Launch Office Employees International Union at Historic Session

FUTURE BRIGHT FOR NEW UNION

Cincinnati.—"There is no organization chartered by the American Federation of Labor that was ever launched under more auspicious circumstances and with a brighter future than this union of office workers."

So declared AFL President William Green as he conferred international status upon the Office Employees International Union.

Presenting the charter to Paul R. Hutchings, D. C., C. W., and later unanimously elected President and Secretary-Treasurer, President Green said: "I believe the union could not only become the largest affiliated with the AFL, but the largest single union in the world and pledge all assistance "to make your organization a million member union in the near future."

Historic Occasion

Earlier in his address, President Green stressed that the occasion was an historic one and likened the delegates to the pioneers who settled and developed this nation.

"I want to congratulate you," he went on, "you who represent these splendid federal labor unions of office workers established in different sections of the country. You have performed a wonderful work and those associated with you, those whom you represent, those who have worked, fought, and those of the American Federation of Labor who have worked with you,"

"I am conscious of the difficulties encountered in the campaigns which were launched in the different communities in the office workers. Apparently it has been difficult for the office workers to comprehend the importance of mobilizing their economic strength into one solidified movement. So many of them have been under the impression that what they could consider their individual, personal outstanding qualifications, and felt that reason they had hesitated to join with others. But they have learned and are learning the lessons, perhaps slowly, but surely, that after all, they occupy the same position in our economic structure as do the wage-earners in other calling. There is no difference.""}

Solution of Problem

"The voice of one cannot reach the council chambers of the directors of the companies, but when they are mobilized and the voice of one becomes the voice of all and the voice of one becomes the voice of one, then they can make their influence felt. And so, as a result, we have been making office workers conscious of the necessity to become organized along with other wage-earners in order to improve their standards of life and living. It is the only solution of the problem."

The AFL chief explained what the international union means to the locals, which have been functioning under the rules and laws of the Federation, saying: "Now, you will be banded into a nation union and in that national union you will function under the direction of that union. But the membership of your locals will shape the policies of that union."

Complete Autonomy

"You will be an autonomous union. Even the American Federation of Labor cannot interfere with the exercise of your authority. You yourselves will determine policies, you will decide in democratic fashion how and in what way your union will be administered. You will elect your own officers. You will hold them responsible. You will formulate your own constitution. That constitution will represent the will of the majority of the members of your organization once you are united into an international union."

"Now, when the organization is formed today and you are launched, then all the federal unions will surrender the federal charters to the federation and accept new charters from the newly created Office Employees Union. We will fix a time and date when the transfer of your property and your charters can be made in an orderly and systematic way."

Cincinnati.—The Office Employees International Union was launched here January 8 by representatives of local unions in the United States and Canada after they received the international charter from President William Green with the assurance that the federation will continue to watch with interest and assist in the development of its newest autonomous affiliate.

Immediately following acceptance of the charter the delegates turned to the adoption of convention rules, the election of the delegates and the prime task—drafting and adopting the constitution, which was finally voted by the election of officers.

Paul R. Hutchings of Washington, D. C., Cincinnati, and J. Howard Hicks, of Portland, Ore., was elected secretary-treasurer. Hutchings and Hicks had previously served for 2½ years as the executive officers of the International Union.

Vice Presidents Chosen

Ten vice presidents were elected as follows: J. O. Blondworth, Jr., Tampa, Fla.; A. R. Carson, Sheffield, Ala.; J. A. Toleda, O.; Mildred Erickson, Seattle, Wash.; George E. Firth, Pittsburgh, Pa.; Alice Holz, Minneapolis, Minn.; Paul J. Rundell, Oakland, Calif., and C. A. Stafford, Port Arthur, Tex.

The purpose and aims of the new International Union are expressed in its constitution and define the organization to the tre mendous crowd on the day of the dedication of the office and clerical workers to the United States and Canada. It is the result of the labors of the workers organized through the organization of these workers. The International Union will strive to render all possible assistance and guidance to all of its local unions and their members. Every effort will be expended toward the establishment of collective bargaining agreements, which agreements should provide the workers with adequate compensation for the services which office workers perform, shorter hours of employment and proper pay for their overtime and holiday work."

Union Wins in NLRB Election

Milwaukee.—Local 16465, scored a decisive victory in the. bargaining election conducted by the National Labor Relations Board for the office employees of the Milwaukee Transport Co., according to Alice Holz, financial secretary of the local and a Vice President of the International Union.

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Charter Convention Delegates Get Outline of Label Trades Activities

Cincinnati.—One of the highlights of the charter convention of the Office Employees International Union was the message of I. M. Orrnorn, secretary of the Union Label Trades Department of the AFL, which was delivered to the members by Miss Lily H. King, secretary to Mr. Orrnorn and a member of Office Employees Union No. 1110. Miss H. King stated that "the chief aims of the department," she explained, "are to publicize the sale of union label goods and to promote the sale of union label goods and service button and to promote the sale of union label goods and service button. In connection with these activities we are called upon to assist in many problems concerning labor unions, but our constant goal is to popularize the official emblem of labor and the principles for which they stand.

"These symbols of union labels and union services are the free trade marks of the American Federation of Labor. Through intelligent buying we are endeavoring to determine what we have obtained through collective bargaining."

The best way to maintain American labor union standards," she emphasized, "is to buy only from firms that display the union label, shop card or service button—the emblems of democracy in industry. If we are to retain fair wages, shorter hours and better working conditions, it is necessary for us to buy only goods that are manufactured under union conditions and patronize only those establishments that employ members of service unions."-

The hundreds of thousands of pieces of literature and posters are put out each year by the department.

