1200 bank employees join union

H. B. Douglas dies

1st OPEIU contract boosts salary scales $1,150 to $2,575 annually

After negotiating a 30-month contract for 1,080 bank tellers, clerks and junior accountants, the biggest unit of organized bank employees in North America voted to affiliate with the Office and Professional Employees International Union.

It is now OPEIU Local 434.

The agreement was reached after six months of tough bargaining in which the independent union called upon OPEIU for the services of International Representative Romeo Corbel.

The union, certified by the Canada Labor Board last October 13, had signed up nearly all the eligible employees in the Montreal City and District Savings Bank. An impressive demonstration in front of the St. James Street head office helped to persuade the employers to sit down and bargain.

Salaries will be increased in three stages. Initial increases retroactive to January 1 will range from $650 for tellers to $1,575 for senior clerks. Further increases are due January 1 and 12 months later will increase salary scales to a maximum of $3,800 a year and a maximum of $10,000 for employees below the accountant category.

The bank's 110 accountants and assistant accountants have formed a separate local and voted 95% to affiliate with OPEIU before beginning negotiations for this contract.

"For a first contract, this one is very good," Charles Bilodeau, bank union president, said. "We will now be the best-paid bank employees in Canada. Employees of other banks will be very tempted to join our union when they hear about this contract."

The 23-page agreement sets up grievance machinery, eliminates evening work at the 76 bank offices and improves holidays and fringe benefits.

Ohio auto salesmen affiliate

Auto salesmen in the Greater Akron-Cleveland and northeastern Ohio area have joined up with the OPEIU. The union's newest affiliate—Professional Automobile Salesmen Union Local 436—has received its charter and has launched an active campaign for members at some 50 Cleveland and Akron area automobile dealerships.

International Representative John Richards reports that the affiliation came about when a previously organized salesmen's group—the Professional Automobile Salesmen's Association—approached OPEIU seeking the strength of AFL-CIO affiliation to aid its drive for recognition and improvements in pay and working conditions.

Under its new charter, Local 436 has filed three election petitions—one in Cleveland and two in Akron—seeking recognition of the automobile salesmen. Although the union is concentrating on 50 dealerships at this time, Richards estimates that there are well over 100 unorganized dealerships employing close to 450 employees in the area.

Previously, PASA had won several NLRB representation elections at dealerships employing more than 100 new and used car salesmen. Where PASA already has obtained bargaining rights, the union will retain its independent identity during contract negotiations but once contracts are executed, the PASA will transfer to OPEIU affiliation.

Ohio auto salesmen affiliate

Bilodeau said the union plans to hire full-time organizers who will campaign to organize the staffs of other chartered banks in the Montreal area. Already, he added, the union has been approached by local employees of four other banks—Bank of Montreal, Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, Provincial Bank of Canada and Banque Canadienne Nationale.

OPEIU President Howard Coughlin said the Canadian victory marks a "major breakthrough in our efforts to organize all bank workers in North America," adding: "A union contract is the soundest blue-chip security every bank worker in the U.S. and Canada needs in his own personal investment portfolio."

More Canadian news page 3.

Local 29 airline drive gains

More than 500 of the 1,100 passenger service reservation and ticketing agents of Bonanza Pacific and West Coast Air Lines have signed up with OPEIU Local 29, Senior Business Representative John Kin- nick reports.

The campaign has resulted in a 1966 Air West. Local 29 became bargaining agent for Bonanza's employees late in 1966 and shortly negotiated a contract superior to those of the other two air lines represented by other unions. Already more than 150 cards have been signed by Pacific Air Line's employees, indicating widespread disenchantment with their present representation. The Bonanza unit now totals more than 200.

Local 29 is pointing toward a representation election.
Survey shows clerical pay gain

Pay for clerical workers in private industry rose faster in 1966-67 than did earnings of professionals, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics' national survey of Professional and Clerical Pay. This was the first time that clerical salary gains outpaced those of professionals. The national survey covered 1.4 million employees in 81 selected occupation work levels, including 51 professional, 9 technical, 21 clerical, and 14 occupations, entirely organized, entirely unorganized, and 10,000 white-collar and blue-collar workers, both clerical and professional, in private industry. The survey was conducted by urging friends and acquaintances to send in two $500 strike funds to the AFL-CIO Strike Committee to raise funds for eight months. A $500 strike fund is designed to provide a base salary, ranging from $582 to $1,066 a month, while auditors averaged $599 at level I and $568 at level IV. First level accountants and auditors were trainees with bachelor's degrees in accounting or in the equivalent in education or experience.

