President Meany Joins Blue Cross Campaign

President George Meany of the AFL-CIO is lending his personal prestige and that of his office in the campaign of the Office of Blue Cross, seeking the insurance of all the citizens of the United States and Canada.

President Meany forwarded the following letter to Robert T. Evans, Chairman of the Blue Cross Commission, in which he expresses the need for a change in attitude on the part of Blue Cross toward trade union representation for their employees:

"Mr. Robert T. Evans, Chairman of the Blue Cross Commission, 425 North Michigan Street Chicago 11, Illinois.

Dear Mr. Evans:

This is in reply to your letter of June 6, 1955, with a copy of the 1955 annual report of Blue Cross. I appreciate very much your cooperation in this matter.

Your Commission, and its members, organizations, are to be congratulated upon the objectives they profess and upon the substantial contributions they have made providing a mechanism for the prepayment of hospital care. Millions of AFL-CIO members and their families have benefited from the use of this mechanism under health and welfare plans established through collective bargaining.

Because so many of our members have a direct stake in Blue Cross and because of our general agreement with its aims, we are particularly concerned about any serious blot on the otherwise favorable record of your organization. I refer to the degenerate reputation that certain of your affiliated organizations have earned, as employers, through their resistance to the institution of collective bargaining with their employees.

The most recent instance that has come to my attention occurred in Michigan where the plan director engaged in an active campaign of interference with the exercise by employees of their right to trade union representation, despite the fact that the right to constitute the majority of the members of the plan is predicated upon, in large part, the product of collective bargaining negotiations between unions and employers in the state of Texas. I note that this individual serves as a member of the national Blue Cross Commission.

"Blue Cross has prospered from the fruits of collective bargaining. Had it not been for the successful efforts of trade unions to establish health insurance plans for their members, the record of progress set forth in your 1955 report would have been far less impressive than it is. For that reason, as well as many others, your member plans ought to welcome, rather than resist, the organization of their employees into trade unions of their own choosing.

"The persistence of a negative attitude toward trade union representation for their employees on the part of your member plans is an embarrassment to those in the labor movement who believe that, from the health service standpoint, the Blue Cross approach is preferable to other alternatives but who do not wish to associate themselves or their members with anti-union organizations. The failure of the Blue Cross Commission to rectify the unlightened employment practices and attitudes of member plans is widely interpreted as an indication of agreement with those practices and attitudes, and endangers the future relations of labor and Blue Cross throughout the country. I sincerely hope that some means can be found to remedy this unfortunate situation." 

Mr. Meany's strong letter followed our announcement that the AFL-CIO, through its Director of Organization John Livingston, is actively assisting those in the labor movement who believe that, from the health service standpoint, the Blue Cross approach is preferable to other alternatives but who do not wish to associate themselves or their members with anti-union organizations. The failure of the Blue Cross Commission to rectify the unlightened employment practices and attitudes of member plans is widely interpreted as an indication of agreement with those practices and attitudes, and endangers the future relations of labor and Blue Cross throughout the country. I sincerely hope that some means can be found to remedy this unfortunate situation."
Activities of Conferences and Local Unions

Northeastern Organizational Conference Meeting

Delegates in attendance at the Northeastern Organizational Conference of the AFL-CIO, N. Y. on September 22 at the Hotel Langham, unanimously agreed that an agreement should be provided in such a way of informative material to each and every delegate.

After reports by the delegates, including those of Representative William and Manning and International President Conigliaro, a well occasioned union was held regarding the subject of job evaluation. This was attended by the NLRB in each instance.

The meeting was addressed by Walter Winkworth, Secretary of the Eastern Central Labor Union.

Charles Kaiser of the AFL-CIO staff, and Justin Genoche of the International Association of Machinists. At the banquet held after the conclusion of the meeting, Peter Vincent, Assistant Representative of the Iron Workers in the Northeast area, made the principal address.

It was noteworthy that all representatives of other organizations present stressed cooperation.

Rutherford Office Employees

Vote for OEU

On November 7, the employees of the Rutherford Office Company of New Jersey, R. U. Voted elected, have a complete bargaining representation by a better than two to one majority, despite the fact that the company gave all employees a five dollar increase in the first handbill and notice of union organizing activity.

The company, through its attorney, found several motions for dismissal of the petition for various reasons, but were turned down by the NLRB in each instance.

This organizational drive was led by North Central Organizational Congress Gene Devon, who reported to the staff, and the personnel of the OEU.

and every delegate.

Following an intensive review of the company, President Margaret Rich reports that the contract was increased to cover a better and more complete arbitration provision.

