

THE OFFICE WORKER

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

No. 105

SEPTEMBER, 1953



Affiliation With OEIU Voted by 1000 Office Workers in New York

Smash Company's Unfair Practice

Washington, D. C.—The National Labor Relations Board, by unanimous decision, upheld the determination of its trial examiner that the Allis-Chalmers Manufacturing Company could not lawfully demand during the course of negotiations that the union incorporate into its ultimate contract clauses that would (1) insist that the voting be held on company premises requiring ratification by a majority of all employees in the unit whether or not such employees were members of the union, (2) requiring that any strike ballot taken by the union be held on company premises during working hours at company expense, and further insisting that any strike vote be ratified by a majority of the employees in the unit whether or not these employees were members of the union, and (3) insisting that elections of union representatives be conducted by secret ballot on company time and premises and subject to other company-imposed terms and conditions.

The case was based upon a complaint issued April 24, 1952, by the general counsel of the Board, pursuant to charges filed by Local 19 at Toledo, Ohio, against the Allis-Chalmers Manufacturing Company, for refusal to bargain.

The National Labor Relations Board, in handing down this unan-

(Continued on page 4)

New York City.—One thousand members of Federal Union No. 20940, known as the American Federation of Office Employes, voted recently to affiliate with the Office Employes International Union and Local 153.

This group had been in existence since 1937 and originally refused to affiliate with the OEIU after its inception in 1945. Subsequently, Local 153 was forced to oppose this union in the field of organization.

Recent discussions between representatives of Local 20940; William Collins, Regional Director of the American Federation of Labor; Walter Gorray, Acting Business Manager of Local 153, and International President Howard Coughlin led to the solution of many existing problems. As a result it was agreed that a special meeting of the membership of Local 20940 would be held for the purpose of presenting a resolution to the union calling for affiliation with Local 153. The membership voted unanimously for affiliation.

This is the culmination of a longstanding disagreement between the OEIU and Local 20940. Upon being advised of the union's decision to affiliate, OEIU President Coughlin stated: "We hail the entrance of these office employe trade unionists into the ranks of our rapidly growing International Union. We welcome their aid in terms of numbers and strength to bring about a firmer front in our common fight to bring better wages and working conditions to unorganized clerical employees."

Local 153, in extending its helping hand to these new members, guarantees the support of organized resources in establishing better collective bargaining contracts. The International Union stands firmly behind these guarantees.

INTERNATIONAL OFFICERS SCHEDULE IMPORTANT ORGANIZING CONFERENCES

Washington, D. C.—In accordance with a plan of organization which has consumed most of the time of International President Howard Coughlin, Secretary-Treasurer J. Howard Hicks and Director of Organization H. B. Douglas, a series of organizational conferences will be held in the near future.

The first of these conferences will take place at Dallas, Tex., on September 13. The second is scheduled for Philadelphia on October 4.

These conferences will call for financial participation by the local unions involved in these areas, in addition to greater financial outlay by the International Union, for purposes of trebling the number of organizers presently in the field. They will be designed to bring about concentration of organization

within such areas rather than the unlimited territorial scope which prevailed heretofore. They will further involve the active participation of the local unions concerned within these conferences and accent the participation of all local unions in organizational work.

Let's all resolve in '53 to give our dollar to LLPE.

Hoist OEIU Banner At Ordnance Plant

Camden, Ark.—Office and clerical employees at the National Fireworks Ordnance Corporation plant voted in favor of the OEIU in an election conducted by the National Labor Relations Board. Employees of the company will become members of newly chartered OEIU Local 312. Organizer Frank E. Morton announced the results of the ballot.

The initial organizing campaign was conducted under the direction of Morton who was ably assisted by AFL Organizer Phil Wells. AFL Regional Director Lester Graham made several trips to Camden from his headquarters in Fort Worth to assist in the campaign. Morton gave high praise to local AFL leaders, all of whom supported the organizing activity, singling out particularly representatives of the International Association of Machinists. The heavy vote in favor of the OEIU by NFOC employees is but one of a series of successful NLRB elections recently won in the Southwest and is expected to be followed by others in the near future.

