5 organizing successes add 260 to union ranks

Two hundred and sixty employees in five bargaining units have been added to OPEIU rolls through representation elections and certifications in the U.S. and Canada.

The organizing successes include a school board and an in-service school in Canada; a unit of office clericals at a department store warehouse in Bayonne, N.J., a unit of the health and welfare fund in Connecticut, and a manufacturing company on the outskirts of Atlanta, Ga.

Vice President Romeo Corbell reports that Montreal's Local 57 has applied for certification to the Quebec Labour Relations Board for a unit of some 100 office employees at the C.N.A. Assurance Company. Local 57's Representatives Marc Bouthillier and Jacques Laboufet headed a brief, highly successful campaign in signing up a majority at the insurance company.

The Quebec board has certified Local 57 as bargaining representative for a 60-member unit of secretaries and office employees at the South Shore Protestant Regional School Board in Montreal. OPEIU Local 391 in Eau Claire, Wis., in recent months have run up a string of victories among office employees and secretaries of school boards in that area where interest in unionism is high.

Sec.-Treas. John Kelly reports that New York Local 153 has organized a unit of 60 office clericals at the W. T. Grant Company's warehouse located in Bayonne, N.J. In a National Labor Relations Board election, the department store employees voted for union representation by a 3-to-2 margin. Local 153 Organizer Jerry Fromm led the campaign.

International Representative Justin F. Manning reports the winning of a 30-member unit of clerical employees at the Health-Welfare Fund office of the International Laborers' in Washington, D.C. In an NLRB election, the employees voted 27-to-1 for OPEIU representation.

No President J. Oscar Bloodworth reports that Atlantic Local 21 was chosen as bargaining representative by an office unit at Glass Containers Corporation in Forest Park, Ga. In an NLRB election the employees voted by a 5-to-2 margin to join the union.

Inflation seen stiffening pay demands by negotiators

The head of the Cost of Living Council indicated at an informal news conference in Miami Beach, Fla., that adjustments might have to be made in Federal wage guidelines next year if living costs continue their rapid advance.

John Dunlop, Council director, acknowledged that pressure from labor for bigger wage settlements was becoming more of a problem. But he said it was too early to predict the outlook for 1974. He said, however, that a reappraisal of the controls program was likely before the end of the year.

The comments were made following a speech at the convention of the AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades Department which represents 17 building trades unions.

Economists, armed with slide rules and computers, debate whether a recession is imminent, says The Wall Street Journal, "But that's a guess that the average working man. For him, the recession began a year ago.

The table below, published in the Journal, pinpoints the shrinkage of paycheck buying power since last October. The figures in both columns are based on the average weekly pay of non-supervisory employees in private business. The buying power figures are obtained by adjusting actual paycheck pay to reflect price increases and Social Security and federal income tax deductions.

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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Wkly Pay</th>
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Thus, from October through August, the latest month for which figures are available, the average paycheck has gone up $6.30 a week while its actual buying power has gone down $3.15 a week.

An economist for the AFL-CIO in Washington confides he is "astounded" that union bargainers, in view of such a trend, remain "so doleful." He and his colleagues "much harder bargaining" just ahead.

The Canadian Labour Congress also expresses concern over the decline in wage earners' purchasing power and calls for increased militancy at the bargaining table in order to preserve living standards.

"We are greatly concerned that wage gains are being wiped out by rapidly rising living costs," CLC Secretary William Dodge said in a prepared statement. "We have stated this repeatedly over many months. The latest official figures again underline our concern.

"The real purchasing power of average wage and salary earners, both organized and unorganized, has been declining sharply. At the same time, corporate profits have been soaring to unprecedented levels and have taken a share of national income to a degree not exceeded in 17 years. At the same time, labour income has had its share drop lower than at any time in the past five years. The time has come when wage earners, in order to protect themselves and their families, must become more militant in their demands."
Bankers work on game plan for keeping unionism out

At the annual convention of the American Bankers Association in Philadelphia an anti-union consultant firm was given the assignment to explain its plans for preventing unionism among bank employees. The top executive advisors trotted out a list of 57 Do's and Don'ts that, they said, bank supervisors should use in combatting unionization. They then passed around samples of scare letters which some bank officials, intimately addressed by their first names. Bank employees thinking of joining a union can expect to get such scare letters. However, the anti-union "educators" were careful to add a word or two of encouragement to the bank to keep inside the law, as follows:

"Never reduce to writing your company's position in a union campaign without first consulting your labor attorney. Good, well thought out written communication can be a useful tool in your campaign, but it can also be used as a basis of an unfair Labor Practice Charge. This "composite" is presented to you as an example of what you can say and should not be used verbatim."

