Benefits Won in Near-Record Time

Pittsburgh, Pa.—In slightly more than two weeks total lapse of time the office and clerical employees of M. Rom & Sons, Inc. established OEIU Local 23 as their exclusive bargaining agency through an NLRB election and completed contract negotiations bringing substantial gains to all employees, according to local union Representative Frank W. Rieot who handled this matter for the local union.

By a two-thirds majority vote the office and clerical employees of this large supplier of food, candy and tobacco in the tri-state area, voted for representation through OEIU Local 33.

Immediately following the establishment of exclusive bargaining rights a committee was selected by the employees to work with Business Representative Rieot on contract negotiations. The negotiations have resulted in an agreement being reached which assures all employees of a general wage increase of $5 per week, in addition to numerous individual wage increases for the purpose of wage grouping.

Other major gains included seven paid holidays and the assurance of union security through the union shop. All employees are also granted two weeks' vacation with full pay after one year's service.

The negotiating committee assisting Representative Rieot included George Barres, Rita Markes and Wanda Koisel.

Business Representative Rieot reports the completion of renewal wage negotiations with McCann & Co. in which a general increase of $5 per week, or $5 per cent, whichever was greater, such increase being retroactive to January 1.

Ask Election at Insurance Firm

St. Louis, Mo.—An overwhelming majority of the office employees of the Transit Casualty Company, an insurance operation closely linked with the St. Louis Street Railway Company, have organized into OEIU Local 13, according to AFL-OEIU Representative Frank F. Morton who has been assisting with the organization of this group.

A petition for an NLRB election has been filed.

Third Term

Sheffield, Ala.—Mrs. Maybel S. White, vice president of OEIU Local 62 has recently been reelected, without opposition, to the Local 62 executive board for a second term. Mrs. White is also treasurer of the Tri-Cities Central Labor Union. This will be Mrs. White's third consecutive term in this office.

Big Wage Gains Won at Monogram Pictures Corporation

Hollywood, Calif.—Wage increases ranging from $8.60 to $29 per week, retroactive to April, 1948, were won in a recent arbitration award by OEIU Local 174 for the office employees of the Monogram Pictures Corp., according to Max J. Krug, business representative of the local union.

This arbitration victory culminated a long effort by OEIU Local 174 to complete contract negotiations with the Monogram Corp. Wage rates and job classifications had previously been agreed upon by parties in the office force, but the failure of the company to agree to satisfactory rates and classifications for the remaining group necessitated arbitration of these matters.

The total increase in wages obtained as a result of the negotiations and arbitration award for the members employed by Monogram Pictures is in excess of $40,000 per year for the 60 employees involved, according to Representative Krug.

The contract assures the clerical employees of this company the same working conditions and job security enjoyed by the clerical employees of the major motion picture producing companies who are operating under union shop agreements with OEIU Local 174.

The Monogram negotiations and the arbitration were conducted on behalf of the union by Business Representative Krug and Assistant Business Representative Geyne Schenk, under the general supervision of Local Union President Lauren P. Arnell, who is also a vice president of the International Union.

Majority Signs Up at Monsanto Plant

Monsanto, Ill.—A substantial majority of the office and clerical employees at the Monsanto Chemical Company plant have signed up for membership in OEIU Local 13, according to AFL-OEIU Representative Frank F. Morton who has been assisting this group to organize.

A petition for an NLRB representation election has been filed and it is anticipated that the union will result in a substantial vote for collective bargaining.

The officers and membership of the International Chemical Workers Union are actively assisting in this drive.

Local Membership Drive Is Great Success

Chattanooga, Tenn.—As evidence of what can be done when all of the officers and membership of a local union put their shoulders to the wheel, OEIU Local 119 has been reelected, without opposition, to the local executive board for a second term. Mrs. White is also treasurer of the Tri-Cities Central Labor Union. This will be Mrs. White's third consecutive term in this office.

Building Concern Agreement Signed

Port Arthur, Tex.—A new agreement has recently been signed with the Foster-Wheeler Corp., by OEIU Local 66, according to C. A. Stafford, local union president. Mr. Stafford, who assisted in the negotiations.

