OPEIU, leading in white-collar organizing, gains five new units

A study of NLRB elections by the Bureau of National Affairs, Inc., covering the four years from 1969 to 1973, shows that the Office and Professional Employees International Union led all other AFL-CIO affiliated unions in the number of white-collar employees organized.

During the period, the OPEIU won 158 elections out of 313 with a total of 7,980 unit members. While NLRB figures show almost the entire extent of new organizing in private industry, they do not reflect organizing in elections conducted by state and other jurisdictions or through other procedures, such as card checks, voluntary recognition and unit clarification petitions. Neither do they report on organizing in Canada. They also do not reflect the phenomenal growth in the unionization of public employees, whose bargaining activities generally are credited with arousing a new interest in unions by white-collar employees in the private sector.

The BNA study shows that a total of 1,031 elections were certified in previously unorganized white-collar units in 1973. Unions won 548 in which 15,965 employees were eligible to vote and were defeated in 483.

Unions attempted to organize more professionals such as pharmacists, registered nurses, and professional employees at colleges and universities since the NLRB decided to assert its jurisdiction over private employees at colleges and universities, accounted for an increase in the number of professionals and office clericals at these education institutions joining union ranks.

Among the latter group, the OPEIU was successful in organizing a unit of 150 office clericals at the University of San Francisco.

Vice President Emil W. Steck, who is Business Manager of Buffalo Local 212 reports winning by a comfortable margin a 51-member unit of office clericals at AUX Ceramics Company in Olean, N.Y., in an NLRB election.

Vice President J. Oscar Bloodworth reports that the OPEIU was chosen as bargaining representative by employees at the International Paper Company's Container Division in Bay Minette, Ala. The unit voted for the union by a 3-to-1 margin in an NLRB election.

Local 87 Business Manager Jim Compson reports winning a unit of office clericals at W. R. Grace & Company in a third NLRB election in Lake Charles, La. He says the outlook is good for further organizing in the area which he describes as "an entirely new ball game.

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Across-the-board wage gains totaling nearly $3,200 per unit member over three years were achieved by Twin Cities Local 12 in a contract negotiated for its unit at Northwestern Drug Company, a wholesale drug concern in Minneapolis, Minn.

Business Manager H. R. Markussen reports that the past calls for a 30¢ per hour increase in the first year and 23¢ per hour in the following two years.

In the final year, it sets a starting weekly minimum wage of $150 for the lowest classification, rising to a $157.20 maximum. In the top classification the starting rate goes to $224.8 per week, rising to a $236.4 maximum.

Other gains are a three-day bereavement leave clause and maternity leaves in accordance with Human Rights Commission regulations. For the first time in 20 years of negotiations, management agreed to dues check-off.

The OPEIU negotiating team including Markussen included Gerald Clark, Kenneth Miller, Michael Morrow, Duane Nisbet and Barbara Peterson. The contract runs to August 31, 1976.

Two-year Ohio contract will raise wages $1,900

Across-the-board wage gains of $1,900 per individual over two years, an additional paid holiday and improved health-welfare benefits were achieved in a new two-year contract negotiated by Local 422 for its 50-member unit at Mead Corp., a paper manufacturer at Chillicothe, Ohio.

Local 422 Sec.-Treas. John Liebel, Roger Norman, Richard George and Chester Ballinger, assisted by International Representative Wade McCool.

$150 minimum to start gained in Twin Cities

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Gains achieved in Portland, Ore.

Wage gains in the first year ranging from 7½% to 15% plus increment increases and a 6% across-the-board hike in the second year supplemented by a cost-of-living escalator were won in a two-year contract negotiated by Local 11 for its members at United Good Neighbors & Tri-County Community Council in Portland, Ore.

Local 11 Sec.-Treas. Walter A. Engelbert reports that two new Grade IV jobs are included in the agreement. The employees agreed to pay $56.94 per month for each employee for full family medical coverage starting January 1, 1974, and to pay "full cost of maintenance of the same benefits for the duration of the contract."
A lesson from France

Unionized bank employees in France have had it with soaring inflation and other grievances ignored by an "autocratic and contemptuous" attitude on the part of management toward the rights of the employees, according to union leaders distributed in protest. (See story this page)

The grievances of the French bank employees parallel those heard by OPEIU organizers from their counterparts in this country who have to get their demands on union rolls to solve such grievances through collective bargaining.

