AFL-CIO backs drive on banks

The AFL-CIO has thrown its full weight behind the Office & Professional Employees International Union's efforts to organize some one million bank employees in the United States and Canada.

An historic resolution unanimously adopted by the AFL-CIO Executive Council at its annual meeting fully supports the OPEIU in its efforts to organize presently union-free bank employees within its jurisdiction.

The Council urged its 14-million member organization to patronize unionized banks with their personal checking and deposit accounts and called upon all affiliated unions—as well as all AFL-CIO state, county and city labor councils—to cooperate in this endeavor by transacting their business, particularly that involving Pension and Welfare benefits, with unionized banks.

Although the press and wire services failed to report this important event, the nationally-known syndicated labor news columnist, Vernon Reisel, devoted an entire column to the story.

OPEIU President Howard Coughlin says that strategy and tactics in organizing banks will be a major topic of discussion at the meeting of all the white-collar union's staff members at the Hotel Knickerbocker in Chicago, April 16-17.

The meeting will be attended by some 100 field representatives and organizers from all over the United States and Canada, as well as business representatives from the larger OPEIU Locals in both countries.

The Martin B. Segal Co., one of the nation's most reputable consultants and actuaries on Pension Funds, estimates that AFL-CIO unions influence some $20 billion in such funds. Other estimates run the figure as high as $35 billion.

Vernon Reisel says that while no estimate can yet be exact, it is said that at last count national and local unions deposit some $3 billion annually, besides the "billions more which individual union members push through tellers' windows."

As for union-involved welfare funds, which are a constant cash flow, estimates run from $8 billion to $14 billion annually, according to Reisel, adding: "The AFL-CIO chiefs have told their 128 national unions, their 57,000 local unions, their individual members, their state, county and city central labor councils to reward their friends and punish their opponents."

Pointing out that there are banks where some of those pension funds, managed by trust and investment divisions, come close to a billion dollars, Reisel continued:

"No minor matter this. During the General Electric strike a local Cleveland machinist leader simply walked into a bank whose officers had been critical of the walkout, and withdrew the union's $1 million balance."

Dean S. Hirst, of the Organization, says: "We plan to go after the National Bank of Washington, D. C., where the miners control some 75% of the bank. And there's a bank in Kansas City where the boilermakers have made a run, as well as an union-involved welfare fund, which is a constant cash flow, estimates run from $8 billion to $14 billion annually, according to Reisel, adding: "The AFL-CIO chiefs have told their 128 national unions, their 57,000 local unions, their individual members, their state, county and city central labor councils to reward their friends and punish their opponents."

United Funds affirm employees' union rights

The Board of Directors of United Community Funds and Councils of America has issued a policy statement upholding the right of employees in such fund-raising agencies to unionize. The statement said:

"United Community Funds and Councils of America is concerned with the welfare of all people and the institutions that serve them.

"Among the institutions, with which UCPCA is particularly concerned, are local United Funds, Community Welfare Planning Councils and their associated agencies, some of which have experienced recent labor-management difficulties, including walkouts.

"It is the position of UCPCA that the welfare of agency employees and clients—as well as the agencies themselves—can best be served in a climate of harmonious employee-management relations, stability of employment and good working conditions, including payment of at least minimum wages.

"UCPCA, therefore, believes that voluntary community health and welfare agencies should respect the right of their employees to join organizations of their own choosing for collective bargaining and grievance purposes, if that is their desire. Such agencies should not refuse to take the determination of the employees' desire to organize.

"In this spirit, the Board of Directors for the total community—UCPCA urges the general acceptance of this policy.

"Copies of the statement are being distributed to all national voluntary health and welfare agencies, as well as local United Funds, Community Centers, welfare planning councils and the like.

Nannie Vernon mourned

We regret to announce the death from a heart attack of Nannie M. Vernon, recording secretary of Local 391 in Chicago, Ill. She is survived by her husband, Master Vernon, to whom we express our deepest sympathy.

Since first employed at Roosevelt University on Jan. 20, 1949, Mrs. Vernon was active in the white-collar union movement. During that time, she had served as president, vice-president, trustee and steward of Local 391 as well as working on numerous committees.

Because of her years of devotion to Roosevelt University and its students, a Memorial Loan Fund has been established in her name at the institution.