The Foster-Wheeler Corp. is presently engaged in a large construction project at the Texas Co. refinery and Local 66 established its exclusive bargaining rights for the eligible clerical employees of the company through an NLRB election.

Under the terms of the recent agreement all covered employees received a 10 cents per hour across-the-board increase. The agreement provides for a 40-hour week and an 8-hour work day Monday through Friday.

Time and one-half paid for all hours worked in excess of 8 per day and for Saturday work. Double time paid for all Sunday work and work performed on five holidays.

The pact assures of seniority protection and provides for a grievance Procedure that also provides for the handling of grievances with arbitration provided for grievances which other wise are not settled to the mutual satisfaction of the parties.

Participating in the agreement negotiations were Local Union President E. P. Letulle and J. L. Lemaire, past president of the local, who have been in helping with the organization of this group.

AFL Insurance Council Wins Back Pay for Agent

Washington.—The AFL's National Federation of Insurance Agents Council, currently engaged in a nationwide organizing campaign among Prudential and John Hancock agents, proved its worth as a collective bargaining medium by securing for a discharged member one of the finest individual awards in the history of the National Labor Relations Board in the insurance field.

Wendell B. Phillips, fired from his job with the Home Beneficial Life Insurance Co., for union activities was told he was "fired for helping some minor company regulations.

The federation, through President George L. Rugg, took the matter to the National Labor Relations Board. Result, Mr. Phillips has been reinstated to his former job and at the same time was handed a check for $2,620.90 as compensation for lost time. It proved to be the ``final straw'' that convinced employees that membership in the American Federation of Labor affords protection for workers from unfair practices of employers.
One Package or Two

The AFL Legislative Committee has asked that the Taft-Hartley Act be repealed and the Wagner Act restored. Our friends who are concerned that amendments acceptable to management and labor should be passed. This is the “two package” approach.

The AFL reasoning: FIRST, the Taft-Hartley Act has been such a confused hash that amendments would be futile. The AFL wants restoration of the pre-Taft-Hartley Act status quickly while Congress is in the mood. The Wagner Act is a sound base for amendments. The Taft-Hartley Act is not.

SECOND, the AFL wants a test vote on repeal to demonstrate clearly who are our true friends. A final vote on a compromise bill amending the Taft-Hartley Act might be won only on the admission that our friends would vote for it as the best possible and our enemies would vote against it as the worst possible. (Note: The President and the Democratic majority on the Hill are committed to outright repeal by the party platform pledges.)

The newspapers are (wishfully) reporting that the Taft-Hartley Act will be repealed and a new act passed at all time . . . the “one package” approach. Here is where the strategy becomes complicated.

Many of our friends and many of our enemies favor the “one package” but for different reasons. The AFL and friendly unions feel that the “one package” will prolong debate and will amount to weakly amending the Taft-Hartley Act. It is the feeling in Washington that the longer the delay the worse the final bill will be.

Many of our friends favor the “one package” approach for opposite reasons. They feel that it would be more difficult to get the Taft-Hartley Act repealed outright but that a substitute measure satisfactory to labor could be passed quickly in “one package” by gaining support from many who voted for the Taft-Hartley Act, and that the AFL might if it so desired, later try to substitute a different measure.

The survey analyzed the reasons for this remarkable success and came up with the following five factors which it said were most important:

1. TVA directors early adopted a work policy known as “force and count,” making the agency itself the employer for construction projects.

2. The management has proven by its deeds that it is constantly striving to deal fair and square with labor.

3. “Labor has complete trust and faith in the motives of TVA.”

4. The Tennessee Valley Authority and Labor Council is composed of “responsible unions.”

5. Officers of the council are “real labor leaders, men of exceptional ability and character.”

6. Both labor and management know the value and meaning of cooperation.

7. TVA keeps the council fully informed of all things of interest to it.

The AFL Legislative Committee is working overtime on the best strategy in cooperation with Congressional leaders. Whether a final decision is made for a “one package” or a “two package” labor law, AFL members may rest assured that the AFL Legislative Committee and our friends in Congress will have carefully considered every alternative. That strategy which assures the quickest and best results will be the one urged.

