

THE OFFICE WORKER

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

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OEIU WINS DECISION ON REPORTING FIRM

Washington.—The NLRB has accepted jurisdiction over the Columbia Reporting Company and sustained the request of OEIU Local No. 2 that a secret ballot election be conducted by the Board among the staff reporters and transcribers employed by this company, which is engaged in the reporting and transcribing of proceedings before government agencies and congressional committees.

A substantial majority of the reporters and transcribers signed up for membership in Local 2 several months ago, together with similar employes from other reporting firms in the District of Columbia. The employer took the position that its staff reporters and operators were independent contractors and hence not entitled to be considered as employes within the meaning of the National Labor Relations Act.

In denying the company's contention and directing that an election be held within thirty days among the office workers, the NLRB pointed out that from the facts in the case it was apparent that the employer retained control over the earnings of its staff reporters and operators whose work constituted an integral part of the employer's business.

The Board also denied a further employer contention that it should not accept jurisdiction because of the peculiar nature of the industry involved and that the company might not obtain government contracts for such work next year, as such contracts can be bid on competitively.

In dismissing this claim the Board pointed out that it would not deprive employes of the right granted them by the Act merely because their designation of a bargaining representative might be effective only for a year or because collective bargaining in the various combinations of employers in the reporting business might involve unusual problems.

Local Business Representative W. Robert Probey, who handled the organization of this group, pointed out that this decision should clear the way for the local union to obtain bargaining rights in numerous other reporting companies, many of the employes of which have already signed up for membership in the local union.

President Honors Gompers



Washington.—President Truman tells Gompers Memorial Dinner that he recalls AFL founder as "the originator of the great movement which set labor free." He is applauded, l. to r., by Vice President and Mrs. Alben W. Barkley, AFL President William Green, AFL Secretary-Treasurer George Meany and Secretary of State Dean Acheson. OEIU leaders participated in the impressive affair.

Wage Hike and Other Benefits Won For Insurance Workers

Galveston, Tex.—Salary increases ranging from \$10 to \$45 per month and the adoption of a wage promotion plan which will yield income increases of over \$160,000 to the clerical employes of the American National Insurance Company during the current year highlight the gains made in the first agreement to be signed with that company covering its large home office staff in this city.

More than 600 home office clerical employes will benefit under the agreement negotiated by their OEIU Local 27. This represents the first major entrance of OEIU into the life insurance industry.

Aided by Stafford

The contract negotiations were conducted by a negotiating committee of the employes, Mrs. Jeanne V. Deal, chairman; Mrs. Lee V. Imlay and Mrs. Shirley Dial, assisted by the president and business representative of Local 27, A. G. Wilson, and International Union Vice President C. A. Stafford. The union is recognized as the sole and exclusive bargaining representative for all of the company's home office employes.

The contract sets forth detailed clauses governing seniority, the recognition of a five consecutive day work week Monday through Friday, with a maximum of eight hours per day and time and a half for all work in excess of forty hours. Five full holidays and two half holidays are established, with double time to be paid for work performed on such days. Paid vacations and paid sick leaves are specified, and provision is made for leaves of absence to employes delegated to attend State Federation or International Union conventions.

A comprehensive grievance procedure is established and provision is made for arbitration of grievances not otherwise settled.

Unique Feature

A unique feature of the agreement lies in the fact that it establishes a joint company—union committee to function during the life of the contract, which committee has authority to pass on all promotions and demotions of employes covered by the agreement.

Valuable assistance was rendered during the course of the negotiations by President George Russ and the National Federation of Insurance Agents, which holds bargaining rights and a national agreement covering all of the insurance agents employed by this company.

Left Behind in Economic Parade

Washington.—A subcommittee of the Joint Committee on the Economic Report points out that almost one-third of the nation receives an income of \$2,000 a year or less. It said these families "have been left behind in the economic progress of America."

"They do not have many of the products considered symbolic of the American standard of living," the subcommittee said. "Their inadequate incomes constitute a great underdeveloped economic frontier—a new and expansible market for the products of American industry."

More than 8 million incomes were under \$1,000 a year and al-

OEIU VICTORY AT DIXON PENCIL CO.