Organizing report

Business teachers signed in N.Y.C.

A landslide victory was scored by Local 153 when it won a State Labor Relations Board election among a 50-member unit of teachers and office clerical employees at Monroe Business Institute, New York City. The vote was 4-to-1 in favor of the OPEIU as bargaining representative.

This was the first election ever conducted in New York City among teachers at private business schools. The Monroe Institute is the largest business Teacher's union in N.Y. City operations and programming as well as accounting, plus many other college-credit business courses.

The unit comprises professional teachers, non-professional teachers, non-professional teachers, and office employees, according to Local 153 Organizer Gerald Lashewitz.

He said that the teachers were so inclined by the overwhelming election victory that the next day groups were out at other business institutions urging fellow-teachers to sign OPEIU authorization cards. There are several hundred such private business institutes in New York City.

Lashewitz said the union plans to file for another State election at a second business institute in the near future.

Local 277 reports that it was chosen as a bargaining agent for an office employee unit at Rogan Company, in Dallas, following a card check. The company is a consultant firm in the Health and Welfare field.

A third organizing victory is reported by Local 19 President Delores Lysakowski, in St. Louis, Mo., where representation of a 20-member unit was won.

The Labor Relations Board election at the Security Fire Door Company.

Package at Midwest brings $2,000 plus cost-of-living protection

An economic package averaging close to $2,000 per employee over the last three years was won for the 153-member office unit at Midwest Manufacturing Co. by Local 444 in Galion, Ohio. Wage gains averaging 6½% an hour and fringe benefits valued at 27½ full-time cents were obtained.

Cost-of-living provision is included in the new pact, starting in November, to protect salary gains from inflationary pressures. For each one-point gain in the BLS index after November 1, salary rates will be adjusted on an annual basis by 1½% on hour to a $6 maximum.

Other gains were one additional holiday, five weeks' vacation after 20 years, and four weeks after 15. Group insurance was increased from $4,000 to $6,000. Hospital room allowance was set at $20 a day up to 70 days, increasing to $35, $40 and $45 daily each for years of the contract up to 120 days. Effective July 1, all OPEIU members will be included in a non-contributory Pension Plan now in effect for production employees. Such OPEIU members will be credited for continuous service. The plan provides retirement benefits of $4.50 per month for each year of service in the first 16 years, $5 in the second; and $5.50 in the third, with a 25-year service ceiling. Rights are vested at age 55, with 15 years service.

The employer agreed to refund to each employee, with interest, all contributions made to the plan, including the so-called "contributory-type" plan. This represents a 17½% hourly gain.

There are several language revisions in the new agreement, which also includes a "successors and assigns" clause for the first time.

The negotiating committee included Chairman Walter Brunner; Local 444 president; Secretary Helen White, Marion; Bill, Robert Bell and Lawrence Barrowman. International Representative Bill Adams assisted the committee.
**The transit fare crisis Costs up sharply nationwide...**

Bus and subway riders in major cities across the nation are feeling the effects of sharp fare boosts that, in some cases, are heading for the 50c level.

Nationwide, the trend toward higher transit fares is gaining momentum. Recently, bus riders in Kansas City, Mo., began dropping 50c in the fare box; the highest basic fare in the country. Other cities, including those in the TV markets, are also considering half-dollar fares.

Several TV-owned lines have raised fares three times since 1961, the last time a year ago to 35c, plus another nickel for a transfer. The fare increases resulted in a reduction of services, and each time was followed by a notable decline in passengers—a nationwide trend.

In Washington, the D.C. Transit Line, largest of four privately owned lines, has increased bus fares between times in the last 10 years to a current level of 32c set in October, 1969. Now there is talk of another fare increase—up to 40c.

In Denver, the Denver Transportation Corporation's fares were boosted from 10c to 15c in 1956; to 20c in 1960, to 25c in 1964; to 30c in 1967, and to 35c last June. Even in New Orleans, where the basic fare has been 10c for the last ten years, bus riders began paying 15c in January. This fare is still the lowest basic rate in the country but, for New Orleans residents, the rise represents a minor civic tragedy—symbolic of the passing of the nickel glass of beer.

A trend toward reduced transit fares for senior citizens and school children is being introduced in major cities, but so far no universal way has been found to ease the burden on economically depressed inner-city residents or those who have to use transit facilities daily in getting to and from work.

