Despite membership losses due to the economic slowdown, reflected in mergers, bankruptcies and relocation of companies under OPEIU contracts, nevertheless membership continues to gain both in the U.S. and Canada, according to Hols and Coughlin reported at the semiannual meeting of the Executive Board in Los Angeles.

Membership growth in Canada since the 1974 Convention has been greater than in the U.S., he noted, but "it is possible, with continued progress, to reach a 100,000 total by May, 1977."

He pointed out that the OPEIU is now in the process of replacing retired staff members with new staff, and it is intended "to add to our present staff if a substantial per capita tax increase is adopted at the next Convention."

In hiring new staff representatives, he continued, every effort is placed on "organizing the unorganized, which is 80 to 90% of the job." He said new staff representatives are given six months to prove their abilities in this respect.

"We are looking for young staff members with a background in labor relations, either educational or experience-wise, or a combination of both — who are willing to take positions with our International Union, knowing they must successfully organize," he declared.

He pointed out that the Strike Benefit Fund, after a drain by lengthy strikes in the preceding year, had now recovered to the extent that full benefits are again being paid to striking members.

He disclosed that OPEIU's unwritten no-raid pact with the Teamsters "has been adhered to religiously by that organization."

The Teamsters had prevented a raid by one of its Locals on our membership in Denver offices of the trucking industry there. The no-raid pact also assisted immeasurably in Los Angeles and Minneapolis, in addition to other areas of the United States, he said.

Referring to the situation in Canada, where a wage stabilization board has severely limited wage increases, he said that new organizing continues at an "excellent pace," he noted. He expressed particular gratification at the all-union Canada one-day protest, in which our Canadian members participated wholeheartedly last October 14. The protest got wide publicity in all media in the U.S. and Canada.

"We feel that Premier Trudeau will find that a one-sided program which restricts wages and does very little to restrain prices cannot be successful," he added.

Hailing the election of Jimmy Carter to the Presidency of the United States, whose candidacy the OPEIU had supported, he said that "We are pleased that he will give high priority to numerous economic measures designed to combat inflation, unemployment and the "very important, the repeal of Section 14(b) of the Taft-Hartley Act."

Executive Counsel Joe Finley (Continued on Page 3)

OPEIU Board Plans for '77 Convention

Lewandowski Reports on West African Visit

Director of Organization Art Lewandowski during a trip to three West African countries, under the auspices of the African-American Labor Center, found that white-collar employees in those French-speaking states share the same problems and concerns as their counterparts in North America.

In a report to the Executive Board, he listed some difficulties on contract negotiations, high unemployment, soaring living costs, and membership apathy. He said that he saw manpower and resources for the tasks at hand, and an urgent need to implement educational and training programs for emerging union leaders and members.

During his visit, he conducted several seminars on white-collar unionism and distributed copies of OPEIU bank and insurance contracts, the International Model Agreement, stewards' training manuals and other organizing and research materials which were eagerly accepted by West African trade unionists.

He noted that white-collar workers in these countries are among the most highly unionized groups. During his visit he met with national and local union leaders, government officials, American Embassy personnel, and the directors of banks, insurance companies and commercial establishments.

The cities he visited were Dakar, Senegal; Nouakchott, Mauritania; and Lome and Togo.

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OPEIU Wins Pay of $226 a Week for Bank Tellers

Wage gains totaling 24%, an improved insurance plan, and the upgrading of one employee to the teller classification, were won in a new two-year contract negotiated by Local 411 for its office bargaining unit at Springhill Bank & Trust Company in Springhill, La.

International Representative Bill Kirby reports that the new agreements calls for a 12% across-the-board wage boost in each of the two years. After the second-year increase, the hourly rate for a Bookkeeper-Receiver will be $6.67, or $186.60 per week.

The salary rate for tellers and proof operators will go to $3.65 an hour, or $72.60 per week.

He says that a one-year agreement had been renegotiated for Local 411's unit as Citizens Bank & Trust Company, also in Springhill, where both banks in the town are fully unionized.

