INSURANCE AGENTS WIN WAGE INCREASE

Washington—Ratifying their new contract by an almost 2 to 1 vote, the Prudential Insurance agents returned to work ending the longest and largest white-collar strike in the nation's history.

In announcing the terms of the settlement, George L. Russ, president of the Insurance Agents International Union (AFL), said the agents will get a wage increase of $8.36 a week, plus a $150 lump sum reimbursement of 1951 contributions to their pension plan, which is non-taxable.

In addition, the company has agreed to arbitration of grievances and many other important changes in working conditions.

Although the settlement falls short of ending the strike, both on wages and the union shop, Mr. Russ said the new agreement is "as good a contract as exists in the insurance field."

The strike which lasted 78 days was the largest and longest involving white-collar workers in the nation. The American Federation of Labor and many of its national and international unions rallied to the support of the strikers, as did large numbers of policyholders.

There was one outstanding "no" vote during the strike. Although there are dozens of insurance companies which offer welfare and pension plans on an almost identical cost basis, Harry Bridges' International Longshoremen's Union (formerly with the CIO) signed, during the strike, a welfare plan agreement to be administered by the then strike-bound company.

Such an action was nothing more or less than simple scabbing on the insurance strikers.

The idea that every white-collar worker should keep his mouth shut and be content with low pay has been defeated.

It was defeated by 10,000 members of the AFL Insurance Agents International Union who struck the Prudential Company for 78 days.

The agents not only won a pay increase and company agreement to arbitrate grievances. They also succeeded in warning to the anti-labor crowd who counts on white-collar workers and the so-called middle class to fight against social security, minimum wages, and fair labor laws.

They deserve notice that white-collar workers can stick together in a tough fight.

Labor Scores Victory in Railroad Union Shop Fight

Washington—Labor won a major victory when the Presidential Emergency Board recommended that the railroads enter into a national agreement with 17 union shop contracts providing for the union shop and check-off.

The proposed union shop contract would cover all but an exempted few of the 1,100,000 shopcraft, track and office employees. The check-off of dues would have to be voluntarily authorized by the workers themselves.

If the railroads accept the recommendation, similar union shop contracts probably will be negotiated for the 250,000 "operating" employees by their unions.

The unions testified at the hearings before the Presidential Board that 85 per cent of the non-operating employees already are union members.

The others, if the union shop is put into effect, would have to join the union of their craft within 60 days.

17,000 Wage Cases are Mired Under WSB Backlog

Washington—More than 17,000 cases remain to be acted on by the Wage Stabilization Board. Board members see no relief in sight as more cases are submitted for study.

Industry members of WSB reported that businessmen are complaining that they are unable to put pay raises into effect because the board has not had a chance to consider them.

Executive Director Harry Weiss of WSB suggested four ways to cut down the backlog, aside from getting more money from Congress.

1. Handle more cases orally in regional boards.
2. Eliminate the unanimous vote requirement on cases involving pay increases to get rid of interplant inequities.
3. Give more power to the executive director to decide cases.
4. Work out policies on pensions, productivity increases and commission earnings.

PACT WITH GROCERY CHAIN HIKES WAGES

Buffalo, N. Y.—The office and clerical employees of Loblaw, Inc., a large grocery chain, are now receiving benefits and protections of their initial collective bargaining agreement which was negotiated by Local 212 of this city with the assistance of International Vice President Gerald G. Weiss.

Agreement was reached during the last few hours before a strike deadline that had been voted by these employees and approved by the local union and the International Union. A representative of the mediation service assisted the parties in working out the final disputed issues in the short time remaining before the strike was due to be called.

Principal Gains

Principal gains made were a general increase of 10 cents per hour (4J4 cents of which is subject to WSB approval) with some employees receiving as much as $9 per week increase as a result of a new schedule of job classifications and rate ranges (ranges providing automatic pay increases to the midpoint, from there to maximum), sick leave with pay increasing to 30 days after 5 years of service (no sick leave with pay had been granted previously to this agreement), and 3 years paid leave for death of immediate family.

