



WHITE COLLAR

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

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Organizing successes bring 200 into union

Four organizing successes, three of them in Canada, have brought the OPEIU nearly 200 new members.

Local 81 has organized a 41-member office unit at Lakehead University in Port Arthur, Ontario, and negotiated a first contract. Lakehead is the fourth higher educational institution organized by the OPEIU, and the first in Canada. Previously organized were Fordham University and the Jewish Theological Seminary, both in New York City, and Roosevelt University in Chicago.

Local 131 in Toronto won certification as bargaining agent for a 25-member unit of office workers at Purolator, Inc., manufacturer of filters used in the automotive, industrial and aerospace fields. Local 32 in Newark, N.J., bargains for another unit of Purolator office workers.

International Representative Romeo Corbeil reports that newly-chartered Local 447 has been certified as bargaining

agent for a 40-member office employee unit at the new newsprint mill of Consolidated Bathurst, Ltd., in Portage-Du-Fort, Miller's Bay, Quebec. This paper manufacturer, listed on the Toronto and Montreal stock exchange, has subsidiary plants at Ashland and Hinsdale, New Hampshire, and at Brattleboro, Vermont.

Local 5 in Denver, Colorado, has been elected as bargaining agent for a 65-member office unit at United-Buckingham Freight Lines in that city. This company maintains scheduled services over routes in excess of 18,000 miles in 15 northwestern and midwestern states, and Alberta, British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Manitoba in Canada.

Here or in sight: the \$100 minimum

A \$100 weekly minimum starting wage for office workers in the lowest clerical grade—office boys, messengers, file and mail clerks—is becoming a reality through hard-hitting collective bargaining by OPEIU negotiators.

An analysis of OPEIU contracts negotiated during 1968 indicates that some bargaining units already exceed the \$100 figure—which is 56% above the U.S. minimum wage—while others will reach it through guaranteed automatic raises before current contracts expire.

This wage rate, of course, does not include fringe benefits such as health and welfare programs, pension and dental plans. Fringe benefits are estimated to run about 27% of a company's payroll, thus costing employers some \$33 additional per worker each week.

The new contract negotiated by Local 2 with the Washington (D. C.) Gas Light Company, a public utility, sets a \$474 a month starting rate, effective

June 1. It also sets a top scale of \$833 a month in the highest job classification, just \$4 below a \$10,000 annual salary rate.

Local 153's contract covering office employees at the Public Service Electric & Gas Co. of New Jersey also achieves a \$100-plus minimum, as does the settlement covering the local's hotel members.

In New London, Conn., Local 106 negotiators bargaining for clericals in a multi-union contract with the Electric Boat Division of General Dynamics Corporation settled for a starting rate of \$99.60 next year, with a boost to \$104.80 in 1971. Local 277 negotiators in Fort Worth gained a \$101.20 weekly starting minimum for clericals employed at the Texas Division of General Dynamics.

In some specialized situations, OPEIU bargainers have won a starting office minimum far

above the \$100 figure. For example, Local 29's newest pact with the California Trucking Association, covering some 70 office clericals, sets a \$124.80 beginner's rate in the lowest office grade to take effect April 1. These members will also enjoy a cost-of-living allowance of up to 4¢ an hour.

The Oakland local also achieved a \$108.20 weekly minimum for beginner clerks in its current contract with the California Bakery Employers Association, and a \$130.20 weekly minimum for office employees of the Northern California Dairy Industry.

Further north in Portland, Oregon, Local 11's latest contract with McKesson & Robbins, Inc., a division of Foremost-McKesson, wholesale distributors of drugs, establishes the \$100 a week minimum for clerical employees in October, 1970.

NLRB, courts uphold locals in unfair practice cases

The National Labor Relations Board has upheld a complaint by Local 9 that a member was denied a Christmas bonus because of union organizing activities and ordered the employer, the Wisconsin Aluminum Co., to make the payment.

In two other cases involving unfair labor practices on the part of management, OPEIU locals have been upheld by U.S. Circuit Courts of Appeal. Local 306 has successfully defended two employees of an Atomic Energy Commission contractor in Amarillo, Texas. Local 153 in New York City has obtained an affirmation of the vital Excelsior ruling on names and addresses of representation election voters.

