WHITE COLLAR

Office and Professional Employees International Union, AFL-CIO and CLC

No. 323 JUNE, 1973

Three collect $13,500

After Local 2 filed an unfair labor practice charge with the National Labor Relations Board, the National Memorial Park, Inc., of Washington, D.C., agreed to reinstate three salesmen it had discharged for union activities and to reimburse them $13,500 for time lost.

The salesmen are Louis Hyatt who received $10,000 in back pay; Charles J. Clay, who got $2,700 plus an additional 1% commission if his sales in 1973 exceed $85,000, and Patrick J. Martin, who got $800.

Local 2 charged that the company unilaterally withdrew from an agreement to accept binding arbitration and refused to discuss wages at the bargaining table.

The employer also agreed to cease and desist from all future anti-union action, to bargain in good faith for an OPEIU contract, and to post a notice to this effect on its premises for 60 consecutive days.

$3.50 exemption viewed as an organizing stimulant

All pay increases up to the level of earnings of $3.50 an hour are exempt from wage controls as of May 1 last, according to the Cost of Living Council. The new and higher figure was adopted by the Council under new legislation enacted by Congress extending the Economic Stabilization Act for another year until April 30, 1974.

The previous low-income cutoff was $2.75 an hour. Even that was achieved only through a court battle after the council had set a cut-off figure at a below-poverty level of $1.90 an hour.

Expansion of the wage exemption was one of a number of major changes that organized labor had urged to make the controls program more equitable and effective. By raising the cut-off, Congress increased the estimated number of workers now exempt from wage controls from about 16 million to 25 million.

"The $3.50 exemption should be a strong stimulant for new organizing among white collar employees," OPEIU Director of Organization Art Lewandowski commented. He pointed out that this is particularly true for non-union office women and minorities who have been the victims of these restrictive policies simply because the vast majority are still unorganized."

He asserted that unionized employees in the exempt category can now legally bargain for a basic salary of up to $140 for a 40-hour week, or $122.50 for a 35-hour week. But in this respect unorganized white collar employees will continue at a decided disadvantage unless they take a fresh look at their self-interest and unionize, Lewandowski said.

"Only by unionizing to gain the legal right to bargain collectively can they ever hope to obtain a living wage to keep abreast of the current inflation, which shows no sign of being brought under control," he said, adding:

"Recently I called attention to the fact that many employers are using wage controls as an excuse to withhold or deny pay raises to unorganized employees. Where raises are given they are usually held far below the 5.5% guidelines. A classic example of this was a 1972 BLS wage survey in Texas which showed that the annual average pay raise was only 0.4% when compared with the year before wage controls were first introduced.

Adding weight to his remarks is the fact that the House rejected even a partial rollback of prices, rents and consumer interest rates. And a House-Senate conference committee dropped a Senate-passed provision to limit rent increases in metropolitan areas with a shortage of vacant apartments.

The final version of the economic stabilization legislation also includes some other provisions sponsored by organized labor that:

- Require the Cost of Living Council to offer to conduct hearings for affected parties before wage raises can be reduced.
- Redefine "wages and salaries" to exclude reasonable employer contributions to fringe benefit plans.
- Stipulate that the stabilization law may not be used as authority or justification for impoundment of funds.

Second pact brings many gains at lumber firm

Across-the-board wage gains totaling more than $1,750 per member over two years and a wage reopener on all monetary items in the third were achieved in a three-year contract negotiated by Twin Cities Local 12 for its unit at Miles Lumber Company in Minneapolis, Minn.

The company, a division of Insilco Corporation, manufactures pre-fabricated homes, garages, plumbing, heating and kitchen equipment.

In the first year, the days before Christmas and New Year's become full paid holidays (previously half-days), and in the second year the day after Thanksgiving also becomes a paid holiday. The vacation schedule was liberalized to provide two weeks after one year (was three), and eligibility is now based on hiring date (was June 1).

New clauses in the second contract with the company include dues check-off; a pregnancy clause complying with the State's Human Rights guidelines, equal distribution of overtime, and full accumulation of unused sick leave days. In the second year, the company agreed to pay a differential for jury duty service.

The OPEIU negotiating team included Business Manager H. R. Markusen, assisted by Shop Stewards D. Michele Spiczka, Tim Tigue and Cleo Balabon. The contract runs to Dec. 15, 1975.