The issues are: soaring inflation, dehumanization of jobs because of automation, and the seeming inability of the U.S. bank managers to even approach a 20% inflation rate in this country. Can we expect to see bank employees occupy banks of the Federal Reserve System in protest as they have at the Bank of France? We don't see this as likely, simply because bank employees in this country are the least organized of any group anywhere in the Free World.

Unfortunately, American bank employees for years have merely contented themselves to work for wages below the "poverty level" as defined by the U.S. Department of Labor. Even sadder is the fact that bank and other white-collar employees let down badly their union-minded co-workers when the showdown comes in representation elections.

When management offers them a miserably few dollars a week raise, they grab it and then go out and vote against not only their own best interests but also those of their more courageous fellow employees, feeding instead the "arrogant and contemptuous" attitude of their employers.

As dignified human beings, French bank employees in no uncertain terms clearly resent this attitude by management and, we have no doubt, will change it shortly, just as Belgian bank employees did a year or so ago when they tied up that country's banking system until their demands were met.

Earlier this year, President Charles F. Bourgeois of one French bank had this to say to his employees: "We may be the money men, but we are the servants of those who make the money."

Anywhere else, especially in the United States, it would be laughable.

But in France, an English-speaking student who set up camp outside on the esplanade of the Bank of France in the spring of 1975, would've gotten a twelve hour raise in pay and more liberal leave policies.

Be informed, support VOTE

Only some 89% of the American people can name one U.S. Senator from their state, less than 40% can name the other Senator, and a minority knows who their Congressmen is. These facts were made known in testimony by Louis Harris before Sen. Estes Kefauver's Senate subcommittee.

Most Americans have strong opinions on important issues, but their views are based more on emotion than knowledge, says Harris, citing the famous Harris Polls. "By their own admission, a majority of people are not well informed about what is going on in government or politics at the federal, state or local levels."

A further study by the National Assessment of Educational Progress shows that 50% of Americans between the ages of 26 and 35 know how to use a ballot and only 60% know how Presidential candidates are nominated.

That's why the International Union feels so strongly about making candidates' ideas and views available to our members.

And that's why we ask our members to support VOTE (Voice of the Electorate), which helps to educate voters on candidates and issues in city, state and federal elections.

Local 95 unit wins 8% raise

An 8% across-the-board pay boost, doubled life insurance coverage, and a new employee investment plan in premiums to pay for hospital-surgical benefits were gained in a one-year contract negotiated by Local 95 for office clerical and technical employees at Prevay, Inc., Wisconsin Rapids, Wis. The firm manufactures heating and kitchen appliances.

Business Manager Carl Meisten reports that December 31 became a paid holiday in 1975.

Life insurance per employee was raised to $5,000 (was $1,000) and premiums in premiums to pay for hospital-surgical benefits were gained in a one-year contract negotiated by Local 95 for office clerical and technical employees at Prevay, Inc., Wisconsin Rapids, Wis. The firm manufactures heating and kitchen appliances.

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CONVENTION FUND: Local unions sending delegates to the approaching Convention will be assisted in meet-
ing a portion of the expense through the International Convention Fund. Article VII of the Inter-
national Union Constitution provides in part as follows with respect to the Convention Fund:

"Sec. 3. Each local union eligible to participate and participating in a regular convention by sending at least one (1) delegate to the Convention shall be paid, for each delegate, a portion of the total amount in this Fund, based on monthly payments received from local unions through the month of February of the regular convention year, and including any balance in such Fund, subject to the following provisions:

"Sec. 4. In determining the amount to be paid each eligible local union participating in such regular convention, the total amount in the Fund as defined in Section 3 of this article shall be divided by the total of all the straight map miles between each and every eligible local union's charter city and the convention city.

"Sec. 5. Each eligible local union participating in such regular convention shall be paid an amount equal to the result of the following process: Section 4 of this article (figured to the next lower half cent) mul-
plied by the number of straight map miles such local union is from the city of the convention being held. Any local union contributing to the Con-
vention Fund less than one (1) year prior to February of the convention year shall participate in the Fund at the rate of one-twelfth (1/12) of a normal share for each month of participation.

"Sec. 6. Included in each regular convention call of the International Union sent to each local union shall be a statement indicating the amount which will be paid from this Fund to local unions participating in such convention in accordance with Section 5 of this article.

