OPEIU Growth in Canada
Double Unions’ Average

The membership of the Office and Professional Employees International Union in Canada has expanded at a rate nearly double the average rate for all unions.

With gains in eastern and western Canada, particularly noteworthy, the OPEIU membership is now four times what it was a decade ago.

The Canadian Labour Congress has a total membership of 1,282,000, comprising 74 per cent of all organized workers. The CCLC reported 112 out of 146—wanted union representation.

In a significant breakthrough in the banking field, OPEIU Local 142 has won the right to represent employees of the Hudson County Trust Company in Union City, New Jersey. An election conducted on January 11th by the National Labor Relations Board showed that a large majority—

New Jersey Bank Employees Vote Overwhelmingly to Join Local 142

Despite the pressure from management, a lively rally held on the night before the election drew an overwhelming majority of the employees. Schneider, Manning and Director of Organization H. B. Douglas spoke. Patricia Kelly, Chairman of the Employees Negotiating Committee, was particularly eloquent in an appeal to her co-workers.

President Howard Coughlin of the OPEIU hailed the victory as the first in a new large-scale organizing drive by the union in the banking industry.

"Banking employees are beginning to wake up to the fact that only through union organization can they achieve adequate pay and working conditions," Coughlin said. "For long the banks have tried to satisfy their employees with a sense of prestige not backed up with remuneration, but the employees, like those in many other white-collar fields, are becoming realistic and turning to unionism to get better conditions."

Successful organizing takes hard work on the part of the union as well as receptivity on the part of the employees, he added, noting that in gaining the success at the Hudson County Trust Company OPEIU representatives had not spared themselves in establishing and keeping contact with the employees through meetings and telephone calls.

An active Employees Committee played a vital role in the victory. In addition to Patricia Kelly, it consisted of Lorraine Kerrigan, Frances Master, Jennie Rehman, Alfred Haase, Florence Moloy, Myrtle Decker, Nina Binetti, Douglas Kordis, Marilyn Parete and Francis Dittler.

Poverty Warriors Pick Local 417

The employees of the Office of Economic Opportunity in Royal Oak Township and Pontiac, Michigan have voted overwhelmingly for representation by OPEIU Local 417, Detroit.

Sixty-two employees voted in the election, held January 18th under the direction of the State Labor Mediation Board. Fifty-seven voted for the union, five against. Henry Lyons, Executive Vice-President of Local 417, led the successful organizing effort.

Local 153 Scores With Fashions

In separate organizing successes, Local 153 has enrolled the salesmen employed by the Rheingold Company, a leading brewery, in Hicksville, New York and Bridgeport, Conn.

Last year the New York City Rheingold sales force voted to join the 13,000-member local in a National Labor Relations Board election. A card count of the salesmen at Hicksville conducted by Impartial Arbitrator Burton Turkus showed that 21 out of 25 wished to join the union. The unit will be covered immediately by the contract recently negotiated for the New York City salesmen.

In Bridgeport an election was conducted by the NLRB, with Local 153 winning by the landslide vote of 22 to 3. Another union on the ballot did not receive a single vote.

Drink Units Join N. Y. Local

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Don Barclay of Bramalena, a suburb of Toronto, has been appointed an International Representative of the OPEIU. His main beat will be Ontario.

Productive Board Meeting Takes Variety of Actions

A highly-productive meeting dealt with a variety of matters ranging from National Labor Relations Board procedures to Welfare Plan improvements and organizing. The meeting was held in Houston, Texas January 16-19.

Elie Platt, Assistant General Counsel of the NLRB met with the board and explained the NLRB philosophy underlying its recent precedent-setting decisions. Submitting to houset-long questioning, he clarified many points of significance to the union as it presses ahead with organizing efforts. The information gained by the Executive Board will be on the agenda of the meeting of full-time representatives to be held in Montreal, Canada.