AFL Unions and TVA Praised For Sound Labor Relations

Washington.—A group of AFL unions and the Tennessee Valley Authority were showered with lavish praise for their outstanding success in developing a sound, successful policy of labor relations.

The source of the accolades was the Senate-House “Watchdog” Committee on Labor-Management Relations, which was studying the Taft-Hartley law. Significant, the report, which was prepared by three of the committee’s staff members, was not published during the tenure of the 80th Congress on grounds that it could not be completed in time for approval by the full committee.

The report singled out the AFL’s Tennessee Valley Trades and Labor Council and its officers for special praise for their work during TVA’s 15 years of life in helping to create labor relations which “have been relatively free of strife and discord.”

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The “Causes of Industrial Peace.” In its three reports issued thus far, two of which involved AFL unions, the planning group noted that well-organized and victorious mutual trust shown by the parties, the absence of paternalism, the responsibility of the AFL with a 60-year record, and many other developments which served to place labor-management relations on a firm foundation.
WASHINGTON—Great Britain's national health insurance plan is meeting with great success, according to the latest reports in conservative newspapers here.

This should serve to counter effectively the unfair attacks on the scheme by the Right in Britain and other top officials in the American Medical Association who are trying to undermine the scheme. The AMA has never developed a similar system in the United States designed to make medical care within the financial reach of all citizens.

The "United Press" reports that the opposition of doctors in Britain, who at one time opposed the measure in the same way that the AMA is doing in the United States, has melted away. After 6 months' experience, 90 per cent of the British doctors are supporting the health plan.

An even more illuminating account was carried in the ultra-conservative New York Times. The Times declared some "bugs" have developed, but it said "no one expected a colossal and revolutionary plan to function smoothly and efficiently in only six months."

"It is creaking and groaning, but it is under way and gathering steam," the Times explained. "In fact, some of the difficulties arise because it is almost too successful!"

The paper said "some abuses have been reported," but it added that "dishonesty is rare." On the credit side it revealed these advantages, among others: "Because the doctor's pay is based on the number of patients on his rolls rather than the number of 'calls,' it is in his advantage to do preventive work, a practice which also benefits the patient."

"Also, since records must be kept of every patient, Britain in the next generation is going to have a national medical history unparalleled in the history of science."

Another big advantage, the paper reported, is the cure of illnesses, which hitherto went undiagnosed, and unchecked, has now come to light and is being overcome. "Lots of doctors are groaning," the paper said, "but in the nature of things it is the故障 of one man, the headache of another, and those who are quietly and determinedly trying to make the scheme work."

Wage Hike Won at Central Foundry

HOIT, Ala.—Negotiations of a renewal agreement with the Central Foundry Company, covering its office and clerical employees who are members of Local 195, have been completed with the employees obtaining a 10 cents per hour increase and the equivalent of 3 cents an hour in paid sick and accident insurance. Also gained was an improved method of computing vacation time.

All previous benefits were retained in the renewal agreement, according to OEIU Vice President A. R. Carson, who assisted the Local Union in its renewal negotiations.

NEW LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ORGANIZED

WASHINGTON—The American Federation of Labor emphasized its determination to press for the outright repeal of the Taft-Hartley law as one of the first actions of the 81st Congress.

This course of action was urged unanimously by the national officers, attending the first session of the newly formed National Legislative Council and Executive Board of Indians expected that the AFL would not consider proposing new labor legislation until the Wagner Act has been reenacted in place of the Taft-Hartley measure.

Amplifying this position, Mr. Wyman said: "If we put everything in one package we mean to have it; we mean to bargain on the one package."

They are now taking the position Senator Robert A. Taft wants us to take. He is ready to bargain on amending the Taft-Hartley Act. We won't. If we take his position we would be bargained as free men. We will fight Taft-Hartley after it has gone back to the status quo prior to June 22, 1947.

Representatives of 80 AFL national and international unions attended the first session of the council which has for its main purpose the coordination of legislative activities on the part of AFL affiliates. It is expected that the council's membership will soon include representatives of all the 106 AFL unions.

