News from Canada:

Trucking firm units find it paid to join

Clerical workers with trucking companies in northern British Columbia, Alberta and the legendary Yukon struck a veritable gold mine when they organized under the OPEIU banner and won spectacular wage gains retroactive to January 1.

Local 15 Business Representative Bill Swanson reports that a new master contract provides 77% wage gains for the newly organized file clerks and stenographers and an 85% boost for the accounts clerks, increasing their annual wages by $2,086, $2,484 and $2,124, respectively.

The two-year master contract covers office employees of Canadian Freightways, Los Angeles-Seattle Motor Express, and United Terminal Ltd. It brings those previously organized a $5 an hour increase across-the-board, retroactive to January 1, with another $5 an hour boost scheduled for the same 1970 date.

A significant number of the employees won increases of $50 an hour in the first year to adjust gross inequities.

Other gains include lengthened vacations and higher overtime pay and shift premiums.

Twin Cities unit gains 1st pact

Members of Local 12's newest unit at American Linen Company, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, have ratified their first three-year contract, which includes a union shop clause and the standard protections such as grievance procedures, arbitration, seniority, etc.

Other gains are a floating holiday chosen by the employee, and wage increases ranging up to $182 a month retroactive to last July 1. Settlement was negotiated by Business Representative H. R. Markstein, with Stewards Alvina Koch and Bertha Roehr on the negotiating committee.

15-state bus contract aids 200

Local 215 President Susan Rose signs Southern Greyhound contract officials, President William E. Jones, Vice-President and Controller A. L. Bruder, and Edna Johnson of Greyhound Bus Lines.

More than 200 office employees of Southern Greyhound Lines, Inc., in 15 states gained wage increases of about $1,000 each from a three-year contract renewal negotiated by Local 215 in Lexington, Kentucky.

The first 14 days an hour across-the-board boost, retroactive to August 1, will be followed by two 12c raises on the anniversary date. Another 96¢ was gained by transferring a cost-of-living allowance into base pay, with a new index level established as of September 15, 1968, for future computations.

Numerous jobs were slated into higher classifications; Veterans Day was added as a paid holiday; a three-day bereavement leave and a more liberalized vacation schedule were secured. Employees will now get three weeks vacation after nine years; four after 17, and five after 27 years.

An improved Health and Welfare plan was achieved when the bus company agreed to contribute $26.50 per employee per month next November, rising to $27.75 in November, 1970. Present employer contribution is $22.50.

Five OPEIU locals report organizing of new units

Five OPEIU locals report organizing successes.

Local 17 in Cleveland won recognition as the bargaining agent for 80 office employees in all classifications at the Grocy Health Insurance at Snowville, Ohio, which was acquired recently by the Kaiser Foundation. It already covers approximately 300 GHI employees and plans to extend in current contract to the new group.

Local 5 in Denver, after gaining recognition through a card check for some 70 office employees at the main office of United Beckingham Lines, Inc., at Littleton, Colorado, which has included them in its contract with Western Empire Operators Assoc., according to Business Representative John S. Meneck.

Members of the new unit won a 15¢ hourly wage boost in addition to many fringe benefits. The organizing campaign was assisted by International Representative Joe McGhee, and the contract negotiations by Regional Director John Kinnick.

In Seattle, Local 8 organized a unit of 20 office employees at Group Health Coop Dental Plan, and in two NLRB elections gained representation of 17 office employees at Builders Hardware.

Local 153 in New York City won an election among 22 women at Pinelawn Cemetery. In Los Angeles Local 30 organized 10 professional immigration consultants at Mexican-American Social Services.

Grocery firm gain: $2,000

Three-year wage gains and fringe benefits valued at more than $2,000 per employee were won by Local 11 in Portland, Oregon, for its 168-member unit of Associated Food Distributors, a wholesale grocery. A 42¢ an hour wage increase across-the-board is effective this year, to be followed by 25¢ hourly raises in each of the following two years.

Computer programmers get 35¢ an hour raises in each of the three years.

A classification improvement shortens by one year the time an employee reaches top of scale in Grade 3, which includes 60% of the office workers.

Other improvements are: an increase in the amount and classification of sick leave; a new Dental Plan with the employer contributing $8.65 a month in the first year, and $10.38 thereafter; Pension Plan increased to 10¢ an hour; improved vacation schedule with one additional paid holiday, and an Optical Plan for the family.

New improvements are jury pay differential; payment leave; leaves of absence; new job bidding and posting provisions; a Health and Welfare opener, and inauguration of a warning letter system.