So that bank employees won't be caught off-guard by such warnings, a sample letter signed by a bank president or some other higher-up, they should be alerted to the game plan of the union. When union-employees separate the wheat from the chaff, they will see where their self-interest lies. Platitude or fear may force you to pay your grocery or rent bills.

Two of the sample letters and union replies to them follow:

Bank letters

Dear [first name]:

By voting for the union, here is what you let yourself in for:

1. The leadership of the union may force you to go on strike for something in which you do not believe.

2. You may be forced to go on a "sympathy strike" for workers elsewhere or plants, here or in some other city. Whether or not you are actually in sympathy with these is immaterial.

3. You may be kept at the union's insistence from earning a living, because you will not be allowed to work a picket line.

4. You may be forced to march in a picket line, without pay, when you would rather be at work and earning your salary.

5. Your opportunity for advancement and increases in your salary will become a matter for the union to debate and will no longer depend upon your initiative and ability.

6. Your days of being considered an individual will be over you will be dealt with by the union as one among many, as a means to an end, rather than as an individual whose salary increases will become a matter for the union to debate and will no longer depend upon your initiative and ability.

7. You will have placed your job in the hands of individual action, and your entire career at the mercy of union outsiders who know little or nothing about the running of our business.

Don't trade your freedom for Union Promises. Union dues, and the threat of Union Strikes and Union Picket Lines!

Dear [first name]:

It appears that "outsiders" are knocking on our gates wanting you to join their union. I have never been able to hear or see anything that would lead me to believe your best interests will be served by a union.

Several questions exist in my mind which I feel sure must be in yours too. Do you really want to be a "union member"? Why are you interested in it? Do you realize they are asking you to give up the welfare of yourselves and your families? Do these people really know or care about your personal problems? Must you give them your pay check each week in addition to your income; your personal deductions and other commitments? Are they really interested in peace, or will they produce unrest, strikes and shutdowns?

Bankers Collar, November, 1973

Questions for the ghost writer

The ghost writer of the sample scare letters to "educate" underpaid bank employees against unionizing insists their intelligence when in fact many are void of such intelligence. These employees know, too, that U.S. government statistics prove that unionized employees on average earn about $1,200 a year more than those unorganized. There are now some 23 million unionized workers in this country. When these workers pay union dues if they didn't benefit from collective bargaining? Can the ghost writer explain to us why bank employees in Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia and South America are living in relative poverty, starved and menial work? Big U.S. and Canadian banks operating overseas recognize these foreign unions and negotiate contracts with them. Thus any bank presidents signing such scare letters are deliberately duping their own employees. Why don't the banks come clean with their current and future plans for automation? They know that revealing these top-secret plans would really scare their employees.

Recently we published the inflated salaries of bank presidents of two banks in Philadelphia: $50,000 to more than $250,000 a year without counting stock options and other goodies. What does the underpaid bank employee who gets a "Dear Joe" or "Dear Sally" letter have in common with these gentlemen? Because they are grossly underpaid, unorganized bank employees realize they urgently need to unionize the same as other workers. Isn't it rather odd that these same bankers maintain their own union (American Bankers Association), and pay hefty dues for a plush Washington, D.C. headquarters with a large staff to enable them to act collectively for their own benefit?

They can't have it both ways. What's good for the goose is good for the gander.

Bankers Collar work on game plan for keeping unionism out

Union replies

Dear Bank Employee:

By voting to unionize, for the first time you gain a voice in bargaining for better wages and better working conditions.

1. Only a bargaining unit majority has to go on strike; the union cannot compel you. 2. Reference to "sympathy" and other strikes is a red herring. U.S. statistics show that 90% of contract negotiations are resolved without a single strike.

3. This business of crossing a picket line will not affect your own, rarely comes up. Union contract negotiations are usually settled, not brought into submission in a management forced a strike.

4. Unions don't debate; they negotiate proper job grades, periodic salary increases. They do not prohibit merit raises above the union scale. They also respect initiative and ability in promotions. Where such factors are equal, seniority prevails. This means that in politics, unfair promotion of pets or management relatives.

5. If you have a just personal file, you have a just personal file card. When you have a just personal file card there is no possibility that its members won't be starved into submission if management forces a strike.

6. Union employees gain higher pay and fringe benefits. They do not prohibit merit raises above the union scale. They also respect initiative and ability in promotions. Where such factors are equal, seniority prevails. This means that in politics, unfair promotion of pets or management relatives.