In the Local 9 case, management admitted that for 19 years prior to 1967, Lorin Haver, senior payroll clerk, had received a Christmas bonus of up to \$500 annually but was dropped from the list after the office became unionized. It said that the bonus went only to supervisors and that Haver was no longer considered a supervisor.

Withholding the bonus for the reason given by management was, the NLRB ruled, a "plain violation" of the labor act. It reasoned as follows:

"There was no change in Haver's duties or responsibilities" from one Christmas to the next. What had changed in the interval was that Haver had

organized the clerical workers into a union and was now included in the bargaining unit.

To withhold a bonus payment solely because the employee is represented by a union "serves naturally to discourage membership in a labor organization,"

the board said.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit ruled to enforce an NLRB order against a no-solicitation rule maintained by Mason & Hanger-Silas Mason Company, Inc., the Atomic
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Hotel pact brings \$24 advance

New York City hotel workers belonging to Local 153—clerks, auditors, checkers and cashiers—gain record increases totaling \$24 under a settlement reached January 18. A \$6 raise is retroactive to December 1, and three others of \$6 each are effective in June of this year, June of 1970 and June

every white-collar category will be over \$100 weekly in 1971. The settlement, negotiated by the New York Hotel and Motel Trades Council, which includes Local 153, covers some 30,000 hotel workers of all crafts. About 1,800 are Local 153 members.

In addition to the highest increases in the 30-year history of collective bargaining in New York City hotels, the settlement brings a differential for night shift work and a job training program to be financed by em-

ployer contributions of \$1 per employee per month. An objective of the program is to enable Negroes and Puerto Ricans to advance into better jobs.

The raises will make possible improvements in the pension plan, which is financed by an employer contribution of 3 percent of payroll.

Under the now superseded contract, negotiations were to start this March 1, but the union demanded an advance reopening last summer in view of changes in the New York City wage pattern and the sharp rise

in the cost of living. A giant rally of the workers in Madison Square Garden and meetings and demonstrations in the hotels helped to persuade the Hotel Association to accept the basic union terms.

Earlier contracts brought the hotel workers the 35-hour week, free medical care for the family, job security clauses, and other benefits.

Local 153 Business Manager Ben J. Cohan, a vice-president of the Hotel and Motel Trades Council, was among the negotiators.

Rise in prime bank rate seen hurting consumers

The danger of an economic recession has emerged with the record-high prime interest rates instituted by the nation's big banks and the resulting credit squeeze, warned labor economist Nathaniel Goldfinger.

The new 7 percent prime interest rate—the amount banks charge to their biggest and best credit risks—was viewed by Goldfinger as too severe for the

national economy, which has been running briskly for the last three years.

"Slapping on the brakes all of a sudden is very dangerous because there is a possibility of going through the economic windshield," the director of the AFL-CIO Dept. of Research declared.

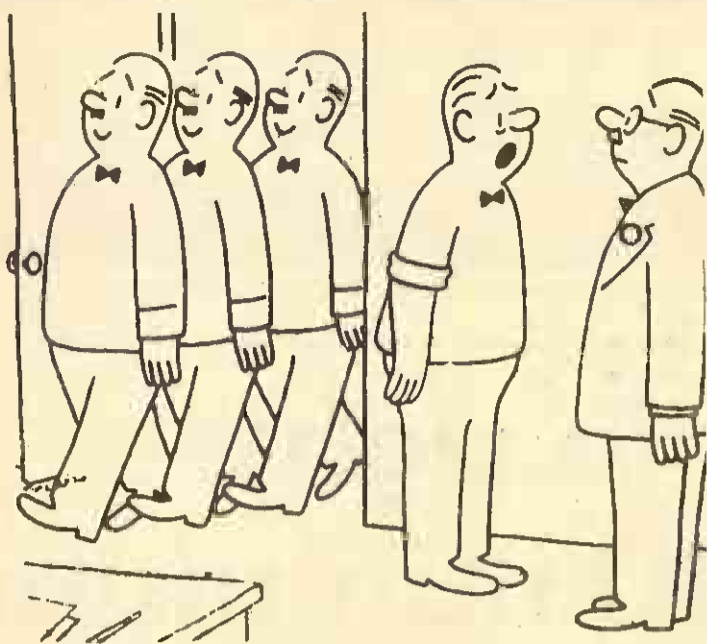
It is much wiser to slow down the economy Goldfinger declared.