Local 388 delivers a $3,750 parcel

Wage gains totaling some $3,750 per individual over three years were won in a contract negotiated by Local 388 for its office unit at United Parcel Service in Cincinnati, Ohio, Business Representative Robert A. Pierce reports.

It calls for across-the-board boosts of 28¢ an hour in the first year, 31¢ in the second, and 33¢ in the third. In the final year, the pact sets a weekly wage of $208.48 in the lowest office grade, and a $248.80 scale in the top classification. An additional 0.7% was allocated to health-welfare.

Other gains are a paid holiday making the annual total eight; a more liberalized vacation plan providing three weeks after eight years (was 10), as well as pro-rata vacations for part-time employees, and a 45-minute lunch period (was 30 minutes).

New clauses were added on maternity leave, sub-contracting, assignment of starting times on a seniority basis, referral of job vacancies to the union, and removal of disciplinary warnings from personnel files after nine months. The pact runs from March 1, 1973 to Feb. 29, 1976.

Inside

Organizers in U.S., Canada add nine units to union

The latest tally shows new organizing has added 9 more OPEIU bargaining units representing some 450 professional and clerical employees in the U.S. and Canada.

The growing tendency of professionals to unionize under the OPEIU banner is reflected in the chartering of a second group of hypnotists, this one in California.

The group, which is located in Panorama City, a Los Angeles suburb, becomes Local 472. It is headed by John G. Kappas as president and Christiana Vick as secretary-treasurer.

The first group was chartered some months ago in Pittsburgh, Pa., as Local 469, with an office in the downtown YMCA. Both new hypnotists' Locals aim to set professional standards for practitioners and thus improve service to those who need hypnotic help.

Expanding its membership in the Spokane Wash. area, Local 187 reports a successful "do-it-yourself" campaign that organize the clerical unit of the Inland Automobile Association. After the employer agreed to a stipulated election, the office employees overwhelmingly voted for Local 187 representation by a 4-to-1 margin.

The organizing committee was headed by Local 187 President Wilma Clarey and Sec.-Treas. Lillian Melton, who disclose that the association's salesmen also are now becoming interested in union representation. Negotiations for a first contract are underway.

Local 3 President George A. Davis reports that the OPEIU has been certified to represent an 80-member unit of clerical employees at the Pacific School of Dentistry, in San Francisco. The campaign was directed by Business Representative Jerry McCool.

Los Angeles Local 30 Business Manager Gwen Newton reports organizing the office employees of Gilmore Envelope Corporation. The campaign was directed by Organizer Bill Roberts, aided by an energetic in-office committee headed by Terry Grand.

After a successful representation election, Local 30 received numerous calls from office employees at other large envelope companies in Los Angeles expressing interest in unions and Local 30 in particular.

OPEIU Vice President Romeo Corbeil reports that Montreal Local 57 has been certified by the Quebec Labour Relations Board to represent a unit of secretaries and clericals employed by the Laurenville School Board.

International Representative Jay Porcaro reports that Milwaukee Local 9 won a state-conducted election at the Green Bay Area Adult Vocational Education Dist. No. 3, by an almost 3-to-1 margin.

In Toledo, Local 19 won a 10-member unit at Consolidated Credit Protection, Inc., in a representation election conducted under the supervision of the NLRB.

U.S. study shows

Workweek cut brings benefits

Shorter workweeks can increase production substantially, ease employer recruitment problems, provide better service to customers by having more than one shift, result in maximized use of equipment, enhance the corporate image, reduce overtime and absenteeism, and help employee morale.

These are the conclusions reached by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics from a study of 10 of 16 firms experimenting with a shorter workweek, according to BLS Asst. Commissioner Jerry A. Maris. They confirm the arguments advanced by the OPEIU over the past decade for a four-day, 32-hour week.

Maris said that 12 of the 16 firms, whose employees work from 32 to 40 hours over three or four workdays, plan to retain it; three more plan to continue the experiment, and the other probably will go back to a five-day, 40-hour week.

Two banks and an insurance company that instituted two-shift operations report that maximum use of computer equipment was a big factor in raising productivity. A hospital among the 16 employers was able to put nurses on two 12-hour shifts, and hired an entire third shift for a four-hour period covering the time when the long shifts were going on and off duty. The new recruits were married women, willing to work the four hours but declining a full shift.