The report provides information on salary levels nationwide and separately for each establishment, metropolitan areas, and for occupations. The report is available for $50 from the Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D.C. 20004.

The report shows that pay increases for clerical workers, both clerical and professional, in private industry were the largest in six years. The BLS report shows that pay increases for 17 clerical work levels ranged from 4.4 to 7.7% from February 1966 to June 1967. For all levels combined, the average advance amounts to 6.1%, but adjusted to an annual rate, the increase becomes 4.6%. Pay increases for almost all of the 51 professional and administrative job categories ranged from 2.8 to 8% during the period.

Survey Provides Benchmark

While the survey originally was designed to compare pay in the public and private sectors, it also is used as a benchmark by business organizations, professional societies, trade associations, schools, and state and local agencies, BLS reports. Among the 51 professional and administrative job categories, ranging from $599 a month for college graduates in training positions, to $1,853 for those responsible for highly complex engineering problems. At the fourth level—the largest group in each profession representing fully experienced employees—engineers averaged $1,035 a month, clerical workers, $1,066.

Among five engineering technicians' levels defined for study, the third, fourth, and third, in which a majority of technicians were classified, drew average salaries of $603 and $693, respectively. Draftsmen-tracers averaged $599 a month, with the highest level averaging $727.

Accountants' salaries ranged from $582 to $1,066 a month, with average advance amounts to 6.1%, but adjusted to an annual rate, the increase becomes 4.6%. Pay increases for almost all of the 51 professional and administrative job categories ranged from 2.8 to 8% during the period.

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Maritime pacts set top gains

New York Local 153's Maritime Division has docket three settlements bringing record wage gains, other fringe benefits and major improvements to working conditions for 200 office employees of three foreign shipping companies. The three contracts cover employees for three years each.

A first contract was reached with Lloyd Brasileiro, owned by the Brazilian government, where the office workers recently staged a one-day walkout that won union recognition. These workers won a $22 a week wage increase over the three years, as well as one significant gain others take for granted: the employer contribution to Social Security.

Being foreign government-owned, Brazilian employees had been paying their own Social Security as "self-employed" persons. This meant that they paid the employer (and higher) tax themselves. In future, the company agrees to pay each employee a bonus equal to the normal Social Security contribution on salary.

Other gains are the union shop with check-off, three days bereavement leave, two weeks vacation after one year and three after five, and after November 1, 1969, inclusion in Local 153's top $31.50 Welfare Plan. A unique clause wins employees a special bonus of one-half their annual salary after 30 years of service.

A pact with the Italian Line, covering 400 office workers, came after five months of sticky bargaining. But this finally won a 23.9% package in wage gains and fringe benefits. In the three-year span, wage gains will total 20.5%. Besides, employees were given 20 transatlantic trips to Italy, board the company's luxury liners at no cost to themselves, a 120% increase in allowances.

Other significant gains are improved vacation schedules, bereavement leave of five days, severance pay clause, and life insurance increased to $10,000 for members, $2,000 for dependents.

Under the third-year pact, Belgian Line office employees become the highest paid clerical workers in the maritime industry. Wages go up 5% each year, bringing the average salary to $150 from $129. Also secured is expansion of the Welfare Plan extending coverage of employees and dependents in the areas of drug, nursing and maternal and child health, and increasing life insurance to $3,000.

The history of the OPEIU Belgian Line unit graphically illustrates the urgent need of all office workers for white-collar unionism and collective bargaining. When the unit was organized in 1958, the average salary was $49.50. In the decade since then wage gains have totaled 68%, an average annual increase of 6.8%.

Needless to say, there is a tremendous gap between this spectacular advance won by the union and the smaller pay increases achieved by unorganized shipping line office workers in the intervening years.

Local 277 starts drive at Volt

Local 277 has launched a campaign to drive the company to sign up 130 white-collar workers employed at Volt Technical Corporation. J. B. Moss, OPEIU Assistant Director of Organizing, is directing the effort.