Other Provisions

Other important provisions in the agreement include two daily 15-minute rest periods, vacations of 1 week after 4 months, 2 weeks after a year and 3 weeks after 15 years, seniority subject to ability to satisfactorily perform the job, time and one-half after 8 hours per day and 40 hours per week, double time on Sundays and Holidays, paid lunch period for after hours late evening work, job posting, termination notice required, leaves without pay of up to 1 year for illness, 2 years as union representative, 10 days for union conventions limited to two per year, stop grievance procedure including arbitration, standard maintenance of membership clause, 30-day probationary period for new employees, voluntary irrevocable check-off for dues and initiation fees, etc.

Our fast-growing Buffalo Local 212 has been gratified on the many improvements in working conditions won for these employees.
Absentee Membership
What about “absentee membership” in labor unions? Certainly if an employee is to carry a union card and benefit from the endeavors of a union, he bears the same moral responsibility for the union's actions and welfare as does every other member. He can meet those obligations only by attending meetings of his local union and playing an active role in its affairs, by helping to make important union decisions, and by conscientiously supporting the union's programs.

Initial Gesture Only
A person does not become a good union member merely by paying dues. That is only the first step, the initial gesture.

Although a strong financial structure is the backbone of any organization, a union cannot accomplish its purposes with dues payments alone. The backbone is no good if there are no muscles to move the body, and a vigorous, informed membership must supply those muscles.

Manpower Lost
Members who consistently neglect attending local union meetings cannot be informed on the urgent issues which concern their union; they cannot contribute to the full benefit of their unions and ideas.

If we could attain a perfect attendance at local meetings and get every member pulling full strength for the welfare of workers of our trade, this International would have a dynamo of human energy which could not be stopped.

Part-Time Members
A member who does not attend meetings regularly is only a part-time member, in the true sense of the word. A “part-time” member is not fully aware of the tremendous importance of united action and the labels of other AFL organizations. Nor can he be duly cognizant of the need for pressing labor's fight for the election of government officials who will give working men and women an even break.

Share Responsibility
When local union attendance lags, responsibility must be shared by the local officers and the individual members. Often the cause for such a condition can be traced to failure of the officers to build sufficient interest to attract attention. Even in such cases, however, members should attend meetings and demand hard-hitting programs, the kind on which any progressive organization thrives.

But since local officers occupy roles of leadership, they must bear the greatest burden of responsibility for maintaining a high degree of interest and attendance at local union meetings.

Strength of the Union
The strength of any union does not lie in the local leadership or in the International leadership—it lies in its membership. An army in which only the officers do the fighting would soon get chased off the battlefield. The same principle applies to a union.

Let's take a look at a local which is being threatened by lethargy and ineffectiveness. Maybe the officers have just negotiated a good contract, and the membership approves it unanimously. Everybody is happy.

Then look what happens. The officers relax their minds. The members bow above the notice of the monthly local meeting, thinking, “There's not much use going, the contract is signed, and everything is hunky-dory.”

Well, there aren't many members at that meeting—not much action either. A little more talk about the contract, a few committee reports, and the session is adjourned.

Is that a picture of a vigorous trade union? No, indeed, that is a portrait of a local union headed just for ineffectiveness and despair. When the time comes for bargaining over a new contract, will that local have gained an ounce of strength?

Union Activity
Union activity does not end with paying dues and neither does it end with settling a contract. As a matter of cold, economic fact, union activity just doesn’t end.

The more constructive projects a union institutes, the more strength it is gaining to gain. Common sense should tell us that as soon as an agreement is signed, we should get down to business on programs of organizing, union label promoting, voter registration etc.

Projects and endeavors in trade unionism are mechanical. There are always worthy things that are waiting to be accomplished, programs that will inspire interest and enthusiasm and, in so doing, make this a stronger union.

Concerns All of Us
The job of keeping our union a vibrant and energetic is a task which concerns all of us. We can succeed only by keeping unionism alive. In the present day, there are always worthy things that are waiting to be accomplished, programs that will inspire interest and enthusiasm and, in so doing, make this a stronger union.

