

# The Office Employees Letter

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## Maryland-D. C. Convention Passes Our Resolution

### State Labor Body to Work For Amendment to Maryland Law To Extend Protection To Office Workers

Our resolution to amend the Maryland workmen's compensation law to cover office workers was approved by the Maryland State and D. C. Federation of Labor convention on May 20. On that date President Hutchings received a wire from our delegates advising that the convention had passed the resolution which we submitted.

The May meeting of our local unanimously approved the proposed resolution as drawn by our executive committee after an explanation of the problem was presented by President Hutchings. The text of our resolution follows:

"WHEREAS, the workmen's compensation law of the State of Maryland provides for the compulsory insurance by employers of their employees who are engaged in extra-hazardous employment; and

"WHEREAS, Section 32 of the said workmen's compensation law lists the employments considered as extra-hazardous including in addition to a long list of manufacturing operations the occupations of salesmen and musicians; and

"WHEREAS, recently the Maryland Industrial Accident Commission has recently *not* allowed compensation to a stenographer who contracted an industrial disease while employed by a chemical company operating in Hyattsville; and

"WHEREAS, said claim was not allowed because the claimant was engaged as a stenographer and without regard to the fact that his work was in close proximity to the place where chemicals were being manufactured; and

"WHEREAS, this shows the need of an amendment to this law so that workers classified as stenographers, typists, clerks, bookkeepers and other types of office workers will not be prevented from obtaining the same treatment as other workers; and,

"WHEREAS, office workers employed in

the District of Columbia are protected by the District of Columbia workmen's compensation act; therefore be it

"RESOLVED that the Maryland State and District of Columbia Federation of Labor in convention assembled go on record as favoring an amendment to the workmen's compensation law of Maryland so that office workers will be protected by the law and entitled to compensation on the same basis as other workers, and that the proper officers and committee of the Maryland State and District of Columbia Federation stand instructed to work for such amendment."

The first step has now been taken to obtain the necessary amendment to the Maryland law so that office workers will receive the same protection at their work that has long been granted to other workers.

### IMPORTANT NOTICE!!

On and after June 1, 1941 the office of our Local will be located in Room 208 of the National Union Building (918 F Street, N. W.). The McGill Building has been sold and the purchaser has requested all tenants to vacate by June 1. Make certain that all communications reaching the Union after June 1 are addressed to the new address to avoid delay.

## General Fleming to Speak at Meeting

General Philip B. Fleming, the administrator of the Fair Labor Standards Act (the Wage and Hour Law), will be the guest speaker at the next regular meeting of our Local on June 3, 1941.

Practically every member has read of General Fleming and his job of administering the federal Wage and Hour Law, but doubtless very few members have had the opportunity to hear him speak. He will be our honored guest on June 3 and all members will want to take advantage of this rare opportunity of seeing and hearing this man who holds such an important post in our government.

General Fleming will speak before our regular business meeting and members are, therefore, welcome to invite their friends to come and listen to General Fleming. The regular membership meeting after the speech will, of course, be for our members only.

Brother Caesar Boone of American Ice is "In the Army Now". Brother Boone's new address is Fort George Meade, Md.

**NEXT  
REGULAR MEETING  
Tuesday, June 3, 1941**

**8:00 P. M.**

Chantilly Room

**HAMILTON HOTEL**

•  
Guest Speaker

**GEN. PHILIP B. FLEMING**

Administrator

U. S. Wage and Hour Law

**IF YOU ASK YOURSELF—"WHAT HAS MY UNION DONE FOR ME?" THEN ASK YOURSELF—"WHAT HAVE I DONE FOR MY UNION?"**

# THE OFFICE EMPLOYEES LETTER

Published Monthly by

OFFICE EMPLOYEES UNION

No. 11773

Chartered Oct. 3, 1904, by the A. F. of L.

208 National Union Building  
Washington, D. C.

PAUL R. HUTCHINGS.....	President
IRENE BOYCE.....	1st Vice President
W. R. PROBEY.....	2nd Vice President
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## OFFICE WORKERS AND NATIONAL DEFENSE

Every day we hear and read about shortages in skilled labor groups and of the vast attempts being made to provide sufficient skilled workers to meet the growing demands of defense industry plants. Very seldom, however, do we ever read anything about the part of office workers in the defense effort.