Actions by the board included approval of OPEIU membership in the Council of AFL-CIO Unions for Professional, Scientific and Cultural Employees. The Council is in the process of formation. A preliminary meeting was held in Washington recently. President Howard Coughlin was directed to take steps to affiliate the OPEIU.

On the matter of the OPEIU Welfare Plan, Secretary-Treasurer J. Howard Hicks was instructed to negotiate with the Union Labor Life Insurance Company and the Blue Cross with the aim of obtaining improvements. The board heard a presentation by Vice-President John Kinnekin and Local 153 (New York) Secretary-Treasurer Ben J. Cohen regarding the difficulties of establishing a national pension plan through a merger of the Local 153 Plan and the Western States Plan. It was agreed that an impartial actuary should be retained to study the relevant data.

Beer Units Join N. Y. Local

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The Growing Threat To Privacy

Reprinted from the AFL-CIO News

The controversy between Senator Robert F. Kennedy (D-N.Y.) and FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover over wiretapping and bugging may serve to bring out a little more in the open the steady erosion in industrial spying in this country.

Sen. Edward V. Long (D-Mo.), chairman of a Senate subcommittee probing into wiretapping, has promised to invite both Hoover and Kennedy to hearings he will hold in the near future. The hearings could throw a searing light on the entire problem of invasion of privacy.

Wiretapping, hidden microphones, spying devices and other gizmos have long been used in both Washington and in industry. Organized labor has bitterly criticized this growing invasion of privacy which constitutes a monumental threat to our freedoms.

Rep. Emanuel Celler (D-N.Y.), chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, recently noted that official wiretapping in Washington was so widespread that no one could be sure that his telephones were really private.

Invasion of Privacy

The William J. Burns International Detective Agency recently announced that it has been conducting "morale surveys" to find out why employees are troublesome, either consciously or unconsciously.

Unlike the conventional surveys, made by interviews or questionnaires, the Burns Agency method moves undercover agents into jobs where they can talk to employees, gain their confidence and often drive to their grapes and private lives.

One Burns investigator posed as a clerk and dug up evidence that certain executives were having affairs with secretaries. While a company official claimed that undercover agents would not report on union activities, he said they would discuss "controversies that might affect the morale of workers."

We cannot conceive of a more repugnant service and we do not believe that such undercover agents will be restrained from spying on the legitimate organizing activities of those who wish to form unions.

Viewed in conjunction with the countless cases of bugging of hotel rooms, private homes and offices (see articles to right), this announcement by the William J. Burns Detective Agency ought not to be ignored.

Congress would do well to investigate such noisome practices and legislation against this type of invasion of privacy.

NLRB Notice Program

The National Labor Relations Board is to be congratulated for putting into effect a three-point program (reported in this issue) designed to inform workers of their rights in representation elections through notices to be posted in plants.

While the OPEIU and other unions advise prospective union members of their legal rights under existing laws, printed notices from the federal government containing such information will have greater influence on voters.

Wirtz Forecasts Work Force Jump

Labor Secretary William W. Wirtz predicted recently that in the decade ahead, there will be well over 100 million workers by 1980. By 1970 the work force is expected to increase by 22 per cent to 85.3 million. By 1980, it will grow by an additional 18 per cent to a total of 100.7 million. The labor force in the western part of the country is expected to rise by 26 per cent in the same period. The West will be the fastest growing region, with a labor force gain of 26 per cent.

Subscription Price $1 a Year

Tax Dodges—For Executives Only

The Research Institute of America recently outlined a service for executives entitled "How To Do It Tax Free Scrounging Money From The Company." At a cost of $2 per member, this organization advises businessmen on how to take pay from business and call it capital gains. It does not talk about how private arrangements can be made with the company to insure lower tax rates.

In addition to instruction on such matters as how to avoid taxes through stock options, the Research Institute outlines methods of combining business with personal affairs to save taxes on fringe benefits.