**Two OPEIU locals act...**

Will parking charges for autos used by office employees to get to and from work, as well as increases on bus and subway fares, become a part of union demands in future collective bargaining? Precedents pointing in this direction have already been established 11 years ago in Portland, Ore., and Local 153 in New York City.

In a new contract negotiated by Local 11 for secretaries and clerks in Portland, the employer agreed to defray their actual car parking costs. This was in addition to the salary gains negotiated.

Members of New York's Local 153, employed in hotels were spared the full impact of the recent transit fare increase because of a unique clause in the city-wide hotel contracts which called for an extra 50c a week wage boost in the event transit fares were raised.

When the contract was negotiated, it was generally assumed that any fare increase would be limited to five cents. However, the wage was raised a dime (from 20c to 30c) for all subway and bus rides. When the fare was raised, a letter from Local 153 and other unions in the hotel industry to the employer called this transit clause to their attention.

"For thousands of N.Y. City families, the new 30c fare will eat up close to a full week's wages each year," according to Local 153 Secretary-Treasurer John Kelly. With this in mind, he sent a letter to all OPEIU contract employers pointing out:

"This fare increase has placed a tremendous burden on your employees. In order to alleviate this situation we are requesting that you increase the wages of our members by an amount equal to the increased cost of their bus and subway transportation. This will mean that your employees will not suffer any reduction in wages."

He has instigated all Local 153 Business Representatives and stewards to arrange meetings with management to take up the transit fare question.

**U.S. labor bureau adds computer wages to its regular studies**

Average pay for computer operators in the top classification (class A) ranged from $135.50 per week in Dallas, Texas, to $159.50 in Chicago, Ill., according to original studies made by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics between September 1968 and April 1969.

The OPEIU suggested to the bureau nearly two years ago that the new computer occupations should be included in its periodic salary studies of traditional office and clerical jobs conducted in different U.S. areas. At that time, the BLS said it hoped to test the feasibility of such a survey when job classification in the computer field were determined on an all-industry basis.

The BLS announces that it now plans to add these data processing salary surveys for the time and opportunity study of white-collar jobs in 90 U.S. areas. These may be helpful in contract negotiations.

This first BLS study covers systems analysts, programmers, and computer operators in 10 U.S. areas. Salary information was collected for three levels of complexity in each job.

Systems analysts—the highest paid category to be studied—earned $203 per week in Jacksonville, Fla., to $275.50 in Los Angeles, Calif. Employees in this category are required to work independently, or only under general supervision, on complex problems.

In the programmer classification, class A employees averaged from $228 per week in Los Angeles to $164 in Cleveland, Ohio. Those in the lowest programmer category (class C) averaged from $152.50 to $158 per week.

A description of the job classifications may be obtained from the Bureau of Labor's Washington, D.C., or its regional offices.

**Tri-Cities labor thanks OPEIU**

Dennis Pinkston, president of Tri-Cities Central Labor Union, in Sheffield, Alabama, has sent a letter to President Howard Doughlin, "to thank you for your support and assistance in our recent Congressional campaign to save the TVA Fertilizer Development Center."

"While ultimately all consumers benefit from the lower cost of fertilizers of improved quality, which result from the work of the Center, our members locally who are employed there owe you a personal debt of gratitude," the letter said.
Profile of the working wife

The “dynamic, competitive, ambitious, new woman” is not to be found in large numbers among wives searching for meaningful work outside the home, concludes a study made by Linda Bell, Research Officer of the Women’s Bureau of Ontario’s Department of Labour.

The survey reveals that the typical woman seeking job self-fulfillment is 41 years old, has three children reaching school age, has a slightly better than high school education, and some “rusty and out-of-date office skills.” Paragraphal-ly, she both lacks self-confidence and has an overly optimistic view of what she expects to contribute to the labor market.

More than 80% of 300 wives interviewed, ranging in age from 30 to 67, had completed their formal education before 1950, and 30% had finished by age 20. More than a quarter were university graduates; a third had some university education.

When asked why they wanted to return to work, the wives listed one or more of the following objectives: extrinsic income; a social or personal interest; to belong to a group; family status; change of scene; a new challenge; a preferred activity; companionship; and emotional therapy.

