President Truman Greets OEIU

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON
February 7, 1949

Dear Mr. Hutchings:

Please extend my cordial greetings to the officers, delegates, and members attending the 1949 convention of the Office Employees International Union. I wish your organization well in all its constructive activities in the interest of office workers during the coming year.

Very sincerely yours,

[Signature]

Mr. Paul R. Hutchings
International President
Office Employees International Union
601 New York Avenue
Washington, D. C.

Assistant Secretary of Labor
To Address OEIU Convention

Washington—International President Paul R. Hutchings announced that the principal address at the 1949 OEIU convention opening in St. Louis March 21 will be delivered by Ralph Wright, assistant secretary of the Department of Labor.

It is hoped that AFL President William Green will be able to arrange a "breathing spell" in his duties so that he may also address the delegates.

Wright, a member of New York Typographical Union No. 6 and secretary of the Allied Printing Trades Council of New York City, was appointed by President Truman to the Department of Labor post last November. 

He was born in Concord, N. C., and began the printing trade in an orphanage from which he graduated at the age of 17. After a month in a cotton mill he became an apprentice on a newspaper and was obligated by the I. T. U. in 1920. He has worked as a linotype operator on nearly every newspaper in New York City.

During the war, Wright represented labor on the regional War Manpower Commission Board.

LAUNDRY INDUSTRY
PACT HIKES WAGES

Oakland, Calif.—A renewal of OEIU Local 29's general agreement with the establishments in the dry cleaning industry has resulted in a general wage increase of 10 cents per hour for all covered office employees, five cents of this increase being effective January 1, two and one-half cents on March 1 and the remaining two and one-half cents on May 1, 1949.

The addition of a new job classification provided an additional wage gain for a number of covered employees, according to Local Business Representative John B. Kimnick who handled the negotiations for the local.

Other gains included pro-rated vacation pay upon termination of an employee's services and provision for an additional day off if a recognized holiday occurs on an employee's regular day off.

Creamery Contract

Business Representative Kimnick also advises that the office employees of the Creamcrest Creamery have recently been organized with the good will of Milk Wagon Drivers Local No. 302, and that OEIU Local 195 has signed a contract with this company covering this group.

The principal gains include increasing in various amounts ranging from $15 per month in addition to the establishment of the two weeks vacation after one year of service, instead of on one week which this group previously received.

Renewal Pact at Hoe Brings Gains

New York, N. Y.—A general wage increase of $5 per week highlights the gains recently won in a renewal agreement with The Hoe and Company by OEIU Local 153, which holds bargaining rights for the office force of the company.

Other gains won include double time for Saturday and holiday work. In addition to the employee's regular weekly salary, improvements in sick leave allowances, improvements in vacation allowances to increase vacation pay by including the average overtime worked in the three months prior to the employee's vacation period.

In addition to the $5 weekly general increase, a merit review for all employees as of January 1 is provided, as well as for certain automatic increases in the lower labor grades.

Renewal negotiations were handled by Local Business Manager Howard Coughlin who worked with the office committee of local members, Chairman, Louis A. Bufano, Raymon Dittie, Jerry Piro, John Brown and Timothy Reddy.

Majority Signs Up At Ward LaFrance

Elmira, N. Y.—An overwhelming majority of all eligible office employees of the Ward LaFrance Truck Company have signed up for membership in OEIU Local 137, and the local union has petitioned the NLRB for a collective bargaining election in this office.

Ralph Wright

Guest Speaker

Labor Board and the regional War Manpower Commission Board.
Raids on Reserves

Winthrop Aldrich, head of the Chase National Bank (the world's second largest bank), is starting a new campaign to have our banks exempt from paying premiums to the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation for insuring bank deposits. (FDIC insures bank accounts up to $5,000.)

His reason: The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation has a large surplus. Let's try this the next time we receive a premium notice from an insurance company that insures us or our property. We shall just write a letter and say, "We are not paying this premium because we have looked at your statement and find that you have a pretty good sized surplus.

Secondly, this move by the Chase National Bank is a very dangerous one. For about 10 years banks have tried to get out of paying their insurance premiums for bank deposit insurance.