NAMED TO NLRB
Washington—President Truman has nominated Ivar H. Peterson, administrative assistant to Senator Wayne Morse (Rep., Ore.) to be a member of the National Labor Relations Board.

Peterson was named to succeed James J. Reynolds, Jr., who resigned. Peterson would serve Reynolds' unexpired term of five years running from August 27, 1951.

DEMAND ACTION ON MEDICAL CARE
Washington—An angry demand for action to satisfy America's medical care needs at reasonable prices was voiced unanimously at a recent conference of Southern Catholic leaders. Many conference leaders denounced the "lying propaganda" put out by the American Medical Association.

In an article published by America, a national Catholic weekly, Stephen F. Ryan reported the conference reached its most complete agreement in an "angry demand that medical men take some action or let the Government take it for them."

The conference was under the sponsorship of the Louisiana State Council of the Knights of Columbus.

"Surprisingly enough," wrote Mr. Ryan, "those who had been most active in decrying the dangers of the medical state...those who had cried 'socialism' the loudest...joined with the majority in condemning the stand taken by the medical profession and the AMA.''

Mr. Ryan reported complete agreement at the conference that "medical fees...are too high, and there were many references to the failure of physicians to provide adequate medical care at a reasonable cost for the middle-class population of the United States."

Read Your Union Paper
"Were it not for the labor press, the labor movement would not be what it is today, and any man who tries to injure a labor paper is a traitor to the cause."

SAMUEL GOMPERS.
Founder and First President, American Federation of Labor.

THE OFFICE WORKER
Official organ of the OFFICE EMPLOYES INTERNATIONAL UNION

PAUL R. HUTCHINGS, President
J. HOWARD HICKS, Sec.-Treas.
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EASTERN LABOR PRESS CONFERENCE

Subscription Price $1 a Year
"How's That Again?"

Washington—The National Association of Manufacturers and most newspaper publishers are jumping on the Presidential Emergency Board for recommending the union shop for nonoperating railroad unions.

They say the Board puts the government in the position of urging the union shop. That, they say, is bad. The government, they say, should keep its nose out of such business.

But where were the NAM and the publishers when the Taft-Hartley Act was being debated in Congress? Taft-Hartley forbids a closed shop whereby no one can be hired unless he's a union member.

You didn't hear the NAM and the publishers complain that Taft-Hartley puts the government in the position of barring a handy union from signing a closed shop contract with a willing employer. On the contrary, they pressed for this provision.

It's terrible, you see, for a Presidential Emergency Board to suggest that workers be granted a union shop. That's "government interference."

But it's OK for the government to bar the closed shop. That's "government regulations."

"Grace" Period—Recently the NLRB eliminated a lot of confusion about the T-H Act's 30-day "grace" period for union security clauses by determining that the 30 days did not apply to employees who were already members of the union. The Act said security clauses, to be legal, can "require" membership only on or after the 30th day following the beginning of employment or the signing of the contract, whichever is later.

Now the Board adds the logical second part of this rule: A maintenance-of-membership contract, which doesn't require anyone to become a member against his will, doesn't need any 30-day "escape" or "grace" period.

Union Leader

Washington—President Edna Stoll, of the Women's Wear Union, has been reelected secretary-treasurer of the Central Labor Union of this city. Mrs. Musgrave, as she is known, has proven a very capable and efficient officer and has won the admiration of all the delegations who attend the CLI. She is secretary-treasurer of OBU Local 185 and also was recently reelected president of the Woman's Union Label League of this city.

UNION LEADER

Springfield, Mo.—Mrs. Pauline Musgrave has been reelected secretary-treasurer of the Central Labor Union of this city. Mrs. Musgrave has proven a very capable and efficient officer and has won the admiration of all the delegations who attend the CLI. She is secretary-treasurer of OBU Local 185 and also was recently reelected president of the Women's Union Label League of this city.

Wage Rate

Restaurants—Affiliated Restaurants (representing a number of cafeterias), Local 153, New York City, $3 to $3.69 per week.

Unipak, Inc. & C. L. Restaurant, Local 153, New York City, $3 to $5 per week.

The Milwaukee Press, Local 18, St. Paul, Minn., 25 cents per hour.

