FOUR-DAY WORK WEEK SEEN A "MUST"

OEIU Officials Pictured With F-111

Job Opportunities, More Profits Would Materialize

In the past decade, our economy has been burdened with a rapidly rising and dangerous unemployment rate. The ratio of unemployed workers in the nation's labor force now stands at 4.8 per cent.

Reliable and well publicized statistics and forecasts demonstrate that the unemployment problem will grow more acute. Labor Secretary Willard Wirtz has stated that by 1967, the American economy will have to produce more than 16 million new jobs just to stand still.

Today in America, 5,000 jobs are abolished daily by automation and technological change. At the close of 1965, there were over 20,000 computers functioning in America with more than 6,000 on order. The myth that automation would produce enough new jobs to absorb the growing number of unemployed has all but evaporated. Experts such as IBM President Thomas Watson and John Snyder, President of U.S. Industries, have testified that computers are designed to displace workers.

The Office Employees International Union, in a pioneer attempt to alleviate the plight of unemployment, introduced the concept of the four-day 32-hour work week.

When the four-day week was statistically applied to the work force, a progressive and heartening picture developed. For example: The current white collar work force numbers approximately 31 million people. If their work week was reduced from 35 to 32 hours, it would create room for three million jobs. Office, clerical, professional and technical employees total 18,862,000. When the four-day week is an accomplished fact, over 1,768,000 new jobs will be created.

Automated Equipment

Employment in industries such as banking and insurance have been hit hard by the introduction of automated equipment.

The current number of clerical employees in banking is some 525,000 and a 1975 U.S. Labor Dept. survey predicts an increase of only 200,000 jobs. However, if the 32-hour work week was initiated, 50,000 new positions or 25% of the 1975 forecast would become an immediate reality.

Besides creating job opportunities in an industry where employee positions have been decimated by computer installations, management would now be in a position to operate on Saturday. Since the four-day week is based on a six-day schedule, with employees working Monday through Thursday, Tuesday through Friday, or Wednesday through Saturday, the employer can maintain a six-day business week without paying overtime.

Boon to Business

The six-day business week would provide a boon to both management and the customer. Presently, banks and numerous service industries are handicapped by the fact that their services can only be utilized in the few short minutes a customer can snatch from his lunch hour on a hectic work schedule.

Metropolitan banks would flourish on Saturday because of the expanded retail trade in the downtown areas. Suburban branches would enjoy an increased profit as a result of a six-day schedule and an additional day of leisure will provide ample time for workers to cater to their banking needs.

Nearly every service, commercial and manufacturing industry would benefit by a six-day operation, with a four-day work week schedule. New recreational industries would thrive and stagnant industries would be revitalized.
Southern Progress Report

November 1964

By J. O. Bloodworth
Intr. Vice President

The "Old South" is experiencing an industrial revolution and is shifting from a predominantly agricultural economy to a more equal industrial economic basis. Interest for organization among office and technical employees in the Southeast has increased in the past several months. This increased interest has been most noticeable in the vastly expanding chemical, transportation and pulp and paper industry of the region.

In addition to the employees of private industry becoming more interested in OEU organization one of our Local Unions has been successful in organizing and securing a contract for employees at one of the U.S. Naval Air Stations. Recognition was secured under the White House Executive Order 10988, which provides for organization of Federal Service employees. Current representation petitions being processed by the National Labor Relations Board should add many new members to the OEU.

For many years, the clerical employees of the extensive Tennessee Valley Authority System have benefited from collective bargaining agreements which have provided benefits such as increased pay and more efficient working conditions.

Crown-Zellerbach, Local 89 Sign 3-Year Pact

Bogalusa, La.—A 10% wage increase over three years headed the list of demands for clerical employees of the Bogalusa Container-Multi-Wall and Mill Division of the Crown-Zellerbach Corp.

Other improvements include an additional holiday plus a provision for holidays falling on Saturday to be observed on the prior Friday.

Also incorporated into the agreement was a modified union shop clause and provision for five weeks' vacation after thirty years of service.

Numerous other minor improvements were negotiated.

Local 3 Signs Stages

Negotiations were completed with States-Marine Isthmian Agency and San Francisco Local 3 on a two-year contract to be opened the second year for wages and fringe benefits, with a 6.7% per cent across-the-board increase, plus fringe benefits including $10.0 to $75 a month.

Saturday holidays are to be observed on Monday or Friday. Also included were an improved hiring clause, vacation clause, jury duty clause, a paid educational clause, and the Local 3 Pension Plan to be effective November 1, 1964 at $4 per week.

