Staff to meet on organizing

Ways and means to accelerate organizing efforts among white-collar employees in the banking industry, in hospitals and in group health organizations such as Blue Cross and Blue Shield will be major topics at a three-day meeting of full-time OPEIU staff members in Kansas City, Missouri.

The meeting will take place April 17 to 19, and will be attended by OPEIU international officers, Regional Directors, Field Representatives and other representatives from the larger locals all over the U.S. and Canada.

President Howard Coughlin will be the principal speaker. His talk will keynote the conference of 41, stressing the need to organize large units of white-collar workers at an accelerated rate because of the impracticality and costs of organizing small office groups. He will also give additional details on the H. B. Douglas Memorial Award.

General Counsel Joseph Finley will report on the most recent developments in collective bargaining, and how to obtain all necessary and pertinent financial information on pension plans so that contract negotiators can gain a better insight as to what management is doing with those monies.

He also plans to discuss recent developments in the use of cards checks in a means of obtaining union recognition, and the latest court rulings on the Exclusor Doctrine; the need to update the Supervisors and Assigns Clause because of the growth of corporate mergers and conglomerations, extent of a union's obligation to process grievances, and the dangers inherent in refusal to cross a picket line if the OPEIU contract is silent on the subject.

Techniques used in recent successful bank organizing campaigns by the OPEIU will be shared.

(Continued on page 2)

Local 81 scores high in 1st university contract

FIRST CANADIAN UNIVERSITY SIGNS: Local 81 Vice-President Mary Humphrey and Comptroller Grant Thompson watch Lakehead President Dr. W. G. Tamblyn sign first contract with OPEIU. Standing from left, Chairman Jack Elwert of Local 81 Negotiating Committee; International Representative Emil Stencer, Local 81, and George Rose, Lakehead's Personnel Director.

Substantial wage gains and liberal fringe benefits are included in a first contract negotiated by Local 81, Fort William, Ontario, for its new unit of 41 employees at Lakehead University. Lakehead is the first university organized by OPEIU in Canada.

In the first year, employees scored a $27 a month wage gain in addition to $10 a month for those with one or more years' service. A further 5% across-the-board increase is effective next October 1, with an additional $8 a month for those employed a full year.

The two-year agreement sets a 35-hour work week and secures 10 paid holidays and three weeks vacation after one year. After six months, vacation time accumulates at the rate of 1/4 days per month. After three months, the same rate applies to sick leave which is cumulative to a 200-day maximum.

The contract also includes a health and welfare program and a University Pension Plan, and provides for grievance and arbitration procedures.

More Canadian news on page 3.

TV-film star Dina Merrill to write column on fashion and beauty for OPEIU membership

One of America's most glamorous and talented actresses, Dina Merrill, will turn to her typewriter once a month for the next year to write a column on beauty and fashion exclusively for White Collar. In her column, Miss Merrill will answer questions sent to her by OPEIU members. Her first article will appear in the next issue of the paper.

Never before has a film star of Miss Merrill's position and stature written a column exclusively for a union newspaper.

OPEIU members know Miss Merrill from her many starring roles in film and on TV. Her films include "Butterfield 8," in which she co-starred with Elizabeth Taylor and Laurence Harvey; "H.I. Take Sweden," with Burt Lancaster; "The Courtship of Eddy's Father," with Glenn Ford; "The Young Savages," with Burt Lancaster. In her next film, "The Big Blind," Miss Merrill will be on location in Jamaica with her co-stars Peter Lawford, Terry-Thomas and Bill Dana.

Television viewers have seen Miss Merrill as a guest star on virtually every top program, including "Bonanza," "Alfred Hitchcock Presents," "DuPont Show of the Month," "Bob Hope Comedy Special," "Run for Your Life," "Daniel Boone," to name a few. In the fall NBC-TV will air her latest tape production, "Savages Syndrome," in which she appears along with an all-star cast. She is presently at work filming "Against Heaven's Hands," with Barry Nelson and Arthur O'Connell for ABC-TV.