"Sec. 7. Upon receipt of a properly executed dele-
gate's convention credential, bearing the seal of the local union and signatures of its president and sec-
retary-treasurer of the International Union, Secretary-Treasurer shall issue to the local union a check drawn on this Fund in the amount determined by Section 6 of this article, and subject to conditions in Section 8 hereof.

"Sec. 8. Local unions which are not represented at such convention or whose representation at such convention is limited to officers and/or representatives of the International Union shall be paid those expenses to such convention paid for by the International Union, shall not share in this Fund for such convention, and shall receive no more than those local unions which have been paid from this Fund for such convention shall refund to the Inter-
national Union for redeposit in this Fund any such payment.

Local unions sending at least one delegate to the Convention, other than an officer and/or representative of the International Union and whose expenses to the Convention will be paid by the International Union, will receive the following amounts from this Fund:

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HOTEL RESERVATIONS: Headquarters for the Con-
vention and for the officers and Executive Board 
members of our International will be at the 

Deauville Hotel, 6701 Collins Avenue, Miami Beach, 
Florida 33141.

Reservations should be made as promptly as pos-

sible and it should be explained that they are being 
made for delegates attending the Convention.

Room rates at the Deauville Hotel are presently as follows:

| Single Room | $16.00 |
| Double Room, Twin Beds | 20.00 |

Suits (Tuxedo, Bedroom, Bath) 38.00 up

SPECIAL MEETINGS: At 2 P.M., Sunday, June 9, the 
day preceding the convening of the Convention, 
the A.M. Canadian Conference will convene. At 
2:30 P.M., the same day, there will be a representative 
meeting for U.S. delegates and guests. All those at-
tending the Convention from local unions should be 
advised and urged to attend these meetings.

Fraternally yours,

HOWARD COUGHLIN WILLIAM A. LOWE
President Secretary-Treasurer

Ronald C. Bell, A.M. Canadian Conference

Vice Presidents

BILLIE D. ADAMS
J. O. BLOODWORTH
JOHN P. CARR
ROMEO CORBEIL
WALTER A. ENGELBERG
JOHN K. GENTZ
STEVEN B. KINNICK
FRED W. MARTIN
GWEN NEWTON
EDWARD P. SPRINGMAN
EMIL W. STECK

Local union secretaries-treasurers will please read this call at the first meeting of their local union.
Inside story of a defeat

One year after it first petitioned the National Labor Relations Board for a representation election at the Central National Bank and Trust Company in Des Moines, Iowa, the Office and Professional Employees International Union was defeated at the polls by a margin of three to one.

The reasons for the defeat are astounding. They are a direct reflection on the competence and pro-management partiality of the National Labor Relations Board. First, it took one year from the date of petition before the Board ordered an election. Second, the Board handed down an "appropriate" collective bargaining unit determination which included 30 officers of the bank. This is the first time in the history of the Board that officers of a company were declared eligible to vote in an NLRB election.

Thirdly, the bank handed out a $400 across-the-board pay increase to all workers prior to the election.

The American Banker, in its issue dated March 1, 1974, quoted a post-election interview with Collin W. Fritz, the president of the Central National Bank and Trust Company. Mr. Fritz acknowledged that the only reason he sought to include 30 officers in the collective bargaining unit was a desire to gain more time. Such an argument, he said, resulted in hearings by the National Labor Relations Board, the filings of briefs and counterbrieifs, and finally a decision by the National Labor Relations Board in Washington, all of which took considerable time.

Naturally, Bank President Fritz was accordingly surprised when the National Labor Relations Board included 30 officers with a unit of 309 clerical employees. The officers immediately thereafter used the authority of their positions to attack the union. They argued with the employees they supervised that unionization would trigger first the loss of Central National's correspondent bank business, and then a subsequent loss of jobs at the bank. As a result of the NLRB decision, they were free to intimidate employees and did so under the license granted to them by the National Labor Relations Board.

The bank hired a Chicago consulting firm which worked with its supervisors and officers for purposes of defeating the union.

The bank, in accordance with President Fritz' statements, said that if management wanted to get a point across to workers, such as a change in policies, it gave the supervisors and officers a letter about this change with instructions to bring it to the attention of the workers and leave it with them for a while, telling the workers they would be back in 20 minutes or so to discuss any questions.

In effect, the supervisors and the bank officers used individual captive audience meetings for purposes of intimidating their employees.