OEIU Delegates at Michigan State AFL-CIO Convention

From left to right: Ruth Sauter, Local 353, Grand Rapids; Bert Lambert, Local 283, Flint; Betty Wenner- ski, Local 42, Detroit; and Thelma O'Dell, Local 10, Detroit.

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WHITE COLLAR

November 1964

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White Collar

President

Room 610

265 West 14th St.

New York 11, N. Y.

Subscription Price $1 a Year

NLRB: Company May Pray

The National Labor Relations Board recently held that a company may ask individual workers whether they are for or against a Union. In effect, the Board also held in a recent case, that a company can circulate a questionnaire asking each worker if he wants the company to bargain with the Union.

In rejecting an unfair labor practice charge lodged by the Union involved, the NLRB stated that there was no show of animosity towards the Union and that the purpose was non-illegal even though the questioning and the questionnaire deprived workers of a secret ballot.

This is a bad decision by the National Labor Relations Board. If allowed to stand, it will allow companies the right to undo organized work accomplished by a Union.

We still feel that the right of a worker to join or not to join a Union is his own business and the employer should not be given the right to interfere in any way.

Change of Contractor

Changes Nothing

A contractor who took over a service contract from a predecessor contractor and hired all of the predecessors' workers was told by the NLRB that he also acquired a duty to bargain with their union. While, in this instance, the contractor did not take over the previous contractor's corporate identity or physical assets, he hired most of the workers and then refused to recognize the Union.

In holding that the new contractor was legally obliged to bargain with the Union, the NLRB said that he acquired the same operation and substantially the same employee unit.

Unless the NLRB held as it did in this case, it would be a simple matter to get rid of a Union on a particular project by simply changing contractors.

Shorter Work Week Possible

In a rally held at Madison Square Garden prior to the election, President Johnson gave listeners a look into the future of the United States. He stressed the need for more homes, schools and hospital facilities. He pointed out that in the next decade we will have more than 27 million people over the age of 65.

He emphasized the fact that the increased population will require more jobs. He projected a shorter work day and a shorter work week.

We say "Amen."

Meany on Medicare

In a recent address to the St. Luke Physicians' Guild of Washington, AFL-CIO President George Meany attacked the AMA's record against Medicare. He urged the doctors present to think of medical care insurance for the elderly as something apart from the area of private enterprise.

He pointed out that the AMA also opposed the original social security act. Pres. Meany warned that medical care for the aged is not something that should be farmed out for private profit.

We agree with President Meany and feel that the nation will not wait too much longer for a medicare program for the aged through the social security system.
Ontario Labor Asks Anti-Poverty Drive

North Bay, Ont.—The 500,000-member Ontario Federation of Labor at its 8th annual convention challenged the federal and Ontario governments to wage war on poverty.

Armed with a 50-page study showing one-third of the nation living below a decent subsistence level, delegates demanded a royal commission into the whole situation of poverty in Canada and endorsed an eight-point program for dealing with the situation.

The study, prepared by the OFL Research Dept. under Dir. John Ellen, stressed that the numbers of those who are growing in the ranks of poverty are older workers, pensioners, the under-employed and the unemployed, school dropouts and the under-educated, widows and fatherless families, the disabled and sick, the retarded and mentally ill, small farmers, migrant workers, Indians and new immigrants.

The study estimated that near- ly 2.5 million persons, or more than 13 per cent of the total population, are living in what it termed destitution—families with in- comes of $2,000 a year or less and single persons with incomes of $1,000 or less.

Another 1.6 million are liv- ing in poverty, with total family incomes of $3,000 or less or single-person incomes of $1,500 or less—a total of more than 22 per cent living in poverty or destitution.

The study listed another 2,340,000 persons whose incomes were under $4,000 a year for families or $2,000 for single per- sons—persons lacking the com- forts and some of the necessities of life. Of the 6.5 million in the three categories, almost 2 mil- lion live in Ontario.

Apart from the need for re- search at both federal and pro- vincial levels to analyze the ex- tent of poverty, the OFL de-manded action on minimum wages, economic education, de- velopment to create jobs, hous- ing and welfare legislation.

The new Ontario minimum wage of $1 an hour was called far too low to remove poverty and excludes too many who should be covered. In a separate resolution the report called for a $1.50-an-hour minimum now with periodic adjustments and inclusion of those in farming, domestic service, tourist op- erations and hotel and restaur- ant service currently omitted from coverage.

The statement said more re- sources should be devoted to education with cost no bar at any level of the system. Adult education should be assisted.