To direct the work of the council, the AFL has appointed a seven-member administrative committee headed by William C. Green, executive assistant representative for the American Federation of Labor. The committee's biggest job will have been the preparation of the main council program and legislative campaigns.

Other members of the group include: Richard J. Gray, president of the AFL's Building and Construction Trades Department; Thomas Walters, of the Government Employees' Council; George Q. Lynch, president of the Pattern Makers' League; John B. Haggerty, president of the International Brotherhood of Bookbinders; A. E. Lyon, chairman of the Railway Labor Association; and Fred Tobin, legislative representative for the International Brotherhood of Teamsters.

RETRACTIVE PAY BOOST SECURED

BALTIMORE—A renewal agreement with the American Ice Co. has recently been completed by OEIU Local 191 and the office and clerical employees of that company's Baltimore office a general wage increase of $3 per week, retroactive to October 1, 1948.

BRITISH HEALTH PLAN SUCCESSFUL

Washington—Great Britain's national health insurance plan is meeting with great success, according to the latest reports in conservative newspapers here.

This should serve to counter effectively the unfair attacks on the scheme by the Right in Britain and other top officials in the American Medical Association who are trying to undermine the scheme. The AMA has never developed a similar system in the United States designed to make medical care within the financial reach of all citizens.

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OEIU OPPOSES HOFFMAN'S PLAN TO SHIP BY FOREIGN VESSELS

Washington—The Office Employees International Union has joined with the Seafarers International Union and the AFL in urging Congress to reject the application for renewal of the merchant ship subsidy program by Dr. Morris Carson, a member of the American Brotherhood of Engineers and Shipyard Workers.

International President Paul R. Huchings, in an appeal to all members of the AFL, stated that Hoffman's plan to ship Marshall Plan bulk cargo in foreign bottoms is put into effect it will react to the detriment of thousands of skilled American seamen who will be thrown into the ranks of the unemployed. It would also strike a serious blow to the maritime industry and might well lead to loss of national security.

In a letter to all locals requesting that they express their views on the matter to their congressmen, President Huchings recalled "the splendid, courageous assistance given to our striking Wall Street membership last year by ship owners, creditors and members of the Seafarers International Union."

OEIU, however, does not oppose the program of the U.S. Department of Commerce and the U.S. Department of Labor which calls for handling at least 50 per cent of the bulk cargoes on American ships, as proposed by Dr. Morris Carson, the chairman of the Advisory Committee for World Trade, and the chairman of the Committee on the Council of Economic Advisers.

"Our brother seafarers are now faced with a crucial problem and need our help," he said.

President Huchings requested all congressmen, and senators, to use their good influences to see that Hoffman's plan is rejected by the original intent of the Marshall Plan.

Rhodes Named AFL Director in South

ATLANTA, Ga.—President William Green announced the appointment of J. L. Rhodes of Jacksonville, Florida, as a member of the AFL's National Scheme by Dr. Morris Carson, a member of the American Brotherhood of Engineers and Shipyard Workers.

For the last two and one-half years he has been attached to the south, as an assistant southern director of organization under the direction of George L. Googe.

Mr. Rhodes was elected vice president of the AFL, Pressmen's and Assistants' Union of North America, following the retirement of the late George L. Berry, president of the union.

Lang Book Basis Of Essay Contest

Washington—The Workers Educational Research Committee of the AFL is sponsoring a prize essay contest among undergraduate college students to determine the subject of "Insam: What Isn Do You Choose: Anarchism, Communism, Fascism, Socialism, Americanism?"

This contest was inspired by Lucy Robin's Lang's recently published autobiography "Tomorrow Beautiful," in which she posed all the "Insam" of yesterday and today. As Chairman Woll of the Senate has said: "It represents an unusual opportunity to focus the student mind on the social and political lines which they must face and eventually cope with."

The contest will close January 30, 1949, and six prizes of $200, $200, $100, $50, and $50 will be awarded to the winners at the 26th anniversary dinner of the New Leader at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel on Sunday evening, March 6. The judges will be Dr. Harry D. Gideonse, President of Brooklyn College; Professor Allan Nevins of Columbia University, and Professor Sidney Hook of New York University.