It calls for a 10% minimum wage increase, an increase in the daily hospital room benefit to $30 per day from the previous $16, and a decrease in the number of job classifications to three from the previous four.

Wage rates for Citizens' bank employees under the new contract will be Grade I, $4.36 an hour or $74.40 per week; Grade II, $4.96 or $198.40 a week, and Grade III, $5.11 or $122.60 per week after 18 months.
Congress Must Act

We are sure that the vast majority of OPEU members are dismayed at the decision of the U.S. Supreme Court which holds that company disability plans that exclude or limit coverage of pregnancy or childbirth do not violate the federal anti-discrimination laws.

The decision is all the more surprising since it reverses the rulings of six U.S. Courts of Appeals. All three lower courts upheld that of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, holding that private employers with plans that temporarily compensate workers who are pregnant or on leave for absences caused by pregnancy violated Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 if they refused such payments to women for absences caused by pregnancy.

The decision marks a setback for the women's liberation movement, and we are deeply disappointed. Yet, we believe that it will bring about a closer liaison between organized labor and other women's groups struggling to gain equal treatment under the law for women as well as men.

Although organized labor, including the OPEU, is championing their cause, we hope to see legislation introduced in the next Congress to correct this situation. Needless to say, this union which has always lived by the fight for women's equality, will throw its fullest influence behind this legislation.

Discrimination against women in disability plans, because of their sex, is clearly repugnant to all fair minded people and violates our national conscience and justice.

However, the Supreme Court ruling does not prevent unions from seeking and winning contract provisions that would specifically require disability compensation for women absent from work because of pregnancy, on the same basis as for other disabilities.

We feel that the ruling is one more reason why all women who work should belong to a union. Collective bargaining, embodied in a union contract, is their best guarantee for equality in the world of work.

Labor Law Reform Urgent

The Putnam & Sons, Inc. case (See Page 4) is a classic example of NLRB delays involved with recalcitrant employers who use illegal means to prevent or to collective bargaining.

The J. P. Stevens case is perhaps the best known nationally. So far, none of its plants operates under a union contract. The same applies to office employees of book publishing houses.

The Labor Board is now in the process of defining the Labor Board Relations Act because it's cheaper and more expedient to do so.

Thus, the present delay of the Labor Board Relations Act because it's cheaper and more expedient to do so.

They regard paying token fines or legal expenses involved as far less costly than allowing their employees to organize without illegal interference.

However, recent developments show that drastic changes may be on the horizon. These would speed up NLRB procedures in order to make sure that employers do not use their muscle to prevent or curtail the right of employees to find a contract and union

Hence, we urge all employees who are covered by an NLRB case to join the NLRB, so that the Board is able to make enforcement mandatory.

Under the Nixon-Ford administrations, weaknesses within the Act and the union enforcement by the NLRB actually encourage employers to flout the law deliberately. The only punishment they received was a slap on the wrist.

Congress has long been studying basic changes in the labor law itself, especially in the enforcement area, but failed to introduce corrective legislation in the fear that it would be wasted effort as such would face vetos by both Nixon and Ford.

The present NLRB Task Force, set up by Chairman Betty Southard Murphy, made 69 recommendations in November on new procedures calculated to speed up its work. Most of the task force's recommendations were approved by the full blue-ribbon panel of union, business and government labor lawyers. Its final report is due in early 1976, and this is likely to be adopted without a fight.

Finally, the five board members are all appointed by the President. Three are now Republicans and two the Democrats. The five-year terms of four members will expire during the Carter administration.

Although Jimmy Carter has not discussed potential NLRB appointments, prospects for corrective legislation are brighter than they have been in years.

Women Lose on Pregnancy Issue

High Court Rules Employers Not to Pay Absences

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled by a vote of six-to-three that companies do not have a program for temporarily compensating out-of-work employees for a broad range of disabilities, including absences caused by pregnancy.

The ruling, as two of the dissenters noted, reverts the rulings by six Courts of Appeals. Every Court of Appeals that has considered the issue has held that exclusion of pregnancy from such plans violates Title VII.

