

THE OFFICE WORKER

Official Organ of the Office Employees International Union of the A. F. of L.

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OEIU Wins Important NLRB Decision

NEW GAINS MADE IN BUS LINE PACT

Jacksonville, Fla.—A recent agreement negotiated by OEIU Local 73 on behalf of the office and clerical employes of the Florida Greyhound Lines, Inc. has resulted in a 5 cents per hour salary increase applied across the board, improved the sick leave provisions so as to provide an accumulation of unused sick leave up to a maximum of three weeks, provided for strict seniority in case of lay-off, provided for "bumping," and if an employe is forced to bid down in order to remain with the company because of layoffs, he will suffer no reduction of pay although he might be doing a lesser job.

The vacation period was extended an additional two months to allow for a greater choice of vacation time by the employes. Employes will suffer no loss in pay when called for jury duty, or when required to attend court in any capacity applicable to the operations of the Company.

OEIU Local 73 was represented at these negotiations by President James A. Browning, Committee Member Fred Pollett and OEIU Vice President J. O. Bloodworth, Jr. The company was represented by Comptroller J. D. Segall and Assistant Office Manager Stan Hall.

Vice President Bloodworth feels this is one of the best agreements in the industry and is very proud of the relationship that exists with this company. Comptroller Segall has advised him that having his employes working under a good union agreement has been of definite value from the company's point of view, that prior to the organization of his office the turn-over was more than 50 per cent per year, that last year when working under a labor agreement it was 4 per cent, and to date this year it has been zero. He also informed Vice President Bloodworth that the employes handled their individual problems with the company in the proper manner and through the proper union officials.

CHOOSE OEIU

Portland, Oreg.—The office and clerical employes of the Northwest Drug Co. in Portland have by a substantial majority in an election conducted by the NLRB designated OEIU Local 11 as their collective bargaining representative.

Signing of Greyhound Contract



Jacksonville, Fla.—Shown above are the representatives of OEIU Local 73 and of the Florida Greyhound Lines, Inc. at the signing of a recent renewal agreement which brought additional benefits to the office and clerical employes of that company. Left to right, standing, are: Fred Pollett, Local 73 Negotiating Committee member; OEIU Vice President J. O. Bloodworth, Jr.; and Stan Hall, Assistant Office Manager of Florida Greyhound Lines, Inc. Seated are: J. D. Segall, Comptroller for Florida Greyhound Lines, Inc., and James A. Browning, president of Local 73.

Nightly Newscasts To Offset 'Poison'

St. Paul.—The AFL will begin a newscast five nights a week over 147 radio stations on January 1 to offset anti-labor attacks.

This was announced by George Meany, secretary-treasurer of the AFL and Labor's League for Political Education, during the 68th AFL convention.

Mr. Meany said that final arrangements have been made for a 15-minute newscast sponsored by the AFL and League Monday through Friday. He said the broadcast will be heard at 10 p. m. Eastern Standard Time over 147 stations of the Mutual Broadcasting System.

The selection of a news commentator will be made next month. "It is the hope," Mr. Meany said, "that by this nightly newscast we will be able to counteract in the public mind the adverse charges and insinuations made against labor's legitimate economic and legislative aspirations by most of the commentators now on the air."

WAGES BOOSTED

Chicago, Ill.—A general increase averaging \$13 per month for all office and clerical employes highlights the gains made in a recent renewal agreement between OEIU Local 28 and General Mills, Inc., according to Local Business Representative Sarah E. Keenan who handled the local union negotiations.

Other improvements in the new agreement include the union shop and an extra day's vacation to make up for a holiday falling during the vacation period. The contract also provides for regular six-month merit reviews for each employe.

SIGN WITH OEIU

Minneapolis, Minn.—OEIU Local 12 has recently secured applications from over 95 per cent of the office and clerical employes of Hart Motor Express, according to Local Union Business Representative Arthur J. Fritz.

DEPARTMENT STORE UNIT IS CLARIFIED

Portland, Oreg.—OEIU Local 11 has recently won an important NLRB decision for the office employes of the large Meier & Frank Department Store in Portland, Oreg. The point at issue was one of vital interest not only to Local 11 but to all OEIU local unions.