Blame for this has been systematically raiding the trust funds and reserve funds of unemployment insurance by the so-called merit rating plan. Unemployment insurance reserves have been reduced by hundreds of millions of dollars in the states that have fallen for this scheme.

Then again, Senator Vandenberg of Michigan, spokesman for Big Business, told the Senate that the reserve funds of the Old Age and Survivors Insurance section of the Social Security System have been wiped out.

Vandenberg's raid leaves trust funds for the aged twelve billion dollars short. It is the amount that the original law said should be in the fund today. Great credit is due the Wall Street Journal for opposing Vandenberg's raid on the old folks trust funds.

Incidentally Vandenberg's raid was one of the chief causes of the recent bank failures.

It seems strange that Big Business is constantly attacking reserve funds and raiding government trust funds. It is a form of economic sabotage on the part of people who do not believe in insuring bank deposits, in unemployment insurance, or in Social Security for the aged.

Question for Big Business—Will such irresponsible tactics pay off in the long run?

Affiliate With City Bodies and State "Feds", AFL President Urges

Washington.—An urgent call for affiliation of local unions with State Federations of Labor and City Central bodies has been issued by AFL President William Green.

Emphasizing the valuable service rendered by the state and city organizations during the 1948 political campaign, Green declared that such a demonstration of solidarity, of service and of the value of education makes it clear that state federations and city central bodies should be made strong, influential and effective.

"If all eligible local unions are affiliated with state federations of labor and city central bodies, the voice of labor as spoken through these agencies can be made stronger and more influential than ever," he said.

"The decision of the Supreme Court upon the constitutionality of anti-labor laws makes it clear that state federation of labor and city central bodies must redefine their efforts in order to prevent the enactment of additional anti-labor legislation and bring about the repeal of the little Taft-Hartley laws already on the statute books of a number of states."

New Heller Budget For Single Women
San Francisco, Calif.—The Heller Committee for Research and Social Economics of the University of California, has recently issued a new and more comprehensive budget for a single working woman based on San Francisco prices for September, 1948.

This new budget represents the pre-war standards, and is easy to compare with those of the March, 1943, and March, 1942, budgets of the Committee.

During the war years of 1942-45, the war time budget published by the Heller Committee reflected temporary reductions from the peace-time standards. It is significant to note that the Committee has found, based on September, 1948, prices, that it now costs more than $2,300 for a single woman to live in the San Francisco area on the generally accepted standards of health and efficiency.

The Committee points out in its introductory remarks that "the good services included in this budget are intended to conform to generally accepted standards of health and efficiency for a woman employed in relatively low scale clerical or sales occupations or in a factory."

"The budget is definitely designed for a low income group." The Committee also points out that "if a woman living alone receives much below the cost of the items specified here ($2,217.77) she cannot live a wholesome life in accordance with these standards of the community."

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Copies of this latest Heller Committee budget, which is a 16-page mimeographed booklet, can be obtained for 50 cents from the University of California Press, Berkeley, California.

SURVEY NOTES RISE IN PAID HOLIDAYS

New York.—The National Industrial Conference Board has completed a survey showing sharp changes in the national pattern of industrial holiday observances during the last 13 years.

In 1935 fewer than 10 per cent of the companies included in the board's survey were paying hourly rated employees for one or more unworked holidays. But by 1948, it was found, 70.3 per cent of the firms followed this practice.

Although this is not reported in the report of the National Industrial Conference Board, the great increase in paid holidays has been brought about by the activities of effective trade unions during the past 13 years. Even nonunion employees have benefited because organized labor went out for and achieved paid holidays in collective bargaining agreements.

Build Up Will to Live in Harmony

New York.—Cooperation between labor and management is crucial not only for domestic welfare, but it is a "determinant of the world-wide choice between material abundance and stable peace on the one hand or poverty, revolution, war and destruction on the other," according to a report issued by the Labor Committee of the Twentieth Century Fund.

Despite current conflicts between labor and management, the committee report finds that "A will to learn how to work together is building up. It may not be long before it breaks through into solid achievement."

