Chicago curtain-raiser

15,000 handbills launch drive on banks

Led personally by President Howard Coughlin and Organization Director Arthur P. Lewandowski, 100 regional directors, International Representatives and organizers zeroed in with handbills at 8 major Chicago banks, launching the OPEIU's long-range campaign to unionize one-million bank employees in the U.S. and Canada.

The handbilling took place during the two-day OPEIU staff organizing conference in the Windy City, which has approximately 25,000 employees in Loop banks and 5,000 Potlairs in outgoing areas.

It was the most concentrated handbilling operation in OPEIU's history.

Among the banks handbilled were the Continental Illinois National Bank & Trust Co., with 5,000 employees; the First National Bank of Chicago with 4,000, and the Chicago branch of the Federal Reserve Bank with 2,200.

Altogether, some 15,000 handbills were passed out.

Coughlin later appeared on a TV program, "The Stock Market On CBS West," and on the interview, he outlined the reasons bank employees everywhere today need to unionize, and said that the OPEIU drive has the fullest support of the AFL-CIO Executive Council and the backing of the entire organized labor movement.

Besides TV coverage, the banking organization "kick-off" received wide publicity in Chicago daily and radio news broadcasts. "I think we set in Chicago the general educational pattern all our Locals will follow as the tempo of our bank organizing drive steps up," Coughlin said.

The immediate response was "unbelievable!"

Lewandowski commented, "Phone calls and personal visits by Chicago bank employees swamped our headquarters in the Knickerbocker Hotel after the initial "kick-off."

It was so encouraging that we handbilled three other banks that afternoon.

"Some Chicago bank employees hadn't known that OPEIU even existed. Many expressed surprise that our Local 28 was in the area, ready to help them unionize."

Lewandowski said that bank employees work in an atmosphere of so-called "paternalism" which must be overcome by a vast educational campaign, adding: "Working in clean, modern air-conditioned offices, most don't realize that they are among the lowest-paid white-collar employees in North America."

He pointed out that in other countries, where bank employees are highly unionized, they enjoy shorter working hours, overtime and pension benefits which the American bank workers are the exception rather than the rule in the U.S. and Canada.

(See Lewandowski article, editorial and news on Page 2.)

Living cost allowance gained at R. L. Polk Co.

Wage gains and fringe benefits averaging $900 per individual, plus a first cost-of-living allowance, are included in a new contract negotiated by Local 388 in Cincinnati for some 500 mail order employees at R. L. Polk & Co.

Employees regard the package as "the best ever negotiated with the company," in Cincinnati, according to International Representative John W. Richards. It was ratified by an overwhelming 3-to-1 vote.

Other improvements include an additional paid holiday; two half-days added to Christmas and New Year's Eve; making them full holidays; shift differential raised to 102 hourly from 75; extended sick leave; increases in sickness and accident insurance, and the maximum for pensions raised $50 to $175.50 per month depending on length of service.

The negotiating team included Local 388 Business Manager Bob Pierce, Daisy Penrod, Harry Coven, Vivian Raymond and Vera Corman. They were assisted by Richards.

7-hospital contract ups wages 10%

Oakland's Local 29 has reached an agreement with the seven large hospitals of the East Bay, in northern California, on a new two-year contract covering 2,500 medical technologists, Senior Business Representative Joe Nohlan reports.

Replacing a contract that expired on Feb. 1, the agreement calls for an immediate wage increase averaging 10.05%, or $1,152 per year. The yearly raises will range from $822 to $1,246, or 4.99 to 10.94%.

Negotiations may be reopened in the second year on wages, or any one fringe benefit chosen by the union.

The settlement also brings three-week vacation after two years' service, with $1,000 (was five), and four weeks after five years (was 10). It calls for three days of educational leave per year.

The parties agreed that 30 days after ratification, union membership roll will be taken on whether or not they wish a "union-agency shop" provision to replace the current maintenance of-membership clause.

In an election to be conducted by the State Conciliation Service, employees will vote on a provision calling for an agency shop for current employees who are non-members, and a union shop for all new employees.

The hospitals have also agreed to modify the union's 120 days in advance of any plans to subcontract laboratory work or to automate, sell, rent, or consolidate their laboratories.

The employer must negotiate any such plans with the union.

If a satisfactory agreement isn't reached in that time, the union may strike.

Both parties further agreed that improvement in retirement and health and welfare benefits in future be tied to those negotiated by the California Nurses Association and Hospital Workers Local 250.