Local 11 sought a unit of the office clerical employes. The company opposed the union's position contending that a unit of its office force is not appropriate for bargaining purposes and that all of its office and sales employes must be lumped together in one store-wide.

OEIU opposed the company's position and successfully contended that a unit of office employes is just as appropriate in a large department store as it is in other types of retail and industrial establishments whose office staffs are organized in OEIU.

Because of the vital importance of the case the International Union, through its General Counsel Herbert S. Thatcher and Attorney John Foley, filed a brief on behalf of the International Union. Local 11 was represented at the hearing by its Secretary-Treasurer T. M. Kincaid and Attorney R. M. Dimick, who also filed a brief on behalf of the local union.

The Board, in finding that office clerical employes at the Meier & Frank Company constitute a unit appropriate for the purposes of collective bargaining within the meaning of the Labor-Management Relations Act, noted that:

"In earlier cases in which this Board has been asked to determine appropriate units for sales employes in retail stores, in which no union has sought to represent office employes as a separate group, we have included office employes in units of sales employes, much as in an analogous line of decisions, we have included in production and maintenance units crafts and other fringe groups who otherwise would have been unrepresented. This employer's office clerical employes, however, constitute a large homogeneous identifiable group, most of whom work separately from sales employes.

"We have frequently found that office clerical employes may constitute a separate bargaining unit apart from other categories of employment. In the instant case, were a second labor organization seeking

(Continued on page 4)



In a statement to Wage and Hour Administrator William R. McComb, OEIU President Paul R. Hutchings took vigorous exception to some of the proposed revisions to that portion of the Fair Labor Standards Act which defines the terms "Executive," "Administrative," "Professional," "Local Retailing Capacity," and "Outside Salesman."

He objected to the proposed revision which would allow persons exempt as bonafide executive, administrative or professional employees to devote up to 20 per cent of their hours in their work week to activities which are not directly and closely related to the performance of their work, pointing out that he opposed in principle any flat allowance in either percentage or hours which would permit exempt employees to perform non-exempt work and that he did not believe the Administrator was given any license by the Act to make such exemptions less bonafide by allowing such exempt employees to perform non-exempt work without receiving overtime payment therefor.

He further pointed out that the old regulation was preferable in that the non-exempt work permitted was not more than "20 per cent of the hours worked in a work week by non-exempt employees" whereas the new regulation permits not more than "20 per cent of their (the exempt employe) weekly hours." However, he further stated that if the Administrator was determined to allow exempt employees to perform a certain amount of non-exempt work, it should be accomplished by setting forth a specified number of hours rather than on a percentage basis.

He also took vigorous exception to the proposed \$55 per week wage test for executive exemptions, stating it was unfair to have a differential between a salary test for an executive and a salary test for an administrative exemption, for which a \$75 per week wage test has been proposed. He urged that the Administrator give consideration to a minimum salary test to be applied in connection with administrative, professional and executive exemptions of not less than \$400 per month for all three of these groups.

In connection with specifying minimum salary rates for exempt positions, he stated that he felt the regulation on this matter should be written so that it could only be interpreted to mean that such an exempt employe must receive each pay period a specified amount not less than that stated in the regulations.

Another objection concerned the proposed revision which would allow employees who are compensated on a salary basis at a rate of not less than \$100 a week to be construed as executive, administrative or professional employees and exempt from the protections of the Act without being required to meet the specified requirements otherwise necessary to such exemption.

CHANGE TO THE GOOD SHIP "OEIU"



A HELPFUL STUDY

Washington—The OEIU has made available to each of its local unions a copy of a pamphlet recently published by the National Industrial Conference Board, Inc. entitled "White Collar Unionization." This study considers the following subjects:

Union Strategy and Tactics—Methods used by unions to overcome resistance of white collar employees to unionization. Step-by-step procedures in organizing campaigns.

What's in a White Collar Contract—Contract provisions broken down as to frequency in contracts of principal unions organizing white collar workers (62 tables, 11 charts, 133 clauses). Contracts studied include 50 from the OEIU.

Problems of White Collar Unionization—Three industrial relations executives and three union officials (including your International President Paul R. Hutchings) discuss problems and conflicts that come with white collar unionization.

This study should be given wide circulation among the officers, committee members and other interested members of our local unions.