In a two-year contract covering the employees of Washington Canners Association in Vancouver, Washington, Local 11 won 6% wage increases in each year, plus productivity increases.

A new vacation schedule calls for two weeks after one year; three after five; four after ten, and five after 15. The Pension plan contribution was raised to 7¢ an hour, and an additional holiday was gained.

N.Y. local in 3 pacts

New York Local 153 has concluded three agreements bringing substantial wage gains and fringe benefits to approximately 700 members employed by a health insurance facility, a religious seminary and a shipping line.

A three-year contract for 600 employees of Group Health Insurance raises, wage gains average of $22 a week. An important gain was in the area of education where management agreed to pay full tuition for any employee wishing to complete high school or college or take post-graduate courses.

The Jewish Theological Seminary settlement provides for a $20 wage gain in two years and updates the wage range system.

Project Upgrade

Local 29 in Oakland has signed a contract covering the office staff of Project Upgrade, a program for training some 100 members of minority groups in construction crafts.
The Wall Street Journal finds that President Nixon's talent scouts privately confess exaggeration over the number of turnarounds by individuals who were offered top jobs in his new administration despite the promise of the higher pay President Johnson bequeathed to his successor.

The article then posed some thought-provoking queries it didn't attempt to answer. It wondered why Republican administrations always seem to have trouble filling jobs. It asks why so many young Democratic businessmen and lawyers seem ready—may, in fact, look upon government as a career after their law or business careers and lawyers are deterred by loss of income or fear that top government jobs might not offer the power they seek.

For this reason, the relatively low earnings of women in unorganized offices looms as a far more serious problem for them today than that of excessive hours of work. But despite federal and state law wages at $4 and $5 an hour, it is evident that the problem of equal pay for men and women is something more than an academic question, and women have to answer it carefully until women numerically exert their latent bargaining power through the ranks of organized labor.

Every woman working today—the majority now being white-collar workers—should realize that a woman contract is the simplest and surest way to achieve economic equality with men.

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An example for U. S. auto makers

The Swedish company which makes the Volvo automobile recently ordered its West German distributors to cut car prices by $46 to $180 because of "an unusual profit rise" in 1968.

For more than a decade, American auto manufacturers have been reporting record-breaking profits year-in and year-out. But one seldom hears of any price cuts for consumer items, especially automobiles. Instead, our auto firms keep on piling up billions in profits, hiking prices virtually every new model with the alibi that such increases are needed to meet "highstairs" of production costs.

The Wall Street Journal recently reported this trends alihi as utter falsity.

Yet Volvo can remain competitive, cut prices, and can still pay the highest union wages in Europe. In Sweden, wage rates are usually only one seventh to one fifth paid in the U.S.A. How can the Swedes do it when American corporations claim they can't?

The answer is simple. Unlike American corporations, Swedish industrialists are satisfied with a fair return on their capital investment. Besides, Swedes are socially-conscious at every level of their society.

On the other hand, an insatiable greed for profit characterizes the American corporation. It cares nothing about creating a balanced prosperity that everyone can enjoy. It ignores the inflationary dangers of unjustified profit increases. It also doesn't hesitate through inflated prices to fleece workers and consumers alike so that bled to profits can appear in reports to stockholders.

NLRB may order back pay, too

The National Labor Relations Board has the authority to require an employer who illegally refused to sign a union contract to pay employee benefits to workers retroactively, the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled.

By an 8-to-1 majority decision, written by Justice White, the ruling says that the law empowering the NLRB to involve itself in unfair practices by employers is broad enough to cover medical payments.

Justice White rejected the argument of the employer, Strong Roofing & Insulating Co., that the employee benefits should be decided by arbitration. He said the Strong firm refused to recognize the contract providing for the arbitration on which Strong now insists.

The employee benefit case stems from the refusal of Strong to sign a collective bargaining pact agreed on by members of the Roofing Contractors Assn. of Southern California.

In August 1963 the group negotiated a four-year contract with the growers union, but the Strong firm balked at signing the agreement and withdrew from the association.

The NLRB held that Strong was guilty of an unfair labor practice because it did not bargain in good faith. The board ordered the firm to sign the contract and to give the workers back pay and benefits Strong would have paid if it had signed the 1963 contract.

NLRB order in Delaware Auto Workers case

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The order stems from a case in which the union alleged that the company refused to negotiate an agreement, that it refused to recognize the union, and that it refused to bargain in good faith.

