Executive Board approves mergers, sets up award honoring H.B. Douglas

A plaque and a prize of $250 are to be awarded annually to the member of the OPEIU who makes the biggest contribution to organizing. The award was established in New Orleans December 9-12 in the name of the late Hen- derson B. Douglas, who served the union for 15 years as director of organization.

The Executive Board will select the winner of the Douglas Award and make the presentation.

Organizing was one of the main subjects dealt with by President Howard Couchlin in his report to the board. He listed the firms organized in the United States and Canada during the year 1968 to date which added some 3,700 members to the ranks of the OPEIU.

After extensive discussion the board decided to give local unions exclusive jurisdiction over members in other locations covered by a master contract. In such cases, the local union will no longer be able to employ the dues of these members to the local union in that area. In view of the fact that the contract-holding local has the responsibility for servicing all those covered, it should receive the dues, the board felt.

The mergers of the following locals were approved by the board: Local 212, Buffalo and Local 34, Rochester; Local 30, Los Angeles and Local 83, San Bernardino; Local 25, Local 30, Local 130, East St. Louis; and Local 23, Tacoma and Local 32, Bremerton. In all cases, the first-named local union is the survivor.

The board decided tentative-ly to hold the international union's 1971 convention in Van- couver, British Columbia. It also approved a continuation plan for providing for an All-Can- adian Convention to be held in conjunction with the convention.

After selecting Ron Bone, Wil- liam A. Lowe and William J. Mullin as subcommittee to plan the conference.

In other actions, the board:

- Asked Secretary-Treasurer J. Howard Hicks to audit and spot check local unions' books and records and to assure the proper handling of the disbursement of local funds.

Dairy unit wins $9 twice

A two-year master agreement each year has been negotiated by the Dairy Industry Local 29 in 200 clerical workers employed by dairy manufacturers in Alameda, Contra Costa, Santa Clara and San Mateo counties.

A new classification consists of computer operator and tab operator trainees. Computer operators won an increase by amounting to approximately $60 a month. The night shift pre-
mium was also raised from $1 per shift to $1.50.

Each employee will receive 40 hours sick leave credit, with providing $9 weekly pay raises between the Northern California and Oakland, California. It covers

Women clericals: 9½ million

A total of 9,274,000 women, or 33% of the 27,495,000 working in the nation in April 1968, are engaged in clerical work, in addition to "Background Facts on Women Work- ers in the United States" compiled by the U.S. Department of Labor. About 15% are in professional and technical occupations and 16% in service work (not including house- holds).

Locked-out members awarded pay

Arbiter Hubert Weycoff awarded make-up pay to members of Local 12, who were sent home by Consolidated Freightways Corp., in Minneapolis, Minn., during a lockout in 1967.

The arbiter suggested that in defending itself the company should have more selective about whom it was locking out.

After the employer, an interstate common carrier, is represented by Trucking Employers Inc., in bargaining for an industry-wide contract for truck drivers. After the bargaining, impasse, the driv- ers' union called selective strikes against key trucking installations throughout the nation.

In an effort to counter whistleblower strike tactics, the TEI members ceased all operations, an ac- tion that NLRB later held was a lawful lockout. The employer sent home all its workers for the duration.

Ironically, "teamsters, at whom the lockout was aimed, worked some equipment... whereas maintenance and office workers who were inno- cent bystanders in the labor dispute, did not work at all." The employer contended that its action was "lawful, not a lockout."

The arbiter concluded that the shutdown constituted a lockout, which Local 12 had "in- sured against... by securing an unqualified no- lockout pledge from the employer."

Units East and West say OPEIU is best

An office group on the West Coast and a group of salesmen on the East Coast chose OPEIU locals as their bargaining representa- tives in elections just before the year ended.

By a vote of 15-to-2, Local 8 in Seattle, Washington, won a unit of 17 office employees at the Builders Hardware Supply Company.

Local 153 in New York City was designated bargaining agent for 21 salesmen employed by Pinelawn Cemetery. The vote was 12-to-5 for unionism, with four not voting, in an election con- ducted by the National Labor Relations Board.

Kinnick joins OPEIU staff

Vice-President John Kinnick joined the field staff of the International Union on January 6 as regional director in the Western states area which includes Cal- ifornia, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, Colorado and Hawaii.