The decision, written by Justice William Rehnquist and handed down in a case involving the International Electric Company plan, does not prevent unions from seeking through collective bargaining to require employers to provide pregnancy coverage.

Nor does it bar future legislation by Congress. The ruling was an affirmation of Title VII's ban on sex discrimination as now written, and Congress is free to alter that.

But without such action, the ruling opens the way for companies that currently provide coverage for pregnancy-related absences to drop it from their plans.

The majority of companies that have disability plans apparently do not now include pregnancy, but many others do.

Companies that have not made such plans, but have been under pressure to adopt them, now need not do so.

The ruling may also prompt employers to change policies relating to women employees or at least employees who are pregnant, such as paid or unpaid maternity leave, and possibly even hiring.

The Court found in essence that pregnancy is a unique condition; that refusal to cover it is not a refusal to cover people because it is female; but instead is a refusal to cover a special condition.

In dissent, Justice John Paul Stevens said: "This is an issue where the issue raises the risk of being caused by pregnancy in a class by itself. By definition, such a rule discriminates on account of sex; for it is the capacity to become pregnant which primarily differentiates the female from the male."

Men vs. Women Pay Gap Widens

Bigger Now Than 20 Years Ago, U.S. Bureau Finds

Despite the growing number of women in higher-paying and traditionally male occupations, the pay differentials between men and women has widened over the last 20 years, a study by the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics shows.

The study, published this week, found that women's earnings expanded at a faster rate than men's during the 1970s, but that men later caught up. But overall, women still earn less than men.

The widening gender wage differentials are the result of continued overrepresentation of women in low pay occupations and the sharp increase in women's earnings in the labor force, which jumped to 46.3% from 39.9% over the past 25 years.

Consequently, a large proportion of men and women making in or near the entry level, the relatively low pay at these levels tends to pull the median wage down, the Bureau's White says.

Moreover, while women make up only 32% of full-time workers, they account for 63% of individuals earning between $3,000 and $4,999 a year. Only 5% of workers earning $15,000 annually are women.

While much of the wage gap can be explained by differences in education, work experience, and skills, many women are simply paid less than men doing the same job.

The Need to Unionize

A union study of government jobs in the state of Washington shows considerable discrimination in pay-setting for women and other minorities. The study revealed that state jobs that are predominately held by women are paid an average of $235 a month less than comparable jobs held by men.
Northeast Delegates at N.Y. Educational Conference

During an intermission OPEIU delegates from Locals in the Northeast area pose for picture at the Summit Hotel, in New York City. One session was devoted to the advantages of forming Councils to stimulate new organizing and provide better service for members.

Board Sets Up New Program
To Help Raise Funds for VOTE

Sec.-Treas. William A. Lowe reported to the Executive Board that contributions to the VOTE program had improved prior to the last election, but had failed to meet the quota. He pointed out that "some Locals didn't participate in the program at all."

The board agreed that such Locals fail to realize how essential the VOTE program is to all members of organized labor. Because of the high cost of TV spots, advertising, and literature, candidates for public office friendly to organized labor and the cause of the working population must depend on private contributions, particularly from union members.

If candidates friendly to our Union can't meet the costs, they can't be elected. If they're not elected, they can't help organized labor, and its enemies are thus enabled to pass legislation that hurts every man or woman who must work for a living, the board agreed.

Following a discussion, the Board authorized a new approach to VOTE fund-raising efforts.

J. P. Stevens Boycott Launched

The Amalgamated Clothing & Textile Workers Union has launched its nationwide retail boycott against J. P. Stevens which for years, because of its anti-union bias, has topped the list of organized labor's enemies.

The union is opening boycott headquarters in 27 cities and already has staged modest demonstrations in Washington, D.C., Detroit, Chicago, Philadelphia and St. Louis.

Although Stevens manufactures many synthetic products, it is mostly known as the prominent maker of sheets, towels and tablecloths. It markets half of its fabrics unfinished for apparel manufacturers, and sells a large portion of its linen goods to institutions, mail order houses and retailers.

The products are marketed under many names, among them Utica, Mohawk Sateens, Taste-maker and Gallistan. OPEIU members are urged not to buy these brands.