He pointed out that such a test would only encourage reclassification of individuals to meet the \$100 test and give the employer a license to work them unlimited hours and to have them devote an unlimited portion of such working time to non-exempt work.

He urged that a further hearing be held to correct these objectionable features.

to the Ladies

As she has done for 10 consecutive years, Miss Mary Toman of the Minnesota Federation of Labor spent her annual vacation attending the convention of the AFL.

Miss Toman, who is secretary to Minnesota Federation Secretary-Treasurer George Lawson, went to work for him in 1917. When the AFL met in New Orleans in 1940, she requested her vacation to coincide with the sessions and attended them at her own expense.

"I've done it every year since," Miss Toman said. "I find it like President William Green called it in a speech at the Seattle convention in 1941—a college course."

Miss Toman is a member of the Office Employees International Union. She first belonged to the Minneapolis local but transferred in 1931 to become a charter member of the St. Paul local.

Basic Hourly Wage Is Fixed at 75 Cents

Washington—The AFL won its long fight to raise the minimum wage when Congress voted to increase the rate from 40 to 75 cents an hour.

The sweetness of victory was soured though because Congress failed to bring the new top up to the \$1 an hour favored by the AFL and because other amendments to the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act chisel away coverage and protection from thousands of deserving workers.

The increase is the first important progressive change in the law since its enactment in 1938.

NEW 'SECURITY' LAW GOOD BET FOR 1950

Washington.—A new Social Security law looks like a good bet to get on the books in the early part of 1950 if the recent House vote is any indication of Congressional feeling on the matter. The House okayed the new law by 333 to 14 and it appears that the Senate will probably go along with the provisions of the bill pretty much as they stand.

Even management may not be so opposed to this bill as many union security plans are tied in with the amount of Social Security benefits and the more benefits that are forthcoming from Social Security the less bite there probably will be on management's pocket.

Under the new law, about 11 million more workers stand to benefit, bringing the total, including those already covered, up to 46 million. The main group that would be affected by this change are self-employed workers in non-agricultural work, numbering some 4½ million. A large number of domestic workers, at present left out in the cold, would also be covered in the new law, as well as employees of non-profit institutions, and employees of local and state governments if local governments work out a special deal with Federal officials. Farmers make up the largest group still left out of the Social Security Act.

Under the House-approved bill pensions and other benefits would be increased from 50 to 150 per cent, and retired workers would be allowed to earn up to \$50 a month above their benefit payments from the government.

PASSES AWAY

Ogden, Utah—The officers and members of Local 220 are aggrieved by the untimely death of Brother Owen W. Christensen, a trustee of the local union for the past two years and one of its charter members.

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INTERNATIONAL UNION



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Snapshots at ST. PAUL

IMPORTANT ACTIONS OF AFL CONVENTION

St. Paul, Minn.—Of particular interest to the members of the OEIU are actions taken by the recent AFL Convention with respect to the calling of a national white collar organizing conference and the AFL's Samuel Gompers Memorial Organization Drive.

White Collar Conference

A resolution instructing the officers of the AFL to call a national organizing conference of white collar workers was referred to the Executive Council for appropriate action to carry out its intent of increasing emphasis on extending organization among white collar workers.

In commenting on this resolution, Paul Hutchings, president of the Office Employees International Union, told the 68th annual convention that "organization in any establishment is not complete and secure until the office and clerical staff of such establishment has been brought within the fold of the AFL and its appropriate international unions."

The resolution said that the economic position of white collar workers has shown less improvement than any other section of the working population and tends to depress the rates and conditions of all industrial workers.

Samuel Gompers Memorial

The AFL will embark on a gigantic organizing campaign next January to enroll at least a million new members during 1950 as a memorial to the AFL's former great President Samuel Gompers.

All State Federations of Labor are being called upon to hold full and complete state-wide organizational rallies in every state during January, 1950 to launch this vigorous and militant campaign. All national and international unions are expected to cooperate fully with these rallies and take an active part in the formulation of the state-wide campaigns and in the execution of their programs.

The convention recommended that these state-wide organizational rallies adopt a program of local and district rallies subsequent to state rallies in order to inaugurate in every congressional district, county and precinct organizational campaigns among all types of unorganized wage earners in every section of the continent.

Political activity is to be coordinated with this organizing activity.

