women, as long as women can do a better job of public office on every level of government from the ward and precinct to the top."

Incidentally, the number of women representatives in state legislatures has increased from 29 in 1917 to 217 in 1949. Percentage-wise it is now twice as high as in Congress. The trend is certainly upward.—Polly Edison.

Philadelphia, Pa.—Professor Anthony Luchek, Labor Education Service, Pennsylvania State College, and chairman of the panel on Organizing Problems at the recent OEU educational conference here indicates the points to be stressed by members of the panel. Left to right: OEU Representative George P. Firth, Professor Luchek, OEU Representative Nicholas J. Juliani, OEU Representative Edward C. Nagel. Howard Coughlin, business representative of New York Local 153, was also a member of this panel, but he was not present when the picture was taken.

The "Do-Little 81st Congress" has turned the halfway mark of its second session and is headed for adjournment in three months or less with an unimpressive record to lay before the voters.

One side is the certainty of no further action to repeal the Taft-Hartley law, no action on National Health Insurance or liberalizing unemployment compensation. That's the progress that the House of a federal aid to education bill; slight prospects for any strong civil rights law, especially congressional; killing the cooperative housing provisions of the housing law.

On the positive side, this session has completed action on a good displaced persons bill and repeal of the federal taxes on oleomargarine. This year we put money into the people and workers appears to be liberalization of the social security system, already past the House and guaranteed Senate passage before adjournment.

Still pending are the Marshall Plan and agency appropriations measures. The Senate took up rent control extension nudged by a special joint session of President Truman to extend present curbs until June 30, 1950. The House scheduled later hearings.

Among witnesses before the stawarts in House and Senate were doubtful that they could give the people the little rent protection they now enjoy. Only the strongest action by labor and liberal groups can retain any kind of curbs.

In his special message asking Congress to continue rent controls another year, Mr. Truman said:

"I strongly advocate extension of rent control because I am convinced that the public interest requires it. Housing is the one area of acute shortage remaining from wartime. Removal of controls would mean serious hardship for large numbers of tenants who are caught in a 'seller's market' and cannot obtain lower rents by shopping around. Until supply is near enough to demand so that the forces of competition will again operate effectively to protect the tenant, rent control should continue.

"At the same time, we should continue the present policy of granting the landlord all justifiable increases in rent. The basis of our policy must be the assurance that it is justifiable."

The collective bargaining process, and related developments of the local unions present offered many constructive suggestions and added valuable mustiness to making this conference a success.
Renewal Pact With Gas Utility

Portland, Ore.—Shown at signing of renewal agreements between OEU Local 11 and International Chemical Workers Union Local 133 and the Portland & Cal. Coke Co., the local union and the company have agreed to a 60-day notice to the company and a 60-day notice to the local union. The company has been ordered to cease and desist from any unfair labor practice in violation of the National Labor Relations Act.

Negotiations—The locality of the plant is the proper place for negotiations to take place over a contract, NLRB rules; and if a company, together with another company, in another place in the country, it's up to management to get its negotiations with the local union. The Board makes this ruling in a case involving a company near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in a place at which a local had bargaining rights. The company insisted that negotiations take place in Pittsburgh as the union had an office in that city, but the Board holds that it's the local union doing the bargaining and there's no reason it has to delegate its powers. (Woolaway, Pacific Coast Brake Co. and IAM.)

60-Day Notice—An NLRB trial examiner has recommended that a union that walked out on the 50th day of the 60-day cooling-off period went out on an illegal strike. The examiner holds the company's refusal to deal any further with the union and its decision not to take back the strikers. The NLRB hasn't ruled on this point yet.

The union intended to comply with the 60-day requirement but got fouled up because a legal holiday delayed receipt of the notice by the company. Ohio Oil Co. and Oil Workers, CIO.

Grievance Handling—The NLRB has upheld a union's right to refuse to give up its right to be present at all grievance adjustments, and the Board emphasizes that the union has such a right to be present given to it in the plain language of the contract.

The company had refused to sign any contract unless the union waived its right to be present during the initial processing of a grievance. The union signed the contract before waiving its right to take the issue to the NLRB.

What Congress intended in the T-H law, says the Board, was that the employee had the right to keep its eye on any settlements between the company and individual employees precisely because they might, at any time, affect the contract.

The company made the union's agreement on the point a condition for any further bargaining. And this is reversed and held to be in good faith, NLRB rules. (Bethlehem Steel Co. and Shipbuilding Workers, CIO.)

Picketing—A picket sign calling an employer "non-union" carried by a union attempting to organize the employer's employees has been held by the California Superior Court (Los Angeles County) NOT to be untruthful so as to warrant a temporary injunction. (Cancer v. RCIA Local 244.)

Renewal Contract—in order to maintain a suit for breach of contract against an employer under the T-H Act, the S. District Court (Northern District of Ohio) points out that, what is alleged, has been held to constitute a violation of the contract. It is not enough, the court states, that it be a provision of the law.

The suit in the instant case (Elektro Workers v. Pasko Airflex Co.) was based on employer's failure to give a 60-day notice of desire to amend a contract and his alleged change in working conditions within the 60 days.

The action was dismissed because there was no indication in the contract covering the 60-day notice.