Union Shop Won On Big Exchange

TVA WATAUGA DAM
WORKERS ORGANIZE

Elizabethon, Tenn.—On February 3, 1948 at a mass meeting of TVA office employees from Watauga Dam, sponsored by the officers and members of Local 217 a total of 61 members were enrolled.

The meeting, which was attended by approximately 70 employees was addressed by Vice President A. R. Carson, TVA Personnel Officer Will
im N. Brownell, supervisor in construction ac-
counting, and D. L. Tapley, secre-

OEIU Vice President Carson gave a brief explanation and his-
tory of the bargaining relationships with TVA.

Mr. Brownell made some inter-
esting and thought-provoking re-
marks on the responsibilities of
unions which he listed as: 1. Res-
ponsibility to members, 2. Re-
sponsibility to management and 3. Responsibility to the public.

Mr. Rogers supplemented the history of the relationship between
the TVA and organizations of
salary policy employees which had been previously outlined very briefly by Vice President Carson, and spoke at some length on the policies of TVA with respect to employees together with their unions and representatives of their own choosing.

Recognition for all the individuals contributing to the success of the organizing drive cannot be giv-
en here. The report would be incomplete, however, if it failed to recognize the good work of C. F. Birchfield and Charles A. Walker, presi-
dent and secretary-treasurer of the
local union.

Secretary-Treasurer Tapley and members of PSSEU 24151 also rendered valuable assistance.

Vice President Carson reported that he is looking forward to the early establishment of joint formal cooperative relationships between the local union and management at the project.

Secure Wage Hike At Utilities Corp.

Oakland, Cal.—Negotiations with the Intersate Utilities Corporation by OEIU Local 29 have resulted in a monthly wage increase of from $22 to $32.50 retroactive to January 5, according to Business Representative John Kinmick of the local union. Also obtained are three additional paid holidays for the office staff.

The local has also completed ini-
tial negotiations of its new union shop agreement which provides several increases of from $4.50 to

Further Gains For
TIN CORP. WORKERS

Texas City, Texas.—The clerical workers employed in the plant of the Tin Processing Corp. have just obtained a general 14 cent per hour increase, according to Business Representative A. G. Wilson of OEIU Local 27 which represents this group. This is the second general increase obtained under the provisions of the 1947 agreement which has renewed itself by consent of the parties for an additional one year period.

The clerical force at this plant received a general 5 cent increase negotiated last August which, together with the present increase, gives them an additional 19 cents over the rate schedule agreed to last year and a total of 34 cents per hour increase in their base rates over the rates contained in the old 1947 agreement.

The agreement also provides for many other benefits. Time and one-half is paid for all work performed in excess of 8 hours per day and 40 hours per week, as well as for work performed on legal hol-
days and for all Sunday work. Paid sick leave up to one day per month is provided, and vacations of 14 days after a year's service are also stipulated.

The agreement also provides for 3 days paid leave in the event of death in the immediate family, and protects all employees by assuring them of no loss of earnings while performing jury service. Call-out pay of 4 hours is guaranteed if an employee reports for work and money is available.

$9.50 per week for the members of the local union employed in the various union offices in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties.
OEUI FAVORED BY TWO RESOLUTIONS

Vancouver, B.C.—The Convention of the Pacific Coast District Metal Trades Council meeting here recently unanimously adopted a resolution to include the Office Employees International Union in any new Shop Agreement negotiated by the local Shop Agreement negotiated by the Pacific Coast District Metal Trades Council or its respective local Councils according to Eleanor Murphy, Secretary-Treasurer of OEUI Local No. 30 at San Francisco, who served as International Union delegate to the Convention.

The resolution stated in part: "It is resolved that the Office Employees International Union be included in any proposed Pacific Coast District Metal Trades Council Shop Agreement or local Shop Agreement negotiated by the Pacific Coast District Metal Trades Council or its respective local Councils for the purpose of giving the Office Employees International Union and its appropriate affiliated local by such shop or shops whenever that organization obtains adequate representation among the office and clerical workers employed in any such shop or shops covered by such agreement in which event, upon receipt of such agreement, the Office Employees International Union, the terms and conditions of the Master Agreement covering such shop or shops shall become the rights and that an appropriate wage schedule will thereupon be negotiated covering the office classification involved."

The 1947 Convention supporting the request of OEUI to become an affiliate of the A.F.L.-C.I.O. as a part of the Metal Trades Department was affirmed. The resolution on this subject further resolved that OEUI be given a letter of affiliation with the Department if full affiliation is not found feasible at this time.

OEUI delegate Murphy served as the Secretary of the Resolutions Committee of the Convention.

"Who's Kidding Who?"