Kinnick resigned as president and senior business representative of Local 29 in Oakland; he has been an officer of the local since 1947.

British white-collar employees flock to unions says U.S. News

White-collar workers, even minor supervisors, are flocking into unions in Britain and some labor experts believe that the trend may soon spread to the U.S. and other Western industrial nations, says a U.S. News & World Report dispatch from London.

New British surveys reveal an increase of 40 percent in white-collar union membership at a time when union strength among manual workers has been fall- ing. The lower ranks of supervi- sion, for example, are included in membership rolls of the As- sociation of Scientific, Techni- cal and Managerial Staffs, which claims it is adding 2,500 new members a month.

After Britain's first bank strike in 1967, the National Union of Bank Employees reported that it had recruited 20,000 additional members. More than half the country's 150,000 bank employees are now unionized.

United officials say that in- flation has changed the attitudes of British office workers, who once regarded unions as beneath their dignity and social status.

Also, union officials point out that there have been major changes in relative rates of pay and a tendency toward "deper- sonalization" of white-collar jobs. Government restraints on pay raises also are mentioned as accelerating the trend toward unionism.

Along with surveys, shows that more than 2.4 million British white-collar employees are be- longing to unions, compared with 1.9 million in 1948. Only about 30 percent of Britain's 9,000,000 office workers are orga- nized, but this is more than dou- ble the white-collar union ratio in the United States.

A recent Department of Labor report said that in 1966 or- ganized white-collar workers in the U.S. totaled slightly more than 2.7 million, about 14 per- cent of total union membership. Britain's working population is only about one-fourth the U.S. total.

L.A. strikers aided

A $320 check has been sent by Local 3, San Francisco to aid the Newspaper Guild members on strike for a year against the Los Angeles Herald-Examiner, a Hearst newspaper. After the workers struck to enforce wage and other demands. Hearst con- tinued to operate the newspaper with imported strike-breakers. No settlement is in sight.
Bank employees abroad

Widespread inflation—a 10 per cent increase in food costs and a 4 per cent rise in costs in general—has prompted the Australian Bank Officials’ Association to demand a 25 per cent salary raise.

Organized bank employees in both England and Australia are now finding that their employers take additional measures to protect them against inflation by imposing the lowest feasible settlement.

On the other hand, only a comparatively small number of bank employees in North America have done anything so far about solving their problems through collective bargaining.

They should know by now that bank employees as individuals lack bargaining power. They have no means whereby they can express dissatisfaction with wages and working conditions which place them today among the lowest-paid white-collar workers.

The OPEIU already has won major wage gains and outstanding fringe benefits for some half-dozen units of bank employees in the United States and North America. But these are only a tiny fraction of those employed in the vast banking field.

American bank workers would do well to study the trend abroad.

Pay for witnesses

Wage earners who appear as witnesses in court cases ought not to lose financially. All too often, they do. And where trials are postponed again and again, they lose a good deal.

The OPEIU believes that the employers should pay employees for the time they give to the essential duty of testifying. And that this employer obligation should be specified in the union’s contracts.

Retirement dollars and sense

A couple needs about $350 a month for secure retirement, according to the government’s new moderate-cost budget. But Social Security benefits at present are far too low. Current benefits for a couple amount about $170.

The message is simply that all workers ought to plan to have a retirement asset beyond Social Security—like a strong union pension program.

Social Security Tax Rise Pays for Better Benefits

Employers and employees are now paying slightly more for social security but workers and their families are also getting increased benefits never before.

The social security contribution for both employee and employer was increased by four-tenths of 1 per cent to 4.8 per cent on wages up to $7,800 a year, effective January 1.

The slight increase in contributions results from a number of improvements made in the Social Security Act in 1967, including a 13 percent across-the-board increase in benefits. These improvements will also mean higher benefits and better protection in the future for workers and their families when the breadwinner retires, dies or becomes seriously disabled.

Meanwhile, the contribution for employers and employees alike under the reduced retirement also went up. Effective Jan. 1, from 8.9 to 9.55 percent on the first $650 of each month’s earnings.

The contribution increase under this system follows legislation enacted in 1968 which boosted retirement benefits to levels about 10 percent higher than comparable benefits under social security. Other improvements also were made.