"If the monetary managers of the Federal Reserve System wanted to act in the monetary area, they could increase the reserve requirements on banks," he said, which would have a more gradual slowing effect.

The higher prime rates will not only be felt by the richest and biggest borrowers, but throughout the nation, Goldfinger noted.

"I don't think it takes much imagination to see what kind of interest rates medium-sized business and small businesses,

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"Mr. Peebles fell into the Xerox machine."

Executives fail own tests

For a long time unions have strenuously opposed so-called psychological testing and similar management mumbo-jumbo used by big corporations to "screen" new employees. Now it seems that the executives of these same corporations have become the unwitting victims of their own tests.

The N.Y. Society of Accountants' Bulletin reports that one executive from each of 12 top U.S. corporations submitted to the IQ and aptitude tests that their own companies use on future employees. Not a single one did well enough to qualify as an executive in his own company. Three scored enough only to be considered, while two achieved the minimum score for clerical jobs.

When it comes to promotions, union contracts specify that these be made on the basis of merit, ability and seniority with the latter prevailing in the event candidates are all equal in ability. This clause rules out favoritism.

It would appear that big corporations might be far better off if all promotions were made from the ranks as labor unions advocate, instead of the present method rating more highly "who you know" rather than "what you know." Or maybe it's just plain old corporate nepotism better known as: "Thanks, Dad!"

Organizing perspective

A total of 2,744,000 white-collar employees were members of unions in the United States and Canada in 1966, the most recent year for which figures are available. The figure is 9.4% of the 28.4 million wage and salaried white-collar workers. Overall union membership is 28% of all non-agricultural workers.

If white-collar organizing reached the same percentage of its potential, or the same degree of unionization as among all non-agricultural workers, there would be in excess of five million additional members in the ranks of organized labor.

Joining union is 'duty'

Joining a labor union is not only a right but a duty of workers, says Monsignor James A. Healy, western New York's best-known "labor priest" and labor-management representative of the Buffalo Diocese. During his distinguished career, the 48-year old priest has mediated many labor disputes.

In a recent interview, Msgr. Healy said: "History demonstrates that it's through labor unions that people have achieved the best standard of living. For a family man especially, it would not be right if he didn't follow the course which would lead to the best standard of living for his wife and children."

Federal standards pressed to end jobless pay erosion

Legislation to strengthen the "eroded" unemployment insurance system "should have the most urgent priority" in this Congress, an article in the Federationist, the AFL-CIO magazine emphasizes.

The system which was set up to be "the nation's first line of defense against want and poverty," writes James O'Brien, "has deteriorated to a level where it perpetuates poverty and its evils.

"The jobless worker, the grocer, the merchant and the entire economy are the actual and potential victims of the shocking erosion of the system."

O'Brien, an assistant director of the AFL-CIO Dept. of Social Security, notes that the federal-state system was enacted in 1935 to aid jobless workers involuntarily separated from their jobs.

"But the record shows the system has been moving away from this goal," he points out.

O'Brien tells why and how this has happened, presents examples of the system's breakdown and sets forth federal standards for unemployment compensation being pressed by the AFL-CIO and liberal forces.

The argument by opponents of federal standards that the states can be relied upon to modernize the system and make improvements has been completely disproved by the record of state legislatures in recent years, the article stresses.

Its review of state improvements adds up to this picture:

A few "insignificant extensions" of unemployment insurance coverage, minor changes in the taxable base for employers in a few states and "continuing deterioration of the benefit structure" despite slight increases in benefit payments.

"In fact," O'Brien says, "half-hearted state action and federal inaction made the unemploy-

ment compensation meaningless for more than half the jobless workers."