The battle, union leaders say, is likely to grow into the largest and most heavily financed consumer boycott in labor history.

The union spent $5 and $6 million in the successful boycott against Farah Manufacturing Co. four years ago and is expected to double that outlay in the fight against Stevens.

The union hopes to establish labor contracts for the 44,000 workers in 85 plants, most of them in North and South Carolina, and to halt what it claims is the worst record of labor relations of any manufacturer in the nation.

Stevens began as a small family-owned New England textile manufacturer in 1813. It closed its Northern plants following World War II, moved south where labor costs were lower, and grew into a multinational corporation with sales in the last year of $1.4 billion, second only to Burlington Industries, Inc.

Since 1963, the textile union has been trying to organize the Stevens mills, but with one notable exception its efforts have bogged down in a morass of National Labor Relations Board litigation and costly and federal court cases — most of which have gone against the company.

OPEIU Board Plans
For 1977 Convention

(Continued from Page 1)

member and, for the Canadian membership to hold its national Convention in the year preceding the International Convention. It is hoped that the Canadian locals will be fully represented at the next International Convention.

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Ford Proved Keynesian Economics Outmoded


The writers found that the economic theories adhered to by the Keynesians, which their followers have henceforth called British economist John M. Keynes—are completely impotent in the face of current economic events, not only in the United States but in every other economy in the world today. In effect, we find ourselves faced with problems of unemployment and inflation at the same time. Keynes's teachings would have us believe that this is impossible.

Economists, as taught in our nation's colleges, has been refuted. Economists have always taught that there is an inverse relationship between inflation and unemployment. Unemployment is supposed to result in deflation.

At the same time in the United States, despite both inflation and unemployment—now referred to as "stagflation"—workers have banked more money than ever before. This money is accumulated in banks and is drawing interest at a rate far below the increase in tangible goods. In effect, therefore, businessmen and workers who regularly deposit money in banks have seen that money erode when compared to the prices of food, hardware, software and real estate.

While the Ford Administration, based on Keynesian economics, held tight to curbing inflation and subsequent unemployment, such has not happened. Despite Keynesian teachings, neither wage rates nor prices have been reduced as a result of unemployment and recession. Actually, in the last two years, wage rates were not reduced in recession. Economic conditions curbed wage increases but did not, for the most part, have any effect on current wages. Despite inflation and unemployment, particularly in the building trades, wage rates in that industry and the price of materials have continued to increase.

In contradiction to the teaching of economists, businessmen did not cut the prices of their products when demand fell off, as they should, in order to stimulate demand for goods. Instead, wages were cut and the plight of the consumer resulted from wages being cut as a result of lay-offs and unemployment. The reverse is true. In this era of inflation and unemployment, wages and prices have been raised to levels not seen in decades.

In view of the fact that economics is not by any means an exact science, President Carter will have a difficult time choosing his economic advisors and the theory of economics which he will follow in leading the country away from inflation and unemployment. It has been suggested that the answer lies in pumping money into the economy. This, in turn, would create jobs and, through taxes, return large sums of money to the United States Treasury. Without some type of controls over the industries of our country, this could very well serve to accelerate inflation.

During the Ford years, nothing was done to curb large price increases in the steel, automobile and aerospace industries. Wage earners were hit with three price increases on automobiles in one year without any intervention whatsoever by the Ford Administration. The steel industry also increased prices without a word of reproach. The American Telephone and Telegraph Company, through numerous increases, announced a profit of one billion dollars for the third quarter of 1976, with resultant silence from the Ford Administration.

Obviously, while no one favors rigid price controls, something should be done by the government in dealing with monopolies. While the law of supply and demand dictates higher prices when supplies are scarce and demand is heavy, the average worker-consumer requires protection against monopolistic practices.

Over the last two years, we have had abnormal increases in prices of beef, grain, oil, sugar, coffee, numerous articles of apparel and many additional commodities. The Ford Administration did little or nothing to protect the public against these abnormal rises in prices.