Show high aspirations

The women had a fairly high level of aspiration. The positions attracting their interest had a wealth of opportunities, but more than 80% of the sample had never been employed outside the home.

The study notes that women seem capable of much greater contribution to the labor force than has been realized under present conditions. The majority entering the labor force today appear to be job hunting with little understanding of the labor market, little assistance from educational institutions, employment agencies, or specialized counsellors, and without benefit of receptive attitudes on the part of employers and school admissions officers.

Thelma Dawson named to women’s ‘Who’s Who’

Thelma N. Dawson, former Secretary-Treasurer of Local 2 in Washington, D.C., in which she still retains membership, has been named to “Who’s Who of American Women.” The selection was based upon “women outstanding as women without regard to their accomplishments, positions in relation to men to stress the women who stand out from their sisters” and to emphasize “achievement, advancement, or equal status.”

Active in Washington’s business world for 38 years, Mrs. Dawson was for 27 years administrative secretary of the Washington Building Trades Council before joining the Building Congress as its Executive Director. In this capacity, she also edits the Building Congress for Bulletin, official magazine of the construction industry in metropolitan Washington.

In addition to her business activities, Mrs. Dawson has voluntarily assisted innumerable fundraising drives for charity and other civic purposes for which efforts she has received numerous other honors and citations.

Shorter week at Preway

A 39-hour work-week (cut from 40 without pay loss), plus a 6% across-the-board wage boost, were won by Local 95 in Wisconsin Rapids, Wis., in a new one-year contract for the office unit at Preway, Inc., makers of kitchen appliances and heating units.

Business Representative Carl Meister reports that the company offered a 7% boost for 40 hours, but the employees by a vote of 40 to 3 chose the shorter work-week. They now work 39 hours, one hour earlier each Friday.

The pact won a day off with pay the first and second day of the week, the first and second week of the seventh month.

Besides Meister, the bargaining team included Chairman Jean Peck, Marie Arnold, Office Secretary Dorothy Rivard and Rae Ann Lindner.

Juliana named to Rutgers post

Business Manager Nicholas S. Juliana of Local 32, Newark, N.J., has been appointed to the State Advisory Committee of Rutgers University Institute of Management and Labor Relations. He has been chairman of Rutgers Labor Education Center’s Trade Union Advisory Committee.

A former OPEIU international vice-president, Juliana holds 41 years of service credit with the company and five years on the Labor Unionization award by the university.

Two key NLRB rulings

Two important decisions that should be of prime interest to those of us who organize and negotiate have just been handed down by the National Labor Relations Board. One upholds the Office & Professional Employees International Union’s Local 231 in Gatesburg, Ill., as bargaining agent for office employees at Brown Specialty Company. The firm refused to negotiate after the union won an NLRB election; the board orders it to bargain.

The other case involves Century Electric Motors Company in Gettysburg, Ohio. There the board ruled that the employerviolated the law by disrupting the 1968 Christmas hours and later refusing to negotiate this matter with the Electrical Workers.

In the Brown Specialty case, the board’s order was its second. It was the result of a review of the same decision of July 30, 1968, in the light of a U. S. Supreme Court decision in the case of NLRB vs. Gissel Packing Company, a situation similar to the Brown case.

In the Gissel case, the Supreme Court affirmed both the board’s reliance on authorization cards in determining a union’s majority status and the power of the board to issue a bargaining order upon such a showing, where the employer’s unfair labor practices undermined the union’s majority and impeded the election process.

Gissel Precedent

The board had initially ruled that Gissel violated the law by interrogating its employees, by threats of reprisals including the closing of the plant, and by actually changing working conditions in reprisal, by soliciting withdrawals of union membership, by suspending employees and discharging one, and by refusing to bargain with the union, which represented a majority of its employees without a valid good-faith doubt of the union’s majority. Reviewing its earlier Brown Specialty finding, the board ruled that it was not necessary to rely upon the employer’s lack of good faith as a basis for its findings. Rather, the board found that by refusing to bargain after engaging in various unfair labor practices designed to undermine the union’s majority status, and in view of the employer’s knowledge—independent of the Union’s card showing—that the union represented a majority, the employer violated the law.