The study included a clothing manufacturer whose personnel department found that six out of 10 applicants preferred a four-day week with longer hours. But an automobile firm, which tried to attract mechanics by instituting a four-day week, failed to get a single applicant for a second shift.

A General Accounting Office study of government productivity found that it increased 30% in one section of the Social Security Administration when the system was computerized.

It was also reported that blue-collar employee production was up 5% per year after automation and mechanization of some systems.

Workweek cut at Cotton Exchange

A 35-hour workweek for office employees, reduced from 40, together with an 11% across-the-board pay boost over two years, highlight a new contract negotiated by Local 205 for its bargaining unit at the New York Cotton Exchange.

Local 205 President John R. Kret reports that the pact calls for a 5½% wage boost in each of the two years. Other gains include two personal bolidays, a new maternity clause, and a more liberal vacation scbedule.

Employees are now entitled to three weeks vacation after four years (was 5), and four weeks after 14 years (was 15). The new contract runs to October 31, 1974.

A 10½% general wage increase for some 270 employees at the American Stock Exchange was gained in another two-year contract negotiated by Local 205 a montb abead of the previous pact's expiration date, Kret said.

This settlement calls for a 4½% across-tbe-board wage hike effective last May 1, with a 6% increase scbeduled for May 1, 1974. Fringe benefits remain unchanged because of the securities trading slump on Wall Street.

Kret explained that negotiations occurred at the "worst period in the exchange's history, with securities volume in the first three months 42% lower than the same 1972 period." He added that the "new contract has been back-loaded in the bope that conditions will improve before the second-year wage increase becomes due."

Local 205 will insist on opening early negotiations at the New York Stock Exchange and at the Securities Industries Automation Corp., where current contracts expire on October 31. It now represents about 2,000 employees at the major excbange, and 230 at SIAC.

Local 205 has established a Sunshine Fund, financed by members' voluntary contributions. It provides baseball tickets to Met or Yankee home games, sends flowers to a member's family in case of bereavement, and in other ways touches members' lives.

$1,400 plus bonus won for San Francisco unit

Wage hikes approximating $1,400 per member, plus a $52 annual bonus starting on Dec. 1, 1974, were gained in a two-year contract negotiated by Oakland Local 29 for its 190-member office and technical bargaining unit at Technicolor, Inc., San Franscisco.

Other gains add dependent coverage to the employee dental plan, improved seniority language, protection for employees on "dangerous" jobs, and reimbursement for unused sick leave.

The union also secured a minimum guarantee of eight hours work daily for employees with five or more years of service (75% of group); six hours with three years or more and four hours if less than three years.

U.S. Price Index

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
New Base 1967=100

1972	
April	124.3
May	124.7
June	125.0
July	125.5
August	125.7
September	126.2
October	126.6
November	126.9
December	127.3
1973	
January	127.7
February	128.6
March	129.8
April	130.7

Canadian Price Index

Dominion Bureau of Statistics

1972	
April	138.2
Moy	138.3
June	138.5
July	140.2
August	141.3
September	141.8
October	142.0
November	142.8
December	143.3
1973	
January	144.5
February	145.3
March	145.7
April	147.3

Pension vesting at 40 among Cincinnati gains

A 16½% wage increase over three years, an additional paid holiday, plus improved hospital-surgical and pension benefits, highlight a new contract negotiated by Local 388 for its unit of 315 statistical clerks at R. L. Polk & Co., mail order house, in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Business Representative Robert A. Pierce reports that the additional paid holiday, Good Friday, brings the annual total to nine. Other gains are doubled life insurance coverage to $2,000 (was $1,000) for all employees. Eligibility for sickness and accident benefits, equal to 45% of an employee's regular weekly pay, is extended to 26 weeks (was 13).

Pension vesting eligibility was reduced to age 40 after 15 years (was 50 and 15), and the employer agreed to increase the maximum retirement benefit to $75 per month (was $67.50). A significant gain was a company agreement to provide $500 life insurance coverage for all retirees.

For the first time, the employer also agreed to bargain over health-welfare matters for retirees. This is expected to lead to additional benefits for retirees in future agreements.