Utilities—Portland Gas and Coke, Local 11, Portland, Ore., $12.50 per month.

Periodicals North Shore News Co., Local 6, Boston, Mass., $2 to $4 per week.

J. O. Stolz Co., Local 241, Chicago, Ill., $3 per week retroactive to Oct. 24 and $4 per week in May.

Trucking—Denver-Chicago Trucking Co., Local 8, Denver, Colo., $6 per hour.

Chemicals—Mathieson Chemical Corp., Local 87, Lake Charles, La., 10 cents per hour (plus individual adjustments to new minimum when approved by WSB).

Foundry—Hunt-Spiller Mfg. Co., Local 6, Boston, Mass., $3 to $7 per week.

Outboard Motors—Gale Products, Local 221, Galesburg, Ill., $7 per month.

Sanwells—Pacific Mfg. Co., Local 94, San Jose, Calif., $19 to $25 per month.

Concrete Plants & Forms—Butler Bin Co., Local 5, Milwaukee, Wis., 16 to 25 cents per hour.

Foundry—Indiana Steel Products Co., Local 24, Detroit, Mich., 10 cents per hour plus 20 cents per week. Non-soliciting escalator, $1 when escalator is present.

RENT ADVISORY BOARD

Women in labor organizations are more and more bearing the load of problems confronting local rent advisory boards in the United States. The boards—made up of community leaders representing employers, landlords, and community leaders—have been asked to help by the federal rent stabilization program, and as a result they are making rules in many other communities.

Renter Advisers

In Indianapolis, union wives who have to listen to their husbands denounce "time-motion" studies when they see their housewife almost blow their tops when they were advised by home economics experts at Purdue University that "time-motion" studies made in their own kitchens would cut their work 26 to 46 per cent.

Women Expected by Women

Of the women in the United States in early 1951, more than 40 per cent had worked in 1950 according to the U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. Of these women workers three-fourths were married. Of these, about half had married by the age of 20, 20 by the age of 25, and 60 by the age of 30.

Considerably larger proportions of the unmarried than of the married women were in professional and clerical occupations and in household service. The largest group of married women workers, whether with or without small children, were operatives, farm laborers, and clerical workers, which together accounted for 56 per cent of the total. Part-time jobs were held by a considerably larger proportion of the married women workers than of those in other marital groups. Almost 40 per cent of the married women workers with young children had part-time jobs.

Higher Minimum Wage

The long, historic struggle for better wages, hours, and working conditions for women and minorites continues.

In California it hit a new climax when the California State Federation of Labor presented a comprehensive brief at the public hearings called on persistent state regulations by the California Industrial Welfare Commission.

In asking for a minimum wage of $1.25 an hour, the Federation brief observed: (1) That the Commission budget for a single working woman supported such a figure; (2) That such a minimum would benefit both labor and management; (3) That the same minimum should prevail for every covered industry.

The present minimum in California is $0.50 an hour and was established in the Commission in 1947.

Bumper Crop

About 3.9 million babies were born in 1951 in the U. S. There is a definite trend toward larger families. Already by the end of the year more than 31,8 per 1,000 mothers were compared to 18.5 in 1940, and third and fourth children being born at about the same rate as the first and second child is 31.8 per 1,000 mothers as compared to 18.5 in 1940, and third and fourth children being born at about the same rate.

LEGAL Notes

"Grace" Period—Recently the NLRB eliminated a lot of confusion about the T-H Act's 30-day "grace" period for union security clauses by determining that the 30 days did not apply to employees who were already members of the union. The Act said security clauses, to be legal, can "require" membership only on or after the 30th day following the beginning of employment or the signing of the contract, whichever is later.

Now the Board adds the logical second part of this rule: A maintenance-of-membership contract, which doesn't require anyone to become a member against his will, doesn't need any 30-day "escape" or "grace" period.

Court Review—The T-H Act gives parties 20 days to file objections with NLRB after a trial examiner issues his Intermediate Report. If you don't object, the examiner's findings and recommendations are adopted "automatically."