The company does considerable subcontracting work for General Electric, where white-collar workers there already are organized. The Volt workers include technical and office employees.

At Local 277's first general meeting of the year, 65 new applications were received for OPEIU membership. Mrs. Dor- tie McCarty, of the General Dynamics unit in California, recommended her unit's Grievance Committee.

Also cited for outstanding work in representing their unit members and signing up new employees was Iva Lanear of General Dynamics and Buren Terry, chief steward of the Chicago Pneumatic Tool unit in Fort Worth.

Toronto Parley Draws 200

More than 200 delegates attended the recent Ontario White-Collar Conference at Toronto's Inn-on-the-Park.

The keynote speaker was Bill Dodge, Executive Vice-President of the Canadian Labour Congress, who reviewed progress being made in white-collar organization in Canada.

OPEIU International Representative Romeo Corbeil described current organizational projects being carried out by the union in Canada.

Larry Sefton, chairman of the National Committee on White-Collar Organization, gave the wind-up talk on the role and future of the office worker in the labour movement.

Named to Commission

Jean Mohart, a member and past president of Local 15, Vancouver, B. C., has been named by the Canadian Labour Congress to serve on a committee which will present a C.L. brief on the Status of Women to the Royal Commission set up by the Federal government.

She is the only union representative from British Columbia to be appointed to this important committee.

Causes of the Copper Strike

Nearly 60,000 copper, lead and zinc miners—and the office workers too—have been on strike since July 15, 1967, for wages, pensions, insurance and other benefits closer to those of their fellow workers in similar industries. Their increased productivity and their employers' ability to pay.

OPEIU Locals 62 and 286 in Silver City, N.M., and Bingham Canyon, Utah, are representing 200 office workers in Kennecott Copper units at those mines—are involved. Ours is one of 26 unions—22 affiliated with AFL-CIO—reporting regularly for picket duty at some 60 properties owned by 11 companies in 23 states.

The strikers and their families are being aided by the OPEIU Strike Benefit Fund and the entire labor movement rallied by the AFL-CIO. Callously refusing to bargain, the copper companies are among the most profitable in U.S. industry. They want to destroy the unions.

These 26 unions last summer extended their contract expiration deadline for two weeks to encourage the companies to bargain realistically. They offered to meet frequently and bargain freely, company by company. They accepted a fact-finding proposal last December 6. The companies refused it, long before a federally-appointed panel summoned both sides to Washington to state their arguments in open public hearing.

Briefly, the copper strikers were thrown a "take-it-or-leave-it" offer that was far below major settlements in other industries. This offer was 3% to 4% an hour for three-year pacts, against 1% an hour won by auto workers; 85¢ for rubber workers; 90¢ an hour for Canadian nonferrous workers, and upwards of 90¢ an hour in the nationwide trucking industry agreement.

The unions unanimously are fighting an arrogant and powerful industry, dominated by four huge companies whose profits zoomed 110 to 192% in the 1963-66 pre-strike period, and which through fragmented bargaining in the past had been able to play one union off against others to achieve settlements far below those won by other American workers. The profit-blotted copper magnates now seek to starve the strikers into submission.

As examples, pensions in copper industry contracts are among the lowest in American industry. Also, contract termination dates vary under separate agreements at each property. Rates for the same jobs are different. Even within each company, plants have a different level of wages. Photographer agreements are common in most industries, but not in copper. The Big Four won't permit any of the biggest unions in the industry merged last July. All the unions, affiliated or not, joined to exchange information and devise bargaining strategy. The companies are dominated by top executives and not by unionized workers. The companies objected, saying they would "never agree" until the unions return to the "good old days." The copper workers seeking social justice insist:

1. Non-ferrous metals workers need skill and endurance. Their work is hazardous. Twenty copper miners lost their lives in Anaconda's Butte, Mont., mines in the last two years alone.

2. Wages in the copper industry lag by $9.20 to $24 a week, in some job classifications, behind most other important U.S. industries.

3. Wage gains won by copper workers in 1964 negotiations have been completely wiped out by the continuing rise in the cost of living. Copper workers can no more today than they did in 1964 despite the fact that they are producing many more products and far greater profits for their employers each year.

