OEIU Wins Remington Rand Election By Big Majority

Elmira, N. Y.—In a consent election conducted on June 15 by the National Labor Relations Board, Office Employees International Union was chosen as the collective bargaining agent for the office force at Remington Rand, Inc., one of the largest manufacturers of typewriters and office machines in the world.

The union won the election by a substantial majority of the 170 eligible office and clerical workers, the vote being 81 to 32.

After the ballots were counted a victory celebration was held at the Machinists Building and steps were taken to apply for a charter and formally establish Local 197. Thomas Keane was elected temporary president and Leona Shephard, temporary secretary-treasurer. A negotiating committee was also selected.

Brief addresses were made at the meeting by Paul Hutchings, president of the International Union, and by Claude W. Worley, local representative of the Machinists, which represents the production employees.

President Hutchings expressed his pleasure over the outcome of the election, especially in view of the activities that preceded the balloting, and pointed out that the Remington Rand workers were pioneers in the unionization movement among Elmira office and clerical forces.

The management consented to the election as the result of conferences held with President Hutchings, NLRB Field Examiner Elizabeth Bihnig, Mr. Trout of the corporation and a committee of workers—Avis Lyman, Mary Brill, Leona Shephard, Tom Keane, Esther Johnson and Annabelle Jaram. As a further result of these meetings a copy of the payroll names was secured to determine the eligible voters and the balloting was arranged to be conducted on company time.

On the eve of the election a rally was held by the Local for all workers.

Complete Contract With Phillips Oil

Borger, Tex.—The negotiating committee of Local 117, together with C. A. Stafford, vice president of the International Union, and J. W. Park, AFL organizer, have completed negotiations on a proposed contract with the Phillips Petroleum Co. The pact is being submitted to the membership.

The local also recently won the NLRB election at the butadiene plant of Phillips, and it is anticipated that negotiations on an agreement will get under way shortly.

Seek Rights At Paper Company

Panama City, Fla.—A request has been filed with the National Labor Relations Board for bargaining representation for the Southern Kraft Division of the International Paper Mills here.

More than 85 per cent of all the eligible office workers have signed up with Local 80, according to J. O. Bloodworth, Jr., vice president of the International Union, who has been assisting officers of the local in this campaign.

Organization of the office force completes the unionization of this plant as other workers are organized and have established collective bargaining relationships with the company.

Dairy Agreement Near Completion

Norfolk, Va.—With a substantial portion of the negotiations of the agreement between Local No. 23786 and the Rosedale Dairy Co. completed, an early submission of the concluded agreement to the Fourth Regional Labor Board is anticipated, according to J. Howard Hicks, secretary-treasurer of the International Union, who represents the union.

Transit Case

Notwithstanding the degree of representation possessed by Local No. 23786 the management of the local operations of the Virginia Transit Co. have demanded that the union be certified by the National Labor Relations Board, Hicks reports.

As a result a petition for certification has been filed with NLRB and the office workers employed by the company are eagerly awaiting action by this agency, which should clear the way for the submission and negotiation of an agreement.

Employees of Gulf Refinery

Choose OEIU In Election

Port Arthur, Tex.—A substantial majority of the office and clerical workers at the Gulf Oil Co. refinery voted for Local 80 as their collective bargaining agent in an election conducted by the National Labor Relations Board.

The victory was achieved despite the opposition of the office force, who solicited the more than 200 office employees to vote against the only union on the ballot and put up their own slate, urging them to vote “No.”

That these tactics failed to deter the workers in their determination to secure the benefits of collective bargaining through the Office Employees International Union is attested by the outcome of the election.

The Gulf refinery is one of the largest plants in the country turning out 100-octane gas and other products. It employs over 6,000 workers.

Much credit for the successful outcome of the office force goes to the office force, due the organizing committee and officers of Local 80 together with Vice President C. A. Stafford of the International Union and J. W. Park, AFL organizer.

Steps are now being taken for selection of a committee to draft a proposed contract to be submitted to the company.

Consent Election At Brown & Sharpe

Providence, R. I.—A consent election was agreed to at the Brown & Sharpe Co. to determine whether office and clerical employees desire to be represented by Local 76.

The company's consent to have the National Labor Relations Board referendum is the result of interest shown by the office employees in signing up with the local.