Now, it appears that courts will "automatically enforce" orders of NLRB. The objecting party can't, for example, go to the court and say he had a fair hearing, or, "The examiner's report is not supported by evidence." To raise these objections is before NLRB, during the 30 days allowed by the Act. The court will let such arguments unless you produce a good reason for failing to object when you had a chance to do so—(NLRB vs. Auburn Curtain Co.).

Dept. Store Organizing—The NLRB has previously ruled that departments store union solicitation in selling areas but not in non-selling areas. Now, the Board has ordered that the parts of a store to which the non-solicitation rule may be applied.

Contest Unsolicited Solicitations—The Board says, include aisles, corridors, stairways, escalators, and elevators. But bars unsolicited solicitation, "automatically," according to NLRB, if they apply also to other public areas such as rest rooms, waiting rooms, and restaurants. In these areas, the Board rules, management may regulate union activity but not prohibit it.

As for non-public areas, NLRB lays down these rules: Union organizers who are also employees must be allowed to solicit objects who are not on duty in all such areas. But outside organizers may be denied access to such places as stockrooms, workrooms, cloak rooms, locker rooms, and the employee library. Under the particular facts in this case, the Board found that the company's rule barring union organizers from entering these areas constituted an unreasonable impediment to the organizers' ability to organize employees and constituted a violation of the Labor Management Relations Act (Taft-Hartley).
WOMEN TAKE JOBS TO MAKE A LIVING

Washington—That the working women who help produce goods in our factories and serve the public in many capacities are also carrying financial responsibilities of major importance to their family and community life, is indicated by the findings of a study made by the Women's Bureau of the U. S. Department of Labor.

An analysis of replies from 8,300 women workers in 160 trade union locals indicates that most women who take jobs outside their homes do so for the same reason that men seek employment—to make a living.

This was the answer given by 80 out of every 100 of the union women when asked to give their chief reason for working, and practically all (98 per cent) of those without husbands were women in families of four or more.

Inquiries into how they used their earnings brought out the fact that more than half of these working women must spend all of every dollar of their wages to meet living expenses. Three out of four of those reporting said that daily living took 75 or more of the earnings they earned.

Practically all (98 per cent) of those earnings brought out the fact that more than half of these working women must spend all of every dollar of their wages to meet living expenses. Three out of four of those reporting said that daily living took 75 or more of the earnings they earned.

A detailed report of this study is soon to be published in bulletin form.

INDEX CHANGE

Washington—The U. S. Department of Labor has announced that sometime early in 1952 it will revise its Consumer Price Index (cost of living index). At that time it will discontinue publication of both the "old" index (unadjusted) and the "adjusted" index (based on an interim revision of the "old" index). However, both the "old" and the "adjusted" index will continue to be published through the end of 1952.

The Labor Department has made this announcement long in advance in order to give union officials ample time to plan a shift over to the new index.

The change-over will be of particular interest to workers with escalator clauses in their collective bargaining agreements.

Washington—The Cosshall Laundry has signed Oakland Local 29's agreement with the Des Moines Produce Office and clerical employees having recently been organized by that union.

Business Representative Anne Sweet's annual report to her Local Office in Los Angeles for 1951 indicates an increase during the year of eight in the number of industry contracts which now total 45, an increase of 14 in the number of office agreements for a total of 111, and over $7,500 recovered in cases of underpayment. EXPAL expects to start negotiations soon with the City of Hope Sanatorium for its office and clerical employees.

Connecticut—Newly chartered Local 287 in New Haven is awaiting an NLRB decision on the representation petition it filed on behalf of the office and clerical employees at Wilson H. Lee Printing Co., a format firm, which has been held up for the last month.

Florida—Tampa Local 46 now represents the approximately 75 office and clerical employees of Tamiami Trail Tours in that city as a result of winning an NLRB representation election by an over 85 per cent favorable vote. This local has also secured a substantial sign-up among the office and clerical employees of the Central Truck Lines.

Idaho—A substantial number of the approximately 75 office and clerical employees of Garrett Freight LINES, Inc. have designated an NLRB member as their bargaining representative of the office and clerical employees of a second branch of the RCA Service Co., Inc. in that city.