4. Pensions in the hazardous copper mining industry are inferior. The basic program calls for monthly benefits of 50¢ per year of service for a maximum of $100 a month. The average, however, is well below that figure. The unions want protection for widows, provisions for earlier retirement, doubled benefits.

5. Job classifications are non旺季; and wage rates need expansion to provide fair differentials between skilled and unskilled work. Also sought: better job and income insurance, protection and fringe benefits like those in other prominent industries.

The copper companies can well afford a just settlement with their striking miners and office workers. Copper industry profits are fabulous. Dividing the profits by the number of workers shows that Kennecott Copper, for example, made $200 a week profit per each worker employed. Other companies reap profits ranging from $150 to more than $200 a week from the work of each employee.
Help Red Cross help GIs

The recent AFL-CIO Convention unanimously pledged the full support of organized labor to the American Red Cross annual appeal, continuing its traditional cooperation in this drive. The Red Cross currently faces a financing problem, increasing our armed forces in Vietnam, AFL-CIO President George Meany points out. This year's armed forces number over 2,000,000 men, with more than 500,000 in Vietnam, where the Red Cross has 166 staff people serving with troops in the field, as well as 52 hospital branches for women directing recreational programs—often on the firing line.

These are in addition to regular Red Cross staffs serving in major installations here and in 30 other countries. The cost of fulfilling its obligations has risen in four years from $39 million to an estimated $49 million for the fiscal year beginning July 1, much of this increase due to Vietnam commitments.

As a result, the Red Cross now needs $121, 600,000 to continue its job. Part of the sum is raised through United Funds but, to raise the remainder, the Red Cross is conducting a special March appeal to help each Chapter fulfill financial obligations. This special appeal is called S.O.S.—Support Our Services.

All OPEIU Locals are urged to take part in this national mobilization by sending treasury checks directly to "O.I.S. Campaign, American National Red Cross, Washington, D.C., 20006."

Space contractor yields $1,000 package

Office and technical employees of Mason Rust, contractor at Mountain Division Center in New Orleans, La., won wage boosts and fringe benefits totaling close to $1,000 per individual in a new three-year contract concluded by Local 403. Some 100 workers, who ratified the agreement by a 3-to-1 vote, are covered.

Wages are hiked up to 38c an hour, plus approximately 7% in fringe benefits. Maximum rate for a photographer will hit $4.91 an hour. Employees will now receive two weeks of vacation after one year and, starting with the seventh year, an additional day per year to a maximum of 15 days. The Friday after Thanksgiving becomes a paid holiday. Employees with perfect attendance records for six months earn one day's bonus pay at vacation time for each six months of perfect attendance.

The pact was won two days before the leave, jury service, and time off for voting, and pay. Other improvements were scored in computing overtime and premium pay, and in the insurance program. Sick leave is now 13 days each year with no cap on accumulation. Employees will no longer be required to furnish a doctor's certificate to collect benefits, and female employees may use sick leave credits while in the hospital for childbirth. The pact also includes a minimum overtime minimum with job posting and job bidding.

Local 277 President and Business Agent J. B. Morgan his helped organize the unit in 1962 and negotiated its first two-year contract, was designated a special International Representative by President Howard Coughlin to assist in negotiations.

Cost-of-living pact

A three-year contract setting forth nearly $1,000 in gains has been wrapped up for 317 Local 29 members employed by drug stores and retail stores in Oakland, Calif., and vicinity.

The first 15c an hour raise is retroactive to November 1.

Two other 12½c boosts take effect on the same date, and in 1969.

Employees at the top of their range for two years will, be more on November 1, get an additional 5c an hour. The night-shift premium goes to 35c from 15c.

Employer Pension Plan contributions go to 12½c this year from the previous 10c, and to 15c in 1969. Health and Welfare gains include Local 29's comprehensive dual choice plan together with dental and major medical insurance and $2,500 life insurance.

The contract, completely rewritten, is much stronger than the previous agreement, according to Business Representative Ann Willis.