Motor Freight Workers Choose OEIU in Poll

Albuquerque, N. Mex.—By an 11 to 1 vote, office employes of Navajo Freight Lines, a motor freight carrier, selected Local 251 as their collective bargaining representative in a recent National Labor Relations Board poll, Kenneth C. Shinn, president of the local union reported.

Negotiations presently underway are expected to bring employes of the company the benefits of OEIU membership enjoyed by motor freight line employes in numerous places throughout the country.

The local union will be assisted in negotiations by Organizer Frank E. Morton.



TLC Meet Urges Pension Increase

Ottawa.—President Percy R. Bengough, of the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada, told the assembled delegates at their 68th annual convention of the growth of trade unionism in Canada since the 1870's and paid tribute to the pioneers who had helped build the congress to its present membership, which he reported as more than 550,000.

"The trade union movement still has a very important role to play in the life of the workers of Canada," said Bengough as he expressed keen disappointment with the Canadian government's failure to broaden the application of unemployment insurance to cover loss of income due to unemployment caused by illness.

Dealing with old age pensions, Bengough said that the eligible age should be reduced and the monthly payments increased. He paid tribute to the government for its action in enacting the Fair Employment Practices Act which he said is "one of the greatest advances we have ever made in our social laws and marks up a first for Canada, since no other nation in the world has such a law on a national basis."

Noting that the Congress had been campaigning for many years for a national health insurance plan, he said that labor would continue its efforts in this direction.

Take Your Choice

Washington, D. C.—News magazines offer a choice of predictions to business men: "U. S. News and World Report" swears the economic future looks black; "Time" says that prospects never looked better; "Newsweek" is pessimistic about the chances of getting back to good old 1932.

Average Income \$1,639 in 1952

Washington, D. C.—The "average" American had an income of \$1,639 last year, the Department of Commerce reported. Average earnings ranged from \$2,260 in Delaware to \$818 in Mississippi.

The department's figures included wages, salaries, dividends, interest, rent, social insurance benefits and relief.

For the nation, income payments increase 5 per cent. Gains were reported in all but four states—Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wyoming.

Total income amounted to \$255 billion last year compared with \$243 billion in 1951.

What 'Right to Work'?

By GEORGE M. RHODES
Congressman from Pennsylvania

As a worker, I know what it was like in an industrial community before there was a Wagner Act. I have lived and I have worked under "Taft-Hartley." You need not read these two laws to feel the difference between them.

The evil intent of the Taft-Hartley Act has not been felt, except in a minor way, largely because there has been a high level of employment since the law was passed.

But if those who seek curtailment, or what they believe is "a necessary amount of unemployment," are successful in their endeavor, many unions could be destroyed. Growing discontent and disunity would follow as a result. It would be exactly what the Communists are looking for and is something that we should now seek to prevent.

Statements by employers which call for a float of unemployment contradict all the high-sounding remarks by these people when they express interest in "the right to work."

The enthusiasm for this right does not exist in most quarters when a worker grows too old to produce or when he becomes partially disabled.

Employer interest in the right to work is most prevalent when an effort is made to organize a union. A good example of this can be seen in the case of an old firm whose owners grew wealthy in my home city of Reading—the Vanity Fair Company, an underwear concern.

Several years ago the firm moved its plants to a Southern city on one week's notice to the employees. Many of them had given a lifetime of loyal service to the company.

There was no consideration at all about the rights of these people. They had family obligations. Many of them had never worked anywhere except in the Vanity Fair mill.

In closing down so abruptly there was an utter disregard for community welfare or for the right to work, which was such a convenient argument when used to defeat the efforts of workers who tried to organize and win a voice about conditions under which they labored.

In my time I have seen the march from shanty towns and breadlines to full employment and a high level of prosperity and security. These changes were not made without cause or without effort.