He cites figures showing that more than one-half of the jobless drew some benefit from the system 10 years ago, while only four out of 10 were benefitting by 1965, and the ratio is now down to three out of 10.

Noting that 16 million wage and salary workers—one-fourth of the nation's total—were not covered by the system in 1967, the author warns that "this number increases annually as employment expands in uncovered industries."

The article focuses on these aspects of the system, among others, in which there are "major deficiencies" that are regularly getting worse:

Qualification—While a half dozen states qualify 90 to 95 percent of new claimants for unemployment benefits, "far too many states deny benefits to 25 and 30 percent of new claimants."

In the three years of 1965, '66 and '67 there were 16 states that increased benefits and at the same time "robbed Peter to pay Paul" by imposing stricter qualification requirements.

Financing—State after state has deviated from the 2.7 percent state tax on employers that was counted on to finance the unemployment system, along with a three-tenths of 1 percent federal tax on employers.

In 1967, ten states permitted application of zero tax rates to some employers. The average employer tax rate during the year for the entire system was only 1.6 percent of taxable pay-rolls.

This "underfinancing" has occurred for one apparent reason, O'Brien observes. It is part of the competition among states to pirate industry with the lure of low taxes.

Disqualifications—Provisions for challenging employes on unemployment rolls and denying them benefits have increased to the extent that "a hostile attitude toward the unemployed has developed within the system itself."

Benefits—In the early years of the program, the maximum weekly jobless benefit in most states equaled 65 percent of the average weekly wage. Today, the typical maximum benefit represents only 42 percent of the average wage.

There are only two states in which the maximum weekly benefit is not lower in relation to wages than it was in 1939.

Only seven states have maximum benefits that maintain a worker with three dependents above the poverty-level income of \$3,335 per year for a four-member family set by the Health, Education & Welfare Dept. in 1966.

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Bank rate

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farmer, home buyers and consumers will pay," Goldfinger added.

Noting that mortgage rates were running at 7.25 and 7.5 percent at the end of 1968, he predicted the rates will go up toward 8 percent for the country as a whole.

"The sad part," the federation's top economist said on Labor News Conference, is that these interest rates "get built into the price structure so they increase the price of everything you buy . . . they are an inflationary factor."

Local 286 and Kennecott spell out classifications

Local 286 in Bingham Canyon, Utah, and Kennecott Copper have signed a memorandum of agreement clarifying job descriptions and evaluation to supplement the three-year contract signed last March 28.

This agreement, which ended the industrywide strike of copper miners and office workers against the producers last year, lists 17 classifications in the white-collar bargaining unit. It calls for a standard annual salary of \$5,543 in the lowest

white-collar job category starting next month. The top grade will pay \$11,676 a year starting March 3, 1970.

Local 286 President Arden E. Webb reports membership has reached a record 137 of the 140 eligibles.

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OFFICE AND PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION
affiliated with the AFL-CIO, CLC

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The Life of a Union Official

If he talks on a subject, he is trying to run things. If he is silent, he has lost interest in the organization.

If he is seen at the office, why doesn't he get out. If he can't be found, why doesn't he come around more often.

If he does not agree that the boss is a skunk, he is a company man. If he calls the boss a skunk, he is ignorant.

If he is not at home at night, he must be out drinking. If he is at home, he is shirking his duty.

If he doesn't beat his chest and yell strike, he is a conservative. If he does he is a radical.

If he doesn't stop to talk, his job has gone to his head. If he does, that's all he has to do anyway.

If he can't put a member to work who got into trouble, he is a poor agent. If he does, that is what he is paid for.

If he should give someone a short answer, we'll get him in the next election. If he tries to explain something, he is playing politics.

If he gets a good contract, why didn't he ask for more.

If his suit is pressed, he thinks he is a big shot, if it isn't he is unfit for the job.

If he takes a vacation, he has had one all year anyway.

If he is on the job a short time, he is inexperienced. If he's been on it a long time, there should be a change.