Recently The Carpenter, official publication of the Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America, received a non-committal response from a contractor's office at Columbia, O., accusing unions of being "selfish" and blaming them for the high cost of living. The answer by Assistant Editor Peter E. Tertzakian certainly "hit the mark" according to OEUI, as the trades unionists have been accused of "Who's Kidding Who?"

The bookkeeper stated: "In trying to control the cost of living as it is forced up by your organization, we are finding out that we are not making as much money as we are required to pay over to you... We are not just 'banking' your money, but spending it for the betterment of all people in the country." The contractor finished up his letter by saying: "For a narrow, one-sided presentation of the labor situation that is being made, we have fought for the betterment of the labor unions..."

Tertzakian replied: "You start out by accusing the unions of being 'selfish' and blame them exclusively for the high cost of living, if wanting to make money today, tomorrow, and forever. If the unions are selfish, however, your communication is one long plea for more money in your wallet. You do not present the facts of the making a living wage. If you consider the desire to make a decent living selflessness, then certainly you must include yourself in the same category as organized labor.

"When you blame the high cost of living, you merely display your colossal ignorance of the economic facts of life. In the past, wages and prices have often been fought as a losing battle against skyrocketing prices. Describing the labor, the spread between wages and prices has grown wider month by month, and it is only in the last year that wages have increased by some six percent but during the same period that prices have increased by about sixteen percent. The fact of the matter is that most workers are worse off now than they were three or four or five years ago despite higher wages because the higher wages will buy less. If you think this is "big business," or "against the state," or "misrepresentation," do not take our word for it, but talk to the labor for the exact figures; or do you think that they are untrustworthy too? Recently Secretary of Labor Schwellenbach said in a speech that each month for the last fifteen months prices have pulled higher wages up also."

"If you read The Carpenter as you have certainly probably read the recent issue that the Department of Commerce estimates profits for the first six months of this year at a rate of 100 percent. Therefore, it is well ahead of total profits for any other one full year prior to the war. The Department of Commerce reports that for the year 1929—long considered the boom year of all time. In other words, the profits of business had already piled up more profits in the six month period than it did in all of 1929 which was supposed to be a bonanza year. But the question is, do you suppose the corporations amassed these profits? By lowering the wages of workers who may or not your pay check was going to be sufficient to keep you alive! Cuts wages, you and I have been there. You and I paid for those profits and we paid for them at a higher price to our health and our store checking stand. Corporations cannot make 200% and 300% more (as they have done) on net worth than they made in any of the immediate pre-war years without prices going up."

"The higher union demands for present prices you are merely displaying an ignorance of the basic facts of human living. The struggle of the unions has been to try to maintain living standards, despite the fact that you have been able to do, the gap between wages and prices has grown wider and wider. As an employee of a contractor's office, you should be interested in what is familiar with what has transpired in the building game. lumber prices have increased 200% over pre-war prices. Brick and tile are roughly 125% above pre-war prices. Car and truck payments and most other materials. According to the Wall Street Journal building trades today are making in wages less than eight cents per cent on the national average. It wages or profits then that are contributing most to building cost? It labor's fault the house that was built for $4,000 twenty years ago sells for $25,000 today."

"The one thing I can agree with in your communication is the statement that you, as a non-union worker, are in less comfort in an economic squeeze. But let me ask you two questions; why? and whose fault is it? First, you have the fact that you are the one in the squeeze because you are a devotee of individual bargaining, then you are alone in their. To my way of thinking, you are a walking testimonial of the high cost of living, you are an example of what the worker can expect for his services when he tries to go it alone instead of banding together with his fellow workers to engage in a little collective bargaining. As far as I can see there are only two possible solutions for you crying over your unhappy plight and damning those who do have a union as selfish. It is the fault of the individual who tries to go it alone and in effort to gain something approaching economic justice."

"But let us get on with the second question, whose fault is it? Within the American Federation of Labor there is an organization for office personnel. It is known as the Office Employees International Union. Do you belong to it? Apparently not; you seem to think that maybe some members have horns and forked tails. Instead of joining forces with the wrong of these, you are the other way, going after a living wage, you are the other way, going after a living wage, you are the other way, going after a living wage? By how much do you then, but your solution seems to be to try to bring everybody else down to your economic level rather than stepping up your own economic level."

OEUI BOARD MEETING

Washington, D.C.—The regular March 23, 1949, meeting of the International Executive Board has been called by the Executive Committee of the International Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America. Under the chairmanship of President R. Hutchings and Secretary-Treasurer J. Howard Hicks.
**PILLSBURY MILLS CONTRACT SIGNED**

Ogden, Utah. Numerous improvements in employment conditions highlight the recently signed first agreement between OEU Local 220 and Pillsbury Mills, covering the office and clerical workers at the Globe Mills operation of that company at Ogden, according to Donald G. Merrill, President of the local union.