Organizing report

Three locals sign up units

New gains on the organizing front are reported from are from the OPEIU and the U.S. Midwest with OPEIU bargaining units formed at a credit union, a board of education, and a contractors' association.

International Representative Wilfred Peels reports that Local 152, at the Topeka Board of Education, reached an agreement with the OPEIU bargaining units formed at a credit union, a board of education, and a contractors' association.

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Local 111's contract with the Twin-City Local 12 has negotiated a first contract for a new office unit at the National Electrical Contractors' Assn., in Minneapolis, Minn. A sister group at NECA of St. Paul has been in OPEIU ranks for many years, Business Manager H. R. Markusten reports.

As reported in an April issue bulletin, a massive organizing effort by Local 11 among employees of Northwest Natural Gas Co. in Portland, Ore., added an additional 650 eligible to that bargaining unit. It marked a major OPEIU expansion in the Pacific northwest.

It was the outcome of a National Labor Relations Board election in which OPEIU defeated the independent Chemical Workers, formerly representing these employees, by an overwhelming 5188 to 28 vote.

The victory merged into a single bargaining unit — now totaling nearly 1,000 — of the gas company's employees.

The election was conducted by mail, ballots being mailed at NLRB's Portland office. It covered employees at 60 locations in Oregon and Washington.

Local 11 Secretary-Treasurer Walter Engelsb led the intensive campaign, assisted by Business Representatives Gene Davis, Gary Kirkland and Lance Meier who criss-crossed both states getting employee signatures on OPEIU cards.

Have an effective leaflet? Enter it in OPEIU contest

Director of Organization Art Lewandowski has started a "Leaflet-of-the-Month" contest which can prove invaluable to all OPEIU Locals. The best leaflet will be chosen from entries submitted for consideration by various Locals, and then reproduced and distributed to all Locals.

The winner will be "the best leaflet or handbill created for dramatic impact and visual effectiveness in an OPEIU organizing campaign." The competition will help all Locals to "pick the brains" of others throughout the U.S. and Canada.
Unionizing the banks every member can help

By Art Lewandowski
Director of Organization

Plans to implement our international drive to unionize bank employees in the U.S. and Canada were mapped out at the annual meeting of 100 OPEIU staff members in Chicago, where this campaign was given its initial kick-off. As all OPEIU members already know, the AFL-CIO Executive Council has thrown its full support and that of the organized labor movement behind this existing white-collar organizing target. We are being backed by the Canadian Labour Congress.

But our organizing drive can succeed only with the 100% cooperation of every OPEIU member in becoming involved—personally and actively—in both countries. It's a cliché, but true, that "many hands make light work." Our volunteers can also be enlisted to help with the "action with the OPEIU." Organizing on this vast scale demands both logistics and manpower. Even if our entire International staff, together with staff members of the larger Locals, devoted all their time to new organizing, their combined full-time efforts would be insufficient to cover even 200,000 man-hours in the year ahead.

In this event, they could do no better than to serve the Local with no time to arbitration or NLRB hearings; no time to negotiating new contracts, nor could they perform their many other varied duties — without counting extra efforts on their part.

"David-Goliath" situation

Assuming that they can apply as much as 100,000 man-hours to the project, we are still in a "David-and-Goliath" situation. We must recognize that there are presently some 1.8 million white-collar employees today — too many for organizing just in U.S. banks, educational institutions, and Blue Cross and Shield offices — now-top priority OPEIU organizing targets.

Organizing such manpower is needed to supplement the efforts of OPEIU's field staffs in the gigantic effort ahead. But it's a challenge to us in the AFL-CIO-high command; a challenge to our dedication we must meet if we are to live up to our responsibility "to organize the unorganized" in the white-collar field.

By now, every Local should have an active Organizing Committee to develop new leads — and follow through. There are banks and boards of education in every community, with colleges and universities in the major cities. But the majority of these office employees don't even know that our union exists. An educational program is vital.

This is where our Organizing and Publicity Committees in every Local — big or little — can work hand-in-hand. They can launch educational campaigns through handbills and local publicity in the mass media to let these non-union white-collar employees know that there is an OPEIU, that it stands ready to help them achieve a better future through collective bargaining. This is our mission.

Key to problem

With every OPEIU member volunteering just two hours per month to distribute handbills at banks in their communities, our 85,000-member Union can mobilize two-million man-hours in the coming year. Results can be spectacular.

Many OPEIU members participate in fund-raising and other community activities on a volunteer basis. They do it partly because they like to meet people and make new friends. And they have lots of fun. Moreover, union activity develops news coverage in local media.