The coercive effects of the employer’s conduct could not be dispelled by the imposition of the traditional remedies and were of such a nature as to make a fair election improbable. The board found that the purposes of the law could be better effectuated and employee relations improved by an expedited Gissel-like bargaining order. If the employee authorization cards could be better protected by issuance of a bargaining order.

The board ruled that the unfair labor practices were so coercive in character as to require a bargaining order to remedy their effect even in the absence of a violation of Section 8(a)(5). The board, therefore, affirmed the bargaining order previously issued.

This decision among other things points up the importance of using the official OPEIU authorization cards when organizing new units, rather than designation cards to obtain an election, which later may be lost on a technicality.

Bonus Issue

A major obstacle in organizing brokerage house office workers and registered representatives has been their fear that if they unionize they may lose their traditional Christmas bonus. Once again, in the Century Electric Motors-IUE case, the NLRB has struck down such a practice.

Upholding a Trial Examiner, the board found that Century Electric Motors violated the law by unilaterally discontinuing the bonus and then refusing to negotiate the matter.

The examiner found that Century Electric, although it told its employees that it was not paying the bonus because sales had been disappointing, did not advance that or any other business consideration during contract negotiations, or at a hearing, as reason for its action.

On the only occasion when the employer discussed the matter with the union, it made no claim of financial liability to pay the bonus, and thus reproduced the principle of collective bargaining on that issue. The board found that no special circumstances were advanced which showed that the union could not have successfully resisted the repayment of the bonus if it had been afforded the opportunity.

The board ruled that equitable considerations, on balance, tilted in favor of issuing the order to reimburse the employees.
AFL-CIO offers internship

Initiation of a Labor Education Internship for one year beginning July 6, 1970, has been announced by the AFL-CIO. It is open to college graduate or student pursuing a degree in the social sciences.

The intern will be expected to become a regular staff member of the AFL-CIO Education Department in Washington, D. C. He or she will work with senior staff members and will become deeply involved in the entire range of the department's work. This includes the fields of public education, staff training and workers' education programs. Aptitude opportunity will be provided to attend meetings, conferences and workshops with representatives of labor, government and universities engaged in labor education.

Salary for the first six months will be $150 per week. For the next six months $175 per week.

The aim of the program is to train labor education specialists to serve the trade union movement.

Applicants should submit the following to the AFL-CIO Department of Education, 815 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D. C. 20006, latest but no later than May 15, 1970:

(1) The specific application form available from the AFL-CIO Department of Education.

(2) Transcript of the applicant's college records.

(3) A statement of not more than 500 words explaining the applicant's interest in organized labor plus some indication as to plans for a future career.

Selection will be made at the earliest possible date. Applications should be made early to receive maximum consideration.

Local 173 adds living cost hike

Wage gains totaling almost 15% across-the-board, and nearly 20% for some reclassified office employees, highlight a two-year contract negotiated between Local 46 and the Tampa Electric Company, Florida.

In the first year, the agreement provided a top rate of $950 per month when across-the-board boosts ranging from 7.84% to 12.56% took effect on Jan. 26. When the second 7.1% boost takes effect on Jan. 25, 1971, the top scale will go to $1,018 per month, International Vice-President J. Oscar Bloodworth reports.

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Local 269 co-sponsors Pioneer Valley conclaves

Local 269, one of the three largest union locals in Chicopee, Mass., was co-sponsor of the annual one-day conference at Chicopee, AFL-CIO Council, attended by some 200 delegates. Local 269 President Eugene X. Pelletier and Gil LaValley represented the OPEIU.

Among topics discussed was a bill, prompted by the GE strike, recently introduced in the Bay State's legislature that would allow strikers to collect unemployment benefits after six weeks.

Letters were sent to the heads of all high school and colleges in the area inviting students to attend and see "lab in action." The Pioneer Valley AFL-CIO Council represents 29,000 union workers in 13 communities, comprising 62 Locals of 36 international unions.

Wage gains rose in 1969

About 7.8 million production and related workers in manufacturing industries received general wage increases during the first nine months of 1969, according to preliminary estimates by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Some 3.6 million received increases resulting from current decisions, while 4.2 million obtained deferred wage raises under earlier decisions, automatic cost-of-living escalator provisions, or both. The median wage-decision increase for unions was 6.9 percent, up from 6.5 percent for the full year 1968.