DEVELOP ATOMIC ENERGY

The reactionary 80th Congress, under the leadership of Taft tried to undermine the atomic energy for civilian use by changing the terms of the atomic energy law. It failed to do this, but it did succeed in making atomic energy development for peaceful purposes impossible. The reaction 81st Congress is to try the same thing. It is not expected that the Taft-Hartley Act will be reenacted in place of the Taft-Hartley measure.

To direct the work of the council, the AFL has appointed a seven-member administrative committee headed by William C. Green, executive assistant representative for the American Federation of Labor. The committee's biggest job will have been the preparation of the main council program and legislative campaigns.

Other members of the group include: Richard J. Gray, president of the AFL's Building and Construction Trades Department; Thomas Walters, of the Government Employees' Council; George Q. Lynch, president of the Pattern Makers' League; John B. Haggerty, president of the International Brotherhood of Bookbinders; A. E. Lyon, chairman of the Railway Labor Association; and Fred Tobin, legislative representative for the International Brotherhood of Teamsters.
KEENAN STRESSES

POLITICAL ACTION

Washington—The Supreme Court ruled unanimously that there is nothing in the Constitution to prevent state legislators from outlawing all forms of union security—closed shop, union shop or maintenance of membership.

"The AFL members in the 15 states which presently outlaw union security are threatened with "right to work" bills must accept the hard truth that neither the Supreme Court nor the repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act can save their unions from eventual destruction," declared Joseph D. Keenan, director of Labor's League for Political Education. "No union is strong when its members are forced to work with scabs and free riders. A union can't be strong when faced with infiltration by company stooges and Communist trouble makers. Nor can a union exercise effective responsibility in carrying out contract obligations with employers so long as disciplinary control over membership is denied by these laws."

"This Supreme Court decision has taught us a lesson we shall not forget. The trade union movement will be strong only when we have elected at all levels of government public office holders friendly to the interests of the majority of our people. Throughout the past two years, Labor's League for Political Education will carry on a vigorous educational and propaganda program in every state in the union to place in the legislatures men who are committed to the repeal of all anti-labor state laws."

AFL Endorses Acheson

As Secretary of State

Washington—AFL President William Green endorsed the appointment of Dean Acheson as Secretary of State to succeed General George C. Marshall, who resigned recently because of poor health.

In a statement released here, Mr. Green said:

"We are impressed by Mr. Acheson's broad understanding of the basic international problems of our time and we are convinced that his views on maintaining a firm policy against Soviet aggression and aggravation coincide with our own. Mr. Acheson made a notable record in the State Department while serving as Under-Secretary of State."

URGES QUICK ACTION

Trenton, N. J.—Secretary of Labor Tobin asserted that the minimum wage must be hiked "as soon as possible" from 40 to 75 cents an hour.

Tobin promised in an address here that the Labor Department "will work to the utmost with President Truman" to fulfill campaign pledges on "such subjects as minimum wage, cost of living, housing, and every other phase of the infamous Taft-Hartley law."

The Office Worker

TRUCKING COMPANY

CONTRACT RENEWED

Denver, Colo.—A renewal agreement with the Denver-Chicago Trucking Company has resulted in wage gains of from 5 to 15 cents an hour for all clerical employees, according to Joyce Segar, secretary-treasurer of OEU Local No. 5, which has bargaining rights with this company.

Another improvement over the previous contract was the establishment of night differentials of 5 cents for work performed between 6 p.m. and midnight, and 10 cents for after-midnight work. The premium rate for holiday work was increased from time-and-one-half to double time. All other provisions of the previous agreement were retained, including its union-shop clause.

The renewal agreement was negotiated by OEU Vice President Frank F. Randall and AFL Organizer S. Wesley Johnson. The employees' negotiating committee was composed of Ray Purcell, Roxie O'Connor, Carl L. Johnson, and Fred Cochere.