WHITE COLLAR

Official Organ of
OFFICE AND PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION
affiliated with the AFL-CIO, CLC

HOWARD COUGHLIN, *President* — J. HOWARD HICKS, *Secretary-Treasurer*

Room 610, 265 West 14th St., New York, N.Y. 10011

POSTMASTERS, ATTENTION. Change of address Form 3579 should be addressed to Office and Professional Employees International Union, 1012 14th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005.

Published monthly at 810 Rhode Island Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20018. Second class postage paid at Washington, D.C.

Reproduction by the Labor Press of any or all material herein contained is not only permitted, but wholly desirable in the interest of workers' education.

Subscription Price $1 a Year

Case for increases

With workers' buying power declining as profits and prices skyrocket, it is clear that workers are "the victims of this inflation, not its beneficiaries," says a policy statement issued by the AFL-CIO Executive Council which adds:

"The Administration's inequitable and unbalanced stabilization program has imposed stringent controls only on workers' wages, ever since August 15, 1971. From the very beginning there has been:

"• No effective control on prices and the degree of price control that did exist has dwindled to the vanishing point.

"• No direct control on interest rates.

"• No restraint on profits.

"American workers cannot—and will not—continue to be the only group in the economy forced to sacrifice. Wages of workers are only worth what those wages will buy. Today, everything they buy and the rents they pay cost more than ever before. The compensation of the executives of the corporations they work for are allowed to mount unchecked. Tbe profits of their employers are allowed to soar. The interest rates they pay on mortgages and loans are allowed to increase.

"None of this is fair. None of this is equitable.

"Unless and until effective action is taken in tbese areas, no government intervention on collective bargaining settlements is justified, nor can the Administration reasonably expect tbe trade union movement to counsel moderation of wage increases.

"We bave no further alternative but to seek equity at the collective bargaining table."

AFL-CIO President George Meany suggests that wage increases of 7% to 8% are required this year to meet soaring living costs. With food prices skyrocketing, unions cannot ignore this basic factor in negotiating new contract settlements. The 7% to 8% figure is entirely justifiable under present circumstances.

What you can do

In the five years ending 1971, American multinational corporations through export of capital and technology have caused an estimated net loss of one million jobs or job opportunities in this country. Our Canadian brothers and sisters are in the same boat, experiencing record unemployment because of these multinational firms.

Briefly, multinational corporations set up plants all around the world. They move machinery and production techniques to those plants to take advantage of low wage scales—especially in the Far East.

Thus, they make huge profits but keep most of those profits overseas. Amazingly, U.S. tax laws fit band-in-glove with the wishes of these giant corporations. Our trade and tax laws encourage tbem to move plants abroad, at the same time giving them vast benefits on overseas profits.

As a result, we must pay higher individual taxes because the multinational corporations pay so little, but even more important is the loss of jobs. The Burke-Hartke bill is designed to solve this foreign trade problem by ending these tax privileges, thus providing more jobs for our own citizens.

The OPEIU has gone on record in supoprt of the Burke-Hartke bill, recommending that Canada be specifically exempt from the quota provision in the proposed legislation. Here's wbat OPEIU members can do to help enactment of tbis urgently needed law:

1. Send a card or letter to your Senators and Congressmen in Washington. Ask them to support the Burke-Hartke bill (officially known as S 151 and HR 62) but urging exemption of Canada from its quota provision.

2. Get your Local to adopt a resolution endorsing Burke-Hartke, and circulate the resolution among members of the Senate and House of Representatives, and among public officials and other leaders in your community.

3. Ask your city councilmen and state legislators to seek passage of resolutions calling for enactment of Burke-Hartke by Congress. Publicize your action in your local press.

4. Talk up the Burke-Hartke bill among your friends and relatives, your neighbors and fellow-employees.

Four Ontario units score

Health unit

A 7% general salary boost, an additional paid holiday and important fringe benefit increases were gained by Local 327 in a one-year contract renegotiated for its unit of visiting registered nurses at Northwestern Health Unit in Kenora, Ont. The organization provides health services and inspection.

Mid-Canada Council Representative E. M. Stencer reports that a floating holiday brings the annual total to 12; daily meal allowance was boosted to $8.50 from $6.50; the employer agreed to pay 75% of hospital-surgical costs (was 66⅔%), and 75% of accumulated sick leave upon severance (was 10%).

The starting uniforms allowance goes to $90 (was $60), with $45 for upkeep annually thereafter (was $30). The car allowance was increased.