The 1,200 eligible employees have been set up in 3 voting units for the election, which is scheduled to be held June 20. One is the administrative office, another the drafting and engineering offices and the third embraces the office workers in the 117 production departments. Balloting will take place during working hours under NLRB supervision.

The agreement covering the election was negotiated and signed June 4. The company was represented by Mr. Austin, comptroller, Mr. Hall, adjuster, and Mr. Phillips, general counsel. Representing Local 76 were President Russell, president and business agent, Angelo Aiello, vice president, and James M. C. Milius, secretary-treasurer.

The proposal was presented by Field Examiner McFadden.

Workers were advised of the consent election arrangements at an open meeting the night of June 4. Addresses were delivered by President Russell, president and business agent, Angelo Aiello, vice president, and James M. C. Milius, secretary-treasurer. They were assisted by Paul R. Hutchings, president of the International Union. The NLRB was represented by Field Examiner McFadden.

The company, which has been in business for over a century, is one of the largest manufacturers of heavy machine tools and machinists' tools and is one of the principal industrial establishments in the Providence area.

The production and maintenance workers are members of the International Association of Machinists and have obtained substantial benefits as a result of their union membership.

It is anticipated that substantial improvements in working conditions can be obtained for the office workers through collective bargaining.
Medical Service Included
In New Security Measure

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Introduction in Congress of a new and improved Wagner-Murray-Dingell bill, providing for a nation-wide, comprehensive system of social insurance, was hailed by the American Federation of Labor.

AFL President William Green called upon Congress to enact the bill without delay in order to assure protection to the American people in the postwar period. Authors of the measure—Senators Wagner and Murray and Representative Truman—dropped the bill into the congressional hopper and it was reported that they received promises of support from the President. The President also consulted with AFL officials before introducing the bill.

The measure would establish a national system of insurance consisting of prepaid personal health service; set up unemployment and temporary disability insurance and provide benefits for any week on a uniform, national basis; and broaden retirement, survivors, and total disability insurance with more liberal benefits than existing laws.

It also authorizes a 10-year, $900,000,000 program of federal grants and loans for construction and operation of hospitals and health centers.

The bill would provide grants to states for expansion of health services, maternal and child health and welfare services, and for protection against the insensitivity to needy individuals, such as the aged, blind, and dependent children.

It also calls for a national system of public employment offices.

Sen. Wagner told the Senate that all the insurance benefits could be financed now and for several years thereafter from Federal taxes and in the case of employees who have no compensation from regular wages, can become adequately safeguarded against unnecessary hardship arising from temporary unemployment during the reconversion period in any subsequent economic crisis.

In addition, the new Wagner-Murray-Dingell bill offers basic protection to the millions of workers suffering from the hazards of illness, temporary disability, extended disability, old age and retirement. It extends the benefits of old age and survivors insurance to fifteen million persons now excluded.

“The American Federation of Labor is proud of the fact that it originally sponsored this legislation and has consulted closely with Senator Wagner and his colleagues in efforts to improve and perfect it.”

“A full measure of social security against the hazards of our complicated economic civilization must be guaranteed by a humane government to every American family.”

Wage Thaw Urged

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The AFL’s relentless drive to modify the wage freeze of the Little Steel Formula received unexpected support in Congress.

Rep. Gearhart of California, introduced a concurrent resolution requested by the National War Labor Board, the Director of War Mobilization and the Director of Economic Stabilization to allow a general wage increase of 15 per cent beyond the “Little Steel” formula in order to permit workers to meet increased living costs.
Many Gains Won For Milwaukee Members

Milwaukee, Wis.—Many gains have been obtained recently for members of Office Employees International Union, Local No. 9, according to Alice Holz, vice president of the International, and secretary-treasurer of the local.

Dairy Increase Approved

Wage increases were approved by the Sixth Regional War Labor Board for members of the Dairy Distributors, Inc., who are members of Local No. 9. These adjustments averaged $2.04 per week and were retroactive to December 9, 1944. In addition to the wage increases, the board approved the sick leave clause which provides that employee shall be granted leave, paid leave, and sick leave for each month. In case of prolonged illness the employer agrees to pay the wages for the waiting period of 3 days under the insurance policy. This new agreement provides for a sick leave of 2 weeks' vacation after one year's service and is a closed-shop agreement.