We have good cause now for a change from the Taft-Hartley Act to a more just labor-management law.

SALES TAX PUSHED

Washington, D. C.—The National Association of Manufacturers, an organization of prosperous gentlemen dedicated to improving one another's financial welfare, is opening its drive for a national tax in earnest.

NAM President Charles R. Sligh, Jr., has urged the House Ways and Means Committee to bring out a bill calling for a sales tax of 4½ to 5 per cent. Sligh recommends that the tax be imposed on all items except food.

The NAM has been beating the drums for a sales tax for many years. It is the natural way to shave the tax load from the big fellow to the little fellow. Sales taxes always hit the smaller-income groups hardest.

But there is cause for real worry over the NAM's latest drive, because there are signs that the Eisenhower Administration will endorse the sales tax proposal. For example, Secretary of the Treasury George M. Humphrey has indicated he is "considering" a sales tax as part of the tax revision program.

Cuts are expected in income and corporate taxes during the next session of Congress. Monied interests which backed the Republicans expect these cuts, and they must be satisfied.

With Congressional elections coming up next November, Congress might be reluctant to pass a sales tax at the coming session. However, if the Republicans again win control of Congress, you can count on a sales tax being seriously considered after the election to offset losses of revenue which will be incurred in cutting income and corporate taxes.

Discussing the events of the day after dinner, Gladys remarked to her husband, "Charlie, some day we'll be rich." Reaching over and taking her hand, Charlie replied "Darling, we are rich! Some day we'll have money."

THE OFFICE WORKER

Official organ of
OFFICE EMPLOYEES
INTERNATIONAL UNION



HOWARD COUGHLIN, President
J. HOWARD HICKS, Sec.-Treas.
625 Bond Building
Washington 5, D. C.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY
Entered in the Post Office at Washington, D. C., as second-class mail matter.



Reproduction by the Labor Press of any or all material herein contained is not only permitted, but wholly desirable in the interest of workers' education.

Subscription Price \$1 a Year.

President to Address Handicapped Meet

Washington, D. C.—President Eisenhower will address the regular fall meeting of the Committee on National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week, September 23 at the Labor Department auditorium in Washington, D. C.

The meeting will open September 22. Vice Admiral Ross McIntire, committee chairman, will preside.

The President's trophy to the handicapped person of the year will be presented following Eisenhower's address.

2,000 Hotel Workers Granted Wage Hikes

New York City.—Two thousand members of Local 153 employed in the hotel industry were granted a wage increase of \$3 per week retroactive to June 1, 1953, in accordance with industry-wide negotiations recently concluded. Thirty-one thousand other workers represented by nine craft unions received increases which, for the most part, were scaled lower than the increase granted to OEIU members. Many factors, including a large number of employees who receive tips, brought about the resultant scaled increase.

Local 153 was represented in these negotiations by International President Howard Coughlin, prior to his recently assuming the office of the presidency.

The New York Hotel Trades Council, of which Local 153 is an affiliate, is typical of what can be accomplished through the close co-operation and joint efforts of varied crafts through their respective local unions. This Council has not only brought about a scale of wages which is the highest in the hotel industry throughout the United States, but has accomplished the formation of a health and welfare fund, a pension plan and one of the finest medical centers in the country for its 35,000 members.

Credit Bureau Workers Fight Sub-Normal Pay

Toledo, Ohio.—Employes of the Credit Bureau of Toledo have almost unanimously indicated a desire to be represented by Local 19 in dealings with their employer, according to John C. Taylor, business representative of the local union. Despite this strong showing by Local 19, credit bureau management has refused to grant recognition and the local union is indicating other steps will be taken to fortify its position in this connection.

In reporting the unionization of this group, Taylor stated that employes were "tired of being pushed around" and were "smarting under a sub-normal salary schedule."

Management in refusing to recognize Local 19 gave as its reason that the employes were already represented by a union, apparently referring to the now defunct United Office and Professional Workers of America which was ousted from the CIO some years ago because of communistic leadership, and which at one time had represented the group.