Jersey City, N. J.—The office staff of the Joseph Dixon Crucible Company, manufacturers of Dixon pencils, by an approximate 80 per cent favorable vote, established OEIU Local 142 as their exclusive bargaining agency through an NLRB election held early in January.

Local Union Secretary-Treasurer Irving Barist reports that within a few hours after the election all of the remaining office employes signed union application cards, so that the union holds full representation among this group of close to 100 workers as it prepares to enter contract negotiations with the company.

The organization of the Dixon office brings the first large pencil manufacturing company's office staff under the banner of OEIU.

Secretary Barist points out that the success of this campaign was based on recognition by the members of this office staff that collective bargaining is the effective means for obtaining improved working conditions.

Anglo-Canadian Mills Signed Up

Quebec, Canada.—The clerical employes of two additional paper companies have achieved collective bargaining benefits with the signing of first agreements between OEIU Local 241 and the Anglo-Canadian Pulp and Paper Mills, Ltd. and the Northeastern Paper Products, Ltd. both located in this city.

The agreement follows the general lines established by OEIU agreements in this industry covering the exclusive bargaining recognition of the union, the establishment of union security through the union shop, hours of work, statutory holidays, half-holidays, paid vacations, sick leaves, emergency leaves, job classifications and rate schedules, and other matters of importance to the employes.

Canadian Representative Russell Harvey assisted the local officers and committee with their negotiation of these first agreements, and International Vice President L. A. Bruneau has also been aiding the local union.

most that many were under \$2,000 annually. The family groups include one-fifth of the nation's children.



Last Fall, when I was appointed as one of the two U. S. Worker Delegates to the Salaried Employees and Professional Workers Committee of the International Labor Organization meeting at Geneva, Switzerland, I was not only particularly pleased at the opportunity of representing U. S. non-manual workers at the Geneva meeting, but also at the opportunity to find out something about office and clerical organization in other lands.

By careful planning of itinerary, by flying both ways across the ocean instead of consuming a week each way for boat crossing, and by using plane travel on the Continent, I found that at no loss of time and at relatively little expense, I could visit with union leaders and study briefly the progress and the problems of clerical organization in various of the Western European countries.

I reported at some length to our International Executive Board December meeting on clerical organization abroad. There was great interest shown by our Board members, and I thought that through the columns of our OFFICE WORKER I would report briefly to our general membership in a series of articles on clerical organization in other lands. It is not feasible to present a chronological report on my entire trip, but I do want to pick out highlights of particular interest to us all in connection with our efforts in building a strong clerical union in the U. S. and Canada.

In this issue appears the first article dealing with the Norwegian Clerical Union—NHKF. I hope that you will find it and the subsequent articles informative and stimulating. Clerical organization is on the march in all countries which cherish and preserve individual freedom.—Paul R. Hutchings.

Clerical Organization In Norway

The Norwegian Clerical Union—Norges Handelsog Kontorfunksjonerearene Forbund, NHKF—was founded in 1908. It is composed of clerical and technical employes in industry and commerce. It does not embrace draftsmen, nor does it cover employes of the National Government, municipalities, or railroad clerical workers. It does include shop assistants (sales clerks).

The membership of this union presently stands around 20,000 who are organized into 230 branches throughout Norway, which has a population of less than three and a half million persons. It is estimated that the present maximum potential of NHKF would run somewhere between 70,000 and 80,000 members. In other words, it presently has between 25 and 30 per cent of its jurisdiction organized. This is particularly noteworthy when you recall that Norway was occupied by the Nazis for about four years.

In addition to its national office

AFL Says Workers Need Substantial Raise In 1950 to Maintain Full Employment Levels



Washington.—Workers look to 1950 with much concern over the increase in unemployment which seems sure to develop, the AFL Monthly Survey believes.

To reach our national goal of maintaining "full" production and employment, demand for industry's products must increase enough each year to create jobs for all new workers joining the labor force and for those laid off by labor-saving devices. In 1947 and 1948 (and during the war) demand was ample to create these jobs and we had "full employment." Gross national product in 1947 and 1948 (shown on the chart) was the sum total of all products and services turned

out by all industries at maximum employment levels. But in 1949, for the first time in eight years, demand fell short, production dropped below "full employment" levels and unemployment rose by 1,300,000 (year's average). The chart shows the gap (dotted space) or shortage in demand in 1949, and the even larger gap in prospective demand for 1950. This gap means unemployment.