7. Unions are not just a personal file card. When you have a just personal file card there is no possibility that its members won't be starved into submission if management forces a strike.

Dear Bank Employee:

The union is organizing the bank. The union is not the only one of your fellow-employees believe their own hope of a living and self-interest. When this collective bargaining, the same as 23 million union workers in other industries already formed. When did your employer start calling you by your first name? Which your own? It's not because they're not personally interested in your problems? How much sleep has been lost worrying how you and your family are trying to make

(Continued on page 3)
Bank letters
(Continued from page 2)

If you and your family take
a hard look at what the ( )
union is selling, it boils down to
one thing. Let them know:
Is there any guarantee that goes
with the purchase? (GO) The
union can make you only
come promise, that they will
present your company with a list of
their demands and if your
company does not agree with these
demands (no matter how out-
rageous), the union can pull you
out on strike.

You should be aware that if
the union strikes in support of
contract demands like wages,
compensatory membership, or
automatic deduction of monthly dues,
the company has the right to
continue to operate its business
and can hire new men and women
to permanently replace the strik-
ers. Statistics show that many
strikers are permanently replaced.
Furthermore, strikers cannot
even get unemployment compensa-
tion.

When you’ve finished reading this is-
 sue, please pass it on to the teller at your
local bank the next time you conduct
business there.

Women bank employees stand to
gain equal status when they join a union

Non-supervisory employees in
all offices (including banks and
insurance companies) in the
U.S. and Canada are legally en-
titled to seek collective bargain-
ing rights through a union of
their choice. In the U.S., it
costs an employee nothing; in
Canada procedures are slightly
different.

All an office employee in the
U.S. need do is sign an OPEIU
designation card without obliga-
tion. Names are held in strictest
confidence. When 30% of eligi-
ble employees in a company sign
up (we prefer 65%), an election petition
is filed with the National Labor Relations
Board, or state labor board
when this is appropriate.

A hearing is then held to de-
fine the eligible bargaining unit,
and if the unit is deter-
mined, an election is scheduled
within usually within 30 days. After
a majority of eligible employees
vote for the union in the elec-
tion, it is officially certified as
bargaining representative. The
law then requires an employer
bargain in good faith with the
union for a contract cover-
ing the employees.

Union members draw up
their own contract proposals and
select a negotiating commit-
tee to assist an experienced
union negotiator who acts as their
spokesman. In organizing cam-
paigns, the union waves initia-
tion fees. Union dues begin only
after a satisfactory contract
is obtained and notified by a unit
majority in the democratic
American way.

Union dues provide skilled,
trained and experienced negotiators
backed up by a competent

team of experts in labor law, eco-
nomic research and wage anal-
ysis, together with other vital
services that include a Defense
Fund, retirement, medical, and
educational materials. The
union also thoroughly trains
shop stewards to represent unit
members on the job in solving
grievances.

Periodic general membership
meetings are held. Unionized, women bank
employees have a golden oppor-
tunity to influence their
discrimination and promo-
tions. Banks now assign them
to the lowest-paid, dehumanizing
detours. In these cases they can win equal pay and
equal opportunity for advance-
ment on the same basis as men do in
the same work.

Signing a union designation
 card is the first step toward econ-
omic and political gains for
Liberation, and more satisfying
cares.

Union replies
(Continued from page 2)

ends meet on your present salary?
Union dues are your concern, not
his. Here he says they are paid
weekly, "and in the same
see, they are paid "monthly"—a tip-off
to his ignorance on union matters.

He says the union is "selling"
—promises.

A union of competent
expert service in labor-relations
for which it is being paid. As
a bank collects interest on
loans it makes. The strike theme is
dramatically calculated to avoid
FEAR. Unions don’t cause strikes, or
"pull you out." Only a
majority vote of the bargaining unit
members can do this. The
local union then negoti-
ates with an entirely different

Finally, this scurril letter
adds insult to injury by telling
experienced employees that if they
exercise their legal right to
join a union, they will be
"replaced" overnight. The fact
that when strikes do occur,
settlements are made with
strikers are reinstated. Contrary
to the letter, some states do
pay strikers unemployment bene-
fits; others don’t.

Local 2 unit
advances $800

A wage boost averaging
more than $800 was
an additional half holiday and an
improved vacation plan were se-
cured in a new one-year con-
tact negotiated by Local 2 for
its office unit at Carday Associa-
tes, Inc., in Washington, D.C.

The agreement covers
workers, and increases their
wages. The agreement includes
a $2 raise, for a total of $120.