Mr. Merrill announced that the union and management obtained in the agreement, together with a general increase obtained, have resulted in an average raise of 6 cents per hour to the present employees of 15 per cent. Through its negotiation the union has also increased the number of paid holidays from 6 to 8 per year, and has improved the vacation schedule so as to assure two weeks paid vacation each year after one year’s employment.

Another outstanding improvement in the salary schedule is the automatic step increases provided upon the completion of six and two years’ tenure, and which will be similarly provided by the company. All wage increases and schedules are retroactive to January 1, 1948.

The agreement provides for a modified union shop and also assures all regulars by A. F. of L. Organizers H. B. Douglas.

**ELECTION WON**

Richmond, Cal. — OEU Local No. 29 has won authorization for a union shop for workers recently in the California Steel Products Company, according to Business Representative John Rinnick of the local.

**Plans Made For Union Label Week**

Washington, D.C. — Plans for Union Label Week, May 10 to 16, were formulated by the American Federation of Labor and the Union Label Trades Department at recent quarterly meetings held in Miami. Plans for local campaigns in all states, recently reported by A. F. of L. unanimously voted to place all the facilities of the A. F. of L. back of the excellent idea. The members of the Executive Council also pledged their all-out support for the Montreal label movement...[rest of text cut off]

**PUBLIC HEARING**

Washington, D.C. — A public hearing was held by the Wage-Hour Division of the U.S. Department of Labor regarding wages and hours in the Washington metropolitan area.

**Businessmen's Magazine Notes**

**Office Workers Organizing**

Washington, D.C. — Business Week, a McGraw-Hill magazine, published mainly for businessmen, in a recent article takes cognizance of the fact that office and clerical workers are qualifying in ever-increasing numbers.

It recognizes that the Office Employees International Union is the largest such organization in the country and that the wide range of members, with locals in the United States, Canada, Alaska and Hawaii, provides a pattern for other unionization efforts, while OEU is opposed to the Taft-Hartley act and is working with other AFL unions for its repeal, it is the only office employees' union with international affiliation which has complied with the law.

**INCREASE GAINED**

Honolulu, Hawaii — Re-negotiation of the agreement between Local 191 and the Van Hamen Company with a resulting increase in wages to members of the union over the previous year and other benefits has been announced by Secretary-Treasurer Beatrice T. Pung of the local union.

**Right to Pass Upon Merit Adjustments Won by Union**

Cincinnati. — The AFL's Agamala Mead Potters and Butlers of the Cincinnati Workmen’s Union won the right to pass upon merit raises given individual employees by an employer who has a collective bargaining contract with the union. The union's claim was supported by the Circuit Court of Appeals in a decision handed down here.

The court voted 2 to 1 to enforce an agreement between the parties a year and a half by the National Labor Relations Board, which had found J. H. Allison & Co. of Chattanooga, Tenn., guilty of refusing to bargain with the union. Refusal to bargain was based on the argument that the company’s settlements with employees are final and it is unfair to labor practice, both under the old Wagner act and the new Taft-Hartley act.

**Wage-Hour Division Issues Regulations Under FLSA**

Washington, D.C. — A new regulation was issued by the Wage-Hour Division of the Labor Department, setting forth the principles limiting the amounts which may be deducted in both the Wage and Hour Law “facilities” furnished at a profit, and the rules governing deductions for articles which do not qualify as “facilities,” such as, for example, tools, miners’ lamps and dynamite caps.

The bulletin also points out that no deductions may be made for any tax or share of a tax which must be paid by the employer in respect to labor-management intended to protect the worker, however, that nothing prohibits the payment of wages in “facilities” furnished either as additions to a stipulated wage or as items for which deductions from a stipulated wage may be made.

According to the bulletin, no limits are set on the amount which may be deducted for “board, lodging, or other facilities,” either in nonovertime weeks or in overtime weeks, in which the employee works at time and one-half his regular rate for each hour beyond 40 — provided, however, that no more than the reasonable cost of these facilities “Reasonable cost” as determined by the administrator to the employer of furnishing an employee with “board, lodging, or other facilities” when such items are customarily furnished.

It appears that the clear intention of Congress to protect the basic minimum wage and overtime wages shall be paid to the employee * * * * from profiteering or manipulation by the employer, said McComb, regarding the safeguards which control the payment of wages in other than “facilities.” He emphasized, however, that nothing prohibits the payment of wages in “facilities” furnished either as additions to a stipulated wage or as items for which deductions from a stipulated wage may be made.