Prospects are bright for the first half year. Total business volume should about equal 1949 through May or June of 1950. But this will not be enough to expand production and create jobs for new workers, so unemployment in the first half year will edge upward, exceeding 1949 by perhaps a million.

A down trend is likely in the second half of 1950.

The country faces in 1950 not a depression, but another business readjustment which need not be disruptive if we take the right steps to meet it. Several constructive developments are possible. A gradual price decline will release more buying power; continued spending by business to improve equipment would maintain employment and increase productivity; reduction in the many taxes paid by consumers would enable them to buy more of the durable goods they want and need.

A large increase in workers' buying will be essential in 1950. If every worker in the U. S. could receive a 10-cent wage increase, some \$8,000,000,000 would be added to consumer buying power, nearly all of which would immediately be spent for living necessities. This would be enough to reverse the prospective downward trend of business and start a rise. But with lower profits in prospect for 1950, many companies would hesitate to give such increases unless earned by reducing costs.

Most American managements have never seriously tried to cooperate with unions by submitting cost data and assuring union mem-

bers of a fair share in the saving that could be made by joint effort to reduce costs. Some amazing results could be accomplished if workers were given week by week cost records, so they could see the results of their efforts, and management agreed to share the savings with them, determining the just wage increase by collective bargaining negotiations.

At least a goal could be set of 7, 10 or 15 cents more in wages through cost reduction. If management recognized the need for an immediate increase in workers' buying power and agreed to such a program of cooperative effort to raise wages, the battle against business recession would be well on the way to victory. It is clear, of course, that wages must be raised without causing a general increase in living costs.

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Reopening Contract—A contract may be reopened during its term, and still stop NLRB from holding an election on the petition of a rival union if the contract has a reopening clause providing for renegotiation on certain subjects while the rest of the contract continues in effect and if the parties limit their negotiations to the subjects covered by the reopening clause.

However, in the case of Shopwell Foods Inc. and Retail Clerks, AFL, the NLRB ordered an election petitioned for by a rival union because, although the contract provided for reopening during its term on wages and hours, the company and the union also bargained over promotions and seniority rights of promoted employees.

* * *

Strikes—In the Julian Freirich Company case, the NLRB reaffirms a rule established by the Board and the Courts under the Wagner Act that, an unfair labor practice strike does not lose its character as such merely because the employees may also have had economic reasons for striking.

An NLRB trial examiner had ruled that the employer was not obligated to reinstate a group of strikers because, while part of the cause of the strike was an unfair labor practice he had committed, the "primary purpose" of the strike was economic.

The Board found that there was no economic purpose for the strike, and goes on to say that even if "the strike had as its purpose both the achievement of an economic goal and the dissipation of an unfair labor practice, it is a well-established principle that a strike caused in part by an unfair labor practice does not lose its character as an unfair labor strike because economic reasons may also have brought it about."

* * *

Secondary Boycott—A "fair list" of companies that have signed contracts with the union isn't illegal, NLRB holds, even though it's issued along with a plea to union members to favor the companies on the list. This kind of list isn't part of an illegal secondary boycott under the T-H law.

The Santa Ana Lumber Co., whose name wasn't on such a list, charged that this was actually a boycott tactic by the Building and Construction Trades Council of Orange County, AFL, and that the union was asking employees working for companies on the list to refuse to handle the products of companies whose names were off the list.

The Board, however, finds no evidence for this charge and says there's nothing to indicate employees were "induced or encouraged" to refuse to handle this company's products. Besides, NLRB says, an "unfair list" of companies with which the union is engaged in a primary dispute isn't a violation of the law and a "fair list" isn't either.

Another Large Paper Mill Brought Under OEIU Banner

Holyoke, Mass.—Another large paper mill has been added to the growing list of mills whose office staffs have chosen the Office Employees International Union as their exclusive bargaining representative. By a more than 80 per cent favorable vote, the office and clerical staff of the American Writing Paper Corp. selected OEIU Local 247 as their exclusive bargaining representative in an NLRB election conducted last month.

All of the office employees in the Holyoke general offices of the company and in its Albion, Nonotuck and Linden Divisions participated in the vote which was conducted by NLRB Field Examiner Thos. E. McDonald.