Union shop clauses gain

Union shop provisions or some modified form of union security are one of the most important agreements, according to the Bureau of National Affairs, Inc. The BNA study shows that union shop provisions are in 83% of contracts against 53% five years ago.

One or more of the principal forms of union security — union shop, modified union shop, maintenance of membership, agency shop — appear in nearly 83% of present-day agreements.

By now, every Local should have an active Organizing Committee to develop new leads — and follow through. There are

Banks snub women employees

With full AFL-CIO support, the Office & Professional Employees International Union has launched a major drive to unionize bank employees in the U.S. and Canada. Now without union bargaining power, they are among the lowest paid white-collar workers in both countries.

Women employed in U.S. banks today total 619,000, or 63% of all bank employees. But they are surrounded by artificial barriers that unfairly deny them promotion opportunities and keep them in the lower paid and lower skilled banking jobs.

A U.S. Department of Labor study shows that one in every six bank employees is an officer, with 140,000 in this category. But only nine of every ten of these higher paid jobs.

Women also are found among violators of the 1963 Equal Pay Act, which calls for equal pay for women doing the same work as men. In Texas recently, a U.S. District Court ruled that the First National Bank of East Orange was violating the law by paying its female tellers at lower rates in male tellers.

The OPEIU now champions the cause of all bank employees. Its platform aims at upgrading both wages and working conditions in the entire banking industry — especially for women employees. By unionizing, they can open the door to equal opportunity — not only in pay but also in breaking down existing barriers against promotion of women to the higher paying jobs.

Bank unions make gains in Britain and Ireland

35-hour week

Unorganized bank employees in Britain recently won a 35-hour work week for all bank employees in December 1969 was 37.1 hours, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Now that British bank employees have gained the 7-hour day, the Prices & Incomes Board is preparing to fix pay rates for overtime, says their union publication. But with the arbitration decision, it feels that the OPEIU will allow time-and-a-half overtime for the lower pay brackets starting July 1971, with time-and-a-half for those in the top pay scales.

Annual pensions

Some banks in the U.S. do have pension plans — some good, some bad — but most have no plans whatever.

Through collective bargaining, Ireland's bank employees — unionized nationwide — now enjoy the following minimum annual pensions, with those retired for the greatest benefits:

- Female Clerk $1,640
- Male Clerk $2,280
- Teller $2,400
- Assistant Manager $2,530
- Manager $2,940

If Irish banks can afford these pensions, for wealthier American banks can double or triple such retirement benefits. But unless they unionize industrywide, as in other countries, American bank employees will remain underpaid today, and get only pensions (if any) tomorrow!
White-collar organizing is Toronto seminar topic

Some 70 union staff members took part in a seminar on white-collar organizing sponsored by the Canadian Labour Congress and Wire-Club Committee in Toronto. The OPEIU was represented by Marc Bourland. Speakers discussed not only the technical structure of white-collar bargaining units in Ontario, but also the differences in outlook of white-collar workers that require special approaches in organizing.

Art Kube, CLC white-collar coordinator, said that it is important to remember that every time a white-collar worker is invited to join a union, he is being asked "to go through considerable changes of traditional habits or thinking patterns." He added: "White-collar workers are adapted to their environment and any change is hard to come by. Joining a union requires an educational process for them. Terms like seniority, union security, and any change is hard to come by. Joining a union requires an educational process for them. Terms like seniority, union security, and bargaining units are often strange to them, and sometimes they wrongly interpret such terms."

London sets example in drive against pollution

Dr. Joseph McKennon, a Toronto surgeon, recently told citizens—organized by Pollution Probe and Group Action—to stop pollution—that more than half of all human illnesses result directly from air pollution. His audience was one of many citizen groups now springing up in Canadian communities to light pollution.

Meanwhile, British trade unions offered proof to organized labour's anti-pollution campaigns in North America that the effort pays off in terms of economics and even more jobs. In the Greater London area, it has cost local and national governments only $4 per citizen annually to achieve an 80% reduction in smoke, and obtain 50% more winter sunshine. The British government campaign has not only cleaned industrial smoke, but it also pays 70% of a household's cost for altering his furnace or fireplace to use smokeless fuels. With 50% more winter sunshine and therefore greater warmth, workers' families find their heating costs slashed to 40%, and doctors' bills for respiratory ailments also are lower. Two wholly unexpected benefits: (1) With city air becoming cleaner, white-collar workers find laundry bills are smaller; (2) More jobs have been created in the building-cleaning business because owners no longer claim there's no sense in cleaning a building that becomes dirty all over again in a few weeks.