The Office Worker

AFL AUTHORITY SUPPESDES

State Board, Court Rules

Washington—The Supreme Court ruled that a state board cannot assume jurisdiction in interstate labor relations problems where the National Labor Relations Board has authority but has refrained from exercising its power.

In a unanimous opinion, written by Justice Douglas, the court overturned a ruling by the Wisconsin Employment Relations Board, which had certified an independent union and had been agreed to by the La Crosse (Wis.) Telephone Corp.

The high court decision follows its line of reasoning in earlier cases, and the Supreme Court said this situation is not changed by the Taft-Hartley Act.

Absence of a formal NLRB order in instances where the NLRB has not waived jurisdiction, and the presence of a state board certificate under a different theory of representation can be "wildly disruptive" as if the orders of the two boards made a head-on collision," said Justice Douglas.

In the case at issue, according to the Justice Department, the AFL's International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local B-953, was recognized in 1941 as bargaining agent for the telephone firm, with the "approval" of the NLRB regional director.

A formal action was ever made by the NLRB. In 1946, the Telephone Guild of Wisconsin (now Division 23 of the Independent Communications Workers of America) applied to the NLRB for a collective bargaining election to challenge the position of the AFL.

Before the NLRB could act, the union withdrew its petition, filed a petition with the Wisconsin Employment Relations Board, and in an election on January 14, 1947, the guild was chosen as bargaining agent for the plant and traffic employees by vote of 91 against, 14 for the AFL union, said the guild.

This certification was set aside by a Circuit Court, but the Wisconsin Supreme Court upheld the election.

The company and the AFL union both appealed this decision, and the Justice Department joined in on behalf of the NLRB. They said inasmuch as the firm was engaged in interstate commerce and the NLRB has jurisdiction in such cases, the board's action may in some cases under the Taft-Hartley Act, and since the NLRB had acted in other telephone cases, NLRB authority still prevailed.

The high court agreed with this contention.

BUSINESS WORKING

CAPITAL HITS PEAK

Washington—American business corporations had more money for working capital at the end of the third quarter of 1948 than at any time in their history, according to a report released by the Securities and Exchange Commission.

This situation is just about the reverse of that faced by the average American family which has been forced to dip heavily into savings in its struggle to make ends meet in the face of dwindling purchasing power.

The SEC report showed a total net working capital in the hands of corporations of $65,400,000,000 which represents an increase of $1,500,000,000. Manufacturing companies accounted for about nine-tenths of the increase, with trade, railroad, and miscellaneous companies making up the remainder. The bulk of the increase was financed out of retained corporate profits, the report said.

According to the commission, the increase reflected a rise in current assets of $4,900,000,000, offset in part by an increase of $3,400,000,000 in liabilities. Total current assets in the quarter were $123,300,000,000, while the increase in working capital also was about $200,000,000 greater than the working capital increase in the second quarter.

The largest change in any of the items of current assets and liabilities, the SEC said, was in notes receivable, which increased $2,600,000,000 during the quarter to a total of $41,500,000,000, as compared with a slight decline in the second quarter. Inventories increased by $1,700,000,000 to $47,700,000,000, reflecting, in part, the SEC said, higher prices paid for goods included in inventories.

Other items of current assets also increased. Cash on hand and in banks was up $300,000,000 to a total of $22,800,000,000, while United States government securities increased about $400,000,000 to approximately $3,600,000,000.

The increase in notes and accounts receivable during the third quarter of 1948 was almost entirely due to increased paper circulation, by an increase of $2,400,000,000 in notes and accounts payable, which increased $23,000,000,000, reflecting, in part, the SEC said, higher prices paid for goods included in inventories.

The Office Worker

AFL INAUGURAL FLOAT

Pictured above is the AFL float as it prepared to move into the line of march for the elaborate inaugural parade honoring President Truman. Above the bold lettering on the side reading "American Federation of Labor Calls the Country to Work," while the Goddess of Liberty, Mrs. Thelma Dawson, member of OEU Local 2, reigns over all. Behind the stone is a Horn of Plenty, overflowing with the products of AFL union workers. The float was prepared under the direction of the AFL's Washington Central Office.