Local 84 unit wins 25c raise

Office workers at Wright Machine Company—a division of Sperry Rand in Durham, N.C., which manufactures cigarette-making machines—won wage boosts totaling 25c an hour plus increased hospitalization and insurance benefits in a new two-year contract reached by Local 84.

The initial 14c across-the-board raise is retroactive to January 1. An additional 11c hourly boost takes effect January 1.

The OPEIU negotiating committee was headed by Local 84 President Ralph Wheeler and included Margaret Carwell and Ronald Adams. They were assisted by International Vice President J. Oscar Bloodworth.

If you move, send your old and new address, including zip code, to:

J. Howard Hicks, Sect.-Treas.
1012 15th St. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005

A Practical Guide:

Pamphlet Discusses

High Cost of Dying

The high cost of dying has become of increasing concern to many people—cremations, families, clergy, labor welfare directors. Some have found a way to arrange for appropriate, dignified funerals at a moderate cost.

How this can be done is outlined in Funeral and Death Benefits, a new pamphlet available from Local 95 by Sidney Margolius, a leading expert on consumer problems. In this pamphlet Margolius discusses the pricing system for funerals, suggests how to keep costs modest, and summarizes the financial benefits that may be available to meet the expenses.

Criticism of high costs, Margolius points out, does not necessarily mean that funeral directors are making excessive profits. It is, in many instances, the result of endless misunderstandings. Further, labor unions and welfare organizations are disturbed to find that "funeral costs have marched upward in close relationship to death benefits provided by employers and unions"—often for the benefit of renting medical bills and other emergency expenses faced by the family.

One basic fact that may be unfamiliar to many people is that "the price of the entire funeral varies with the type of casket chosen, and an expensive casket may lead to a disproportionate increase in the cost of many other items furnished." And even for those who may prefer the costlier arrangements, there are ways of keeping costs down. Margolius outlines four basic types of group effort to this effect.

But even with individual, rather than group, arrangements, advance planning can help ease the strain and expense of a funeral. Margolius insists it is helpful to have an understanding with your family about the arrangements you wish, and offers specific suggestions and cautions.

The final pages of Funeral Costs and Death Benefits offer guidance on veterans' benefits, Social Security, and other benefits for which the survivors may be eligible. "A will and funeral instructions are essential to save your family expense and time in settling your estate, to make sure your property is distributed as you want," and to make known your wishes in regard to services, interment, cremation, etc.

Also, Margolius stresses, keep "tidyover" money—at least four weeks' living expenses—available, or know from which it can be borrowed until insurance and Social Security checks arrive.

In summary, Margolius shows that there is more freedom of choice of funeral services and goods (and, consequently, costs) than many people realize. His pamphlet is a simple, helpful guide to a difficult problem all families have to face.

Funeral Costs and Death Benefits is available for 25 cents from the Public Affairs Committee, 381 Park Avenue South, New York, N.Y. 10016.

9th Freightways unit wins pact

The first contract signed by OPEIU Local 33 with Consolidated Freightways for its new unit was signed in downtown Kansas City, Kan., on March 6. It increases ranging from 33c to 48c an hour, averaging 47c, in the first year, plus 15c an hour across-the-board boosts in the second and third years, in addition to cost-of-living adjustments.

A contract renewal with the same company by Local 29, covering office workers in the terminals in San Jose and San Francisco, Calif., won 44c an hour across-the-board raises over the past three years. In all, an 11c an hour cost-of-living adjustment.

25c won for hospital unit

Wage boosts totaling 25c an hour were won in a new two-year pact renewal signed by Riverview and Southeast Hospitals in Wisconsin Rapids, Wis., covering office employees who are members of Local 95.

The first 15c raise in two installments takes effect this year, with the second 10c, also in two installments, effective in 1969. Sick leave is now cumulative to 30 days (was 24), and Easter Sunday is added as a paid holiday.

Since a hospital is stilled 365 days a year, the Easter Sunday holiday has the same importance to hospital employees as any other holiday, Business Manager Carl Meisnest points out.

Daily wages, from 70c to 75c, were raised to 80c, and a 15c raise was added for Saturday work. Labor welfare director John D. Freeland points out that the new contract "brings Freightways' wages up to the industry standard" for wages, with the new contract "taking the lead, in wages, in the health, welfare, retirement and severance provision in the region for office employees."