The OPEIU has laid the foundation for establishing a trust fund to provide its members with prepaid legal services through collective bargaining, in accordance with the recent Taft-Hartley set amendment allowing employer contributions for this purpose.

In making the announcement, President Howard Coughlin disclosed that all OPEIU bargaining units are being urged to negotiate into future contracts fully-paid employer contributions for employee coverage under the program. Premium costs per employee will range from $50 to $120 annually. The plan became effective September 1.

The plan to establish the trust fund was worked out jointly by the Tolley International Corporation which will administer the program designed to cover members in domestic, general and criminal litigation. It was developed by the corporation over three years at a research cost in excess of $300,000.

"The group Legal Services Program designed by the Tolley Corporation meets a serious need for legal services by mid-income Americans and provides a very comprehensive schedule of benefits," Coughlin said.

He emphasized that it allows OPEIU members with contract coverage complete freedom of choice with respect to the lawyer who represents them in any legal problem covered by the plan. Benefits will range from $80 for basic consultation with a lawyer to discuss any legal problem, to as high as $3,000 in criminal proceedings.

Among other litigation areas covered are divorce, separation or annulment in domestic matters; estate planning and administration; the preparation of wills, traffic violations, bankruptcy proceedings, and defense of civil suits and administrative matters, etc. The benefit limit applies on a calendar-year basis.

Russell M. Tolley, chairman and president of the Tolley Corporation, said that the OPEIU agreement submitted to the Internal Revenue Service represents the"first and only one of its kind on Prepaid Legal Services to be filed on behalf of any International Union."

The agreement is now being processed by the IRS and a ruling is awaited as to whether benefits under this type of program are taxable to the recipients. The IRS is being urged to accord legal service plans the same tax-exempt status that now enjoys by health-welfare and pension plans.

So far the IRS has not issued its regulations on this and other questions concerning legal service plans.
**CongressAnti-LaborLobby Gets GrassrootViews of Union Member**

Many union members report receiving in their mail appeals for donations to a lobby campaign known as “Americans Against Union Control of Government,” whose Executive Vice President is a James L. Martin. The letters are on official Congressional stationery, signed by reactionary Senators and Congressmen.

One such letter was received by Local 144’s Recording-Secretary Elaine C. Smith, of Knoxville, Tenn., which was signed among others by Senator Jesse Helms, (R.N.C.), elected in 1972. With Sister Smith’s kind permission, we print below her reply to him:

Dear Senator Helms:

I received your letter of July 19, 1974, soliciting funds for Americans Against Union Control of Government and the enclosure from James L. Martin.

First, I would like to know who asked you to write to me, and who compiled the list of members who are believed to be gravely concerned about the possibility of America’s takeover by a relative handful of union bosses.

I think you and Mr. Martin need to learn more about the democratic way unions operate before you accuse the union membership of members’ dues and using them improperly or unlawfully. I have belonged to a labor organization since 1943, and I have worked for labor organizations all these years. I have worked with, and know, many union people.

I have found them to be hard-working, upright people who are trying to help the workers make a decent living above the taxes they must pay to keep the parasites in government. The dues money of the labor organizations, that I have worked with, is spent with the approval of the membership.

Do you believe the citizens would have approved the raise in salary the Senators received? I firmly believe you would be doing a valuable service for your country if you would devote your efforts to eradicating the crookedness that seems to prevail in our politicians, and to represent the working people instead of the wealthy and the people who should be working and also paying taxes.

Mr. Martin is blaming the unions for the energy crisis. What do you think? Do you admit or imply that the members of Congress are bound to vote according to the way contributors to their campaign dictate? If this is true, the working people have a very small chance of getting much representation.

Do you own stock or have you an interest in some industry where the workers are trying to get better recognition so they will have better working conditions, or is this a favor for one of your contributors in your Senatorial campaign?

I am a Christian and I am an American. I love my country and I pray for righteousness to prevail. Sincerely, signed/ Elaine C. Smith

**INSTITUTE GIVES UNION WOMEN FACTS ABOUT ECONOMIC LIFE**

Union women have a 44% earnings advantage over non-union women, participants learned at a two-day Institute sponsored by the Council of AFL-CIO Unions for Professional Employees (CPE) at the AFL-CIO Labor Studies Center in Silver Spring, Md., at which the OPEIU was represented. It was disclosed that women comprised 20% of AFL-CIO membership, and their numbers are growing rapidly.

Other economic facts of life brought were that 60% of the 35-million women in the nation’s work force (19% of the total work force) are being exploited economically; that in 1940 women held 45% of all professional and technical positions, by 1970, only 1.5%; and that the average length of time they stay in the work force is 10 years.

Median earnings of full-time working women are only 60% of the earnings of full-time working men. 45% of women classified as professional and technical are scattered in the traditionally “female-intensive” fields of education, health care, and clerical occupations which also, traditionally, have been among the lowest paying career fields.

It was emphasized that women want a voice in the working conditions to support their cause and are joining unions in far greater numbers than any of the activist organizations concerned with women’s problems.