Salary Increase Won

Warren, Pa.—Members of Local 186 employed by Struthers Wells Corporation were benefited substantially in renewal of the agreement between their union and the company. Salary increases ranging from five to seven cents per

OEIU Member in Fitting Role



Seattle.—Although content with her role as an OEIU member and Pacific Coast Junior Amateur Skating Champion, Shirley Givin, left, was recently selected as Seattle Union Label Queen and subsequently as Queen of the Seafair in competition with 49 other local beauties. The 19-year-old beauty, an entry of the Seattle Union Card and Label Council in the Seafair contest, easily walked off with top honors and will represent this Northwest metropolis at all national functions until the 1954 Seafair. Iris Adams, right, 1952 queen, welcomes Shirley to her new but well-merited role.

Department Store Strike is Averted

Pittsburgh, Pa.—Strike action was averted by a narrow margin when members of Local 33 voted recently to accept a \$2 weekly salary increase retroactive to July 1 from Spear & Company store.

Members of the union employed by the company expressed themselves as unhappy over the attitude of company management toward an increase and improvement in working conditions in the face of excessive profits earned by the company during recent years.

Office employes of Exhibitors Service Company recently voted 5 to 2 for representation by Local 33. Business Representative Lawrence Schrenk is presently in negotiations on the initial agreement.

hour, together with a 5 per cent increase in the maximum of all rate ranges and improvement in the existing hospital plan, were all achieved.

OEIU Vice President George P. Firth spearheaded the negotiations, assisted by a local committee headed by President Louis J. Enevoldson of the local union.

Avrutin Reelected

Binghamton, N. Y.—Harry Avrutin, an active member of Local 153, New York City, was reelected to serve his fourth term as secretary-treasurer of the Union Label Trades Department of the state of New York at the department's 26th annual convention. James Ruehl, representative of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, was reelected for his sixth term as president.

ANTI-PICKETING LAW TO BE FOUGHT

Portland, Oreg.—Oregon's new anti-picketing law adopted by the 1953 session of the State Legislature will soon be tested in the courts.

Oregon labor unions have closed ranks for the fight to prove the union-busting law unconstitutional.

"Unquestionably, it will be a long fight and an expensive one," declared James T. Marr, executive secretary of the State Federation of Labor. "But Oregon unions are already proving their readiness to fight as one team against this law which threatens the life of every union in the state."

Lanston Workers Win New Pact

Philadelphia, Pa.—Recent renewal of the agreement of long standing between Local 14 and the Lanston Monotype Machine Company resulted in salary increases of 10 cents per hour for all members of the union employed by the company, Local President Edward P. Springman announced. In addition, holidays falling on Saturdays are to be observed on the preceding Friday, but if work is performed on such day, it is to be paid for at the established holiday rate.

The agreement also provides for a joint review of job classifications to be engaged in by the union and representatives of the company. Business Manager Joseph A. Phillips, International Association of Machinists, District Lodge 1, actively supported the local union in its negotiations and in events leading to them, according to Springman.

Renewal of the agreement followed swiftly on the heels of an abortive attempt to have Local 14 decertified as the collective bargaining representative of the employes of the company. Members of the union stood steadfast in support of Local 14 during the decertification attempt and gave strong evidence not only of their loyalty but of the appreciation which they have for benefits won for them through union membership during past years.

Springman, who is an OEIU Vice President, also announced renewal of the agreement between Local 14 and the International Color Printing Company which resulted in salary increases of up to \$4.85 per week and three weeks' vacation with pay after one year of employment.

Recent renewal of the pact between Local 14 and the American Ice Company resulted in salary increases of \$2 per week and other benefits for members of the local union employed by the company.

Tool Workers Gain Additional Increase

Utica, N. Y.—Negotiations between Local 281 and the Chicago Pneumatic Tool Company resulted in a pay increase of seven cents per hour for all members of the local union employed by the company. This increase was negotiated during the term of an existing agreement in conformity with a wage reopening provision in the pact.