A new clause calls for check-off of union dues. The OPEIU negotiating team included Local 327 President Mary Jane Boyko, Vice President William Jost and Bill French, assisted by Stencer.

Board of Education

Wage increases totaling $1,030 per individual, improved vacations and health-welfare provisions, highlight a new two-year contract renegotiated by Local 454 for its 90-member bargaining unit at Lakehead Board of Education, Thunder Bay, Ont., Mid-Canada Council Representative E. M. Stencer reports.

The first $20 per month increase is retroactive to Jan. 1, with a further $25 boost scheduled for Sept. 1, and another $25 to take effect May 1, 1974. The improved vacation schedule provides one month after 20 years, and five weeks after 25. The board also agreed to pay 100% cost of employee medical coverage and 80% of the premiums for life insurance.

Other gains include promotion for some 40 employees and an agreement to reevaluate all jobs prior to the next contract negotiations. A change in the union security clause requires some 30 part-time employees to join the union.

New clauses were added forbidding subcontracting and providing that there shall be no reduction in existing privileges or any lower of working conditions. The OPEIU negotiating team assisting Stencer included Local 454 President Edith Enstrom, Sec.-Treas. H. Shaw, and members Annette Kral, Josie Byce and Carol Cardy.

Hardware pact

Wage gains averaging some $1,600 per individual over 52 months, together with greatly improved fringe benefits, were won by Local 81 in a renegotiated contract covering its unit of office and warehouse employees at Cochrane-Dunlop Hardware, Ltd., in Thunder Bay "P", Ont.

Office employees gained a $9 weekly pay boost in the first year, retroactive to Jan. 1; $7.25 in the second year, and $3.60 on the same 1975 date. Warehouse employees won 25¢, 20¢ and 10¢ an hour each year.

Christmas Eve now becomes a paid holiday, bringing the annual total to 10. Under the new pact, employees are entitled to three weeks' vacation after eight years (was 10). The employer also agreed to pay 75% of medical insurance costs in the first year, and 100% in the second.

The OPEIU negotiating team included Chairman Bill Brerland and committee members Kathy Sharpe and Ed Broad, assisted by Local 81 President S. Rabachuk and Stencer.

McKellar Hospital

Four wage boosts over two years, adding $70 per month across-the-board to minimum clerical wage scales and $84 to maximums, an additional paid holiday and other fringe improvements, were gained by Local 81 for its office unit at McKellar General Hospital, in Thunder Bay "F", Ont.

Mid-Canada Council Representative E. M. Stencer reports the new pact sets a minimum starting wage in the lowest office grade of $410 per month, rising to a $456 maximum, and from $501 to a $547 maximum in the top clerical classification. The shift differential was increased to $1 from 80¢. New classifications and labor grades were also negotiated, with some classifications upgraded.

Other gains are a floating holiday, bringing the annual total to 10. The vacation schedule was improved to provide three weeks after six years (was 7) in 1973, and three weeks after five in 1974. Qualification for four weeks was reduced to 16 years (was 20). The hospital also agreed to pay 75% of the costs for medical coverage (previously 66⅔%).

The OPEIU negotiating team included Local 81 Vice President Judy Cholin, and members Deirdre Uvanile, Sylvia Shperuk and Shirley Robillard, assisted by Stencer and Local 81 President S. Rabachuk.

Maine local upheld on upgrading

Upholding Local 232, arbiter William J. Fallon has directed Frazer Paper Ltd., at Madawaska, Me., to upgrade two production and planning clerks because of added duties, to negotiate with the union a suitable pay rate for the new labor grade, and to compensate the grievants retroactively.

In an NLRB unit clarification in July, 1971, the job was first added to the bargaining unit when a strike was in progress and contract negotiations were being conducted. During the negotiations, the union sought to add Labor Grades 8 through 12 to the wage schedule. The company refused, so the current agreement was signed making Grade 7 the top category.

After the strike, the incumbent clerks were given the added duty of computing tonnage produced by each paper-making machine and graphically depicting production on a schedule board until this was dropped in October, 1972.

Eaarlier that year, the union requested that the job be evaluated in accordance with the company's job rating plan in existence since June, 1946. Later, the Personnel Department informed Local 232 that upon analysis it was rated at 300 points (well above Grade 7's 255-280) but that the job would "remain in Grade 7." The grievance was then filed.