Long-Range Planning Urged

The federation called for long- range economic planning cou- pled with short-term measures such as tax cuts to low-income groups, an overhaul of the unemploy- ment insurance fund to provide for at least a 30 per cent increase in benefits, stepped-up government spending in housing, hospital and road construction and the encouragement of new industry.

It also suggested a complete revamping of the present anti- poverty welfare system in Ontario where no over-all standards are observed and administration at the local level is generally in- efficient.

Said David Archer and Sec- Treas. Douglas Hamilton were re-lected by acclamation. Arch- er has held his post since 1959, Hamilton since the merger in 1956.

The problem of double-job holders

MOONLIGHTING

Is the practice of moonlighting—holding more than one job at a time—greatly affecting unemployment in Canada? A federal survey seems to indicate that it doesn’t.

Thus, it can be seen that al- though moonlighting has increased in recent years it is doubtful whether any steps to combat it would significantly re- duce the vast army of unem- ployed.

The report also shows that moonlighters are not likely to be people who are trying to get back into regular work. Many of them have found it necessary, when faced by growing family responsibili- ties, to eke out the inadequate incomes derived from their pri- mary jobs.

Quoting from the report again. “About three-fifths of multiple job holders were mar- ried men, indicating that a good deal of multiple jobholding is associated with financial re- quisites following on by 1967. Ontario recently set a $1.25 minimum for construction workers in the Toronto-Hami- lton district to which it would apply to the rest of the province.

It was hoped to have the code enacted at this ses- sion of Parliament. Preliminary debate in the House of Com- mons will probably be followed by referral to the Labor Rela- tions Committee for hearings at which the Canadian Labour Congress, individual unions, provincial labor departments and organized business would be heard. Changes are possible as the result of such testimony and suggestions from members of Parliament.

Local 15 Continues Western Successes

Opil Skilling, secretary-treasurer of OEU Local 15, reported that the local has received certifi- cates for the newly organized office and clerical employees of RCA Victor and Plunkett Meats Limited. These two suc- cesses followed fast on the heels of the OEU strike victory at the MacMillan, Bloedel and Powell River Limited plant at Port Alberni.

Canadian Workers Seek $1.25 Minimum Wage

Ontario, Ont.—A national la- bor code keyed to a $1.25 an hour minimum wage has been introduced in Parliament by the Liberal government.

If enacted, it would be expected to reduce unemployment in the districts under federal jurisdic- tion—interprovincial shipping, industries now have a $1 minimum wages, banks, pipelines, radio and tele- vision, and airport services. It would affect fewer than 10,000 workers in these industries because of the difficulty in obtaining the necessary legislation.

The code, it is expected, would serve as a model for prov- incial labor codes covering the bulk of Canada’s workers—more than 5 million. Most prov- incial codes now have a $1 minimum wage, with some dropping as low as 90 cents for specified indus- tries. Ontario recently set a $1.25 minimum for construction workers in the Toronto-Hami- lton district to which it would apply to the rest of the province.

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from the desk of the PRESIDENT

Crystal Ball Was Clear

Since the inception of automation, we have been predicting that workers employed in electronic data processing installations would be more receptive to unionization. We made these predictions some years ago based on our discussions with numerous employees so employed who were baulked at the monotony of machine operations and the constant attention that must be given to the computer and its peripheral equipment. We stated that these workers would develop the same psychological outlook as manual workers employed in mass production.

These predictions have been borne out by the fact that numerous requests for organization on the part of clerical workers have emanated from the computer installation. Key punch operators, console operators, those who operate peripheral equipment, programmers and systems analysts do not readily respond to the usual employer indoctrination which generally carries with it a word or two against unionization. These workers are completely aware of the tedious monotony which is prevalent in electronic data processing areas. They are pretty much aware of the fact that they are not going to rise to the top official spots in their companies.

Unfortunately, however, the National Labor Relations Board will not recognize the electronic data processing classifications as an appropriate bargaining unit. The Board insists that the entire clerical force be incorporated as one unit because of the mutuality of interest, similar payroll practices and supervision, in addition to occasional transfers and the same fringe benefits.

Those clerical workers whose jobs have not as yet been automated are fearful of conversion of their tasks to the computer or similar automated equipment. Copy typists who just a few short years ago did numerous repetitive copying tasks now find this work accomplished by the Xerox 914 or other reproduction machines, such as the Bruning. Automatic typewriters which operate at the rate of 100 words per minute have infringed on the work of the typists. Technical engineers, who a few years ago, were in short supply, are now unemployed because of the advanced computers.