Louisiana—Employees of The Fair, Inc. have, in an NLRB election, chosen Lake Charles Local 287 as their bargaining representative.

Michigan—In a recent NLRB election, the office and clerical employees of a second branch of RCA Service Co., Inc. in Detroit have chosen Local 10 as their bargaining representative.

The office and clerical employees of the Kropp Forge Ordnance Company in Philadelphia have chosen the favorable majority have chosen Detroit Local 42 as their bargaining representative in an NLRB election.

Negotiations by Detroit Local 42 with the Midland Steel Company and approval by the Wage Stabilization Board have resulted in an increase for that firm's office and clerical employees by 10 cents per hour in the base rate, a five-year contract with a 4 cents per hour improvement factor, a cost of living escalator clause presently providing 11 cents per hour, additional week's vacation after fifteen years, life insurance coverage increased from $2,500 to $3,000, sick and accident benefits increased from $28 to $52 weekly, the company has assumed larger portion of insurance cost and a pension program.

New York—In an NLRB election a second group of salaried employees of The Delaval Separator Company in Poughkeepsie have selected Local 112 of that city as their bargaining representative.

Pennsylvania—An NLRB election has resulted in the selection of Pittsburgh Local 55 as the bargaining representative of the office and clerical employees of Motor Express, Inc.

Tennessee—A unit of salaried employees of the Florence Stone Company at Lewisburg, in an NLRB election have chosen the OEU as their bargaining representative.

Wisconsin—Milwaukee Local 9 has filed an NLRB representation petition on behalf of the last major group of unorganized, salaried employees at the Milwaukee Works of the International Harvester Company.

Union Label Show
In Boston May 17-25

Washington—The AFL Union Industries Show, graphic example of an economic union policy, will open its 1952 exposition at the Mechanics Building in Boston, May 17, continuing for 8 days.

Patience a Virtue?

Washington—Here's proof that speed isn't a virtue of the NLRB in settling cases before it.

The longest case in the history of the Board required 131 years of litigation before the company—a cement firm—finally gave up and paid 184,906 in back pay to 108 members of the union involved.

This is just another reason why it is essential that this governmental agency charged with the responsibility of administering the U. S. Labor Relations Law should receive sufficient appropriations from Congress so as to allow it to do a good job.

HOSPITAL PLAN UNDER S. S. URGED

Washington Congress will be asked to authorize the federal hospital care for retired people.

The Federal Security Agency (FSA) has a plan that would give up to 60 days of hospital care a year to persons over 65 who are entitled to social security payments.

This program which would cost $200 million in its first year, would be financed by a trust fund.

If Congress approved such a plan, it probably would be operated through such voluntary hospital care plans as the Blue Cross.

No Substitute

This proposed hospitalization plan is not being put forward as a substitute for national health insurance.

Rather, it is an important problem for medical attention.

Old people can't get hospital insurance through the voluntary plans, and this program would help people who get hospitalization policies when they are younger over-burden the present systems when they're over 65.

Opposed by AMA

The American Medical Association (AMA) opposes the new hospital plan for old folks whom it was first announced last June.

If legislation for the plan is proposed again later this year, the AMA is expected to carry on a big campaign against the proposal.

Scores Victory In Union Shop Fight
(Continued from page 1)

days. The applicants would not have to be union members to get work, but would be required to join the union within 60 days after they were hired.

The unanimous decision of the Emergency Board represented virtually a victory for the nonoperating unions in their long fight for union security.

Legislation Passed

Thirteen months ago the unions succeeded in obtaining the passage of legislation by Congress permitting the union shop on railroads. Since then, some of the organizations succeeded in negotiating union shop contracts with some carriers through collective bargaining but the adamant refusal of others persisted throughout the dispute which caused President Truman to name the Emergency Board.

Among the findings of the Presidential Board were:

1. The union shop is not contrary to good policy.
2. There can be given firm assurances that any remaining traces of racial discrimination in union shop will be wiped out at forthcoming conventions, so that minority rights will be fully safeguarded under the present situation.
3. The union shop has been substantially accepted by American railroads and the trend is still in that direction.