Hail Milwaukee Transit Pact

Milwaukee, Wis.—Office Employees of Milwaukee Electric Railway and Transport Company, who recently renounced an “independent” card and came under the banner of the Office Employees’ International Union, are holding a contract negotiation in their behalf by Local 9.

The bargaining committee consisted of William J. O’Neill, Fred II. Koehler, Joseph A. Janeczk and John P. Studler, and was assisted by Organizer Otto Jirkowicz, of the Milwaukee Federated Trades Council, representing the local organization.

The contract provides for a 40-hour week with overtime pay at time and one-half; vacations for one year’s service, 1 week; two year’s service, 2 weeks; the company and the union to submit a Form 10 application to the National War Labor Board requesting a 5 per cent increase in all wage and salary schedules and rates covered by the agreement, retroactive to January 1, 1944; sick leave; payment of a cash bonus of 7.5 per cent to employees on payroll of the company during the period November 10 to November 30, 1945, this payment to be computed at 5.75 per cent of employees twice their average earnings (excluding year-end bonus payment to employees in December, 1944) during the 12 months’ period ended November 30, 1945; monthly payments of a transit industry bonus amounting to $5.25 per month.

The contract covers more than 10 employees.

ELECTION WON AT TAMPA ELECTRIC CO.

Tampa, Fla.—Local 46 won an election conducted by the National Labor Relations Board among the 120 office-employees of the Tampa Electric Co. by a vote of 2 to 1 and has been certified as bargaining agent for the workers.

M. Bruce Burnett, local president, and J. O. Bloodworth, business representative and a vice president of the International Union, and a committee of the local, have had several conferences with Frank J. Gannon, president of the utility company, and negotiations on a contract are now due to get under way.

Since its inception in 1939, Local 46 has grown to be one of Tampa’s leading unions, organizing, among others, 1,000 office workers at the shipyards of the Tampa Shipybuilding Co. and McCloskey & Co., with which agreements are now in effect.

VIRGINIA TRANSIT WORKERS ORGANIZE

Norfolk, Va.—Local 23786 has completed the organization of office employees of the Virginia Transit Co., and with the assistance of J. Howard Higginson, secretary-treasurer of the International Union, is making rapidly toward early recognition and subsequent negotiation of an agreement.

The organizational campaign was aided greatly by H. L. King, treasurer of the Norfolk Legal Labor Union and a member of the Amalga- mated Association of Street, Electric Railway and Motor Coach Employees of America.

Local 23786 also reports that office workers of the Rosedale Dairy Co., Inc., and Rosedale Dairy Stores have organized with the assistance of members of other unions employed by the concerns, steps to secure recognition and collective bargaining agreements are being taken.

AFL Organizer J. R. Miller has been working closely with the officers and membership of the local and considering the credit for the success thus far attained is being attributed to him.

Orders Election for Employees of Ferry Operator

Washington, D. C.—Upon petition of Local 8, the National Labor Relations Board has directed that an election be conducted among the office employees of the Puget Sound Navigation Co. at Seattle, Wash. Vice President Mildred Erickson, of the International Union and business representative of the local, and AFL Organizer Charles G. Hughes represented the union at the hearing on the petition.

Approximately 100 employees are eligible to vote, and it is anticipated that Local 8 will obtain a substantial majority thus establishing its exclusive bargaining rights for this group.

Union Certified at General Mills

Chicago, Ill.—Business Representative Sarah E. Keenan announced that Local 28 has been certified by the National Labor Relations Board as exclusive bargaining agent for office and clerical employees in the Chicago offices of General Mills after an election in which a good majority chose the union to represent them.

Negotiations are now about to commence with a proposal for a contract to be submitted to the management.
A GREAT MAN HAS GONE

Our great peace-time and wartime leader, Franklin D. Roosevelt, is dead. His death constitutes a heavy loss to the labor movement and to every wage-earner in the nation. It is a heavy loss also to the entire freedom-loving world.

President Roosevelt will forever be revered by the people of the world as one of history’s greatest war leaders. His secret military strategy is now leading the United Nations to complete victory over the forces of human freedom. And if we follow his inspired wisdom, we can be confident, united, all the nations of goodwill into an international security organization which will effectively banish future wars.

It is the personal duty of every one of us to carry on and reach these two great goals upon which he laid his life and which death forced him to relinquish on the brink of fulfillment.

His fellow citizens in this country will always remember President Roosevelt as a man who had supreme faith in America and in the American ideals of freedom, justice and democracy. He took over the Presidency at a time of economic collapse. His courage at that time of crisis rallied the weak, halted the panic and started America back on the road to recovery. His humanity saved millions of American citizens who, without help from the government, might have perished from starvation. And his clear vision succeeded in bringing about a program of reforms and legislative enactments which made America strong and more secure than ever before.