NEWLY-ELECTED OFFICERS OF LOCAL 247 IN HOLYOKE, MASSACHUSETTS have started a drive to spread the union message by means of publicity, a newsletter and personal contact. Seated from left: Secretary-Treasurer Helen McDonnell, Vice-President Reta Sarad, and trustees Bertha Stache, Ann Seiffert and Hazel MacDonald. Standing: Chief Steward Robert Thompson, Steward John Lucey, President Ronald F. Paquette, Steward Louis Gendron, Recording Secretary Howard Fountain, and Steward Norman Martel.

Latest contract settlements specify faster arbitration

Unions and employers are showing increased interest in high-speed procedures to bring disputes to arbitration in a matter of hours.

According to Robert Coulson, executive vice-president of the American Arbitration Association, at least a dozen new contracts call for naming an arbitrator within 24 hours, when employers allege existence of a wildcat strike, or when the unions claim the employer is violating the contract in a way that might result in irreparable loss.

"In the average type of griev-

ance," Coulson says, "it imposes no great burden on the parties to select an arbitrator in the manner prescribed by AAA rules. But in special situations, the parties need quicker service. One way of achieving this is to agree upon a number of arbitrators in advance, leaving it to AAA to appoint the person who can hear the case immediately."

Interest in high-speed arbitration is also heightened, he indicates, by a recent U.S. Supreme Court decision upholding the view that the Norris-La-

Guardia Act, which generally forbids courts to enjoin strikes, does not stand as a bar to a court's confirming a labor arbitration award which orders wildcat strikers to "cease and desist."

"The need for high-speed arbitration is not all on one side," Coulson observes. "There are types of actions taken by management which, in the view of unions, result in losses that cannot be compensated by back pay. In such cases, they want resolution of the controversy immediately, and that is why they use expedited procedures."

NRLB, courts uphold locals

(Continued from page 1)

Energy Commission contractor in Texas, against OPEIU organizing activities.

The Local 306 case resulted from disciplinary action by the Texas company against two employees who exchanged union personnel lists during working time. The action was based on a company rule against conducting "outside business" on the premises without permission.

The NLRB decided that the company's subsequent questioning of the employees "smacked of making a mountain out of a mole hill, and thereby harassing union adherents."

Ordered by the NLRB to withdraw the rule and rescind the discipline, the company responded by replacing the rule with a narrower one governing union activity during working hours, then asking the court to strike down the Board order.

But removal of the objectionable rule and replacement with a "properly narrow" one cannot affect the Board order, the court asserts. Citing earlier court decisions, it says that "a company cannot inhibit the Board's

cease-and-desist power by merely narrowing an overbroad solicitation rule."

The right of the NLRB and federal courts to require an employer to furnish a name-and-address list of employees in advance of an NLRB election was affirmed in Local 153's case.

Three judges of the 2nd Circuit Court of Appeals in New York, saying that they disagreed with a contrary ruling by the 1st Circuit Court of Appeals in Boston, upheld a lower court ruling requiring Beech-Nut Life Savers, Inc., to provide a list of its salesmen and their addresses to the New York City local.

The NLRB is carrying the Boston decision to the U.S. Supreme Court.

The refusal of Beech-Nut to give the NLRB an address list has prevented the holding of an election for more than two years. The union lost a first election held July 20, 1966, one day after Beech-Nut gave the NLRB the names of eligible voters but not their addresses.

Local 153 filed objections because the company had not complied with the board's Excelsior

rule on names and addresses. The NLRB regional director set aside the election and ordered a new one, but Beech-Nut then called the Excelsior rule improper and continued its refusal to supply names and addresses.

The judges in the latest case, rejecting company arguments, held that the Excelsior rule was not adopted in violation of the Administrative Procedures Act requiring extensive hearings before a new rule is set. It was on this procedural ground that the 1st Circuit judges had ruled.

The Excelsior rule and the subpoenas issued under it, the 2nd Circuit Court said, are "designed to assist the board in fulfilling its statutory duties to investigate questions of representation and to supervise representation elections. . . ."