Local 232 argued that in the past management had always notified employees, when new duties were added, that they were being upgraded because of job reevaluation, and the "present situation . . . is synonymous with past practice."

The company contended that the union is "now trying to accomplish in arbitration what it was unable to accomplish in negotiations." But Arbiter Fallon disagreed. He found that "it is clear beyond doubt that the union came to rely on the Company's job rating plan . . . as the established method for evaluating new and changed jobs," and there "is not a single example of a deviation from this practice."

He added that the company's position "on this grievance threatens the integrity of its plan because the 300 points assigned to the job of Production & Planning Clerk comes within Labor Grade 8, and not Labor Grade 7."

International Representative John F. Fitzmaurice presented the union case. He was assisted by Local 232 President Alfred Gerard, Jr., Vice President Joseph M. Martin, Shop Steward Clarence R. Cyr, and Roger Voisine, one of the grievants.

New Haven local upheld on job posting dispute

Arbitrator William J. Fallon has found that the Knights of Columbus violated its OPEIU contract by failing to post a job vacancy at its insurance office headquarters in New Haven, Conn.

After hearing both sides on the grievance brought by Local 329, he ordered management to post the vacancy forthwith, award it retroactively and make the successful bidder whole for both job seniority and monetary difference.

The Grade 4 job became vacant on Dec. 11, 1972, when the occupant bid for a higher grade position. Management then filled the vacancy by transferring a "red circle" rated employee, insisting that it had an "inherent right" to use this procedure, and contending that the transfer (at a more nearly equal rate of pay) was made pursuant to a "long standing practice" of eliminating red circle rates.

Local 329 argued that the transfer was lateral and in no way helped to eliminate a red circle rate. It maintained that management's unilateral action, in violation of the contract, infringed on the bidding rights of employees in the lower labor grades.

The OPEIU case was prepared and presented by International Representative Justin Manning, assisted by a Local 329 committee comprising President Claire Pluff, Ray O'Connor and James Lee.

Employees of 7 hospitals gain under Local 29 pact

Across-the-board wage boosts ranging from $70 to $90 per month in each year of a new two-year contract, negotiated by Oakland Local 29 for its 170-member unit of medical technologists at Associated Hospitals of East Bay, Calif., have been approved by the Pay Board, Business Representative Bruce Lockey reports.

He said this amounts to an annual 8½% increase in wages alone and is retroactive to Feb. 1, 1972. Current starting scales are $995 per month for Technologist; $1,135 for Sr. Technologist, and $1,280 for Supervisory Technologist.

Other gains are sick leave accumulation increased to 60 days; two extra unpaid days off for out-of-state bereavements, now including mothers- and fathers-in-law; five weeks vacation after 15 years; an additional floating holiday, and two extra paid days off for educational leave.

The pact, which covers seven area hospitals, runs to Feb. 1, 1974.

Cost-of-living clause protects Local 29 unit

A 7% across-the-board wage increase in the first year with a 5% boost in the second, supplemented each six months by a 1¢ per hour cost-of-living adjustment for each 0.5 point jump in the Consumer Price Index, highlight a new contract achieved by Oakland Local 29 for its bargaining unit at Twin Cities Federal Savings & Loan Assn. in Berkeley, Calif.

Retroactive to Nov. 1, it calls for a minimum starting rate of $508 per month in the lowest grade (junior teller or clerk-typist), rising to $534 after six months. In the top classification, the scale runs from a $796 monthly minimum to a maximum $815.

Other gains are an improved dental plan; 5¢ per hour added to the employer-paid pension plan, and an extra $2,000 in life insurance coverage per employee, bringing the total to $7,000. The two-year pact runs to Nov. 1, 1974.

Wisconsin unit gains

An 11.8% wage increase over two years plus numerous fringe benefit improvements were gained by Local 385 for its office bargaining unit at Appleton Papers, Inc., at Combined Locks, Wisconsin (subsidiary of National Cash Register), International Representative Jay Porcaro reports.

The pact calls for a 5.8% increase in the first year (a 4.5% general retroactive wage increase with the rest allocated to a set merit plan) and a 6% across-the-board boost in the second year. The technical group in the apprentice program also gained a 10¢ hourly inequity adjustment.

Other gains are an improved vacation schedule and abolition of the previous 10% below minimum policy in the case of hirings and promotions. Employees also won the right to take their two floating holidays when they wish. Previously, management exercised this option.