All that is history. But where would America and the rest of the world be if Franklin D. Roosevelt had not recognized at the outset the menace of Fascism and Nazism, both as a threat to our free way of life and to our physical security? Perhaps his greatest service to humanity was in making us aware of these dangers and in getting America prepared in time for the inevitable attack by the Axis.

As president of the American Federation of Labor, I frequently visited and conferred with President Roosevelt in the past twelve years. His interest and sympathy with the problems of the workers of America were unbounded. I never found him more realist and unflinching than he was committed to the defense of the union movement. The great body of social and economic legislation enacted under his leadership constitutes by itself an irreplaceable monument to his memory.

We deeply mourn the passing of our Great President. It will not stop us or slow us down. On the contrary, we shall work harder than ever before to fulfill the two objectives which he charted for our nation and for which he gave his life — victory in the war and victory in the peace.

Our new President, Harry S. Truman, is ideally fitted by nature and experience to carry out these objectives. An able and sincere man, he can and will unite America, not only for the consummation of military victory but for the inauguration of a postwar program of enduring peace and domestic prosperity.

Right now the supreme responsibility of all the American people is clear. We must support President Truman to the fullest extent of our ability. We must help him in his great tasks ahead. Written by AFL President Wm. Green in the May issue of the American Federationist.
Council Urges Prompt Action On Reconversion

Washington, D. C.—Warning that further delay may result in widespread unemployment before the year is out, the AFL Executive Council, at its spring session, urged the government to speed up reconversion.

Substantial cuts in war production have already been made, the executive council pointed out, and may mean that the war production program will be finished in half within a few months.

"Under these circumstances," the council declared, "it is imperative that a large-scale reconversion program be undertaken at once. Unless the reconversion process is expedited, mass unemployment will grip America in 1945 and purchasing power will fall to such a low point that expansion of post-war production will be blocked."

The council called upon President Truman to take the initiative in purchasing power by prevailing upon Congress to adopt legislation extending more adequate compensation benefits to war workers. The council reminded the President that he himself had sponsored such legislation as a Senator. In a further step to bolster the national economy, the council urged the National War Labor Board that the time is overdue to lift wage rates to make up for the loss of workers going back to peaceful industries. American workers will suffer when war production is cut.

In the same statement, the council declared that even had not the AFL added the AFL's opposition to compulsory labor legislation.

Connecticut Gets "Baby" Wagner Act

Hartford, Conn.—Eight years of intensive work by the Connecticut Federation of Labor were crowned with success here when the State Legislature adopted the Federation's No. 1 legislative proposal—the State Labor Relations Act.

Harold V. Feinmark, legislative agent of the Federation, who guided the bill through three stormy public hearings, said that it will immediately affect a quarter of a million workers, and may protect a half million workers when the war is won.

The act, Feinmark said, meets the major requirements of such legislation: it protects workers in their right to form or join a labor organization; and outlaw unfair labor practices by employers. Appeal to the courts is included, and will be administered by a State Labor Relations Board of three members.

ORGANIZE PRINT SHOP

Oakland, Calif.—Local 29 reports organizing Olympic Press office employees and securing wage increases and reduced work week for the unit.

NLRB Right to Ban Unfair Employer Practices Upheld

Washington, D. C.—The United States Supreme Court ruled that an employer cannot forbid employees to distribute labor literature on company premises during non-work hours, and in a companion case upheld the right of union organizers to distribute labor literature on an employer's property despite a company prohibition against such activity.

In both cases, decided by a 5-to-3 vote with Justice Reed delivering the single opinion covering them and Justice Roberts dissenting, the solicitation case grew out of the discharge of four employees of the Republic Aviation Corp., aircraft manufacturer, on Long Island. One had flouted a company rule designed to prevent soliciting of any sort, and the other three were wearing union buttons during the program. The National Labor Relations Board held that the dismissals interfered with the workers' right to organize. They secured a temporary restraining order, and this ruling was affirmed by the Second Circuit Court of Appeals.

The literature distribution case developed at the plant of Le Tourneau Co., machinery manufacturer, near Tococa, Ga., where two employees had violated a company rule that forbade the company rule. Here, too, the Labor Relations Board said the Wagner Act guarantees were violated. In an order issued by the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals.

The Supreme Court said the "Wagner Act did not undertake the impossible task of specifying in pro-
clic and unmistakable language each incident which constitutes an unfair labor practice. On the contrary, that act left to the board the work of applying the act's general prohibitory language in the light of the infinite combinations of events which might be charged as violative of its terms."

On this premise the court decided that it was a proper exercise of authority for the board to hold that the action complained of violated the act.

