INSURANCE COMPANIES MUST OBEY NLRB SAYS SUPREME COURT

Unanimous Court Upholds NLRB Jurisdiction in Polish Alliance Case Involving Local 20732

Washington, D. C., June 5.—The Supreme Court of the United States in an 8 to 0 decision upheld the decision of the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals which had sustained the decision of the National Labor Relations Board against the Polish National Alliance as having violated the provisions of the statute. As a result of this decision, there can be no further question as to the applicability of the National Labor Relations Act to interstate insurance companies.

In fact, the court through this opinion held that insurance activities of a fraternal benefit society which issues insurance benefit certificates and a large portion of which activities are of a business nature and carried on by interstate communications, all the more so as to render such insurance organization subject to the provisions of the National Labor Relations Act, even though it is organized as a nonprofit organization.

Today's opinion is the first time the members of the Court have asked the question of whether the operations of an insurance establishment are of a business nature and classified as commerce. Prior to this decision there had always been a cloud of uncertainty as to the question whether an NLRB order against an insurance company prohibiting it from engaging in unfair labor practices or discriminatory employment practices could be successfully challenged in the courts.

The Dockyard Local 20732 organized the office and clerical force of the Polish National Alliance in the spring of 1941. The company has had a direct relationship with the local and the company, through its officers and agents, engaged in various types of discriminatory treatment against an active union member employed in this office.

Charges were filed by the local (Continued on page 3)

Walsh-Kaiser Shipyard

Bargain Rights Won

Providence, R. I., June 3.—Office Employees Union 23259 won bargaining rights last week for the office and clerical workers employed at the Walsh-Kaiser Shipyard in this city. It was announced by Secretary James A. MacMillan.

The payroll cross-check disclosure, by John Dillon, president of Providence College, substantiated the local union's contention that it represented over 1,000 office and clerical workers in the yard. Accordingly, the company recognized the local as the exclusive bargaining agency for all such workers, and added that those presently covered under the local's contract with the company, all of whom are represented in the time-keeping department.

It is anticipated that a proposed new contract will shortly be drafted for presentation to the company and the local has requested the assistance of our International Council's office in its forthcoming negotiations.

Notice

Effective July 15, 1944, the business offices of this International Council and its official publication "The Office Worker" will be moved to the following address: 1110 19th Street N.W., Washington 5, D. C.

Secretaries and other officers of local unions should make note of this new address as they should edit their business offices of exchange publications.

Our present telephone number Executive 1908 remains unchanged.

STATES RIGHTS INSURANCE BILLS VIGOROUSLY OPPOSED

AFL AND COUNCIL APPEAR BEFORE SENATE COMMITTEE

Washington, May 25.—This morning representatives of the AFL, of the Insurance Agents Council and of our International Council appeared before a subcommittee of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary regarding the opposition to the so-called "States Rights Insurance Bill S.1382" presently before the Committee.

Brother Lewis Hines of the National Legislative Committee of the AFL made the first appearance and clearly advised the committee as to the justification of the bill because of the far reaching damaging effects which it might have on credit and the protection of the workers in the insurance industry under the Wage and Hour Act and the National Labor Relations Act.

At the conclusion of Brother Hines' testimony Herbert S. Thatcher, general counsel of the AFL, testified at some length on the legal aspect of the proposed bill and as to how it might throw in jeopardy the basic protections presently being enjoyed by the office and clerical workers and other employees in the insurance industry.

WASHINGTON GAS EMPLOYEES VOTE AFL

Washington, D. C., June 30.—More than 1,000 workers employed by the Washington Gas Light Co., hereafter to be represented by the American Federation of Labor as the result of a consent NLRB election held today. The result of the vote disclosed that a substantially majority of all votes cast favored representation through the AFL in preference to the D. C. Gas Workers Union (unaffiliated), which previously had bargained for all employees of the company.

Organizer Ralph U. Boyer has been working with this group for some time and is largely responsible for the results of today's election, which he had petitioned the NLRB to hold. Business representative W. R. Probey, of Office Employees Union 11773, assisted Brother Boyer in preparing for the day's election, as also did Organizer Cook of the International Union of Electrical and Allied Industries, AFL.

There are substantially more than 300 office and clerical workers represented in this company, which refused to the bargaining structure won by the AFL.

(Continued on page 2)

WAGE INCREASES WON IN HARDWARE INDUSTRY

Oakland, Cal., May 22.—The office and clerical employees employed in the hardware industry in Alameda County, Cal., representing 800 workers, have received wage adjustments ranging to $9 per week, according to Paul Nelson, vice-president of our International Union, and business representative of the local union.

The War Labor Board has now approved these wage adjustments, so that junior clerks will now receive a minimum of $32.50 per week, and other classifications proportionately higher range up to a minimum of $40 per week for senior accountant.