Mid-management personnel

‘Acting like union men’

A resolution adopted unanimously at the OPEIU convention in Philadelphia last summer supported changes in the labor laws of the U.S. and Canada that would allow supervisors and professional men in middle-management to organize into unions.

A recent article in The Wall Street Journal indicated that such groups are now organizing and are “acting a lot like the union men they boss these days.” Some are demanding full bargaining rights with top management.

Behind the growing militancy are complaints that most men in the middle supervisory ranks have little or no voice in the security or group bargaining power that union membership provides for rank-and-file blue and white-collar workers.

Many observers say the trend toward unionized supervisors—viewed with dismay by some companies—may become more pronounced and troublesome in the future. However, the movement faces a big obstacle: It would be quite legal for top management to fire supervisors for union activity, unless the National Labor Relations Act is amended to protect them.

Under present Federal law that can’t be done to non-supervisory workers; if such employe feel they have been dismissed for union activity, they can appeal to the National Labor Relations Board which can order them rehired with back pay. Federal law extends no such protection to supervisors who are now considered part of management.

Recently 125 hiring agents supervising longshoremen in Brooklyn, N. Y., won a court decision giving them the right to picket stevedoring companies in an attempt to gain bargaining rights.

Labor specialists say the decision, which protects former employees of new hired just because they picket, is the first of its type and they believe it will spur more organizing among foremen and supervisors in many industries.

About 1,000 scientists and engineers at a three Radio Corporation of America plants in Philadelphia, who direct the work of draftsmen and designers, are negotiating AFL-CIO affiliation for their 24-year-old independent association.

The Journal article observes that there are indications some companies may try to make things better for their supervisors as a way to head off union activity. The Foremost Corporation, a Dayton-based trade group financed by several hundred large concerns, recently suggested that companies backing it meet some supervisors’ demands before the supervisors become discontented enough to organize unions.

“We believe supervisors should have a voice in management, not fight it,” says Harry P. Jeffrey, foundation secretary.

But making foremen happy may be more difficult than many managers realize, the article continued. A recent survey of 242 steel industry foremen by a trade magazine showed that most hated their jobs.

“The foreman in the steel mills is the 20th century’s version of a man without a country,” the magazine said. “This from a supervisor is a man on a tightrope. Badgered by the union, harassed by top management, he is faced daily with getting work out and maintaining harmony in the ranks above and below him.”

The magazine also said that the survey found that most foremen believe their working conditions are the worst in the plant, their prestige is nil and their future “indicates little hope of improvement.”

Firms inflate job titles, save on salary checks

More big American corporations are capitalizing on the snobbery of would-be and other executives by handing out high-sounding job titles instead of fatter pay checks, says The Wall Street Journal.

Some firms are now calling division heads presidents instead of general managers. The three-man “president’s office” gains favor and gives executive vice-presidents “the status they deserve without really changing the corporate setup,” says one president.

Union Carbide creates the post of senior re-

search fellow to give scientists “a real opportunity for recognition and advancement.” Chairman Don Smith of Wolverine Aluminum, a company with 10 vice-presidents among 2,000 employees, contends that the value of a title usually is “a mere curiosity.”

R. M. Schmitz, a Chicago consultant, claims: “To a man who is not a vice-

president, the title might be worth 5% to 10% of his salary.”

New York’s the Kid psychologist Erwin S. Stanson adds: “It’s not socially acceptable for a man to admit the lack of a title bothers him, but it’s the reason a lot of executives change jobs.”

White-collar union growth seen by labor management

A recent survey of top labor relations executives by the National Industrial Conference Board drew a majority response that increasing unionization of white-collar employees can be expected in the future.

Of the 143 executives who re-

sponded, NICB reports: “Over two-thirds commenting on the present trend agree increasing increases in white-collar unionization will be a continuing trend in industry. In addition, several who see the trend as declining think that there will be a growth in white-collar unionization among government employees.”

The labor relations executives listed the following reasons for the beliefs that unionization of white-collar workers will grow:

• Unions will expend more effort in organizing office, sales and professional employees because the blue-collar sector of the labor market offers diminishing organizing potential.

• Unionism today appears more compatible with the white-collar worker, particularly in light of recently negotiated settlements.