Malone Handled Campaign

A. F. of L. General Organizer Wm. P. Malone handled the campaign which resulted in the first group of office employees at Holyoke winning OEIU bargaining rights. OEIU Representative Ed. C. Nagel will assist the newly organized local in its contract negotiations.

Immediately upon learning of the success of the office employees of the American Writing Corp. in winning collective bargaining rights, President Georgia Kokkalis of OEIU Local 228 at nearby Chicopee Falls, extended congratulations on behalf of that local union to the office staff of the American Writing Corp. and indicated that all possible help would be given to the new local by the members of the Chicopee Falls local, which is now enjoying its second contract with the Stevens Arms Company.

The Eagle A Lodge of the International Brotherhood of Paper Makers, upon learning that the office staff had overwhelmingly voted for the OEIU-AFL, welcomed the group into the fold of the A. F. of L. and commented particularly upon the group forming the first successful office union in an industrial establishment in Holyoke.

LABOR LIBRARY

Washington—According to The Bureau of National Affairs some good tips for educational directors are contained in a new pamphlet called A Trade Union Library 1949 by H. C. Benjamin (Industrial Relations Section, Princeton University, Princeton, N. J.—75 cents).

OEIU HEAD CHOSEN TO AID HEART DRIVE

Washington.—Paul R. Hutchings, International President of the Office Employees International Union, will serve as a member of the National Labor Committee of the 1950 Heart Campaign.

The \$6,000,000 fund-raising drive will take place during the month of February and will be conducted by the American Heart Association, and its affiliates throughout the country, to support a program of scientific research, public education and community service.

In a letter addressed to President Hutchings, inviting his cooperation, Secretary of Labor Maurice J. Tobin, chairman of the National Labor Committee's 1950 Heart Campaign, wrote:

"Diseases of the heart and blood vessels are our nation's leading cause of death. They kill more than 600,000 Americans annually and are responsible for more deaths than the next five most important causes of death combined."

Responding to Labor Secretary Tobin's invitation to serve with him as a member of the Committee, President Hutchings stated:

"I am more than pleased to accept your invitation and help this great effort. I am certain that the 1950 campaign will prove most successful."

AFL Commentator



FRANK EDWARDS

Washington.—Frank Edwards, AFL news commentator, has compiled an impressive public service record in the short space of time he has been broadcasting under AFL sponsorship.

He has won praise from listeners for his commentaries for greater highway safety, to keep rent controls, to help temporarily distressed areas with shipments of surplus food held by the federal government.

Mr. Edwards' program originates in Washington at 10 p. m. Monday through Friday and is carried over 147 stations of the Mutual Broadcasting System and eight labor-liberal owned stations.

The program is presented by the 8,000,000 members of the AFL.

Be sure to listen to him and tell your friends.



This column hopes to interest women who are interested in being good citizens.

They say the world is tied to our apron strings, politics eats at our table, and we shouldn't even buy salt without first reading the label.

We hear that the April census will show the country has 1,000,000 more women than men. Now women have had the vote for 25 years but we all know they haven't done as much with it as they might have.

Well, 1950 is our chance! Every member of the House of Representatives and a third of the Senate has to be elected this year. If the wrong people get in, women will be more than half to blame. That's just simple arithmetic—and don't think the men haven't thought of it!

Only people who think as you do and want the same things care whether you vote. Your enemies will be delighted if you fail to register and forget all about election day.

* * *

Half through Congress is a bill to bring the Social Security Act within speaking distance of the 1950 facts of life.

Americans don't begin to have the benefits under Social Security they think they have. The most anyone can draw under the old-age part of the law we have is \$45.20 a month. The national average is \$25.80.

The average payment for persons getting public assistance is about \$44 a month. This gives the top retired worker about \$1.20 a month more than the average person on relief.

The original intention was that Social Security would replace relief and put old age on a self-supporting basis. If properly expanded, it still can do so.

* * *

We still have a depression in one commodity — EDUCATION. Last year, four million children didn't go to any school. Lack of teachers, over-crowded class-rooms, inadequate buildings—the story is repeated everywhere.