Miss Merrill has accepted her first newspaper assignment for "White Collar" without pay, but does not consider it a charitable duty. "I feel a kinred spirit with members of the OPEIU," she said. "I almost became a secretary myself." At the urging of her parents, Miss Merrill mastered shorthand and typing before she became an actress, so that, in her mother's words: "You can always earn a living if you have to.

"I'm looking forward to hearing from OPEIU members," Miss Merrill said. "I hope gals from every local union will be interested in writing so that I can answer their questions in 'White Collar.'"

International President Howard Coughlin said that the OPEIU is delighted that Miss Merrill has agreed to give our members the benefit of her unique beauty and talent. Having an internationally famous actress on the World's Best Dressed Women list write a beauty and fashion column for our members is certainly an honor, and we encourage members to write requesting Miss Merrill's assistance.

"That she chose to favor the OPEIU with this monthly column is evidence of the warmth, generosity and varied interests that have made her such an outstanding success as an international star.

Members with questions for Dina Merrill are requested to write to the OPEIU's public relations counsel, Dick Moore & Associates, Incorporated, 200 West 57th Street, New York, New York 10019; ATT: DINA'S COLUMN.
New light on banking hours

Bank employees in the U.S. have an idea that they work shorter hours than those anywhere else in the world. Not so, says the International Federation of Commercial, Clerical and Technical Employees, which makes annual surveys to determine the social status of bank employees.

Its 1967 survey finds that bank employees in the U.S. with a 37½- to 40-hour week, work longer hours than their colleagues in Canada and Great Britain. The survey discovered that only two countries, Denmark and Holland, cut banking hours in 1967. The former reduced them from 42 to 40, and the latter from 40 to 37½.

"On the other hand," the study notes, "it is evident that many so-called developing countries give good examples of trade union achievement if the working hours factor is the only one taken into account."

"Such countries often have schedules well under the 40-hour work for which trade unions through the world have striven so long. Among these countries are India, Pakistan, Cyprus, Sarawak, Singapore and the Philippines. These, naturally, are accompanied by much richer industrial nations."

Why does the U.S. lag behind? The answer is: Because bank employees here have a recently ignited unionism and allowed their social status to sink accordingly. The OPEIU proved this conclusively when it negotiated its first contract for bank employees of the Trust Company of New Jersey. The contract established a 35-hour work week, boosted salary rates, a one-day-a-month OPEIU turn, and added numerous other fringe benefits besides.

What's on the flip side?

Corporate Scrooges can now get help from the American Management Association in Washington, in The Wall Street Journal suggests. The AMA is offering a $15 seminar on how companies can effectively explain pay policies to office employees. A "skillfully structured" salary talk, the AMA bluntly proclaims, can be "a powerful union weapon" when even a request for a raise is denied. Until now, all of us took it for granted that Scrooges was a figment of Dickensian imagination.

Unskilled office workers shouldn't be taken in by this flimsy AMA propaganda. Injury-pay policies, rising medical and hospital costs, rising taxes, and the soaring cost-of-living give it the lie. While corporate profits increase, the same cannot be said for the wages of the average worker caught in this inflationary spiral.

Today the worker unhappily finds himself skimped on little luxuries. He is cutting down on recreation and entertainment. Women who went to the beauty parlor once a week to get their hair done now visit one either only five or six weeks. Even the kids feel the pinch as parents bypass cookies and candies. Some elderly individuals with scant pensions report they can now afford only one night at a movie.

But AMA, in its Scrooge role, feels it can substitute fiction for the facts of life. Wherever AMA's Scrooge turns on this ridiculous record in an office, unorganized employees should react promptly and efficiently by joining OPEIU and demanding a union contract. Their slogan should be: "Scrooge is Dead—Long Live Unionism!"

Local deliver for new unit

Wage gains ranging from 58½ to 77½ cents an hour were negotiated recently by the City Directors Division of the C.I.O. headquarters in New York City. Wage gains were negotiated by the City Directors Division with representatives of the 2,744,000 white-collar workers, who make up about 35% of the nation's 27 million workers.

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"Hedge your bets against employers who will discuss the expansion of unionism among office employees of Blue Cross and Blue Shield and representatives of the American Medical Association, which is the nation's major health service organization."