Kube pointed out that the key to success is to "adapt ourselves properly to the white-collar mentality. For instance, pamphlets and literature aimed at white-collar workers should be well-designed, informative and to the point. The typical mimeographed leaflet is often a waste of time and effort. Initial organization meetings should be held preferably in small, modern meeting rooms in hotels instead of in some of our older, dingy-looking union halls."

Interest up in power bills, labour says

When the British Columbia Hydro & Power Authority blazed union labour for a 15% hike in its rates to consumers, the B.C. Federation of Labour promptly pointed out that high interest is the real cause. The federation showed that for the next two years the increase in interest rates (cost of borrowing for various projects) will total $427 million, "between three and four times greater than the initial wage costs."

The federation says the result is going to mean "starvation of schools, hospitals, and other important services to fund the massive projects."

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The federation also contends that, if labour costs were the only factor in total costs, the B.C. householder could have enjoyed steady decreasing rates since 1962 because increased productivity has reduced Hydro's labour costs from $4.72 per 1,000 kwh to $4.05 in 1969.

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The double pay standard: why women need a union

While-collar unionism offers female office employees industry's greatest bargains today. Read on...

How many office girls know that Congress in 1963 enacted the Equal Pay Act, requiring employers to pay equal wages to women doing the same work as men? Not too many; most were still in school at the time.

Women will fight their way into bargain sales to save a few cents here and there. But on the job they allow tens of millions of dollars annually in underpayment of salaries to go unchallenged. No wonder employers regard them as "dukes in the woods" of the business world.

As a general rule, employers are "scrofflaws" when it comes to equal pay for equal work. Who says so? No less an authority than Uncle Sam.

This year's Anita survey in the office payroll gives some idea of what the female office worker is worth. And a survey of American female employees at work in 13 major cities.

Union Card Real Bargain
Union contracts forbid discrimination. They specify equal job classifications and responsibilities. Thus, the unionized female office employee knows where she stands. In non-union offices, it is up to her to fight discrimination. If the female clerk proves the point, bringing her up to par with her male counterpart could put an extra $2,574 annually in her hanky. Her union dues (tax deductible) would be less than the last two digits, leaving her a net gain of $2,550 annually.

Non-union office girls have been looking in the wrong places for bargains. As OPEIU membership card is the best bargain to be found anywhere in the U.S. today.

U.S. Price Index

Canadian Price Index

Courts move at slow pace on equal pay violations

Uncle Sam works hard to get equal pay for women doing the same work as men. But this involves long and tedious delays.

Since 1963, the government has processed 125 complaints for alleged violations of the Equal Pay Act. Many cases are still pending. Only 6,322 women so far have recovered their back pay.

For the others—justice delayed is justice denied.

10-city survey shows wage gap

Glaring disparities in pay for males and females doing the same work exist, despite the Equal Pay Act, according to the latest U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics survey of office earnings in metropolitan areas.

Below are average weekly earnings for one occupation, in manufacturing industries in 10 cities, in the same job classifications:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Acct's Clerk 1970</th>
<th>Acct's Clerk 1971</th>
<th>Weekly Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buffalo, N.Y.</td>
<td>$151.00</td>
<td>$155.50</td>
<td>$4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pittsburgh, Pa</td>
<td>$147.50</td>
<td>$168.00</td>
<td>$20.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltimore, Md.</td>
<td>$145.00</td>
<td>$155.50</td>
<td>$10.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort Worth, Tex</td>
<td>$145.00</td>
<td>$155.50</td>
<td>$10.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dallas, Tex.</td>
<td>$141.00</td>
<td>$168.00</td>
<td>$27.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York, N.Y.</td>
<td>$136.00</td>
<td>$177.50</td>
<td>$41.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seattle, Wash.</td>
<td>$135.00</td>
<td>$122.50</td>
<td>-12.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portland, Ore.</td>
<td>$131.50</td>
<td>$168.00</td>
<td>$36.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denver, Colo.</td>
<td>$128.00</td>
<td>$165.50</td>
<td>$37.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trenton, N.J.</td>
<td>$118.00</td>
<td>$165.50</td>
<td>$47.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average: $137.90 $114.50 $23.40

Individual women in this single office category are losing on average $1,216.80 annually. This is an exorbitant price to pay needlessly for failing to join the white-collar union movement.