Stone & Webster Election Scheduled

Knovxville, Tenn., June 30.—A collective bargaining election is scheduled to be held among the office and clerical employees of the Stone & Webster Engineering Corp. on the Clinton engineering project here. According to information received today from Council Vice President E. H. Fritts, the election, which was called by the Army Corps of Engineers on July 25, will follow the pattern used by the NLRB in the handling of collective bargaining elections.

The office and clerical workers employed by the company on this project commenced organization over a year ago and a charter was granted to Office Employees Union 23490 in July 1943. Collective bargaining demands were made on the company in early September, but the company engaged in every conceivable delaying tactic to prevent the election. The company supported by the collective bargaining benefits to which they are entitled.

The NLRB when petitioned refused to conduct an election on the ground that the employer was a contracting company. The company's refusal to the NLRB with reasonable means of determining the majority status of the local union. For a number of months it succeeded in continuing these stall-
HOSPITAL WORKERS SIGNED

Oakland, Calif., June 15.—Announcement was made today by Muriel Kerchen, business representa- 

tive of the local AFL-CIO Union of the American Federation of Labor, that a contract for 400 workers in 

the Kaiser shipyards has been signed with the Kaiser Shipbuilding Co. Inc., in the vicinity of the 

Kaiser Fairmont shipyard in Oakland. The contract was signed for a term of six months with an 

option for a renewal of six months. It is the first contract signed by the union with the shipbuilder. 

The contract provides for an 8-hour workday, a 40-hour workweek, and a wage increase of 25 cents per hour. 

San Francisco Organizing Drive Gains Momentum

San Francisco, Calif., June 14.—Spurred by the realization that the union's drive to organize the 

big San Francisco shipyards could bring substantial wage increases and improve working conditions, 

many workers have joined the union. The drive is expected to continue to grow as workers become 

more aware of the benefits of union membership.

Drive Among Retail Drug Workers

Under the leadership of Fred Miller, business representative of the union, a drive to organize retail drug 

workers has been initiated. Miller has been working closely with the union's organizing committee to 

identify potential targets for organizing drives. The drive is expected to benefit workers by improving 

working conditions and increasing wages.

The Office Worker

Official organ of the
INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF
OFFICE EMPLOYEES UNIONS

J. HOWARD HICKS, President
PAUL R. HUTCHINGS, Sec.-Treas.

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D-DAY MESSAGE
Here is President Green's telegram to Presidents of all National and International Unions—a his- 
toric battle cry.

"D-Day is here. From now until Hitler is finally crushed every worker in every industry must 

produce and distribute every day of the week. Our production must be increased. We must 

maintain uninterrupted production under any and all circumstances. Until victory is achieved, 

no worker must give the same all-out service that our armed forces are giving on the field of 

battle."

GOOD ENOUGH!
The June issue of "Penpundits' Notes," of the Office Workers Union 16556 at Milwaukee, 

contains the following interesting quotation received from one of the members of that local who is 

presently serving in the United States Army: "I am still interested in seeing the union grow (referring 

to Blitz Brewing Co. of Milwaukee) and if there should be any way that I could help while in the 

service, I would consider it a privi- 

lege to know how we are depending on them to keep the union advancing so that all will have a bet- 

ter world to live in when we return to our job after the war is won."

Stop It in the Senate

All local unions and their members are again urged to write to their Senators urging that they 

oppose or continue to oppose and vote against the so-called "Social Rights Insurance Bill S. 1362" when 

such bill reaches the floor of the U. S. Senate. The Council of the United States is in recess from June 23 

until August 1, but it is very likely that attempts will be made to get S. 1362 to a vote on the floor of 

the Senate shortly after Congress reconvenes.

Now that the House of Representa- 

tives has passed its counterpart 

of this bill, H. R. 3270, it is ex- 

tremely important that no effort be 

made in the Senate in advising 

that just because many senators 

endorse your desire for them to oppose 

this measure. Refer to the 

injunction in the following letter of 

memebers of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary on May 28, on behalf of the APL and its interested 

members. This testimony succinctly 

points out the reasons for our or- 

ganization's opposition to S. 1362.

San Francisco Organizing Drive Gains Momentum

Rapid progress is being made by office and clerical workers employed by the United Engineering 

& Dry Dock Co. toward collective bargaining through Local 21320 with their employer. While this 

company has one of the largest operations of its kind locally-indicated that the trade is organized, 

our trade in the employ of the concern may not permit many days to pass before they are in a position 

to request recognition of their union and thus gain the accompanying benefits of collective bargaining.

Drive Among Retail Drug Workers

Under the leadership of Fred Miller, business representative of the union, a campaign has been 

launched among workers of our trade employed by the Owl Drug Co., which operates a large chain 

of wholesale drugstores in this area. A drive in the eastern states is under way.

With office workers employed by wholesale drug firms benefiting from union during recent 

years the organization of similar workers in the retail portion of the industry is considered a logical 

step by the officers and membership of the union.