Attention was also paid to the enormous benefits for women in both the home and society when the Equal Rights Amendment is ratified. (It needs seven more states). In addition to barring employment discrimination, the Constitutional Amendment will also bar discrimination against women in the crucial areas of credit, mortgage loans, and the capacity to contract.

Participants called for stronger channels of communication among trade union women and stressed the need for education among all the unaffiliated non-union salaried women throughout the country. Based on the positive response to the Institute, the CPE is exploring plans to repeat the two-day event in major U.S. cities.

**STUDY WOMEN’S PROBLEMS: OPEIU Vice PresidentGwen Newton (left) and Sec-Treas. Bill Lowe (second from right) shown as they attended a two-day special Institute sponsored by the Council of AFL-CIO Unions for Professional Employees to explore problems facing professional women in the labor force.**

Based on the positive response to the Institute, the CPE is exploring plans to repeat the two-day event in major U.S. cities.
Gale Products Yields Hefty Packet

Across-the-board wage boosts totaling more than $3,000 per member, supplemented by a cost-of-living escalator plus other improved fringe benefits, were won in a new contract renegotiated by Local 221 for its 150-member office unit at Gale Products (an Outboard Marine Corp. subsidiary) in Galesburg, Ill.

Local 221 President Stan Loker says the new three-year pact calls for a $47 per month raise in the first year and $52 in each of the following two years. In the final year, it sets a $60 monthly minimum base pay rate of $3080 in the lowest office classification and $1026 in the top grade.

He says the first-year increase, including the cost-of-living allowance, amounts to $52 an hour, or more than $250 per week. Differential for the second shift was raised to $25 per month and to $32 for the third shift.

Other gains were made in the Christmas holiday period, layoff-provisions and job bidding. Sick leave may be accumulated to 30 days after 15 years.

Inflation Plea Voids Waco Pact

Local 277 Wins Big Pay Hike for American Life Unit

Because of inflationary hardships, Fort Worth Local 277's contract with American Income Life Insurance Company in Waco, Texas, was renegotiated 16 months ahead of time, winning weekly wage boosts as of September 5, ranging from $13 to $20 per week for some 200 clerical and technical employees and a $2.50 per week escalator provision.

Local 277 President-Business Manager J. B. Moss said the company agreed to reopen the contract at the urging of the union. He said that he also understands that the labor contract contains the only cost-of-living clause in the insurance industry.

The revised three-year agreement restructures the labor grades, setting higher minimum and maximum rates. As an example of the lowest labor grade, new calls for a $2.45 hourly minimum for a 37½-hour week, or $2.40 per week, plus the cost-of-living allowance.

New Haven Health Care Plan

Yields 12% Pay Increase

A 12% wage boost in the first year, with a repeater on wages, pension and dental care plans in the second were gained in a new two-year renegotiated by Local 446 for its 75-member unit of office employees and technicians at Community Health Care Plan (CHCP) in New Haven, Conn.

International Representative Justin F. Manning reports that employees in the medical records division, in addition to the wage raise, also benefit by elimination of the lowest three labor grades in that department. He said the package amounts to about 15.65% in the first year.

Wage gains totaling 16.6% over two years, in addition to other fringe benefit improvements, were gained by Local 95 in its contract renegotiated for its 234-member office and technical unit at Consolidated Paper Inc., in Wisconsin Rapids, Wis.

Business Representative Carl Meineert says the pact calls for a 15.5% an hour across-the-board wage hike effective May 1 last, with a 38¢ average increase next level with a $666.67 monthly maximum.

In the second year, the day after Thanksgiving becomes an additional paid holiday and an improved vacation program calling for three weeks after six years (was 5) and after 12 years (was 15). Vacations may also be banked for future employment years to a 15-week maximum.

New employees must take two weeks during the regular vacation season.

Mastel Dairy Contract Signed in Twin Cities

Across-the-board wage boosts of $10 per week in each year, in addition to other fringe benefit improvements, were gained in a new two-year master agreement renegotiated by Twin Cities Local 12 for its bargaining units at six Minneapolis dairy companies.

Other gains are a personal holiday, bringing the annual total to 10 to nine, and six-month pay increases increased to $5 per week from minimum to maximum (was 54). In the second contract year, Local 12 Business Manager H. R. Martinesk says the pact sets a minimum of $116 per week in the lowest grade rising to a $176 maximum, and a $130 minimum in Labor Grade 11 rising to a $187 maximum.

The companies also agreed to increase payments into the Pension Plan to $8.75 per week for each employee (was $6).

The OPEIU negotiating team assisting Martinesk included Stewards Lucille Eddelen, Loraine Kelly, Clara Rasmussen and Mildred Speidel. The six companies are Clover Leaf Creamery, Ewald Bros., Inc., Norris Creameries, Inc., Norland Milk & Ice Cream Co., Dairy Distributors, Inc., and Superior Dairy Fresh Milk Co.