Under the pending Federal Aid bill, each state would have a minimum of \$55 a year per child to spend on education. Every state will receive help, but those with most children and lowest income will receive most.

This method of taxing our national resources to provide help where it is needed is a fundamental democratic principle. The people of the East help pay for irrigation projects in the West, the people of the West help finance harbor improvements in New England.

Although made up of 48 states, let us hope our country is a NATION and as a NATION can do something about our greatest NATIONAL asset: our children.

Prime Minister Clement Attlee of Great Britain is a good standing member of the Clerical and Administrative Workers Union, which he joined more than 30 years ago.

OPEN YOUR HEART
give
TO FIGHT HEART DISEASE
AMERICAN HEART WEEK
FEB. 13-20

WORKERS' STATUS UNDER WAGE LAW

Washington.—The U. S. Labor Department's Wage-Hour Division has issued revised rules governing the exemption of executive, professional and administrative employes (in industries covered by the law) from the act's overtime pay requirements.

Employes in such categories and coming within the scope of the revised rules may find their employers contending that they are not required to pay them for overtime work.

Neither the old rules nor the revised rules on such exemptions affect employes covered by a union agreement which guarantees them overtime pay. The revised rules are briefly outlined below:

A professional must do work that requires specialized intellectual knowledge, or creative work demanding artistic talents and imagination, must spend at least 80 per cent of his normal work week in professional work, and must receive at least \$75 a week in basic pay.

An executive must manage the enterprise or a recognized department of it, must direct at least two employes, have the authority to hire and fire or the power to recommend hiring and firing, must be in a position to recommend promotions even if he does not actually have the power to grant them, must devote 80 per cent of his normal work week to executive work, and must receive at least \$55 a week.

An administrative worker must do work requiring discretion. His job must directly relate to management operations. He must devote 80 per cent of his time to administrative tasks or projects, and must be paid at least \$75 a week.

The revised rules also make special provision to facilitate exemption from the law's overtime pay requirements executive, administrative or professional employes whose base weekly salary is \$100 or more.

Books on Pensions

Washington.—OEUU officers and members interested in pension planning and programs will find the following publications of considerable value:

"Handbook for Pension Planning"—363-page bound book—covers rules, costs, financing, operations, tax angles, bargaining process, etc.—\$5.

"Negotiated Pension Plans"—a compilation of 30 actual full-text pension agreements—also includes overall analysis of eligibility requirements, employee contributions, entrance ages, years-of-service requisites, vesting methods, amount of benefits, handling of beneficiaries, fund administration, financing methods, tax angles—\$3.

Both of above available from The Bureau of National Affairs, Inc., 1231 24th St., N. W., Washington 7, D. C. If both are purchased at the same time, price is \$7.50.

"Employee Benefit Plans Under Collective Bargaining"—(Bulletin No. 946, U. S. Department of Labor, 29 pp., U. S. Govt. Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C., 20 cents.

Pension and Insurance Plan Secured For Alcoa Workers

Massena, N. Y.—Negotiations recently completed with the Aluminum Company of America by OEUU Local 180 have resulted in a pension and insurance plan for hourly clerical employes which provides for non-contributory pensions of not less than \$100, including social security, for any employe 65 years old with 25 years' service. Proportionate benefits are provided for employes with 15 years or more service, and benefits for permanent disability are provided in a limited number of cases.

Insurance Program

The insurance program under the agreement includes a \$2,000 life policy during the employe's active service, with a paid-up policy of \$1,500 to become effective at retirement. Cash sickness, hospital, surgical and accident benefits are also included.

The union has also won for the salaried employes an agreement with the company to provide, by not later than April 1, a pension plan for such employes to assure

benefits which may not be less than those obtained for the hourly employes under the recently negotiated plan.

Salary Reviews Won

OEUU Local 180 also won improvements in the handling of wage and salary adjustments for its members. The company has agreed to the recognition of a union Wage and Salary Committee which shall be provided every four months with full information on all rates of employes within the bargaining unit. The company has also agreed that each employe who has advanced to the job rate for his position shall have his wage or salary reviewed for adjustment at six-month intervals, except for those employes in the highest wage and salary grades, who shall be guaranteed at least an annual review.

AFL-OEUU Representative Frank E. Morton assisted Local President Murland Hazel and the committee in its recent negotiations.