Find High Wage Tales Are Myths

New York, N. Y.—The propaganda about high wartime wages, which many members of the armed forces and wives of the men in the service were thinking about in the mouths of veteran soldiers returning home, should be dispelled by the fact emphasized by Mr. Green that the "battles is only half-won, the job of victory only half-completed." And that they showed as an inevitable determination to "stick it out" for the duration, as President Truman has exhorted them to do.

The further observation of the victory over the Nazi war machine was made by Mr. Green in a radio talk over the Columbia Broadcasting System from San Francisco, where he was attending the United Nation security conference. He said: "Hitler threatened the dignity of human labor. He sought to make all workers slaves. Therefore, the defeat of Nazi to which the free workers of America contributed so importantly by record-breaking production of war materials must be regarded as the final, crushing blow to the advocates of slave labor."

"The millions who lost their lives resisting Hitler's mad ambition for world power, including our own boys who were killed on the battlefronts and on the production lines, will have died in vain unless we make a supreme effort now to prevent future wars and build enduring peace," he stressed.

AFL Head Says All-Out Effort Will Continue

Washington, D. C.—Labor hailed the official proclamation of victory in Europe with sober joy and solid determination to build a world of work and more work," as President Truman urged, until Japan also is forced to surrender unconditionally.

AFL President Green, in a radio address on V-E Day, declared:

"In behalf of the 7,000,000 members of the AFL, I pledge that we will continue steadfastly on the job of war production and will continue to invest our savings in White Boy, in order to speed the day when people in our country and throughout the world can breathe again in peace and to hasten the hour when our boys in uniform can come home safely."

All over the nation workers celebrated the unconditional surrender of the Nazi war machine, with only brief pauses in the factories for listening to the President's proclamation and for prayer. As to the unemployment question, Mr. Green emphasized by Mr. Green that the "battle is only half-won, the job of victory only half-completed." And that they showed as an inevitable determination to "stick it out" for the duration, as President Truman has exhorted them to do.

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Ask Election at U. S. Gauge Co.

Sellersville, Pa.—Organization of the office employees of the U. S. Gauge Co. has progressed to the point where an election has been requested of the National Labor Relations Board.

The valuable assistance in the drive has been rendered by Ernest R. Heimbach, recording secretary of the local lodge of the Machinists, entirely dedicated to the work of organizers in this plant, according to George P. Firth, a vice president of the Office Workers International Union, who is handling this matter.
**RETROACTIVE WAGE ADJUSTMENTS WON**

Richmond, Calif.—More than 100 office workers, members of Local 29, received pay raises and were assured of a full two weeks' vacation under the terms of an agreement recently signed by the local with the Housing Authority of the City of Richmond. The signing of this agreement brought to a conclusion negotiations which have been under way with the Authority for some time.

The retroactive wage adjustments go back to January 1, 1945, and substantial adjustments were obtained in all classifications.

The agreement was signed by local union Business Representative Muriel Krunoon and Secretary-Treasurer Pauline Wilde, and by International Vice President Frank F. Randall.

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**Contract Signed With Engine Firm**

St. Louis, Mo.—A contract covering timekeepers and calculating machine operators has been negotiated with the Bushel-Sulzer Brothers Diesel Engine Co. by Mary E. Rydler and Ralph Wilson, organizers for the Central states-AFL-Joint Organizing Committee, according to A.L. Rex, president of Local 13 of which these workers are members.

Under the terms of the agreement, wages of timekeepers are increased 27 cents an hour. Wages of the calculating machine operators are boosted $45 a month. The increases are retroactive and the workers are due to get approximately $5,000 in back pay.

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**File Petition for Ingalls Employees**

Pascagoula, Miss.—A petition has been filed with the National Labor Relations Board requesting certification of the International Union as bargaining agent for the office and clerical workers of the Ingalls Shipbuilding Corp., according to A. R. Carson, a vice president of the International Union.

About 400 workers are involved. It is anticipated that a local union will soon be established.

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**INTEREST IN UNION**

Alliance, Ohio.—Office and clerical workers in this city are showing interest in unionization, according to Thomas H. Nichols, secretary of the Alliance Central Labor Union.

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**AFL Council Hails V-E Day**

Washington, D. C.—The AFL Executive Council greeted the announcement of the end of the war in Europe with the following statement.

"Hail to the glorious victory in Europe! Hail to the brave men in our armed forces whose hard fighting made victory possible! Hail to the great masses of American workers, whose unifying efforts supplied our armed forces and those of our Allies with superiority in weapons and equipment!"

"Let us remember that permanent victory in Europe requires more than military action. Let us concentrate now on making that victory fully significant by destroying the hateful things Hitler stood for and by establishing enduring peace!"