Newspaper Wages Improved

Local No. 9 has a 3-year agreement covering the office employees of the Milwaukee Electric Transport Co., which expires May 19, 1947. The contract, however, may be opened on any anniversary date for changes in wages or hours of work. The union requested an increase for its members this year and has obtained management's agreement to a 2 per week increase for all employees up to the $56 per week rate. This adjustment has been filed with the WLB and its approval of the increase is awaited.

Win Transit Referendum

Office employees of the Milwaukee Electric Transport Co. and members of Local No. 9, have chalked up a very important victory in a referendum which was conducted by the Wisconsin Labor Board for the purpose of determining an all-union shop. Through the aggressiveness of the members employed at this company the referendum was conducted to assure a union shop for the local in this establishment.

This election decisively showed that these office employees were determined to obtain a union shop, for when the ballots were counted the results showed 76 in favor and only 14 opposed—86% in favor cast.

WLB Hearing Held

O. A. Jirkovic, organizer for the Milwaukee Federated Trades Council, and A. W. Korbel and Fred Schmitz, representing the office employees of the Miller Brewing Co. who are members of Local No. 9, appeared before a hearing officer designated by the War Labor Board in the person of Sonya Spiesman, and presented arguments as to why the union should have the same maintenance of membership clause that has been in existence since 1938. It is expected that a directive will be issued within a short time.

OEIU Wins Long Battle Against Rule

Washington, D. C.—The Office Employees International Union has won its long fight against the Shipbuilding Commission rule limiting paid vacations of office employes to one week after one year of service and two weeks after five years on the job.

President Paul R. Hutchings and J. Howard Hicks, secretary-treasurer, announced the victory, and said that expected that local unions should experience no further difficulty in gaining such shipbuilding Commission's approval on two-week vacation plans for shipyard office employes which have been negotiated with management.

The decision upsetting the past practice was handed down by a majority of the Labor War Board, which in its decision, stated in part that the commission's approval was given in the case of the St. Johns River Shipyard, Jacksonville, Fla., where the Union had negotiated a vacation plan providing accrual of vacation time at the rate of one day per month.

This plan was submitted to the Labor War Board in October, 1944, but was not approved until January, 1945. A second case was submitted to the Board in November, 1944, and was discontinued in November, the commission ordering only half a day, per month, or six days a year.

The union appealed to the National Labor Board. All of these facts showing why the approval should have been approved were placed before the Board, and, on May 24, 1945, the commission's approval was readopted and the vacation issue was referred to the commission for reconsideration.

On May 24, the commission reconsidered the matter and approved the negotiated allowance of one day per month, retroactive to July 1, 1943. The plan was modified somewhat by changing the six-month qualifying provisions to one year.

Mr. Ed. Rowan, who had strongly supported the union's plan, hit at this modification, particularly in view of the exceedingly long delays sometimes occurring in getting commission action.

The retroactive feature will be of particular benefit to workers who have been laid off.

Second Victory Won

Shortly after the triumph in the St. Johns River case, the commission acted on a somewhat similar case which had been presented over 14 months ago. This involved clerical workers in the timekeeping department of the Walsh-Kaiser Shipyard at Providence, R. I., which had been excluded from participation in the two-week vacation allowance in effect for the rest of the office force.

In March, 1944, the local union negotiated the elimination of this inequality, but, when the matter was submitted to the commission, it was referred to the NLRB. On appeal by the Union, the National Labor Board sustained the commission. The Local, assisted by the International, resubmitted the proposal in modified form, and it has now been unanimously approved by the commission. This action has resulted in extension of the two-week vacation allowance to all of the inside time-keeping clerical workers.

Basis of Manpower Control Changed

Washington, D. C.—Decisions to retain or remove all or part of the manpower controls will be made on an area basis after the receipt of a proposal made by national and regional management-labor committees and approved by Paul V. McNutt, chairman of the War Manpower Commission.

This method, instead of directives to areas from national headquarters, as was the previous responsibility, provides for modification or elimination of controls upon the persons who are most directly affected. A regional director could veto the action of an area director and the management-labor committee, if he should find that an adjacent area would be adversely affected.

The report of the conference of national and regional management-labor committees follows:

"War manpower controls should be removed from management and labor in an orderly manner consistent with war production needs and the prevention of mass unemployment.

"Origin of a decision to retain or remove any or all area controls in an area or in a plant in an area shall come from the War Manpower Commission area director and management-labor committee.