Life insurance was improved to $8,000 after one year of service (was $6,000 after 10 years). The company agreed to pay for a $3,000 life policy for employees who retire with 20 years of service at age 55 or better. Sickness and accident pay, which takes effect when sick leave is used, was increased by $5 per week.

The Local 385 negotiating team assisting Porcaro included Jerry Derus, Cindy Seif, Larry Weyenberg and Helen Burns.

from the desk of the

PRESIDENT

The reasons for VOTE

The need for all members of the OPEIU to participate in our VOTE Program was never more apparent than it is now. VOTE was set up by OPEIU following passage of the Taft-Hartley Act prohibiting the use of general funds for political purposes. As a result of that Act, unions such as the OPEIU must attract contributions of voluntary dollars to support friends of labor in the State Legislatures and in the Congress of the United States, and to defeat those who vote against the best interests of working men and women.

A bill, strongly supported by the AFL-CIO in the House of Representatives which called for a rollback of prices, rents and consumer interest rates to March of 1973, was defeated. That bill, sorely needed, met with opposition from all Republicans and 76 Democrats.

There are numerous measures presently before the Congress which call for our support. These include a substantial increase in minimum wages with no exceptions for teenagers, the elimination of numerous tax loopholes for the wealthy, and equitable tax treatment for American multinational firms. The failure to properly tax these firms cost the U.S. Treasury eight billion dollars in 1970.

Too often, OPEIU members refrain from contributing to our VOTE Program because they feel that they may not always agree with the candidates we support. Ninety percent of the monies collected, however, are forwarded to the AFL-CIO's COPE Program which supports only those candidates for office whose voting records should gain them the support of every member.

For example, the Congress recently voted to extend President Nixon's economic control policy for another year, but added several conditions the Administration did not want. One of these called for the exemption from all controls of wages up to $3.50 an hour. The previous low income exemption was $2.75 an hour and even that was achieved only through a court battle after the President's Cost of Living Council had set the cut-off at $1.90 an hour. Obviously, we should oppose those Congressmen who did not see fit to support the cut-off of $3.50 an hour.

President Nixon is proposing a new unemployment insurance program which will bar unemployment insurance benefits for strikers after an extended waiting period. At the present time, unemployment insurance payments are made to strikers in the states of New York and Rhode Island after a waiting period of seven weeks. It is labor's position that such unemployment payments should be made after extended waiting periods in all 50 states. Obviously, we should not support those members of the Congress who feel that strikers should be starved into submission.

While President Nixon has been loath to close glaring tax loopholes which have deprived the U.S. Treasury of much needed billions of dollars, the Administration is proposing that all workers pay taxes on employer contributions to health and welfare plans.

It seems incongruous to us that the Administration should be fearful of removing special tax benefits for corporation and wealthy investors, or of tampering with such loopholes as taxation of capital gains, rapid depreciation of machinery and equipment, oil depletion allowances and numerous others and, at the same time, feel no compunction at all in asking workers to shell out additional taxes on employer contributions to sorely needed health and welfare programs.

It must be apparent to all our readers that we could not support a Congressman or a Senator who would force workers to pay these additional taxes and, at the same time, condone the favored tax treatment of those executives in the upper echelons of corporations who receive special treatment in the form of favored stock option programs.

The Administration is proposing to give oil and gas companies new tax benefits in addition to the oil depletion allowances. They would be granted a seven percent investment tax credit for exploration expenses. If their efforts brought in a gas or oil producing well, they would be further rewarded with an additional five percent tax credit.

Those members of Congress who support the above-mentioned Administration's proposals on taxes, but who opposed a bill in the Congress to roll back prices, rents and consumer interest rates to March of 1973, do not deserve the support of organized labor and should be opposed by the membership of the OPEIU. Only through the VOTE Program can we make our voices heard.

$3,500 advance is Quebec score

Wage gains totaling some $3,500 per member, an initial pension plan and vacation bonuses highlight Local 361's new contract covering office and technical employees at Canadian Reynolds Metals Co., Ltd., in Baie-Comeau, Quebec, OPEIU Vice President Romeo Corbeil reports.

Based on a 35-hour week, the pact calls for $12 weekly increases across-the-board in each contract year, raising a Class 3 Typist from $97.08 a week to $133.08 on May 1, 1974, and a Class 1 Stenographer from $122.24 to $158.24 on the same date.