The report, which is entitled "Partners in Production: A Basis for Labor-Management Understanding," is signed by officials of organized labor, a former president of the National Association of Manufacturers, a functionary of the United States Chamber of Commerce, a former chairman of the National War Labor Board and others of varied pursuits.

In its examination of the specific goals sought by labor and management, the report notes that there is general agreement on management's desire for more business-like and responsible labor relations.
OEIU Requests Change in Law
To Knock Out "Coolie Overtime"

Washington—Several improvements in the Fair Labor Standards Act were suggested by OEIU President M. W. Henle, who appeared before the House Committee on Education and Labor.

First, the wage-payment language with regard to overtime be changed so as to bar the payment of "coolie overtime" to salaried workers; second, the minimum overtime rate be immediately raised upward to 50 cents an hour with further increases to be considered at a rate of not less than $1 an hour, and, third, that the statute be amended to cover all activities affecting commerce.

Hutchings pointed out that the membership of the Office Employees Union is practically without exception has achieved through collective bargaining the minimum standards of overtime superior to the minimum standards provided by the Wage and Hour Law.

Millions of yet unorganized office and clerical workers, however, must rely solely upon this statute and its rates for minimum wage and overtime rate protection.

Workers Organize
At G. E. Supply Co.

Richmond, Va.—A substantial majority of employees of the General Electric Supply Corporation, Richmond office, have signed up for membership in OEIU and formal recognition of the union as the exclusive bargaining agency has been requested.

A representation petition has been filed with the NLRB by Inter- vented, A. R. Carson who, together with the officers of Local 169, has been assisting buying group in its organizational endeavors.

Canadian Paper
Workers Sign Up

Quebec City, Que.—A substantial majority of all eligible office and clerical employees of the Anglo-Canadian Paper Company in this city have signed up by signatures and active membership in OEIU and a local union charter has been issued establishing Quebec Local 241.

A. F. of L. Organizer J. M. Landriault was instrumental in the planning of the organizational meeting which resulted in the majority sign-up of this group. President Michael de the Quebec Central Labor Union also participated and gave fine support as did Lucien Bruneau, president of OEIU Local 169.

A delegation was also made of the local union which participated in the organizing meeting.

The interest and cooperation which is always so generously given by the International Brotherhood of Pulp Makers and Allied Workers and the International Brotherhood of Pulper and Paper Mill Workers was evident.

Workers Increase Wage
In Freighway Contract

Oakland, Calif.—A union shop agreement has been entered into by OEIU Local 29 with the Consolidated Freightways, Inc., on behalf of the clerical and office employees at this company's station in this city.

This group recently organized into Local 29, and the local union established its members' voting rights through an NLRB election by an overwhelming majority vote. It also established its union shop rights through an NLRB union shop election.

In addition to the wage increases ranging from $2.50 to $10 per week which this employer granted at the time of organization, the agreement provides for an additional five cents per hour across the board increase retroactive to March 29, when further wage reviews in April and October, with the agreement running until March 29, 1949, according to Local Secretary-Treasurer Raymond R. Collier who handled these negotiations for the local union.

The agreement provides for the union shop and protection against unfair discharges. A 40-hour work week composed of five consecutive eight-hour work days is provided. Time and one-half is paid for time worked in excess of daily or weekly hours, with time off for holiday work. Eight holidays are recognized under the agreement.

Other features of the agreement include two weeks vacation after one year's employment, minimum call-in pay, two paid rest periods each day, a clause guaranteeing equal pay for equal work, seniority provisions and a grievance procedure with arbitration provided for grievances not otherwise settled.

The company has also guaranteed that no existing system-wide benefits shall be denied or withdrawn as of the employees at its Oakland station.
Unions to Press Claims for Wage Boosts; Ads Misleading

Washington—Reports from every section of the United States indicate that AFL unions seeking justly justified wage increases in 1949 do not intend to permit themselves to be hoodwinked or deflected by propaganda published in anti-labor newspapers.