If wage earners were free to use the tax evasion devices available to businessmen with large incomes, the federal government would soon find itself without cash to conduct the business of the country.

It is about time that Congress closed the numerous tax loopholes that give an unfair break to executives and add to the tax burden of the nation's wage earners.

Contract Bars to Bugging

Needed, Senator Declares

Union members are the chief victims of new eavesdropping gadgets used by their employers, and it would be a good idea to include clauses against the use of such devices in union contracts, according to Senator Edward V. Long (D-Missouri).

Senator Long, who heads a Senate committee investigating wiretapping and eavesdropping in government and private agencies, sounded an urgent warning against the citizen's growing loss of privacy in an address in St. Louis.

"More than perhaps any other single group, labor union members have been the victims of electronic eavesdropping," Long said. "One union member from Boston testified that the phone company for weeks had his phone wiretapped when he began organizing a new local. He had photographs of the tap to prove it. "Employers have been known to place bugs in shops, work trucks, around water fountains, anywhere they can secretly check up on their workers. Not only is the victim the individual involved, but victimized is our whole system of employer-employee trust. Victimized is our constitutional right of privacy. Victimized is our right to live without the fear that whatever we do, wherever we go, we are being listened to, spied on and recorded."

Long made a strong appeal for public help in supporting legislation which would tighten the law against wiretapping and eavesdropping.

"I think unions should consider contract provisions against spying and bugging by the employer," he declared. The union member, like everyone else, deserves a legal recourse when his privacy is invaded. The fact is, unless we win the support of all concerned citizens, we may not be able to pass through Congress the kind of bill we need."

The White Collar

February, 1967
Getting Information from Employers

Good news in the grievance department has just come from a new decision of the Supreme Court. This new ruling will affect every company, and it is one of the most useful developments in years to help you administer your contract, process grievances, and take good cases to arbitration.

The case concerns the legal duty of the employer to give information to you. We have written about this in the past, as new NLRB decisions have greatly broadened your rights in this area, but none of these Labor Board cases has had the impact of the high court ruling. The case involved a single bargaining grievance filed by a local union protesting the removal of machinery from a plant in Chicago.

Immediately after filing of the grievance, the president of the union wrote to the company asking five questions about the removal of the machinery. These questions were framed in precise detail, and if answered could have provided far more knowledge about the subcontracting than the union had. The company replied that it had no duty to furnish the information. The union then filed unfair labor practice charges with the NLRB, alleging the refusal to provide. The NLRB, following the trend of recent years, ruled that the company had violated the law and ordered it to answer the questions.

In the U.S. Court of Appeals in Chicago, the company was completely victorious, as three judges unanimously reversed the NLRB. The court said the grievance procedure would culminate in arbitration, and that the whole matter was one for arbitration. The Board had no jurisdiction in the case.

The Supreme Court with nine justices, all of the U.S. Supreme Court majority, handed down a new decision. It is a new Supreme Court decision that may affect the way you bargain. The Court held that the company had violated the law, and that the Board had properly decided that the company had violated the law. The Court went on to say that the union had a right to know about the subcontracting.

The Court said that the company was bound by the agreement. The agreement provided that the company would furnish the union with full information about the subcontracting. The Court said that the company had no right to refuse to furnish this information.

The Court also said that the company had no right to refuse to furnish this information to the union. The union had a right to know about the subcontracting.

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**Labor Backs Social Security Hike**

President Johnson's proposal for increased in Social Security benefits averaging at least 20 percent represents "a substantial down payment" on what organized labor believes is a needed 50 percent, AFL-CIO President George Meany declared.

Meany said the President had "wisely recommended . . . vital and necessary improvement" in the benefits schedule "which should bring new hope to more than 19 million elderly Americans."

The full 50 percent rise in benefits—called for by the last AFL-CIO convention—should go into effect, he suggested, as soon as it can be adequately financed without detriment to other high priority domestic and foreign commitments.