OEIU Committee Participation

International Secretary-Treasurer J. Howard Hicks served as Secretary of the Committee on Union Labels and presented the report for that committee to the convention. The report emphasized and praised the annual Industries Shows and termed them a potent vehicle "to create good relations through labor-management cooperation."

International President Paul R. Hutchings was a member of the Committee on State Organizations. It was this committee that brought in the report which was adopted by the convention for state-wide organizing rallies.



Int'l. President Hutchings tells AFL convention: "Organization in any establishment is not complete and secure until the office and clerical staff has been brought within the fold of the AFL."



Int'l. Vice Pres. L. G. Nygren, Bus. Rep. A. J. Frita and Rec. Sec'y. Georgiana Merrifield of Local 12. Int'l. Pres. Paul Hutchings. Int'l. Sec'y.-Treas. J. Howard Hicks, and Local 16 Rec. Sec'y. Edna Schwartz.

Local 16 Pres. J. Mead, Int'l. Vice Pres. Nygren. Int'l. Pres. Hutchings. Int'l. Sec'y.-Treas. Hicks. Local 16 Sec'y.-Treas. Ruth Erickson, and Local 12 Pres. R. Brager.



Int'l. Pres. Hutchings and Maine State Fed. of Labor Pres. Benjamin J. Dorsky discuss office organization problems in that state.



Int'l. Vice Pres. Nygren, Int'l. Pres. Hutchings, Textile Workers Pres. Anthony Valente, and Int'l. Sec'y.-Treas. Hicks discuss article on office workers in the "American Federationist."

Dinner given by St. Paul OEIU Local 16 for OEIU delegates to AFL convention and executive boards of St. Paul Local 16 and Minneapolis Local 12.



TODAY and CONGRESS



Has the 81st Congress done a good job during its first session? Take a look at the record:

The House has passed a bill expanding the social security program. A public housing law has been enacted. Public power projects have been improved. The minimum wage has been increased to 75 cents an hour. The Senate has approved an aid-to-education bill. A loan program to improve rural telephone facilities has been passed.

Just a glance at the record reveals that the first year of the 81st Congress has resulted in much progressive legislation. The work of the present Congress glitters compared with the record of inaction of the 80th Congress.

ANOTHER YEAR TO GO

And don't forget: The 81st Congress still has another year to go. A lot more liberal legislation will be enacted by the Senate and House in 1950.

The accomplishments of the present Congress are of special interest to trade unionists for two reasons:

1. The record shows what happens when workers get out and help elect liberal Senators and Representatives.
2. Still more political action is necessary to assure a real working liberal majority in the 82nd Congress.

FILE NLRB PETITION

Tampa, Fla.—OEU Vice President J. A. Bloodworth, Jr., has recently secured applications for membership in Local 46 from a majority of a unit of the office and clerical employees of the Tampa Gas Company, the gas utility in Tampa, Fla. A petition for certification as the bargaining representative of these employees is being filed with the NLRB on behalf of Local 46.

OEU WINS DECISION

(Continued from page 1)

to represent the office clerical and sales employees in a single unit, we would not have hesitated to direct a separate election among the office clerical employees to determine whether they desire to be represented in the store-wide unit or in an office clerical unit.

"Because the sales employees of the Employer are not represented, and the Petitioner seeks to represent only the office clerical employees, we see no reason to bar the establishment of the office clerical unit sought by the Petitioner."

Local Union Organizer Ruth E. Flood was mainly instrumental in bringing to the attention of these employees the possibilities of benefits through organization, and is continuing to work with them so that they may be successful in the election which has been set for November 9th.

Council Maps Organizing Drives



Shown above are the officers and delegates of the Northern California Council of Office Employees Unions meeting recently to map further organizing drives. From left to right, seated, are: Vice President Helen Dean; Trustee Mildred Gonzales; President John Kinnick; Secretary-Treasurer Eleanor Murphy; and Trustee Marian Alcamo. In same order, standing, are: David Morse (visitor); and Delegates Marilyn Anglin, Phyllis Mitchell, Rose Steinbacher, Ed McCall, Mildred McCarthy, Kathleen Kinnick and Cliff Andrew. Recording Secretary Helen Pechette and Delegate Beatrice Levine were also in attendance but not present when photograph was taken.