This salary increase, together with other salary increases and benefits won recently for the newly unionized employes of the company, is ample proof of the effectiveness of OEIU membership.

Vice President Nicholas Juliano of the International Union assisted the local union in the negotiations.

Electric Auto-Lite Agreement Renewed

Toledo, Ohio.—OEIU members of Local 55 employed by the Electric Auto-Lite Company recently received a 10-cent per hour increase in base pay, according to Vice President John H. Shea of the local union. This increase in base pay is in addition to further increases amounting to six cents per hour resulting from a supplemental cost-of-living escalator agreement.

Insurance and pension benefits were also increased under the revised agreement. In addition, the union secured the automatic check-off of union dues which further implements earlier provisions of the contract providing OEIU membership for all employees.

C-W Electronics Pact Completed After Delay

Paterson, N. J.—The membership of Local 279 employed at the electronics division of the Curtiss-Wright Corporation at nearby Carlstadt, N. J., recently voted to ratify the contract which was presented to them by President Francis O'Neill and Secretary-Treasurer George Tierney of the local union and Ben Cohan, acting on behalf of the International Union.

This contract was the culmination of approximately six months of negotiations, during which time a three-week strike was engaged in against the company.

In a recent meeting, after the conclusion of the strike, the company suddenly withdrew its demands for company prerogative in the case of layoffs and promotion without regard to seniority, and agreed to protective clauses guaranteeing the seniority rights of the employees involved in these cases. The company further agreed to a six-cent per hour increase retroactive for a period of ten weeks. In addition, they agreed to cover OEIU members at Carlstadt with an existing pension plan which had not previously been a part of office and clerical employment conditions. This pact is of a two-year duration but provides for wage reopening after one year.

This group of 150 office workers deserves much credit for their determination to bring the company to the point of recognizing their rights insofar as job security is concerned.

The International Union devoted much time and effort to this situation. It had been represented on numerous occasions by Brothers Sam Nealer; David Keefe; L. G. Nygren; Scott Walters, who led the hard-fought three-week strike; and Cohan, who participated in the concluding negotiation sessions.

Let's all resolve in '53 to give our dollar to LLPE.

Atomic Workers Prefer OEIU

Portsmouth, Ohio.—The smashing 10 to 1 vote in favor of OEIU representation recently recorded by employees of Peter Kiewit Sons' Company, prime contractor on the Pike County Atomic Energy project, has resulted in what appears to be a swift windup in complete unionization of the project.

Office employees of the Grinnell Company, plumbing subcontractor on the project, have climbed on the OEIU bandwagon and are expected to formally indicate their union preference in an NLRB election

soon. In addition, similar employees of Reynolds-Newberry Joint Venture, the electric subcontractor, continued to evidence strong interest and are expected to participate in an NLRB poll soon.

OEIU Vice President George P. Firth is actively assisted in local organizing activity by President Glenn D. Dearing and Secretary-Treasurer Mary E. Teager of Local 308 and the organizing committee of the local union.

Pay Boosted By Chase Renewal

Cleveland, Ohio.—Chase Brass & Copper Company office employees represented by Local 17 recently gained salary increases ranging from 7 to 15 cents per hour retroactive to mid-August as a result of negotiations between their local union and company management. OEIU Vice President John T. Finnerty headed the negotiating team.

Finnerty, who is president of Local 17, reported that employees of the company will enjoy a more liberalized vacation plan, plus increased welfare benefits. He expressed the opinion that the renewed agreement "is the best presently in force in the city of Cleveland."

Unfair Practice

(Continued from page 1)

imous decision upholding the trial examiner, issued a cease and desist order restraining the company from making proposals interfering with the functioning of our local union. This cease and desist order will, insofar as these unfair labor practices are concerned, carry with it an order to bargain and must be published on the premises of the company for a period of 60 days.