The agenda also includes discussion of health insurance, and the need for coordination of health and welfare, pension and insurance programs in collective bargaining. This discussion will follow an in-depth evaluation of the OPEIU's pension plans by Secretary-Treasurer J. Howard Hicks.

Among other topics will be contract language and negotiation techniques; bold new themes, basic organizing techniques, and sound preparation for collective bargaining. The VOTE (Voice of the Elector-
AMOCO pact brings 10.5% gain to 250

Salaries of some 250 office employees at American Oil Company's refinery in Whiting, Indiana, will go up approximately 10.5% over the next two years under a pact with Local 423. The agreement calls for a 6% boost in the first year, or a 3.5% on hour minimum increase, retroactive to March 8, with salaries to be raised another 4½% next year.

American Oil agreed to convert the current retirement plan to a non-contributory program by February 1971. Employees now contribute 2½% of earnings up to $6,600 a year to purchase annuities; beyond that, $6,600 the rate goes to 4%.

The company will also raise health and welfare payments by

NLRB upholds Local 221

The National Labor Relations Board has upheld the findings of a Trial Examiner that the Brown Specialty Company in Galesburg, Ill., unlawfully refused to bargain with the union on valid certification cards in an appropriate unit of 14 of its office employees.

The board agreed that when computer consoles end clerical jobs

New York City is installing computer consoles in its 35 welfare centers in an effort to eliminate delays in matching job openings with employable relief recipients. The consoles are being tied into the central computerized job bank which has been operating satisfactorily in 15 neighborhood anti-poverty centers. The computerized system, will eliminate a $250,000 a year clerical operation.

Local seeks to compound bank win

As a result of its success in winning 23.4% wage gains for employees of the Illinois State Bank in East Alton, Local 13 in St. Louis, Missouri, announces that it plans intensive unionizing campaigns among other bank employees in that area. President Julia Riggle says that campaigns at two banks already are under way.

The East Alton bank group also won longevity pay, an initial Pension Plan, three weeks' vacation after 10 years, daily overtime and supper money, an additional paid holiday, and improved sick leave. Unit members in two grades were promoted to a higher grade.

The three-year contract provides for annual increases, the first retroactive to November. Local 13 Business Representative George O'Brien, the chief negotiator, was assisted by a unit bargaining committee comprising Donna Jackson, Jane Story and Rosemary Sebastian.

Local 29 sets $1,000 deal

Wage gains and fringe benefits valued at approximately $1,000 per individual, are included in a new three-year contract negotiated by Local 29, in Oakland, for some 30 office workers employed by 16 wholesale and retail jewelry stores in Oakland, Hayward, San Lorenzo and Alameda, California.

Wages go up 15¢ an hour in each of the first two years, with a 15½¢ boost in the third year.

More dough at ITT Baking

Wage increases averaging more than $1,750 over three years were won for 21 employees of I.T.T.-Continental Baking Co., Inc., in a new contract signed by Local 12, Minneapolis. The average wage gain of 45¢ an hour is effective in the first year, with 20¢ boosts to follow in each of the next two years.

Business Representative H. R. Markussen reports that Grades 4 and 5 were reclassified to Grades 3 and 4, respectively, with progression to maximum
The phone call that kills jobs

In 1955 we began to alert our local unions to developments pointing to automation of white-collar work in the United States and Canada. On numerous occasions thereafter we discussed the effects of the computer and its peripheral equipment on work usually performed in offices.

We went into great detail to explain the workings of the computer, the scanner and the reader. We made some predictions with respect to automated typewriters and developments in Japan and in the United States on a machine which will, when perfected, transcribe from the spoken word.

And we also discussed the possibility of the elimination of the meter-reader from the American scene—a prospect which news reports indicate may soon be realized.

The Wall Street Journal on March 12th announced that technicians have figured out a way to read your home electric, gas and water meters by phone and thereby consign the old fashioned home meter-reader to oblivion. McGraw-Edison of Elgin, Illinois, manufacturer of houseswares and utility equipment, has developed an automated meter-reader system called "Armeter" which it and the telephone company are currently trying out in Belvidere, Illinois.