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AFL NAMES MURPHY ORGANIZING HEAD

Washington, D. C.—Appointment of John Murphy as National Director of Organization for the American Federation of Labor was announced by AFL President William Green. He succeeds Frank P. Fenton, recently elevated to the post of International Representative of the AFL.

Mr. Murphy, while only 45, brings a wealth of experience to his new job. He served with distinction as New England Regional Director of Organization since 1938 and has carried on several special organization campaigns for the federation.

In 1946, Mr. Murphy was assigned to Japan for three months during which he served as special labor advisor to General Douglas MacArthur.

Married and the father of three children, Mr. Murphy plans to move his family to Washington as soon as he can find a home here.

Developer of Shorthand Dies

New York—John Robert Gregg, 86, inventor of the Gregg shorthand system, died February 22 at his home, 1 Lexington Ave. He was a native of Northern Ireland.

Gregg had studied shorthand systems since his boyhood, his father having become interested when a friend took down a sermon in shorthand. By 1888 while he was teaching shorthand in Liverpool, he borrowed the money to publish 500 copies of the first pamphlet on his own personal system.

From then on his rise was rapid. He started business schools in this country and Canada and at one time had 35 in the British Isles.

Win Election at Yellow Cab Co.

Philadelphia, Pa.—OEU Local 14 estimated they had won the support of a large group of clerical workers employed by the Yellow Cab Co. of Philadelphia, who are voting for a new contract. The union is estimated to have about a 75 percent favorable vote in the election recently conducted among this group by the Pennsylvania Labor Relations Board, according to Mrs. Marie Hutchinson, secretary-treasurer of the local union.

In his acceptance statement, Mr. Brissart said that negotiations will commence shortly for this group of approximately 200 employees.

Union Security at Aluminum Corp.

Massena, N. Y.—In a sweeping above-the-board union security drive, the aluminum workers have won the union security contract by the NLHR among the officers of local workers at the plant of the Aluminum Corp. of America. Almost 90 percent of all ballots cast were cast for union security in the new agreement, which was being negotiated with the company, according to AFL-OEU-Representative Frank Morton who is residing the local union in its negotiations.

Taggert Bag Organizing

Oswego, N. Y.—The clerical workers of the Taggert Bag Company are rapidly moving to obtain the securities of organizational and collective bargaining through joining OEU Local 125, according to Local President Alford Gooney.

A substantial majority of all eligible have already signed up for membership in the local. Exclusive bargaining rights are being requested of the company. AFL-Representative Frank Morton is assisting the local in this drive.

Says T-H Law Denies Rights

New York City.—The determined anticrime law advocate to his followers that the Taft-Hartley law grew out of the conviction that it embodies "a perversion and denial of collective bargaining rights," finally won by labor after years of effort, declared Matther Well, AFE executive council member.

Mr. Well's statement was contained in the second of 6 articles on the general topic, "Labor and the Law," which are being published monthly by the Workers Education Bureau of America.

Summarizing labor's basic case against the Taft-Hartley law, Mr. Well declared that the law:

- "Discourages the formation of unions by making organizations difficult.
- "Discourages free collective bargaining by increasing dependence on litigation and legal processes.
- "Nullifies the spirit and intent of the Wagner Act by weakening the position of workers in the bargaining relationship with their employers."

Mr. Well hit at the use of strike statistics as a means of proving the effectiveness of the law. He said:

- "We have not have full-time local representation. The three participating locals which do have their own full-time representatives, Nos. 3 and 36 at San Francisco, and 29 at Oakland, support the council through active participation and the payment of dues, even though they do not gain the direct service of the council's officers. Our local officers, however, do not have a voice."

Another area council is presently being formed by locals 169 Beau- mont, Calif., in the oil country, and 87 Lake Charles, Louisiana. These three locals, all located within a short distance of each other, have refinery industry agreements covering hundreds of clerical workers in Shreveport refineries of the Texas Company, Gulf Oil, Cities Service and Magnolia Refining. In addition to the council serving as a clearing house for local union efforts in the refinery industry, it is anticipated that it will serve as an organizing vehicle of these affiliated locals in their activities in bringing organization to oil workers dependent in the petroleum industry, as well as other industries in the area.

A group of organizing office and clerical workers of operating subsidiaries of the Public Service Corporation of New Jersey is presently being established. Three of these locals, representing Electric and Gas, Locals 91, 96 and 104, have dealt with the company for a number of years, and they have personal relations with their locals for some several years. It is anticipated that the proposed council will cover a broader group of locals and additional subsidiaries of the Public Service Corporation of New Jersey.

Interest in the formation of an area council is presently evident among some locals in the State of Washington who considered a desire for a council of locals in that area.

THE OFFICE WORKER