During the interview with American Banker, Bank President Fritz conceded that if the same election had been conducted a year ago, shortly after the union filed its petition last March, the results would have been different.

Despite the pressure from bank officers and supervisors, the inclusion of 30 officers in the collective bargaining unit, the meetings with supervisors, and the $400 wage increase prior to the election, some 77 workers, or 25% of the collective bargaining unit, voted for the union. If the National Labor Relations Board had handed down a truly appropriate collective bargaining unit within a reasonable period of time, a majority of the eligible voters would have cast their votes for the union.

This is another example of a management-dominated National Labor Relations Board which had the audacity to include 30 officers of a bank in a collective bargaining unit on the grounds that they were neither supervisory nor managerial. The very fact that they were officers of the bank should have, in itself, been a convincing enough argument to the Board that they are both managerial and supervisory and, as such, do not belong in a collective bargaining unit.

from the desk of the PRESIDENT

N.Y. STOCK EXCHANGE SIGNS three-year contract with Local 205 covering some 2,000 employees of the Exchange and its two subsidiaries, Depository Trust Company and Securities Industry Automation Corporation. Seated from left: Terry Rogers, Exchange Real Estate Dept.; International Representative Justin F. Manning, who led the OPEIU negotiations; Local 205 President John Brady, and Bruce Cebdo, Exchange Vice President for Personnel. Standing from left are Exchange Executive Vice President Frank Palmura, DTC President Devon Koelootan, SIAC Vice President Vic Moore and Jim Banbury, Local 205 attorney. Contract gains were reported in March issue.

MBTA members awarded $2,500 yearly raise by arbitration panel

Some 250 middle management and supervisory employees represented by Local 453 at the Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority in Boston receive a $2,500 annual average increase in an initial contract awarded by an arbitration panel.

The $2,500 average increase is broken down as follows: A $700 average increase retroactive to Feb. 1, 1973, in the form of step adjustments; a $700 payment retroactive to Feb. 1, 1974, an average $1,000 increase resulting from a 2.7% cost-of-living adjustment, retroactive to June 1, 1973; and another 4.7% COL, increase retroactive to Jan. 1, 1974.

The agreement further provides for $700 average increases on employees' birthdays in 1974. A cost-of-living clause—effective in July, September and December 1974—will provide pay increases equal to percentage increases in the Consumer Price Index.

The contract establishes a union shop and a new dental plan, in addition to guaranteeing that present pension, vacation and holiday benefits will be continued.

The agreement, which runs to January 1, 1975, also establishes a joint union-management committee to consider continuing disputes over the effect of seniority on promotions, layoffs, recalls and job classifications. The committee is required to report to the arbitration panel in 60 days.

The OPEIU negotiated with MBTA for about six months before the initial contract dispute was submitted to arbitration. Massachusetts law forbids a strike by public employees. The arbitration panel was composed of OPEIU attorney Robert A. Manning, attorney William Joy, who represented the MBTA; and James J. Healy, a professor at the Harvard School of Business Administration, who served as neutral chairman.

The unit originally was organized a year ago last January by Boston's Local 6, which won a representation election conducted by the Massachusetts Labor Relations Commission. A separate local subsequently was chartered for the unit which includes engineers, accountants, data processing employees, writers, and planners. Unit employees were paid a "weighted average" of about $15,000 annually prior to the contract.

The group was organized under an obscure state law necessitating a fight by the OPEIU right up to the Massachusetts Superior Court, which upheld the union. Since then numerous inquiries have been received by Local 6 from other supervisory and middle management groups in the area interested in union representation. However, the exclusion of supervisory and managerial employees from Taft-Hartley coverage makes organization of these groups difficult.

Wage gains totaling more than $4,000 per member over three years, increased employer-paid health, welfare and pension plan contributions and an additional COL adjustment gained by Local 251 in a renewal agreement at Navajo Freight Lines in Albuquerque, N.M.

Fort Worth Local 277 President-Business Manager J. B. Moss, who led the negotiations, reports that the pact calls for a 35¢ an hour across-the-board wage hike in the first year and 30¢ in each of the two succeeding years. The current 10¢ an hour cost-of-living allowance was frozen into base pay with the employer guaranteeing two additional COL adjustments, ranging from an 8¢ minimum to an 11¢ maximum, during the life of the agreement.