Mussera Local Avoids Strike

Northeastern Organizational Conference Coordinator Fred Mussera announced the signing of a new five-year agreement between Local 138 in Montclair, N. Y., and the Aluminum Corp. of America (ALCOA).

Registration of this agreement by the membership merits a strike, which had been authorized by an unprecedented unanimous membership vote.

The agreement calls for an increase of 40 cents per hour located as follows: 16 cents per hour for the first year, 39 cents for the second year, and 45 cents for the third year. Associate workers will receive $5.20 for the first year, $5.60 for the second year, and $5.80 for the third year. Additional wages will be distributed on the basis of a regular 40-hour work week for 25 to 30 years service up to 15 years service and 3 years versus after five years, agreed upon over a three-year increase and 2 weeks vacation.

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Man Union Label Exhibit at Baltimore

Bleach and dryer workmen of Local 12, American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations, presented their first union label exhibit last week. The exhibits were held at the Baltimore Sun newspaper building, a building that has been a landmark of the Baltimore newsprint industry for many years. The exhibit included union labels from various companies, including the Baltimore Sun, and highlighted the importance of union labels in promoting fair labor practices. The exhibit was a joint effort of the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations and the United Auto Workers union, and it aimed to raise awareness about the benefits of union labels and the organizations that support them.

Canadian Corner

BY LLOYD CHAPMAN

President, Canadian Organizational Conference

Gainesville, P. O. — President Lloyd Chapman of the Canadian Organizational Conference urged delegates to elected and appointed officials of the AFL-CIO to support the settlement of the jurisdictional problems of the Canadian Organizational Conference. The conference was held in November and December, and it was the first time that representatives of the Canadian Organizational Conference had met since the early 1930s. President Chapman emphasized the importance of resolving jurisdictional disputes in order to maintain the integrity and effectiveness of the Canadian Organizational Conference. He urged delegates to support the efforts of the conference to achieve a peaceful and equitable settlement of jurisdictional issues. The conference was attended by representatives from various provinces, including Ontario, Quebec, and British Columbia.

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Here's a tip for a sound investment

Here's the new, four-pocket slide leaflet which explains the reasons from union members should voluntarily contribute money to the United Commercial Bank of Education (UCBE). The leaflet is printed in two colors. Please order now with UCBE, 3216 Fifth Ave., Stop 8516, W. Washington, D. C.
Contract With American Bridge Has Improvements

As a result of negotiations between Local 137, Elmina, N. Y., and the American Bridge Company, a subsidiary of U. S. Steel, several improvements were gained in the local's collective bargaining agreement:

A 15 cent wage increase to be spread out over three years as follows: 5.7 per cent this year, effective in August 3, 4.7 per cent in 1957 and 4.6 per cent the third year. Average weekly earnings over the 3-year period approximate $45.53, which is better than the steelworkers obtained. Agreement was also obtained on an immediate reclassification system to correct injustices, which will be administered by a six-man committee, three from the union and three from the company.

Standard biweekly salary rates for the lowest classifications, which include iron circles and machinists, office boys, etc., will now be $136.82 in 1956, $143.25 in 1957 and $149.86 in 1958, effective on July 1, 1957 and July 1, 1958. The previous rate for this group was $129.44. Rate circles, laborers, operating machines, etc., will now receive bi-weekly rates of $189.22 for 1956, $198.11 on July 1, 1957 and $207.22 on July 1, 1958. All groups are shown as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Rate on</th>
<th>Rate on</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1/1/56</td>
<td>7/1/56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$129.44</td>
<td>$136.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>172.42</td>
<td>176.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>166.50</td>
<td>171.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>159.02</td>
<td>169.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>198.03</td>
<td>209.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>218.53</td>
<td>231.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: These are bi-weekly rates.

Sick leave was agreed to as follows:

Maximum Sick Leave

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of Service</th>
<th>Rate on</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 to 6 weeks</td>
<td>6 months but less than one year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 weeks but less than six months</td>
<td>4 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 months but less than one year</td>
<td>4 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 year less than ten years</td>
<td>8 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 years less than fifteen years</td>
<td>12 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 years and over</td>
<td>26 weeks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other fringe benefits included:

- Insurance benefits based on earned income and ranging from $500 to $7,000, to be paid by the employer, which includes:
  - Comprehensive Blue Cross and Blue Shield coverage, one-half to be contributed by the employer, which includes:
    - Disability, medical, dental, and Blue Shield coverage.
    - One-day hospital coverage for $175.99.

We all want a Better America!

We all want to vote for liberal, forward-looking candidates in all the elections this fall.

And we all tax IF . . . We are registered. Are YOU?

Check with election officials at your city hall or county courthouse and see what the registration dates are.

Then BE SURE to register.