Oakland, Calif.—Delegates from the seven local unions affiliated with the Northern California Council of Office Employees Unions held their quarterly meeting at the El Curtola Restaurant, Oakland, Calif., recently and elected the following officers to fill vacancies: John Kinnick, Oakland Local 29, President; Mildred Gonzales, San Francisco Local 3, Trustee; and Marian Alcamo, Modesto Local 208, Trustee.

Other officers of the Council are: Eleanor Murphy, San Francisco Local 36, secretary-treasurer; Helen Dean, Modesto Local 208, vice-president; Agnes Granger, Vallejo Local 86, trustee, and Helen Pechette, Vallejo Local 86, recording secretary.

Reports on the activities of each union were made by the delegates in addition to reports on the recent convention of the California

State Federation of Labor. The greater part of the meeting was spent in a discussion of organizing. The Council has as its primary objective the organization of office employees in the jurisdiction of the Council, which covers an area within 100 miles of Oakland. Since the formation of the Council, Vallejo Local 86 has grown sufficiently to enable the hiring of Agnes Granger as a full-time representative of the Union. Other affiliated locals include Local 208, Modesto; Local 29, Oakland; Local 43, Sacramento; Local 3, San Francisco; Local 36, San Francisco, and Local 26, Stockton.

He: "I'm knee deep in love with you."

She: "I'll put you on my wading list."

Competition For 'Miss America'



Port Arthur, Tex.—Shown above is the Labor Day Float entered by OEU Local 66 in the Labor Day Parade held in Port Arthur. Although received late, we were sure our members would appreciate seeing this float and the beautiful background supplied by Local 66 members (left to right) Carmen Rojo, Dorothy Dean, Dolly Perry, Naomie Ambrose and Billie Jean Moore. Local Union Vice President Claude Bourque is secretary of the Port Arthur Trades and Labor Council and was largely responsible for the success of the Labor Day celebration held there. Local 66 intends to always keep in the forefront of any activity publicizing the labor movement and will endeavor to keep the OEU before the citizenry of this community.



Drugs — McKesson & Robbins, Inc., Local 29, Oakland, Calif., \$10 per month increase for all classifications and all persons retroactive to August 1, 1949.

Retail Hardware — B. Simon Hardware Co., Local 29, Oakland, Calif., \$2 per wk. average retroactive to July 1, 1949.

Automotive Equipment—Chandler & Lyon Co., Local 29, Oakland, Calif., \$5 per month to all employees and in maximums of classification rates.

Grain-Mill Products — Pillsbury Mills, Inc. (Globe Mills), Local 36, San Francisco, Calif., \$10 per month to present employees and contract rates.

General Mills, Inc., Local 28, Chicago, Ill., \$13 per month average increase.

Bus Lines — Florida Greyhound Lines, Inc., Local 73, Jacksonville, Fla., 5 cents per hour plus other improvements.

General Stores—Northern Commercial Co., Local 175, Anchorage, Alaska, 18 cents per hour resulting from reduction in hours plus overtime rates based on guaranteed hours in excess of 40, plus 5 per cent automatic increase after 18 months' service.

Commercial Printing — Aldine Printing Co., Local 30, Los Angeles, Calif., \$2 and \$2.50 per wk.

Asbestos Products — Keasbey & Mattison Co., Local 13, St. Louis, Mo., 6 cents per hour for all employees.

Employees of Grain Co-op Choose OEU

Ogden, Utah—By a vote of nearly 100 per cent the office and clerical employees of the Farmers Grain Cooperative's Ogden office, have, in an election conducted by the NLRB, designated OEU Local 220 as their collective bargaining representative, according to Local Union President Donald G. Merrill.

Local 220 has also petitioned the NLRB to conduct a union shop election among these employees, has submitted a proposed agreement to management and was expecting to start negotiations the latter part of October.

In connection with the winning of the representation election and in observance of the second anniversary of the granting of its charter, the local celebrated by holding a Charter Day meeting and dinner for its officers and members on October 18.

President Merrill advises that the evening increased the interest of the members and further welded the organization into a cohesive group working together towards a common purpose.

This being the season for buying fur coats, File-room Susie offers the following hint to wives: "You never know what you can do until you cry."