Herbert S. Thatcher, counsel for our International Union, represented the local union and our International Union at these proceedings.

This decision is of particular importance to all local unions because it points out the National Labor Relations Board's refusal to allow a company to insist on an open shop and at the same time provide that non-union members can participate in decisions involving our local unions. In other words "free riders" cannot participate in collective bargaining.

Local 19, which was represented in the negotiations and NLRB hearings by Business Representative John C. Taylor and the law firm of Smoot and Riemer, was given high commendation by OEIU officers for bringing about a satisfactory decision in this important case.

Big Gain Won In Freight Agreement

Oakland, Calif.—Renewal of the agreement between Local 29 and Consolidated Freightways, motor freight line, resulted in a \$13 monthly salary increase retroactive to May 1.

Also won were two additional days' vacation each year for a total of 12 work days' vacation per year, an increase in health plan benefits and an agreement to inaugurate a job evaluation program within six months.

Business Representative Kinnick, who is also an OEIU vice president, reported that the local union recently concluded agreements with the men's retail clothing industry, resulting in increases of \$6.50 per month, also retroactive to May 1; an increase of \$11.75 monthly for members of the local union employed in the milk industry, retroactive to June 1, and a graduated vacation plan allowing 15 days' paid vacation for union members with nine years' or more employment in the industry; and similar improvements in salaries and working conditions for members of the local union employed in miscellaneous industries.

A picnic on September 20 in Tilden Regional Park, Berkeley, to which members of neighboring OEIU local unions have been invited, is but one of several highlights of current activities being engaged in by the local union. The picnic arrangements are under the direction of Chairman Aileen Bargar of the local's entertainment committee.

Utility Contract

East St. Louis, Ill.—Renewal of the agreement between Local 130 and the American Water Company which at first appeared stymied by the adamant attitude of management finally resulted in a 10-cent per hour increase for all members of the union employed by the company.

Adjustments in duties in some job classifications beneficial to members of the union was also achieved during negotiations. OEIU Organizer Paul H. Tonguette assisted local officers.

Reach Agreement At Savannah

Aiken, S. C.—OEIU Vice President J. O. Bloodworth recently announced conclusion of negotiations on the initial agreement between Local 294 and the Miller Electric Company, an electrical subcontractor on the Savannah River atomic energy project.

Employees of the company are enthusiastic over gains won in their first agreement and which among other benefits included a \$2 weekly salary increase retroactive to mid-July, two additional paid holidays for a total of seven per year, 12 days' paid sick leave per year, six days' per year with pay for the handling of personal matters and two weeks' vacation with pay each year.

Other features of the agreement include automatic progression at three-month intervals during the first year of employment, following which employees reach the maximum of their salary rate range and time and one-half for all holidays worked in addition to the regular holiday pay. Another provision of the contract guarantees union membership for all employees of the company without exception.

Members of the local union covered by the agreement were loud in their praise of Bloodworth and his accomplishments in negotiating this agreement, particularly in view of the strong front presented by management during negotiations and which included ace negotiators of the duPont & Co., Inc., prime contractor on the project.

Completion of the agreement was reached despite the use of many stalling tactics employed by the Miller Electric and duPont companies during the initial organizing campaign and subsequent proceedings involving the National Labor Relations Board.

OIL PACT RENEWED

Toledo, Ohio.—Members of Local 19 employed in the local sales division office of the Gulf Refining Company received a 4 per cent salary increase retroactive to July 1, together with inclusion in the renewed agreement of a provision for the posting of vacancies or new job openings and a more equitable and effective method of granting merit increases.

OEIU Vote Expected

Stuttgart, Ark.—Office employees of Fairbanks, Morse & Company are expected to cast a heavy vote for OEIU representation in a poll soon to be conducted by the National Labor Relations Board.

Employees of the company recently gave strong indication of their desire for union affiliation and have responded wholeheartedly to the organizing campaign headed by OEIU Organizer Frank E. Morton.