"Such a decision should be effective at the end of the working day after notice of the action is received by the regional director, unless the order should be vetoed within that period by the regional director in consultation with the regional management-labor committee, but if the regional director approves the order it should be effective immediately.

"Nothing in this recommendation should be construed to abrogate any existing appeal privileges."

Another statement adopted by the conference said as follows: "It is recommended that the WMC chairman use his influence to establish a policy by the government with respect to war contracts that will permit employers to give thirty-day notice before workers are separated from payrolls if there are to be layoffs or discharges.

"Chairman McNutt and a group of the management and labor leaders called on President Truman and read a statement to him pledging an "abundant" plea for prosecution of the war in the Pacific. Mr. Truman thanked them for their work.

Election Set By NLRB at Texas Co.

Port Arthur, Tex.—The National Labor Relations Board has directed that an election be held to determine whether office workers in the case and package division of the Texas Co. desire Local 66 as their collective bargaining agent.

The deadlock issues will have to be decided by the Regional War Labor Board.
ORGANIZE EMPLOYEES OF FIBRE CONCERN

Vancouver, Wash.—A majority of the 204 local workers employed by the Longview (Wash.) Fibre Co. have been organized by Local No. 68 and the management is being requested to recognize the union as the representative of the group, according to C. C. Newell, business representative of the local and a member of the president of the International Union.

The successful outcome of this venture would open a large field for unionization of the thousands of clerical workers employed by the Longview area, Newell avers.

Negotiations between Local No. 68 and the association of retail merchants are progressing and an early submission of the completed agreement to the Regional War Labor Board is anticipated, according to Ruby F. Williams, secretary-treasurer of the union. Successful conclusion of this agreement would result in improvements for virtually all office workers employed by retail stores in Vancouver.

Launch Program Of Unionization At Three Firms

Charleston, W. Va.—Under plans formulated by J. Howard Hawks, secretary-treasurer of the International Union, Local 67 of this city is launching a program calculated to complete organization of office and clerical workers employed by the General Machinery Ordnance Corp., and to provide an opportunity of collective bargaining with respect to our trade employed by the Libby-Owens-Ford Glass Co., and the Kroger Grocery & Baking Co.

According to Virginia Lee Woods, secretary-treasurer, and Freida Peterson, recording secretary of Local 67, there is a little interest in the benefits to be derived through unionization has been evidenced by office and clerical workers in this city. The local union is planning to extend the opportunity for membership and the resultant advantages to all such workers in this area.

Local 67 currently is renewing its agreement with the General Machinery Ordnance Corp. which covers certain production clerical workers and is moving toward complete organization of all office workers employed by the company.

Voltey Andrews, secretary-treasurer of the West Virginia State Federation of Labor, is lending substantial support to the organization of the workers of the Libby-Owens-Ford Glass Co. Officers and members of the local Teamsters’ Union are giving wholehearted and enthusiastic support to the organization of the office workers employed by the Kroger Grocery & Baking Co.

President Calls for Hike In Unemployment Payments

Washington, D. C.—Calling for immediate action by Congress to prevent an emergency of regular unemployment, President Truman urged, in a special message, enactment of legislation to increase unemployment compensation and to extend its coverage.

The President asked Congress to provide federal funds so that unemployed workers can be paid as follows: $25 a week (if they have dependent) for as long as 26 weeks in any year. He pointed out that under present state laws, which cannot be changed overnight, the maximum figure is $18 and the duration not more than 16 weeks.

At the same time, the President pointed out that the union of 5 million additional workers who are not now covered because they are employed in small establishments or in navy yards, arsenals or government offices.

Message Encouraging AFL President William Green immediately declared that labor is “highly encouraged” by Truman’s message and said his proposals are “acceptable” for the emergency period. However, he emphasized that the long-range social security goal of the AFL could only be achieved through the enactment of the new Wagner-Murray-Dingell bill.

President Truman gave at least inferential endorsement to the Wagner-Murray-Dingell bill in his message when he said “improvement” in the social security system is “fundamental.” Such action, he pointed out, “will take time,” and he warned that on the specific issue of unemployment benefits “we may not have time available.”

“Thus are we entering the first phase of reconversion,” the President said. “We must be prepared immediately for the far larger problems of manpower displacement which will face us with the end of the war in the Pacific.”