AGREEMENT NEAR

Vancouver, Wash., June 21.—Progress is being made in the campaign of Local No. 2907 of this 

city in unionizing the retail and clerical workers employed in local retail establishments, it was 

announced today by Mr. C. S. Newell, business representative of the local.

Increased activity by the local is bringing desired results and it is 

hoped that within the next few 

weeks a contract may be negotiated 

with the local retail merchants' 

association which will place workers of our trade employed in a majority of such establishments in position 

to secure union wages and working 

conditions.

Experts Find BLS Understates Cost

Washington, D. C.—Three independent experts working for the President's Cost of Living Com- 

mittee reported that the Bureau of Labor Statistics index "grossly under- 

states" the rise in living costs.

APL Secretary-Treasurer George 

Mansy declared the report "deals a solar plexus blow to the Admin-

istration's arguments for maintaining the Little Steel wage formula.

The experts found the BLS yard-

stick doesn't apply to about half 

the living expenses and doesn't include many added 

expenses forced upon workers by 

increased prices of living. Their 

study found that in the cost of 

living means the amount of money a family spends for the commodities and services it buys, then 

the widespread opinion that the index grossly understates the rise in the cost of living is justified," their 

report held.

The compelling need for strong, ade- 

quate collective bargaining through their APL organization.
INCREASE IN WAGE AND HOUR MINIMUM OBTAINED

New York City, N. Y., June 23—Mr. Mildred Walling, administra-
tor of the Wage and Hour Di-
vision of the U. S. Department of
Labor, today announced that and
after July 17, the minimum wage
rate which may be paid under the
Wage and Hour Law to workers em-
ployed in the production of goods
for commerce in the finance, in-
sure, real estate, motion picture and
miscellaneous industries shall be
not less than 30 cents per hour.
The previous minimum as established
by the Wage and Hour Law and
which has been in effect for the
past year has been 25 cents per
hour. Thus the workers in these
industries will benefit through the
increase on July 17 of their mini-
mum wage floor from 25 to 30
cents.

This action by Mr. Walling was
brought into the picture by the
unfair labor practice proceeding
which the company served in its
petition to the National Labor
Relations Board as Case No.
16304.

The company's petition for
an order directing the company to
abandon the plan, which was the
basis of the proceeding, was
heard by the board on May 9th.
Mr. Walling testified that he
had made his decision not to
abandon his plan, based on the
factors involved in the case.

WASHINGTON, D. C. — George
Walling, secretary-treasurer of the
American Federation of Labor,
charged the Department of Labor
and its Bureau of Labor Statistics
for failure to perform their statu-
dory duty "to foster, promote
and develop wage-earners' welfare."

At the annual meeting of labor
research personnel called by the
Bureau of Labor Statistics, Mr.
Walling flatly charged that the
agency is attempting to keep its
budget in balance and "to cover
up the government's failure to
keep living costs down."

Mr. Walling said that the BLS has
"significantly reduced" its research
function "to an administrative
objective." He also charged that the
BLS has become "highly conscious
of an effort to freeze wages," and
that the bureau's "inability to
perform its job" has "resulted in
the dismissal of a number of
research analysts." He also said
that the bureau has "failed to
promote the interests of wage-
earners" and that the bureau has
"failed to provide adequate
information to the public."
Washington, D. C., June 28.—The House of Representatives yesterday by a roll call vote of 283 to 54, passed a $35,000,000 “Streets, Bridges, Highways Insurance Bill” H.R. 3270 which would, if approved by the Senate and signed by the President, make it unlawful for railroads and any corporation or individual engaged in intercity transportation of persons or property by a vehicle to maintain any policy of insurance on the lives of drivers, conductors, and motormen employed in the railroad transportation of persons or property. The bill becomes law in 30 days after its passage by both Houses.

The bill was introduced by Rep. James A. Connolly (D., Mass.) and was sponsored by Rep. John H. Tolan (D., N. Y.) and Sen. Hiram I. Johnson (D., N. Y.). The bill would also require all insurance companies to maintain a fund of at least $1,000,000 for the payment of compensation to any member of a jury who is appointed or summoned to serve on any jury in any court of the United States at a time when he is a member of the board of directors of any corporation or individual engaged in intercity transportation of persons or property by a vehicle.

The bill was passed unanimously by the House and was sent to the Senate for consideration.

WASHINGTON, D. C.—President Roosevelt, Secretary of Labor Perkins and hundreds of friends and associates praised Mary Anderson, executive director of the Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor at a testimonial dinner in her honor.

In a letter the President said: "I am sorry to learn that you are leaving the government service but I can appreciate the more leisure after 25 years as head of the woman's bureau of the U. S. Department of Labor."

"Your work over that quarter of a century has richly earned you the retirement you are taking. You have paid for women doing the same work as men and you may well be proud that you have done so as to equalize the opportunity and equalize the principles which were so perfectly reflected by the bill you have advocated."