President Carter's problems are multi-faceted. He must create jobs, discourage inflation, decrease our dependence on foreign oil imports and prevent monopolistic practices. Based on what we have been taught, the President will require economists who are not steeped in the theories of John M. Keynes.

NLRB Voids Putnam Election

The nation's second largest book publishing firm of G. P. Putnam & Sons, Inc., and two of its subsidiaries—Coward, McCann & Geoghegan Inc., and Putnam Publishing Co.—have lost a fight lasting more than two years to prevent unionization of their office employees. Putnam was the first target in an OPEU drive to unionize the book publishing industry as more than 400,000 workers nationwide.

The Putnam effort has boomed, according to a report by the National Labor Relations Board in Washington, D.C. Upholding New York Local 163's unfair labor practice charges, the board declares that the three companies flagrantly violated the labor laws before a representation election was held on October 1, 1974, when Local 153 was defeated.

The NLRB order sets aside the election, grants Local 153 exclusive bargaining rights for the unit, and orders the companies to back-pay its member and sign a contract retroactive to the 1974 date.

The NLRB order defines the bargaining units as including office and clerical employees; assistant editors, copy writers, production assistants, art directors and sales clerks.

Among the intimidation tactics used by the employers' anti-union crusade, Local 153 cited the firing of six employees for union activities; a threat to move the plant if the union won, and the allegation that union sympathizers would be blackballed if they sought jobs with other non-union book publishers.

The board ordered that the six discharged employees be restored to their jobs, or similar ones, without loss of seniority, and with full compensation for time lost. It said the publishers must post copies of the NLRB order, and the wages and other relevant documents so that the NLRB can determine the amount of compensation due to each dismissed employee.

Prior to the election, the employers also granted additional paid holidays in company paid medical coverage, benefits that previously did not exist, in efforts to influence the election.

James T. Macaione, 61; Local 105 Past President

We regret to announce the death of James T. Macaione, 61, past president of Local 105, at the Lawrence Memorial Hospital in New London, Conn. He was also a past president of the Metal Trades Council for the New London area.

A World War II veteran, who served in the U.S. Air Force, he belonged to the Norwicht Veterans of Foreign Wars; was a life member and past commander of the Norwich American Legion Post; and the American War Veterans.

Burial was with military honors in St. Joseph's Cemetery in Norwich.

Survivors are his wife, Grace; mother, Margaret Macaione of Norwich; a son, Joseph James of New London; two daughters, Mrs. Margaret Michaud of Windsor and Mrs. Anna Raja, Mexico; three brothers, Joseph and Roger of Manchester, and Robert of Hamden; three sisters, Mrs. Dorothy Mitchell of Norwich, Mrs. Mary Lindem of Hartford, and Mrs. Madeline Miller of California.

We offer our survivors our deepest sympathy in their sad bereavement.

New Unit Makes Large Gains in Initial Pact

Pay raises ranging from $17 per week to $37, retroactive to April 1, were settled on COLA and greatly improved fringe benefits were gained by New- ark, N.J., Local 153 in an initial contract covering 9,000 employees who administer pension and welfare benefits for the International Union of Elec- tricians in East Rutherford, N.J.

Business Manager John Ronches explains that the COLA takes effect immediately. He explains that if the CPI increases 7%, then all employees will be required to a 7% wage adjustment.

Life insurance was increased to $5,000 per unit member, double the previous amount. Pension benefits will be computed in future on the base rate for the last three years of serv- ice. Five years' improvements were also made in medical and dental coverages, as well as re-employment leave provisions.

The new unit calls for a union shop, requiring new employees to join after 30 days. As- sisting in the negotiations were Sec.-Treas. Robert Macaione and Steward Betty Ehnhart. The agreement runs to June 30, 1978.

Equal Rights Again Loses Out in Illinois

The Illinois state rejection of the equal rights amendment to the U.S. Constitution by a vote of 29 to 22, seven short of the required two-thirds majority.

The Illinois General Assembly has considered and rejected the measure every year since 1972. Three-quarters of the states, or 38, must ratify the amendment for it to become federal law. Forty-four already have done so.