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a $2 raise, of which $120 will be-
nered to a total of $155 per
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The recent Pacific Northwest Educational Conference, held at the Hotel Vancouver in Vancouver, B.C.

250 gain from new Wisconsin pact

A packet of wage gains and fringe benefits totaling 16.15% over two years was won by Local 95 for its 250-member office unit at Neenah Edwards Paper Co., Inc., in Port Edwards, Wisconsin. The company is a subsidiary of Great Northern Neenah Corp., which manufactures pulp, fine papers and business forms.

Business Manager Carl Meisnest reports that the contract calls for across-the-board wage boosts of 7% in each of the two years, a gain of more than $1,860 for each individual member over the period. In the second year, it sets a starting weekly minimum of $31.16 in the lowest office grade and $52.17 in the top classification.

The pension plan was improved to provide early retirement at age 55 and 15 years of continuous service (age 55 and 20 years), with vesting age 45 after 15 years. It calls for a minimum pension benefit of 7% per month to a maximum of 35 years in the first year, with no maximum on years of service in the second. Previously, pension benefits were based on career earnings only.

In the first year, the company agreed to pay 100% of increased cost of NEMBA insurance (hospital and surgical), also pay in full for diagnostic x-ray and lab service, and to apply sick leave to make up the difference between Workmen's Compensation benefits and normal salary.

In the second year, life insurance will be increased to $7,000 per employee with AD&D (was $5,000). The unit negotiating team assisting Meisnest was headed by Chairman Donavan Dix and Vice Chairman Arnold Brost, and included as members Larry Dubkerko, Marvin DeWitt, Dale Krans and Sue Smoode.

The second year of collective bargaining will also see the two-year pact calls for increases of 7.76% in the first year. This consists of a 5.5% across-the-board wage boost retroactive to May 1, and 1.76% placed in a special account to be paid to employees, also retroactive, upon approval by the Cost of Living Council.

Bridgeport negotiations yield wage, fringe gains

A new Local 123 contract brings wage gains ranging from $8 to $13 per week, establishing a $107.42 weekly salary in the lowest grade and $248.13 in the top grade, with reopeners in the second and third years. The three-year agreement covers employees of Jenkins Bros., in Bridgeport, Conn.

International Representative Justin F. Manning says that AD&D benefits were increased to $80 per week (was $70) and that employees won their birth day as an additional paid holiday.

Life insurance coverage was increased to $6,000. Major Medical was changed to $100 deductible per year (was $100 for each occurrence). The new pact contains a dual choice clause whereby employees may elect to retain their present medical coverage, or opt for the newly-established Bridgeport Health Care Center Plan.

The negotiating team was headed by Local 123 President John Jacomet; Sec.-Treas. Ed Arkain, Ed Demovich and Mary Hammon, Manning assisted.

50 in Wisconsin local win a $3,000 advance

Wage gains totaling more than $3,000 per member over three years, in addition to improved fringe benefits, were won by Local 95 for its 50-member office unit at C.W. Transport, Inc., over-the-road trucking concern in Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin.

Business Manager Carl Meisnest reports that the new pact calls for a 25c an hour across-the-board wage boost in each of the three years. In the final year, it sets a starting weekly minimum salary of $131.20 in the lowest office grade, rising to a $145.20 maximum, and $138.40 rising to $159.20 in the top classification.

The vacation schedule was improved to three weeks after

Turnabout

A teachers' union notes with obvious relish that members of an Indiana school board ("that's right, not the teachers but the school board") have been ordered to jail for refusing to bargain with teachers in good faith.

Arbiter finds for Holyoke local in promotion case

Arbiter Robert Stutz found that the National Bank Book Company in Holyoke, Mass., violated the seniority clause provisions of Local 247's contract when it denied promotion of Carol Pease, a clerk-typist, to traffic rate analyst.

After the company posted the vacancy in Grade 6, Mrs. Pease (Grade 3) applied but her bid and those of three other applicants were turned down by the supervisor as not meeting the qualifications required. When attempts to hire an outsider failed, a Grade 4 clerk expressed interest and was promoted to the job last Feb. 20, although she had less seniority than Mrs. Pease.

After hearing testimony by Mrs. Pease and other supporting witnesses, the arbiter ruled that she should be awarded the job retroactive to Feb. 12, 1973, as "otherwise, the seniority rights of bargaining unit employees are not given adequate recognition."

The OPEIU case was presented by International Representative Justin F. Manning, assisted by Local 247 President Ed LaBarge.

U.S. Price Index

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Canadian Price Index

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