Employers of Labor

Bureau Join Union

San Francisco.—The majority of employees of the National Labor Bureau has authorized representation by the AFL. The National Labor Bureau has been authorized by the WLB to represent their wages and working conditions. The new edition of the National Labor Bureau Catalogue-Directory will be ready for publication in January. It will contain a reproduction of every emblem, label and service button and all new manufacturers using the labels.

The department is also engaged in many war activities and Miss H. King revealed that the recent Victory Recipe-Menu contest won high praise from government officials.

One of the greatest undertakings has been the campaign for free union label cigarette papers for fighters overseas. The symbols of our great cities have been contributed by the workers.

"For all battles are our union label goods have received letters of gratitude from our fighting heroes," Miss H. King said. "Unquestionably, these voluntary gifts have built goodwill and organized labor among our countrymen is more universal than was ever dreamed of before.

In conclusion, Miss McAlinden said, "We must continue to do everything possible to help the government and the men in the field. When wartime industries are recon- structed into factories making civilian goods that the union label is displayed on all union-made goods. The fundamental method for accomplishing the display of union labels, shop cards and service buttons is to date a provision into the contract definitely stating that the union label shall appear on all goods and that the shop card or service button shall designate all goods so bought as produced by the members of service unions."

"Just as Old Glory, the American eagle and the Statue of Liberty are symbols of our great republic, which is setting an example for peoples of all nations, union label, shop cards and service buttons are the emblems that set standards for wage earners all over the world, who are striving for the same industrial justice and economic freedom."

Pay Increases for Drug Firm Workers

Oakland, Calif.—Through negotiations by Local No. 20744 of office workers of the McKesson & Rob- erts Drug Co., we received retroactive increases in wages ranging from 65c to $10, according to Frank F. Randall, vice-president of the International Un-

Workers’ Rights Safeguarded in Insurance Bill

Washington, D. C.—Although the bill exempts insurance companies from the anti-trust laws was passed by the Senate, the rights of employees of these concerns under the National Labor Relations Act and the Wage and Hour act are safeguarded. The bill, as a result of the efforts of the Office Employees International Union, the Industry and Ordinance Services, Assistant Agent, C. H. Huchings, chairman of the AFL legislative committee, Lewis G. Hale, AFL national legislative representative and AFL Association General Counsel, Herbert A. Thatcher.

The protective clause states that the act shall not be construed to affect in any manner the application of these labor laws to the insurance business. Office and clerical workers employed as other workers employed by insurance companies doing an interstate business are thus safeguarded in their right to organize and to bargain collectively as provided in the National Labor Relations Act, and also maintain the benefits of the Wage and Hour Law.

AFL Triumphs in Telegraph Vote

Washington, D. C.—Sweeping victories were scored by the American Federation of Labor in the recent nation-wide elections conducted among Western Union Telegraph and National Labor Relations Board. The AFL unions were chosen as collective bargaining agents by a majority of nearly 2 to 1 over the rival CIO unions in all except the district embracing metropolitan New York.

Drive to Unionize Unorganized Begins

Portland, Ore.—Energetic efforts to extend unionization and its benefits to the unorganized office workers in the Portland area is being pushed by Local No. 16281. At a recent meeting of the local, it was announced that efforts to augment the present staff was authorized and they are to be in the field by the middle of February.

The local announced that employees in the office of the Archdiocese of Oregon have been unionized and negotiations are under way for a collective bargaining agreement.

The first bomb sold in 1945 by the Portland Labor Temple bond drive, according to a business representative of the union.

Union Wins Another Round of Fight With Chicago Insurance Concern

Chicago.—Local 20732 has won another round of its long battle with Polish National Alliance, an insurance firm which has been fighting for years against the efforts of its employees to organize the company and negotiate their wages and working conditions.

Twenty-four workers, who were employed to work over weekends and Sundays without compensation from October 1938 to October 1942, were out on strike totaling $20,000. They were ordered by the federal court where suit was instituted under the Wage Act.

In 1942 the company was found by the NLRB to have engaged in unfair labor practices and was given an order to cease and desist. The company subsequently ruled on the case.

Despite this, the Alliance has been trying to reinstate workers, who have considered the possibility of instituting suits for proceedings for failure of the Alliance to fully comply with the court’s order.

Hutchings on Radio

Washington, D. C.—The establishment of the Office Employees International Union was discussed on the "Labour News Review" conducted by Albert N. Dennis and the "News Review" committee.-

The new International, Hutchings stressed, will strive to bring the benefits of trade union organization and collective bargaining to all office and clerical workers.
WASHINGTON, D. C.—The labor members of the National War Labor Board submitted to the full board a resolution which would establish seven cents an hour as a new standard of living, which wage would be retroactive to April 1, 1943. The board members would receive no less than 72 cents an hour. The statement declared that the board had "enforced the issue of the standard of living," and sought to "secure minimum wages, and to secure adequate living conditions." The statement also declared that the President, in his executive order, "will recommend the board to approve increases to eliminate substandard wages and conditions." The board's recommendation would be submitted to the state board for the transport office employees. The transport office employees are still represented by the National Federation of Labor.
Pictorial Highlights of International Charter Convention

1. Irving Enna, chairman Credentials Committee
2. Clifford A. Jackson, chairman Rules Committee
4. Some delegates during convention session.
5. J. Howard Hicks, chairman Constitution Committee. Seated: Paul R. Hutchings, AFL Director of Organization, and Ruth Wilkie, convention reporter.
7. Vice Presidents C. A. Stafford and Mildred Erickson with delegate Shirley Jacobs.