• Unions are becoming more sophisticated in appeals to management.
Six locals in East Canada organized 1,948 last year

A total of 1,948 white-collar employees were organized by six OPEIU Locals in Eastern Canada in 1968, according to a year-end tally by International Representative Romeo Corbeil.

Four new units were certified first contracts. Three won certification and were negotiating contracts at International Paper Company in La Toque.

Petitions for certification are pending for Local 477 to bargain for a 40-member unit at Consolidated Bathurst, Portage & Main mill; Local 408 to organize a 20-office workers at J. C. Malone & Co., Ltd., Three Rivers, and a 23-member unit at the City of Cap de la Madeleine. Local 57 also has a petition pending to represent a 100-member unit at the Montreal Cen-

Local 236 unit gains 1st pact

Local 236 has signed a first contract covering a new 42-member unit of office and clerical employees of the Port Arthur Division of Abitibi-Price Paper.

A first increase providing for a wage schedule ranging from $390 a month to $813 is retroactive to June 10 when Local 236 was certified as the new bargaining agent by the Ontario Labour Relations Board. Next June 10, a further $27-a-month raise goes into effect.

The pact, which expires April 30, 1970, calls for a union shop; promotions on the basis of seniority, ability and fitness; grievance procedures and arbitration; a technological clause and severance pay.

The contract also provides a pension plan, group life insurance and a welfare program into which employer will contribute $16 a month for married employees and $18.50 per single employee. On May 1, 1969, contributions will be increased to $20 and $10 for married and single employees, respectively.

The contract calls for 7½ paid holidays with three additional floating holidays. Another floating holiday takes effect next May 1. Vacation is two weeks per year; three weeks after eight years; four after 20. Effective this January, those with 18 years’ service will be entitled to a fourth week. After age 60, supplementary vacations run from one to five additional weeks at age 64.

OPEIU member in Toronto pushes new co-op movement

David Weston, a Toronto OPEIU member, is sparkplugging a new type cooperative movement in Canada which has cut food costs from 15 to 20% in seven consumer groups.

The "new co-ops" charge members a weekly service fee to cover all operating expenses such as wages, rent, power, insurance, and so on. As a result, goods are sold at cost—with no mark-

up. Selling to members only, promotional expenses such as adver-

tising are eliminated. The first new "co-op" was started in Ottawa in January, 1964, with eight members. Since then similar co-ops have been organized in St. John's, N.B., Hamilton, Ont., and in the Toronto suburb of Mississauga. Today's membership stands at about 1,000.

As a result of new study groups founded by Weston, a Metro Co-Operative, Co-Ordi-

nating Committee has been set up in Toronto. One group has applied to incorporate the Roch-

dale Grocery Co-Operative Ltd., and hopes to open soon in the Rochdale College area.

"We hope to open with 200 members and one full-time staff person," Weston says. "Our members will likely be Roch-

dale College students and others living in the area. And we in-

tend to have a strong education-
al program.

"Membership involvement is essential for this type of co-

operative to function, and mem-

bership involvement is impos-

sible without a continuing pro-

gram of education."

Another WEA-inspired group is planning a "new co-op" at Kingston, Ont. Derek K. Craw-

ley, associate professor of Eng-

glish at Queen's University at Kingston is a founding member. Union leaders say savings in the "new co-ops" are equal to about 10¢ an hour for workers.
A step toward 4-day week

Back in the summer of 1966, Personnel Magazine published an article based on an interview with me in which I predicted that sooner or later people expected, a four-day office week was coming. At the time, many thought my prediction was mere wishful thinking.

The Reader's Digest has taken the first exploratory step in this direction. It plans to cut its workweek to four days this coming May for its 2,800 employees. The annual month of three-day weekends "will eventually be a major trend," a spokesman added, saying "they thought it was a progressive thing to do and it helps morale." He explained that some clerical employees would work on the bonus days "because they have to keep 13 computers going," but would receive overtime pay.

In 1966, I expressed the belief that just as soon as the Viet Nam situation eased office workers in one or more major companies would go on a four-day, 8-to-5 workweek. My contention was that a four-day workweek per se would be undesirable. A three-day weekend is fine for office workers, but open-for-business only four days a week is scarcely in the interests of office efficiency or customer satisfaction.