Office workers are a skilled, specialized and very necessary group in any industrial operation. Who handles all the record keeping? Who computes the pay rolls for the plant? Who handles the preparation of social security and unemployment compensation records, and the many other office and clerical jobs which must be done if any plant is to operate? Then, too, who prepares the records, letters, etc., on the purchases of raw material, accessories, parts, and the billing and collections on the finished products? These and many other vital operations are all dependent upon a skilled and efficient staff of office workers.

What effect has industrial expansion in the basic defense industries had upon office workers? Have any scarcities of skilled office machine operators, bookkeepers, accountants, stenographers, and other office occupations been experienced? Have office workers in defense plants gone on multiple shift basis? Have regular hours been lengthened? These and many other questions come to mind.

Recently the Department of Economics and Social Institutions of Princeton University has released a study entitled "Hour Administration as Influenced by the Defense Program". In this study we find the following statement: "Employers believe that the labor supply for office workers is almost unlimited and that if the demands become greater, the moving into a multiple shift will be a very simple matter." The study further states that of the companies studied "Only one company reported working its office force on a multiple-shift basis."

President William Green has recently appointed your President to work with the Bureau of Labor Statistics in connection with some studies of white-collar workers which it contemplates making. It is necessary that facts be developed to show just what the situation is as it affects office workers. Is there a scarcity or potential scarcity? What hours are being worked at present? What are the limitations of the use of multiple-shifts in offices and what has past experiences with multiple-shifts shown? Work on these studies has not yet commenced, and we can only speculate as to what will be embraced in them. It is significant, however, that the need for more information has been recognized.

We know that without those who labor in offices the entire defense program would fall. We, as office workers, are vital to a successful defense effort. Our part is just as essential as the part of the aircraft worker, the shipbuilding worker or the armament worker. The principal point of difference between our group and the various skilled and semi-skilled factory workers is our lack of organization. The present defense program gives us a wonderful opportunity to increase and perfect the organization of office workers under the banner of the American Federation of Labor.

## MISS BROYLES' SPEECH ENJOYED

A good-sized group of members turned out at the regular May meeting to hear Miss Eunice Broyles, the executive secretary of the D. C. Minimum Wage Board explain the work of her board, especially in connection with the administration of the minimum wage for women office workers.

According to Miss Broyles, more than \$31,000 in back pay has been collected by covered employes during the operation of the law. A question period followed her talk and the interest of the membership was shown by the questions asked, all of which were answered by the speaker.

## FRANK WEIKEL RESIGNS

According to a story in the May 3 issue of the Trades Unionist, the Washington Central Labor Union paper, Brother Frank Weikel has resigned his position with the A. F. of L. to accept a post as labor relations counsellor for the Reynolds Metals Co. of Louisville, Ky.

*General Philip B. Fleming will be the speaker at the June meeting. You'll enjoy his talk.*

## HUTCHINGS TO ADVISE BLS

On May 6, A. F. of L. President William Green appointed President Hutchings of our Local to represent the A. F. of L. and its office workers' locals in connection with the studies of office workers in the defense program which the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U. S. Labor Department contemplates making.

## NEWS FROM OTHER LOCALS

It was indeed a shock to receive a wire from Baltimore Local 20048 advising that their Recording Secretary, Sister Grace McNulty, passed away on May 10, 1941. Sister McNulty was known by many of our officers, and her passing is certainly a loss to the Baltimore Local which has long recognized Sister McNulty's ability, loyalty and devotion to their movement.

## Miami Local Getting Requests for Defense Workers

According to a story in the Miami Citizen, Local 20380 of that city is receiving requests for office workers to be supplied in connection with defense projects.

## Duluth Local on NLRB Ballot

In a decision issued on May 10 by the National Labor Relations Board, an election is ordered to be held among the clerical employees of the Duluth, Minn., plant of the American Steel & Wire Co. of New Jersey. The office force in this plant will vote as to whether or not they desire to be represented by Office Workers' Union No. 21276 (A. F. of L.), or by the Steel Workers Organizing Committee (CIO).

The CIO had requested the NLRB to include the office workers in a unit of production and maintenance employees, but the board granted the request of our Local 21276 for a separate vote among the office workers.

Milwaukee Local No. 16456 announces a 5 per cent wage increase for all members employed by the Miller Brewing Co. who earn less than \$200 a month. Under the terms of the local's agreement with the company this increase became effective on March 1. Office employes of this brewery have been organized since 1937.

## More Locals Employ Organizers

Recently the San Francisco Local has employed an organizer in addition to its business representative and office secretary. The Seattle Local has also just employed a full time organizer, and the Bellingham, Wash., local also now employs an organizer who is reported to be doing good work.