"And let us also remember that thus far we have won only half the battle. The other half still remains in the Pacific. Plenty of hard fighting and hard work will be required until Japan, too, surrenders unconditionally. Labor will not panic or relax until the entire job is completed and final world-wide victory is won."

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**Majority Want to Keep On Working**

Washington, D. C.—Three of every four women workers in the Detroit area plan to continue working after the war is over and it is a matter of necessity rather than choice with 85 per cent of them, as they have families or others depending upon them for support.

This was revealed by the first of a series of surveys which the women’s bureau of the Department of Labor is making in war production centers.

The bureau said that 100,000 more women would want jobs after the war than were employed in 1940, which would mean a total of 2,350,000 in the Detroit labor market.

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**Ask NLRB to Hold DeLaval Election**

Poughkeepsie, N. Y.—The National Labor Relations Board has been petitioned to take the necessary steps for certification of Local 112 as collective bargaining agent for office employees of the DeLaval Steam Turbine Co.

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**FREIDIN ON WLW**

Washington, D. C.—Jesse Freidin, general counsel of the War Labor Board, was appointed by President Roosevelt to be a public member of the agency. He will fill the vacancy created by the resignation of William B. Davis re-nominated for a second term as Federal Economic Administrator.

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**REALTY WORKERS**

New York.—Organization of the office employees of Starrett Realty Rentsing Co. has been completed by Local 23076, and efforts are being made to secure improvements in wages and working conditions.

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**OPA Formula Invites Huge Profits In Consumer Goods**

Washington, D. C.—Prices set by OPA for consumer goods soon to be brought back into production open the way for huge profits during the reconversion period, Boris Shishkin, AFL economist, warned.

The OPA formula, Shishkin pointed out, is completely one-sided because it makes allowances to manufacturers for cost-increasing factors but completely disregards cost-reducing advantages resulting from war experience.

Chief of these, in Shishkin’s opinion, is the increase of labor productivity, and he said: "In the munitions industry, for example, productivity increased 72 percent—that is, 100 workers are doing today as much as many guns or as 172 workers did back in 1943. This increase is due to technical improvements that have taken place during the war years.

"No one expects this high increase in productivity to be carried over into peacetime production, but certainly a part of it will be held. Yet no provision is made for it in the formula."

The AFL economist also criticized the OPA for "thinking in terms of 1942 production." Such thinking, he said, is "dangerous, because prewar production won’t be nearly enough if we are to have full production and full employment. Such thinking does not take into account the tremendous backlog of consumer goods demand now awaiting satisfaction."

At the same time, Shishkin found the OPA rule regarding "rare and unusual cases" also was relaxed to the extent that "rare and unusual" will be interpreted to mean "exceptional cases of intraplant inequities."

The directive also authorized the WLW to approve or direct "other non-basic rate wage adjustments or changes which may result in efficient and profitable operation and which affect earnings in cases where the board finds that such adjustments or changes are in accordance with the substantial practice in the industry or the area which it would be inequitable not to follow in the particular case and which would be unacceptable to the area or industry, or (2) that they are equitably required to meet a special or unique situation or problem with which the company or industry and consequentley are not of a one-employee character."

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**Davis Gives NWLB Wider Authority to Increase‘Fringe’ Pay**

Washington, D. C.—William R. Davis, Director of Economic Stabilization, issued a directive to the War Labor Board which substituted discretionary authority for rigid standards in passing on so-called "fringe" or non-basic wage adjustments.

The directive supplements one issued on March 8 by Fred M. Vinson just before he left the Office of Economic Stabilization. It stipulated limits on wage adjustments such as night shift premium pay, but permits exceptions either above or below the limits under certain circumstances. In all cases where prices to the public or costs to the government are affected, the adjustments are subject to approval of the stabilization director.

Shift differentials in industries with necessarily continuous operations are to be 4 cents an hour for the second shift, and cents for the third, which is the present WLW policy. In industries where operations by their nature are not necessarily continuous, the premium pay is 4 cents and 8 cents per hour for the second and third shifts, respectively. The stabilizing limits for vacations are one week after one year of service and two weeks after five years’ service.

The directive said that adjustments higher than these limits "may be made if the board finds that the amount of the adjustment follows an already established ‘clear and well-defined practice’ in the industry or the area."

The limit of 1 cent per hour, or 1 cent, on reclassifications and job re-evaluations in "rare and unusual cases" also was relaxed to the extent that "rare and unusual" will be interpreted to mean "exceptional cases of intra-plant inequities."

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**Keasbey-Mattison Agreement Signed**

St. Louis, Mo.—Local 23 has negotiated an agreement with the Keasbey-Mattison Co., securing an adjustment of wages, retroactive to September 5, 1944, maintenance of union membership and other benefits for the office and clerical employees of the firm.