The NLRB found that Delco had violated the law and ordered it to cease the unfair labor practices. The company has appealed the decision to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia.

"The majority of the NLRB,” Justice White wrote, "found that Delco had not shown that the delay in bargaining was 'for a business purpose’ but rather to 'frustrate' the union's demands."
from the desk of the PRESIDENT

The challenge of superbanking

The Office and Professional Employees International Union is now stepping up its drive to unionize bank employees. Next month our organizational staff will meet in Kansas City to formulate plans for a coordinated nationwide effort. The banking industry is in a state of upheaval without precedent. It is branching out in all directions. The new development threatens even to dwarf the growth of the giant industrial "conglomerates."

Bankers are readying an invasion into new lines of business. Soon, if you want to rent a car or a computer, buy insurance, hire a cleaning woman, pick up some fish hooks, or arrange a trip around the world, all you need do is go to your "friendly banker."

The method is: set up a holding company which takes over the bank and then branches out into other lines. In theory, the holding company could even go into manufacturing.

By one count there are now 600 one-bank holding companies—that is, a company which owns a bank among other businesses. An additional 60 are in process of being set up.

Among the enterprises these holding companies plan to absorb are: armored-car and protective services, management consultation, timeshare lease-agency, printing of financial documents, leasing of various types of equipment, acquisition of properties in the "leisure industry" from resort hotels to sporting goods businesses, oil and gas property appraisal, electronic data processing and "data banks."

Since bank employees are among the lowest paid workers on earth because they are unorganized, expansion of banking's outmoded attitudes toward its own employees into other fields could have considerable labor movement as a whole. It would tend to drive down wage scales in unorganized fields to the minimum under the law.

Aside from the indirect threat of this explosive development to all workers, as well as to their bank employees directly, the rush into holding companies is worrying some regulators in Washington. Undoubtedly, the formation of these bank holding companies could have vast social and financial consequences.

It is feared that some banks may jump into wild ventures that could collapse, taking the banks and their employees down with them.

J. L. Robertson, a member of the bank-regulating Federal Reserve Board, says: "We appear to be drifting toward a repetition of serious errors that the banking industry fell into in the 1920s. For example, an Indiana company bought a bank in Florida and company officials threatened to take us back into the kind of situation that many students of history and a few fools remember."

William McChesney Martin, Jr., chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, fears that holding companies may lead to undue concentration on any one big bank.

The Federal Reserve Board is expected soon to renew its plea for control of one-bank holding companies.

So far, Congress has refused to go along—primarily because lawmakers have found no abuses which threaten banks' soundness or depositors' money. But mounting public protests may change its attitude.

Banks cite a squeeze on their business as responsible for their move into holding companies. As an example, they claim insurance companies are entering the consumer-loan field through acquisitions and are making an increasing number of business loans too.

Savings and loan associations already make loans on mobile homes, and now they are seeking the right to make consumer loans of all kinds.情节是不完整的或没有涉及到的。
Local 89 wins wage jump for new unit

An employee in a Montgomery, Alabama, steel plant fired wrongfully for union activity is entitled not only to his job and lost pay, but also to reimbursement for the reasonable expenses he incurred in trying to find another job, an NLRB examiner has decided.

Mohawk Oil
A 6½% across-the-board wage increase, plus better fringe benefits, were won in a one-year contract renewal negotiated by Local 3, in San Francisco, for office employees of Mohawk Oil Corporation, wholesale petroleum distributors.

Four employees in supervisory classifications achieved an extra $25 a month on top of the 6½% increase, according to Business Manager Phyllis Mitchell. The employer also increased the Health and Welfare contribution by 54.56 a month and raised the Pension Fund contribution to 2% an hour from 20c.

Renewals in Brief

Victim of firing awarded job-hunting expenses

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California Life

A 3½% general wage increase for its 500 office employees effective on February 1. The Dental Plan contribution rises to $10 per month per member from $9.50.

The electrical engineering firm is an Atomic Energy Commission contractor which provides maintenance and support services at the Nevada test site.

International Power

A 16.1% wage boost brought about an amicable settlement between Local 378 and the International Power & Engineering Corporation in Vancouver, British Columbia, where the 1½ member clerical unit had threatened a walkout.

The employees of the engineering consultant firm won an 8½% increase retroactive to October 1, with another 7% raise effective this coming October.

A supplemental agreement covering field employees calls for double time for all overtime, in addition to an improved schedule of vacations for those working in the field.

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