Needless to say, there is greater interest in unionization in the white collar field today than ever before. Our failure to organize these workers in terms of tens of thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, is due to the lack of skilled organizers and the lack of finances to support these union representatives if the necessary number were available.

We endeavor to make up for this lack of trained manpower through the work of our Educational Conferences throughout the United States and Canada. Through this medium, we are giving much information to more OEUU representatives so that they can efficiently accomplish the task of organizing the unorganized. Much of the information given to the delegates in attendance at the Educational Conferences is brought back to the Local Unions for dissemination.

In too many cases, however, the delegates return and give a short report on the Conference and do not proceed to implement the instructions given at the Conferences at the Local Union level.

However, when a delegate or delegates return to the Local Union and prepare similar forums for active Local Union members, organizational information is disseminated to a greater degree and the Local Union generally benefits to the extent of increased organizational activity.

All OEUU Local Unions should be made aware of the Educational Conference program. All delegates should set up similar seminars for Local Union Shop Stewards and active members. Courses in collective bargaining, organizational techniques, and NLRB procedures should be the order of the day in OEUU Local Unions. Only through this method can Local Unions carry out their responsibility of organizing the unorganized.

OEIU Local 277 Reports Two New Texas Agreements

Office Employees Local 277 parleys a wage reaper at Wester Gillette, Inc., Dallas, Texas, into a new 31-month agreement containing 19 new or improved items in addition to wage increases.

An agreement negotiated a year ago with the then recently merged Gillette Motor Transport and Voss Truck Lines had two more years to run. The merged companies have since become part of Western Gillette, Inc., operating throughout the western states. The union and the employers agreed to expand the negotiations this year and move the contract expiration date to April, rather than October, so that it will follow the expiration dates of industry-wide agreements in February 1966.

The Gillette unit received pay increases ranging from 10 to 16 cents hourly on October 1. Increases of eight and 10 cents an hour are due on October 1, 1965; and a third three cents across the board will be added on October 1, 1966. New hourly rates, including the initial increase range from $2.83 for file clerks to $3.13 for rate clerks. A provision for cost-of-living adjustments is retained, with six cents hourly to be frozen into base rates.

A new vacation provision, with service requirements reduced throughout the schedule, calls for two weeks after two years, three after 11, and four after 16. Additional contract advancements include fully paid holidays, a "hiring hall" and irrevocable check-off, unit-wide seniority, additional leave for maternity, personal use, and military service; two 15-minute rest periods daily; equal distribution of overtime.

Local 277 also reports a new three-year agreement covering a unit varying from 15 to 25 clerks at ARA Manufacturing Company, Grand Prairie, Tex., providing for across-the-board wage increases of eight cents October 1, six cents October 1, 1965; and five cents October 1, 1966. Tab machine operators at ARA are upgraded to receive an additional 10 cents hourly.

Other provisions include an $18 monthly company contribution for insurance coverage; three weeks vacation after five years of service; additional sick leave; automatic progression; automation protection; and a hiring hall arrangement.

Mid-West Meeting

The North Central Education Conference was held in Joliet, Illinois, on October 10 and 11.

Agreement Ratified at Galveston

The members of OEIU Local 27, Galveston, Texas employed at the home office of the American National Life Insurance Company ratified the renewal of a three-year Agreement covering 650 employees on October 6, 1964. There were substantial gains in salaries and increases in fringe benefits.

The salary increases negotiated were 3 cents per hour across the board increase the first year (effective October 10, 1964), 3 cents per the second year, and 3 cents per the third year.

The three fringe benefits negotiated include three additional amendments to the Pension Plan, which are as follows:

1. Liberalization of the age limitation for participation from 45 years of age to 35 years of age.

2. A provision providing for a "Spouse Survivorship Benefit."

3. Increased the "Retirement Life Income Benefit" to provide for a monthly life income equal to 50 per cent of the employee's salary (based on an average of the last five years service) minus Social Security.

Concerning the Pension Plan, the first and the third Amendments were of particular interest to the ANICO Negotiating Committee because it affected a number of ANICO employees that were near retirement at age 65 in the near future. Since these employees were over 45 years of age when the Pension Plan was initially enacted, they were not eligible for benefits at their retirement date. The amended provisions would enable them to enroll in the Plan with the Company picking up credits for past service.

Standing, left to right: Joyce Douglas, Mike Brebee, International Representative; Olga Perez, Seated: Frank Graves, Local 27 President; Frank Morton, International Vice President; Lucile Davenport, ANICO Unit Chairman.