My belief, then as now, is that through use of two four-day shifts, business will increasingly move toward operating six full days a week instead of the present five, making Saturday a straight-pay day instead of a time-and-a-half pay day. Moreover, I still feel that not only will offices adopt the six-day week with four-day shifts but so, also, will many service industries, for these reasons:

- It will mean fuller employment for youngsters who otherwise might run into increasing difficulty in getting a start in life.
- It will enable the employer to use his equipment, offices and plant facilities more profitably and, in some cases of expanding business, postpone investment in added equipment.
- It will help break the increasing bottleneck in the field of services, where everyone wants to get his car repaired, his laundry done, and his groceries bought on Saturday.
- It will accelerate the development of a vast new market based on expanded leisure-time activities on three-day weekends for millions of people.
- It will mean an easing of the traffic jams that threaten to choke us, both economically and physically.

Some of these pluses offered by the four-day weekend I have discussed with businessmen in the course of contract negotiations. After an initial negative reaction—even a reaction of shock—and then some careful analysis of what is involved, a surprising number of management people agree that this type of scheduling offers significant advantages to all concerned.

In our discussion of the proposed four-day week with various management unions, we found that supervisory employees are skeptical about it because they are afraid that they themselves may be forced to work a longer week.

Actually, experience shows that enlightened management, for from leveling the supervisor and his staff, have historically done the reverse, giving supervisory employees something better in the way of working conditions and compensation.

Thinking in terms of six days of production, management itself, we have found, is receptive to the establishment of a four-day workweek in six business days—with an if. They will not agree to such a proposal unless their blue-collar workers, through their unions, also agree to the six-day base. I feel that this would be advantageous to these unions.

I remain convinced that the four-day week is the next big step forward in white-collar labor relations in the not too distant future, starting once the pressures of the Viet Nam war are lifted off our economy.

One believes that this is inevitable because the alternatives are too grim. With the population explosion increasing the number of job seekers at a fantastic rate and, with automation slashing the number of new job opportunities in offices as well as in factories, it seems to be the logical answer.

White Collar Union Growth (Continued from page 2)

- White-collar workers have less job security due to mergers.
- There is a general trend to group identification, less to individual achievement.
- White-collar workers feel increasingly less able to influence their work environment and, like other groups in society, recognize the need for collective action.

Asked what their companies do to prevent unionization of their white-collar employees, the executives generally agreed that "the policies and procedures they adopt are not specifically designed to thwart unionization, but rather reflect good management practices."

Federal Cartridge Corp. Signs

Wage gains ranging from $236 to $342 an hour, plus numerous fringe benefits, were won by some 300 office workers employed by Federal Cartridge Corporation, munitions makers, in a new two-year pact negotiated by Local 12 in Minneapolis.

Much improved protection is afforded by the pact in the event a division at the Arsenal is discontinued. Other gains were an extra vacation day, if a holiday falls in the vacation period; an improved bereavement clause, and differential pay for two weeks' military training.

Wage raises largest in 8 years but price rise holds down gains

Salary increases ranging from 4.9% to 7% during the year from June 1967 to June 1968 were the largest on record in the eight years that selected professional, technical and clerical occupations have been surveyed, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Despite the record increases, BLS notes that the gain in purchasing power was only about 1% for most of the employees. In the period, prices rose 4%, or about 2-1/2% times the average annual rate of increase in the preceding seven years.

On the other hand, during the 1961-67 period, while annual average salary increases for these same occupational groups ranged between only 3% and 4%, purchasing power advanced 1-1/2% to 2% annually.

PRELIMINARY INFORMATION shows that salary increases for clerical occupations averaged 5.1% over the year ending June 1968, compared to 4.6% the previous year and an average annual increase rate of 3.1% from 1961 to 1967.

Among the 21 clerical work levels surveyed, average monthly salaries ranged from $306 for file clerks 1 to $506 for secretaries IV, the highest of a five-level series. Averages for elevens of the clerical levels were above $420 and only four were below $380 a month.

The BLS survey is used as a benchmark by business, labor unions, professional societies, trade associations, schools, and state and local government agencies. The bulletin, National Survey of Professional, Administrative, Technical, and Clerical Pay, June 1968, containing complete and final results of the survey will be published soon. Copies may be obtained from BLS Regional Offices.