Industries and enterprises which made record profits in 1948 are now pointing to insignificant declines in some consumer prices as an alleged reason for denying sorely needed wage boosts to their underpaid workers. The reactionary newspapers which support the National Association of Manufacturers and the Taft-Hartley Act have taken up the mainstay, calculated cry, but wage-earners and their organizations are not at all impressed, it was reported here. The ballyhoo is spurious and the motives of those behind it are transparent, trade unionists declare.

Wages which are inadequate must be increased, and it certainly does not become highly paid editorial writers, columnists and radio commentators advising Business to advise the members of organized labor to be content with such inadequate wages. The highly paid labor spokesman emphasized that it was learned that AFL unions in every state are determined to press vigorously for substantial wage increases and better working conditions in all cases where such increases and improvements are fully justified by the facts.

Meanwhile, hundreds of AFL local unions are proving higher wage rates every week. Reports of increases pour into the AFL's Department of Organization from every part of the country.

THE OFFICE WORKER

Local Is Chartered At Pump Company

Wellsville, N. Y.—An overwhelming majority of all shop, office and clerical employees of the Worthington Pump Corporation's plant in this city have signed up for membership in OEIU and a new local known as Local 240 has been chartered for this group.

Collective bargaining rights are being requested of the company and the newly chartered local is moving forward to qualify itself for use of the NLRA in establishing its collective bargaining rights through an election among this group, according to International Representative George P. Firth who is assisting this local union.

Solid cooperation is being received from the officers and members of the International Association of Machinists which holds bargaining rights for the workers in this company.

LOCAL 148 IS HOST TO NEW PIPE CO. LOCAL

Burlington, N. J.—OEIU Local No. 148 (general offices, United States Pipe & Foundry Company) was host to the newly chartered Local 238 (Burlington works office of which Joseph Russell is president, at a meeting February 3, Samuel R. Laird, AFL organizer; John L. Firth, OEIU representative, were also guests at the meeting.

Mr. Firth gave the group a very interesting talk. Mr. Laird has initiated several new members of Local 148. Another highlight of the evening was the presentation of a local union honorary membership card to Miss Lilian Pearson, who retired.

WASHINGTON—Members of Congress, President Paul R. Hutchings to pass without amendment the bill giving Stevenson 20 per cent of all cargos moved under the Marshall Plan be carried in American ships.

In messages to members of the House Merchant Marine Committee, and Senate Interstate and Foreign Commerce, Mr. Hutchings emphasized that amendments proposed by ECA Administrator Hofmann and the Maritime Commission would "null Congress' intent anduddle the U. S. merchant marine in favor of low, standard foreign ship operators."

Protests by the OEIU and other AFL unions, in support of the Stevenson bill, organized by the National Union of North America, have blocked Hoffmann's plan to use foreign ships for the introduction of the bill closing the loopholes in the present law.

Expression of appreciation for the assistance given the OEIU on this matter has been received by President Hutchings from Paul Hall, Secretary-Treasurer of the Seamen.

Fourth U. S. Pipe Group Votes OEIO

Chattanooga, Tenn.—The office and executive headquaters of U. S. Pipe & Foundry Company's Chattanooga Works have just voted to establish OEIU Local 179 as their exclusive bargaining agency in an election conducted by NLRB.

This group commenced organizing some months ago and Local President Mattie Henry Hale and Secretary Rader of the local union have been elected with Mr. H. L. Smith, secretary of the Chattanooga Central Labor Union in cooperation with the SEIU, to assist the local. International Vice President A. R. Carson also assisted the group in the election campaign.

The winning of this election brings the fourth U. S. Pipe & Foundry office group under the banner of OEIU. The company's works office at Bessemer, Alabama, has long been organized by Local 18, and its general offices at Burlington, N. J., have likewise been organized for some years by OEIU Local 148. Several months ago, the works office at Burlington also organized into OEIU with the assistance of A. F. of L. Organizer S. L. Fenn, and this group has now been chartered as Local 238.

CORRECTION

As we go to press we are advised that the across-the-board wage increase recently won for the office employees of the Union Land & Company at Pittsburgh was $2 per week retroactive to January 1, rather than the amount reported in our last issue.