The article in The Wall Street Journal indicated that it presently costs their company $2.34 a month plus seven-tenths of a cent per telephone call to read the meter. The phone calls would be made off-hours, such as midnight to 5 A.M., to avoid tying up telephone circuits. McGraw-Edison officials said they would be in business immediately if it were not for the service fees charged by telephone companies for use of their lines.

Existing telephone tariffs for "foreign attachments," such as the McGraw-Edison device, are $2 a month per outlet plus a $25 installation charge. This makes the cost prohibitive in relation to present meter-reading and billing expenses. McGraw-Edison has filed a brief with the Federal Communications Commission seeking a revision of the rates now being charged by the telephone company.

The pilot program now in effect in Belvidere has been working perfectly. It takes only four seconds to read the meter by telephone. If a customer picks up a phone to make a call during those few seconds, the telephone central office automatically clears the line. If and when the Federal Communications Commission allows a revision in the "foreign attachment" rates, utilities in the United States and Canada will install these devices for purposes of minimizing labor costs. Utilities have stressed the fact that such a device would eliminate the costly round trips of meter-readers necessary when no one is home during the first call. It would also end the need for estimated bills and permission to enter private property.

Only collective bargaining can guarantee white collar workers be protected against subcontracting or the elimination of their jobs. Only through OPEIU's Technological Change Chase can workers faced with changes such as described in this column be assured of continued employment in other phases of their company's work.

A warning to women—automation threatens

Women are going to be severely affected by the growing automation of office work warned Maria Weber, a member of the German Trade Union Federation, at the recent World Women's Conference. "Repetitive tasks already have been taken over by machines," she pointed out, "and future programs are that phonetic writing apparatus will make many shorthand typists and secretaries redundant."

She said that the problem of technology has many facets, but its effect on the worker has not yet been adequately examined because it is masked by the current high demand for labor.

"Equally as many-sided is the attitude of office workers themselves toward the problems of technology and automation," she added. "Feelings range from anxiety and suspicion to mere resignation before a development which the individual cannot stop or influence."

"Unfortunately, only in a very few cases does it produce or strengthen the view that solidarity and strong trade unions are the greatest and best protection in this situation."

18.3% deal at car firm

SIGNING CANADIAN CAR PACT: Seated, from left, Cliff Rorsh, personnel relations manager; Local 81 President Pat Holin; Art Alberton, Local 81, and OPEIU International Representative Emil Stener. Standing, Ant. Personnel Manager Don MacCormac; Mel Byers and O. Olynyck of Local 81, and Local 81 Vice President Jack Heffman.

A hefty package of wage raises and fringe benefits, totaling 18.3% over two years, has been negotiated by Local 81 in Fort William, Ontario, for its office unit at the Canadian Car Company, Ltd. Retroactive to September 1, each employee will receive a $6 month raise, the employees added, for each 10 change in the Consumer Price Index.

Other improvements are three weeks vacation after 10 years, four after 20, and addition of Boxing Day as a paid holiday making the total nine. Another gain was sick leave.

CLC, Local 343 committee co-sponsor labor course

Local 343's Education Committee in Toronto is co-sponsoring with the Canadian Labour Congress a unique pilot project of weekly educational sessions for white-collar workers employed in labour union offices in that city.

Most are OPEIU members employed in the same office building.

According to Margaret J. Summers, committee chairman, the course is believed to be the first of its kind anywhere. It consists of eight weekly one-hour sessions, one-half hour taken from the employee's lunch hour and the other one-half hour contributed by the employing union.

Classes discuss the structure of the labor movement and of its objectives; the functions of labor's governing bodies and government departments with which employees deal. Purpose of the course is to improve the knowledge of union employees, improve their efficiency and promote interest in their work.

If the project proves successful, Chairman Summers predicts that repeat courses will be offered, probably on a much wider basis.

$2,000 back pay award

WHEN UNIONISM PAYS: Helen Smith, member of Kinnan Co.'s Local 220, is handed $2,632 check by Business Manager Larry O. Green for back pay after arbitrator ruled that she had been unfairly fired and ordered the employer to rehire.

Canadian Price Index

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