"An employer-furnished list supplied the day before an election does not provide adequate time for fair scrutiny and appraisal. . . . Accuracy, completeness, and opportunity for scrutiny are all necessary if the policies underlying the Excelsior rule are to be fulfilled."



from the desk
of the
PRESIDENT

On wages, prices and profits

No one has to be told that the cost-of-living is increasing by leaps and bounds and adversely affecting the purchasing power of consumers. The popular question, however, is which came first—wage increases or price hikes?

If we were to believe employer organizations, we would tend to blame the spiraling cost-of-living on unions which continue to press for wage increases.

Ray MacDonald, a staff member of the AFL-CIO Department of Research, recently concluded a study which indicates that profits continue to outdistance wages. From 1960 to the first quarter of 1968, corporate profits rose 78.7%. After-tax profits grew even faster as they soared to 95.5% over the same period. Corporate cash flow, or the amount of money available to a company for actual use, rose by some 84.7%.

During the same period the dividends to stockholders rose by 73.1%. This does not include capital gains made when the stocks were eventually sold.

The average weekly after-tax earnings for a non-supervisory worker with three dependents represented a gain of only 26.6% since 1960. After allowances have been made for increases in the Consumer Price Index, the non-supervisory worker was only 9.6% better off in terms of buying power than he was in 1960. Even worse, the same non-supervisory worker had no gain whatsoever in buying power in the last three years.

In effect, therefore, profits outdistanced wages in the eight years ending with March 1968, and in the last three years, the average worker was barely keeping up with the increased cost-of-living. Despite the fact that wage settlements in the last three years have been higher than heretofore, these increases have been washed away by more rapid price increases. The major gains in income have continued to go to profits, dividends, interest payments and executive salaries.

Workers are told that profits are necessary in order for the economy to grow. This is true. Those who manage the profits, however, often fail to take into consideration the necessity to provide workers with incentive to produce.

Employers have many advantages which are not available to the working consumer. For example, certain companies have the advantage of depletion allowances. The law does not provide any reduction in taxes to an older worker. The law provides depreciation of equipment for companies and corporations. The worker continues to pay taxes on his full income regardless of his physical condition. In some cases, the Internal Revenue Service permits companies to speed up depreciation for various reasons. The worker continues to pay his full tax load.

Government actions to speed up depreciation took place in 1954 and again in 1962. These changes increased reported costs and reduced reported profits. Actually, however, these reduced profits because of depreciation allowed companies to pay less taxes to the United States Government.

Stock options used by corporations to provide incentives for executives allow such executives to limit their taxes to a maximum of 25% on stock held six months or more regardless of the total of these executives' salaries or other income. The worker, who produces the profits, is never given an opportunity to participate in a stock option program.

Now we are facing up to the need of controlling prices and limiting living costs to a more reasonable figure. Numerous employer representatives and economists feel it is essential to clamp on a credit squeeze designed to inhibit spiraling costs even if such credit squeeze increases unemployment.

While the Nixon administration has not as yet given us a clear idea of its economic policies, it is apparent that it will adopt some such measures designed to slow down price increases. In effect, the worker beset with price rises is now faced with the specter of unemployment.

Unions, therefore, must continue to fight for wage increases to protect the economic well being of their memberships. The following excerpt from a resolution dealing with collective bargaining adopted by the AFL-CIO Convention in December 1967, is apropos now as it was then:

"... We will continue to press for wage and salary increases to offset rising living costs and to advance buying power. We reiterate our conviction that wage and salary earners deserve to share equitably in the rising productive potential of the nation and to achieve a greater share in the distribution of income. The nation's rapidly rising output per manhour and business profitability make such improvements in wages, salaries and fringe benefits possible within the context of a relatively stable price level."

1st contract at hospital yields raise of \$28.50

A first contract winning a \$28.50 a month across-the-board salary boost, with another 5% in the second year, has been negotiated by Local 29 for 24 office clericals at Doctors Hospital of Pinole, California.

The agreement calls for a union shop; time-and-one-half for overtime; no split shifts; a \$25 per month differential for evening or night work; \$1 an hour for "stand by" duty; and grievance procedure and arbitration. It contains a successors clause.