Bargaining Stage Set Up For Legal Services

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Find OPEIU Delivers the Goods
Dallas Truck Unit Gains $2,500 in 1st Pact

Wage boosts alone of more than $5,200 per unit member, plus cost-of-living allowances with an 11% maximum in addition to numerous other fringe benefits were won in an initial two-year contract negotiated by Fort Worth Local 277 for its new offsite bargaining unit at Strickland Transportation Co., in Dallas, Texas.

Local 277 President-Manager Larry Moss reports that the unit voted for OPEIU representation last May 31 although, paradoxically, the same group turned down a previous bargaining in a 1962 NLRB election.

A pact calls for across-the-board raises of 89c an hour retroactive to July 8 last; 40c on January 1, 1975; 40c on July 1, and 35c on January 1, 1976, for those not in that job rate. It sets a minimum contract rate of 89c an hour, rising to $5.96 in the second year, and a maximum of $4.79 per hour, jumping to $7.09 in the second year.

Other gains are nine paid holidays and two days bereavement pay; two weeks vacation after one year, three after 10, four after 15, and five after 20 years of seniority. Sick leave of 10 days per year, cumulative to 18 days, was also obtained.

Promotion from within is guaranteed through job posting and job bidding. The company agreed to contribute $60 per month per employee into the OPEIU Health-Welfare Plan, and to increase this to $65 on July 1, 1975. Besides, it will also contribute 20c per hour for each employee to the OPEIU Western States Pension Plan.

The OPEIU negotiating team was headed by J. B. Moss, assisted by Jodie Bourland, Barbara Rowley, R. V. Smith and Mary Lou Lanier.

Initial Museum Pact Wins 15% Hike
Minneapolis Fine Arts Signs with Twin Cities Local 12

Wage boosts averaging $18 per week, or 15%, in addition to upgrading 15 positions in the bargaining unit, were gained in wage reopener negotiations by Twin Cities Local 12 for its 50-member unit of professional, clerical and technical employees at the Minneapolis Society of Fine Arts, an educational museum.

The group, formerly an independent association, recently affiliated with the OPEIU. It was the third museum of fine arts to unionize in the nation, and is the first to affiliate with an international union.

Local 12 Business Manager H. W. Hefner reports that wage increases range from a 6% minimum to a 37% maximum, and average 4c an hour per position. He notes that most of the employees received a second increase on their anniversary date.

The independent association had a three-year contract with the employer which runs to July 1, 1975, but contained a wage reopener scheduled for July 1, 1974. Local 12 Business Representative Stephen Ross negotiated, assisted by a unit bargaining committee comprising Chairperson Barbara Cann, and including Ruth Dean, Lois Johnston and Richard Colburn.

Named as Delegate To ILO Convention
Director of Organization Arthur P. Lewandowski was named by President Howard C. Calkins to represent OPEIU at the conference of International Labor Organizations (ILO), which convened in Geneva, Switzerland, from September 16 through 26.

Anti-Union Florida Bank Finally Signs OPEIU Pact

A long-standing dispute between Jacksonville Local 73 and the First National Bank of New Smyrna Beach, Fla., was finally settled when the bank signed a collective bargaining agreement ending lengthy litigation both in federal courts and the National Labor Relations Board.

The bank not only refused to bargain after its employees voted for OPEIU representation, but also illegally discharged union members during the course of the litigation. The NLRB consistently upheld Local 73 throughout, and granted substantial sums of money to those discharged.

The new contract, which runs to December 31, provides a 12% wage boost, 2% retroactive to July, 1973; 3% retroactive to January, 1974, and 7% effective last July. It also calls for a computerized overtime computation, and contains a more liberalized sick leave clause.

N. Y. Governor Picks Coughlin For New Judicial Commission

Governor Malcolm Wilson, of New York, has appointed OPEIU President Howard Coughlin as one of nine members of a new state commission that will investigate complaints about the fitness of judges in the state. Only two of the commission's members are judges.

The group, the Temporary State Commission on Judicial Conduct, was authorized by the Legislature in June and approved by the Governor as a major piece of court-reform legislation. It is intended to serve until a constitutional amendment can be enacted to form a permanent commission with even stronger powers.

The temporary commission will have the power to conduct hearings, subpoena witnesses, grant immunity and require the appearance of judges being investigated. If the commission determines the complaint to be valid, it will report its findings to the judge's superior for disciplinary action.

STORE PACT WINS 24% WAGE BOOST

Wage gains totalizing 24% over three years, plus a new cost-of-living clause in the second and third years with improved fringe benefits, were gained by Local 11 in a renegotiated contract for its office unit at Pay-N-Tukl Stores, Inc., a retail grocery in Vancouver, Wash.

Local 11 Sec.-Treas. Walter A. Engelbert says its calls for a 10% across-the-board wage boost in the first year, with 7% in each of the following two years. The cost-of-living clause sets a 1½ hours raise for each 0.5 change in the Consumer Price Index.

The pact also calls for three weeks vacation after seven years, with an additional day for each year to the twelfth.

U.S. Price Index

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