A Class 4 Clerk goes from $122.53 a week to $158.53, while a Class 1 Clerk will earn $196.63 a week next year. In the top technical classification, a Chemist Analyst will enjoy a $245.83 weekly salary next May 1.

Those working the afternoon shift get a 12¢ an hour differential, boosted to 13¢ on Oct. 19, 1973, and those on the midnight shift 15¢ an hour, rising to 16¢ on the same date. Employees required to work a regular Sunday shift get a 50¢ an hour premium; 60¢ on Oct. 19, 1973, and 15¢ on the same 1974 date.

The pact provides 11 paid holidays; two weeks' vacation after six months; three weeks after four years, and four after seven. After one year's service employees are entitled to a 10% bonus on top of their vacation pay; 15% for those entitled to four weeks, and 25% for those with more than 10 years of service.

The employer agreed to pay 70% of the costs for the group insurance plan, and put a new optional pension plan into effect, purchasing service back to Jan. 1, 1966 and paying those already retired on or before Nov. 1, 1972 date a pension of $4 per month per year of service. The retirement plan is offered to employees on a 50-50 cost basis, with employee contributions limited to $3 per week.

The OPEIU negotiating team assisting Corbeil included Jean Gagnon, Antonio Gohier, Bertrand Laliberte, Laurier Bergeron and Ghislain Vignola. The contract runs from Oct. 19, 1972, to June 1, 1975.

Muskegon unit moves forward

A floating holiday, bringing the annual total to 10½, plus immediate pay boosts ranging from $8 to $10 per week and semi-annual raises totaling $25 over two years, were gained by Grand Rapids Local 353 in a contract negotiated for its unit at Muskegon Co-op Federal Credit Union, in Muskegon, Mich.

A 4% cost-of-living allowance will be paid on Dec. 12, 1973, the anniversary date of the contract. Other gains are time off to attend union conferences, and pay differential for employees called for jury service.

The OPEIU bargaining team included Marge Dulinsky, Patricia Lambkin and Cynthia Franklin, assisted by Local 353 Rec.-Sec. Ida Smith.

Proof unions aid older workers

Age discrimination in the 40-to-65 bracket is a serious problem despite the law against it, according to a U.S. Department of Labor study.

More older workers were found to be denied promotions or fired because of age in 1972 than in the previous two years, but only one instance of age discrimination was found among labor organizations investigated, the report observes.

7.2% wage increase won at utility in Illinois

A 7.2% general wage increase in the first year with a reopener in the second, together with improved vacations and medical insurance provisions, were gained in a two-year contract for Local 167's office unit at Commonwealth Edison Company in Lincoln, Ill., OPEIU Vice President Bill Adams reports.

Wage increases range from 21¢ to 30¢ an hour, boosting the weekly wage to $121.60 in the lowest office grade and to $180.40 in the top classification. A new vacation schedule provides three weeks after eight years (was 10), and four after 17 years (was 19). In 1974, the pact calls for three weeks after seven, and four weeks vacation after 16 years.

The company agreed to increase its bi-weekly medical insurance contribution to $4.95 for single employees (was $4.53), and to $13.50 for family coverage (was $12.23). It also agreed to improve pension benefits under the company's annuity plan starting next March.

Local 167 President Forrest E. Hanslow and Shop Steward LaDonna Mahler assisted Adams during the negotiations. The new pact runs from April 1, 1973 to March 31, 1975.

Free fact sheets

The AFL-CIO Department of Legislation has prepared two informational fact sheets entitled "Tax Justice" and "No Fault Auto Insurance." They are available to OPEIU locals free of charge in any quantity desired. Send a written request to: AFL-CIO Department of Legislation, 815-16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C., 20006.

LABOR LAW INSTITUTE: Four OPEIU women leaders were among students who recently completed one-week course on labor law at the AFL-CIO Labor Studies Center in Washington, D.C. Standing from left are Local 10 Sec.-Treas. Elenore Palyu, Detroit; Local 209 President Carolyn Stegall, Pascagoula, Miss.; Local 457 Rec.-Sec. Marilyn McCoy, Brownsville, Pa., and Local 67 President June Harrah, So. Charleston, W. Va. Seated from left are instructors George Campbell and Glenn Williams.