Terms include eight paid holidays annually; two weeks vacation after one year, three after five, and four after ten. Maternity leave up to six months is provided after one year if the employee returns to work within 60 days after delivery.

Other provisions call for three-day bereavement leave, differential jury duty pay, and cumulative sick leave of one day per month of employment.

The hospital will finance Blue Cross program coverage and will give required physical examinations annually free of charge.

Heroux named

Jim Heroux has been appointed an organizer for Local 12, Minneapolis, which he has served as trustee. A chief steward at the Minneapolis Gas Company, he has been a part-time organizer and was a delegate to the Philadelphia Convention.

Before assuming his new duties, he underwent an intensive 30-day training program at International Headquarters in New York.

News from Canada

Local 15 contracts score for motor transport units

A new era for office workers in the motor transport industry in Western Canada is heralded by two first contracts recently negotiated by Local 15, in Vancouver, B. C. They covered office employees of Canadian Freightways Ltd., and Carson Truck Lines Ltd., both now brought under a Master Agreement.

The two-year contract for Carson's employees follows the general wage pattern negotiated earlier at Canadian Freightways, with some extra improvements. It was negotiated with the help of a Federal Mediator.

The gain made by Carson employees is shown by the fact that a billing clerk's pre-union wage scale of \$300 monthly jumps to \$449 by October 1 next, when all pay scales reach parity with those in the Master Agreement.

Improvements over this latter agreement won in the Carson pact were three weeks vacation after five years (was eight); a 37½-hour work week, against

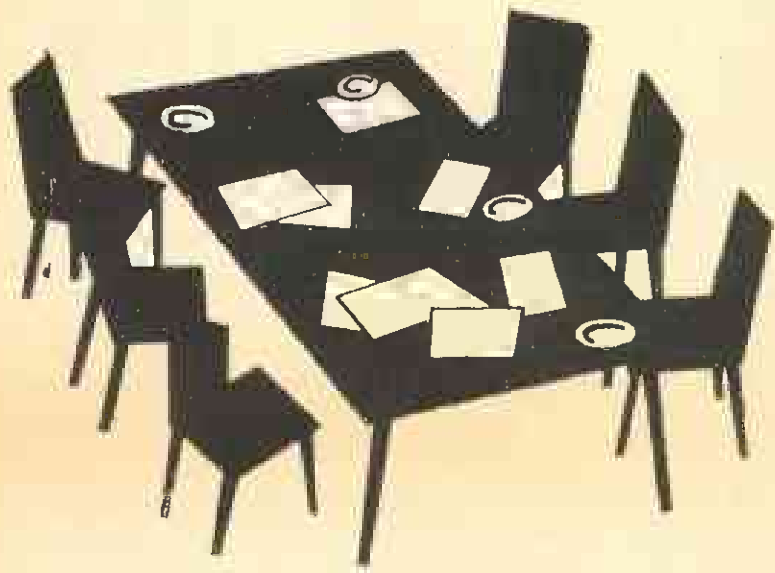
40 at Freightways, and a shift differential of 10¢ an hour.

Local 15 became the first union to be certified as bargaining agent for any white-collar workers in the motor transport industry in Northwestern Canada when it was recognized to represent some 100 clericals in terminal installations of Canadian Freightways in Alberta, British Columbia and the Yukon Territories. Local 15 now also represents office employees of Los Angeles-Seattle Motor Express Inc., Miller & Brown Ltd., and United Terminals Ltd.

These achievements are expected to spur additional organizing of office workers in the

Vancouver area employed by truck lines.

The Union negotiating committee for the Canadian Freightways' pact included Business Representative Bill Swanson; Secretary-Treasurer Opal Skilling, and President Eileen Brady-Brown. Canadian Freightways employees participating were Chief Steward Emil Condrau, Assistant Steward Darsham Kailly and Chief Office Steward Paul Seyler, all of Vancouver, Chief Steward Brian McCool, Calgary; and Chief Steward Roy Olsen, Edmonton. They were assisted by International Representative Brian James.