Neglect Human Needs

The President emphasized that Congress already has acted to provide for business, administrative and agricultural needs in reconversion, but has thus far neglected human needs.

“Let Congress to close this gap,” he said.

“I am confident,” he continued, “that, with appropriate measures, we can avoid large-scale and unhealthy unemployment during the transition period. However, some temporary unemployment is unavoidable, particularly when total demobilization becomes permanent.

“Even if reconversion proceeds rapidly, no amount of planning can make jobs immediately available for all displaced workers. Accordingly, we must provide maximum security to those who have gone so fully of themselves on the fighting and production fronts. The transition from war to peace is part and parcel of the war, and we cannot shrink our obligation to those temporarily unemployed through no fault of their own.

Recent unemployment benefits would serve as a bulwark against postwar deflation. By assuring workers of a definite income for a definite period of time, Congress will help materially to prevent a sharp decline in consumer expenditures which would otherwise result in a downward spiral of consumption and production.

“Adopting unemployment insurance is an indispensable form of prosperity insurance.”

While labor heralded the President’s recommendations, immediate congressional reaction was mixed. Senator Wagner and other liberals rallied in support of the President, but Chairman George, of the senate finance committee, and Chairman Doughton, of the house ways and means committee, both said they saw no pressing need for such legislation. These congressmen and their colleagues were among the first to rush postwar measures to aid businesses.

In his comment on the presidential message, Mr. Green said:

“The government, which appealed to the patriotism of the nation’s workers to take new jobs in the war industries, often far from their homes, cannot evade its responsibility to these workers now and leave them to fend for themselves.

“Labor is delighted to see Mr. Truman maintain the same stand on this important issue that he took as a United States senator. The American Federation of Labor warned more than a year ago of the danger of reconversion unemployment and is highly encouraged by President Truman’s call for action.”

Half Million In Back Pay Is Won For Screen Force

Hollywood, Calif.—The Twentieth Regional War Labor Board has announced approval of a new agreement between the Screen Office Employes Guild, Local No. 1391, and motion picture producing companies operating locally.

The 3000 members of the union will receive a 7 per cent over-all pay increase retroactive to January, 1944, which will aggregate approximately $50,000, according to Glenn A. Pratt, business manager of the local.

Vacation provisions, preferential hiring, overtime and week-end, night premium pay are also included in the agreement.

Alaska Workers Feel Pinch In High-Price Region

Juneau, Alaska—According to AF of L’s Alaska State Council, office and clerical workers in this busy northern outpost are experiencing problems which they are convinced can be solved only through organization. Organizer Marshall has indicated that the field for unionization of such workers in this territory is wide open.

“Of course, it can be immediately aggressive action and he has assured International Union officers of his support and cooperation in affording office workers the opportunity to engage in collective bargaining.”

DEPARTMENT STORE CAMPAIGN MAPPED

Cleveland, Ohio,—In a move to bring the benefits of collective bargaining to the approximately 13,000 department store workers in this city, a campaign has been formulated that will shortly be undertaken for the unionization of this group by interested A.F.L. unions.

Considerable desire for organization has been shown among the approximately 1,200 office workers employed locally in the department store field according to Pearl A. Hanno, business representative of Local 17. Business Representative Hanno gave assurance of the support to this undertaking which will be forthcoming from her local union.

Heading this organizational venture will be Edward F. Murphy, president of the Territorial District Council, and Peter Formica, representative of the Retail Clerks’ International Union. Mr. Hanno, secretary-treasurer of the Office Employes International Union, indicated that the International Union would give all possible assistance to this movement which it is confident will materialize.

Strike Losses at Low Point in 1944

Washington, D. C.—Losses from strikes and lockouts in 1944 hit an all-time low, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported. Idleness due to these causes, the bureau said, was equivalent to about 4 months of 1 per cent of the available working time.

Putting it another way, the bureau said that the lost because of strikes and lockouts last year was lumped together, it would be equivalent to shutting down all industry about 2-1/2 hours, or about one-fourth of a working day.

Analysis of the strike figures made public by the BLS again proved that AFL unions are competing with each other better than any other organization.

Disputes over wages were responsible for more strikes and lockouts than any other cause.

The BLS report showed that stoppages were most extensive in the automobile, iron, steel and mining industries.