NOTES from the field

New Jersey—Nearly three hundred members and guests of Burlington Local 148 attended a dinner and party in honor of retiring local president J. A. Penrose.

Stewards, officers and members of Local 32 in Newark are learning more about collective bargaining in a weekly class arranged by the Extension Labor Program of Rutgers University. Their instructor is Mr. S. Miller, an International Representative of the Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. Other courses are being arranged.

Massachusetts—Boston Local 6 has recently won an NLRB representation election by nearly 90 per cent in another unit of office and clerical employes at City Fuel Co.

California—Fresno Local 69 reports initiating a substantial new group of members at its December meeting and indicates that it is moving forward on an organizational program in that city and giving consideration to employing a full-time local business representative to head up its drive.

A union shop agreement has been completed by Local 29 of Oakland with the Stone & Webster Engineering Co. covering all office clerical employes, including timekeepers, employed at its construction project at Moss Landing. An average wage increase of 10 cents an hour was obtained together with 8 paid holidays, paid sick leave and vacations, a 40-hour work week Monday through Friday, premium pay for shift work and double time

for Sunday work.

Missouri—Formal NLRB hearings expected soon on question of representation of office and clerical employes by Local 13 in St. Louis at Midland Ford Tractor Co. (distributors) and Jay Allen Ward Co. (shoe manufacturers).

New York—Local 153 in New York City has won a state board representation election among the office employes of Coday Farms, Inc., has organized the Beth David Cemetery offices and received recognition from the employer, and has been certified by the state board for the office employes at Sardi's. Local 153 has affiliated with the Hotel Trades Council of New York City.

Utah—Ogden Local 220 reports the signing of an improved renewal agreement with Pillsbury Mills, Inc. (trade name Globe Mills). The principal new benefits include a full union shop clause, replacing the modified union shop clause in the previous contract, a \$10 general increase, improvement in vacation schedules and the addition of a third weeks' vacation for employes with 25 years of service.

Pennsylvania.—Pittsburgh Local 33 reports that a substantial majority of the office force of the Joseph Woodwell Company, a hardware supply house, have signed up for membership in the local union, and that the employes of several additional firms are presently receiving the active attention of the local union's organizing committee.



Grain-Mill Products—Pillsbury Mills, Inc., Local 220, Ogden, Utah, all employes and schedules increased \$10 per month.

Construction—Stone Webster Engineering Co., Local 29, Oakland, Calif., average of 10 cents an hour retroactive to November 1, 1949.

Iron & Steel Foundries—U. S. Pipe and Foundry Co., Local 179, Chattanooga, Tenn., \$5 to \$15 per month for most employes.

Hotels—Concourse Plaza, Local 153, New York City, \$3 per week.

Winthrop Hotel, Local 23, Tacoma, Wash., rate increased \$5 to \$25 per month.

Tacoma Hotel, Local 23, Tacoma, Wash., rate increased \$5 per month.

Non-profit Organizations—World Jewish Congress, Local 153, New York City, 5 per cent.

Restaurants—Sardi's, Local 153, New York City, \$2 per week for part-time and \$10 per week for full-time employes.

Department Stores—The Fair Store, Local 19, Toledo, Ohio, \$1.50 per week.

Drugs—McKesson & Robbins, Inc., Local 10, Detroit, Mich., 5 cents per hour.

Electric Light & Power—Firelands Co-op. (New London, Ohio), Local 19, Toledo, Ohio, \$20 per month.

Trucking—Burlington Truck Lines, Inc., Local 230, Burlington, Iowa, 5 cents per hour.



There would be a great many more brunettes in this country if so many hadn't dyed.

Doctor: "Has your husband taken the medicine I prescribed: A tablet before each meal and a small whiskey after?"

Weavin' Willie's Wife: "He's a few tablets behind but he's months ahead on the whiskey, Doc."

Women who swear they've never been kissed, can't be blamed for swearing.

Jones: "How do you spend your income?"

Smith: "About 30 per cent for shelter, 30 per cent for clothing, 40 per cent for food, and 20 per cent for amusement."

Jones: "But that adds up to 120 per cent."

Smith: "And don't I know it!"

Boss to file-room Susie coming in late: "You should have been here half an hour ago."

Susie: "Why, what happened?"