Renewals in Brief

McKesson & Robbins

Local 11 in Portland, Oregon, has renegotiated its contract covering office employees of the McKesson & Robbins Drug Company, winning raises totaling nearly \$1,000 a year for each member. The minimum starting office rate of \$100 a week will be reached before the three-year contract expires.

The pact calls for two 10¢-an-hour raises the first year, a 15¢ increase the second, and 12¢ the third. The birthday of each employee becomes an additional paid holiday. Other improvements were made in the clauses relating to lay off and rehiring.

Seattle welfare fund unit

Wage boosts amounting to \$1,274, based on a 35-hour week, were won by Local 8 in Seattle, Washington, for its office employee unit at Fund Administrative Associates, a firm which handles pension and health and welfare funds for trade unions.

The raises will take effect in two installments, 40¢-an-hour in the first year, and 30¢-an-hour in the second. Other improvements are a new Health & Welfare package for employees and dependents, and more liberalized vacations and sick leave.

Carday Associates

A 21-month contract renewal for office employees of Carday Associates, Inc., administrator of pension funds, has been negotiated by Local 2, in Washington, D. C. It brings a \$6 a week wage gain in the first year, and \$5 additional in the second.

Other improvements are the addition of a "successors or assigns" clause; employer paid life insurance increased to \$3,000 from \$2,000, and sick leave to be cumulative with reimbursement of half of unused leave.

Walkouts show unrest in banks

The growing unrest among bank employees is shown by two strikes for better pay. One occurred in Seattle, Washington, and the second in a small Wisconsin town.

Sporadic strikes against the Seattle-First National Bank by its Employees Association, an independent union comprising some 1,700 of the 3,600 employees, won a 4% pay raise in a one-year contract. The association first struck the computer and accounting department, following up with intermittent 24-hour walkouts at the main office and 126 branches until a settlement was reached.

The first bank strike in Wisconsin's history was staged in Rice Lake recently. It had a

bizarre but equally successful ending. The bank's 19 tellers and bookkeepers, all women, decided to unionize and walked out when a demand for higher wages was rejected.

Complying with a strict bank rule, the tellers hid their cash-box keys and locked the duplicates in the bank's vault with the vault's combination. But the only girl who knew the combination by memory was on the picket line with the others.

Rather than ask for her assistance, the bank executives did things the hard way. They hired professional safe-crackers to drill open the vault so they could conduct a scab banking business. But even this didn't prevent a union victory. After

15 days the unionized employees won a substantial wage raise and the strikers went back to work.

Jobless pay erosion

(Continued from page 2)

The standards O'Brien proposes would:

- Extend unemployment benefits coverage to all wage and salaried workers, set eligibility requirements not to exceed 20 weeks of work, and entitle every claimant to at least 26 weeks of benefits when he is unemployed that long.

- Call for a weekly benefit equal to 66.6 percent of his past full-time earnings, in no case less than 50 percent, and a maximum benefit amount equal to two-thirds of the state-wide average weekly wage.

- Eliminate the "waiting week" for eligibility or compensate for it retroactively after a few weeks of unemployment.

- Limit the "availability requirement" to registration and availability for suitable work, which should be properly defined and not include employment not covered by jobless compensation.

- Permit disqualification of persons drawing benefits only

for the most serious reasons and for not more than six weeks. Forbid cuts or cancellation of a worker's benefit rights or base period wages. Permit workers to draw benefits when they are participating in state-approved job training courses.

- Help secure the soundness of jobless funds by standardizing

tax rates on employers and disallowing all zero tax rates now being levied in some states.

- Raise the taxable wage base, through a series of steps over a period of years, until it is at least equal to the base used in levying employer and employee social security contributions (\$7,800).

Canadian Price Index U.S. Consumer Price Index

1967	1967
December 151.8	December 118.2
1968	1968
January 152.6	January 118.6
February 152.7	February 119.0
March 153.2	March 119.5
April 154.1	April 119.9
May 154.2	May 120.3
June 154.7	June 120.9
July 155.6	July 121.5
August 156.0	August 122.0
September 156.4	September 122.2
October 156.8	October 122.9
November	November 123.4
December	December 123.7