In a recent editorial, White Collar called raised benefits long overdue.

In his wide-ranging message to Congress on older Americans, Johnson noted that nearly 2.5 million individuals receive retirement benefits based on the minimum of $44 a month, which would mean $66 for a couple, and that the average benefit is only $84, or $126 for a couple.

"Although Social Security benefits keep 5.5 million aged persons above the poverty line, more than 5 million still live in poverty," he said. "A great nation cannot tolerate these conditions."

The President's specific proposals called for:

- An increase of 59 percent for the 2.5 million people now receiving minimum benefits—to $70 for an individual and $105 for a married couple.
- An increase of at least 15 percent for the remaining 20.5 million beneficiaries.
- An increase to $150 in the monthly minimum benefit for a retired couple with 25 years of coverage—to $100 a month for an individual.
- An increase in the special benefits paid to more than 900,000 persons 72 or over, who have made little or no social security contribution.
- To eliminate specific inequities and to close loopholes in the present law, he also recommended that:
  - Social Security benefits be extended to severely disabled widows under 62.
  - The earnings exemption, or the amount a retiree can earn without having his benefits cut, be increased by 12 percent— from $125 to $140 a month or $1,500 to $1,680 annually.
  - The amount above the $1,680 up to which a beneficiary can return in payments for every $2 in earnings be increased from $2,700 to $2,880 a year.
  - To keep the Social Security funds actuarially sound, Johnson proposed:
    - A three-step increase in the amount of annual earnings on which social security taxes are levied—to $7,800 in 1968, to $9,000 in 1971 and to $10,800 in 1974. The present maximum is $6,600, and no future increase is on the statute books.
    - An increase in the social security tax rate from the present 3.9 percent (plus one-half of 1 percent for Medicare) to 4.5 percent in 1969 instead of 4.4 percent as in the present law, and to 5 percent in 1973 instead of 4.85 percent.

**Local 139 Pact With Kaiser Brings Additional Benefits**

Local 139, Office, Professional and Technical Employees, has negotiated additional benefits for the employees of the San Diego Hospital Association and Stevenson Memorial Hospital in bargaining with Kaiser Hospital recently bought the Association.

Under the agreement the employees and their families will come under the Kaiser Health Plan, which provides more comprehensive coverage of salaries and other fringe benefits.

Employees of all Kaiser facilities in San Diego County, present and future, automatically come under the contract.

On January 1st employees with less than one year of employment received prorated vacations at the rate of one day's payment for each full month worked. Employees will get four weeks of vacation after 10 years of service, instead of after 15 years. The pension plan was improved.

Local 139 had negotiated a new contract with the Association and Hospital last year.

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**Local 10 Signs Gleaner**

A three-year contract providing for a $45 a month increase across the board for the first year—$20 for the second year and $15 for the third year has been negotiated with the Gleaner Life Insurance Society by Local 10, Detroit.

In addition, three weeks of vacation after five years and four weeks after 20 years were attained.

Good Friday will be a full holiday under the new agreement. Sick leave was improved to provide for 12 days annually, to be cumulated to 90 days. Automatic increases from the minimums to the maximums in the labor grades in accordance with length of service were also won.

Local 10 President Thelma O'Dell negotiated the settlement with the able assistance of Anita Paschick, Steward, and Minnie Szcepanski.

**Thomas Gallagher, Detroit Corporation Council attorney, administers Oath of Obligation to the officers of Local 10. Officers from right are: President Thelma O'Dell, who is rounding out 21 years at Business Representative; Bessie Shillingford, Executive Board; Lois Derzona, Recording Secretary; Virginia Mills, Executive Board; Edith Hunt, Vice-President; Elmore Palu, Secretary-Treasurer; Lorraine Nola, Executive Board; Eva Zalinski, Trustee; Louise Durn, Trustee; Rosella Reisbeck, Executive Board; and Sharlene Martin, Chairman of Trustees.**