Battle Half-Won for Labor Law Reform Bill
Passes House by Big Vote; Senate to Act in January

After months of strenuous efforts, organized labor including the OPEIU, scored a major victory when the House of Representatives passed a bill designed to help unions to organize the unorganized.

By a vote of 257 to 163, the House adopted the Labor Law Reform Act of 1977, a series of amendments to the national labor law aimed chiefly at eliminating obstacles to union organizing.

OPEIU Card Proves Worth Again
Denver Member Wins Back Job; $4,915 Lost Pay

When an employer arbitrarily fires a nonunion office employee for some flimsy reason, or none at all, there's nothing the unfortunate employee can do except look for another job. But when a unionized office employee in a similar situation has an OPEIU card and a gainaing unit, it's an entirely different story. The union contract has available grievance machinery that obliges the employer to justify his action before an impartial arbitrator.

So when Denver Local 5 member Marlene Martinez was fired from her job at American Benefit Plan Administrators, she took her case up with her union. It found the facts worthy enough to set its grievance machinery in motion.

An impartial arbitrator, after hearing both sides, ruled that the grievant be reinstated in her job and awarded her $4,915 in lost wages.

Last month's issue reported a
two levels higher.

Without a union to back them, the nonunion office employees have no safeguards in their jobs or promotion—proving again that: Unionism doesn't cost—it pays.

Mortuary Unit Wins 6 1/2% Hike
A 6 1/2% general wage increase was gained by Local 11 in a one-year contract renewal for its unit of funeral directors, assistants and embalmers at the Little Chapel of the Chimes, Inc., operated by Uniservice Corp., in Portland, Ore.

The new agreement sets a minimum starting rate of $616 a month for apprentices. For journeymen, the rate is set at $989 per month, rising to $1,318 after one year. Other improvements were made in holidays, work schedule and minimum manpower.

The contract, which runs to June 30, 1978, was negotiated by Local 11 Business Representative Wayne Shelton, assisted by Shop Steward Dan Dorris.

Labor Fight Successful
For Minimum Wage Hike

Organized labor won another legislative victory when House and Senate voted to raise the nation's minimum wage to $3.35 an hour by 1981 from the current $2.30.

The measure now goes to President Carter for his signature. The House-Senate negotiators ended up only five cents below the Carter Administration's goal of a $3.40 hourly minimum in 1981.

The current minimum will go to $2.65 an hour next January 1, once it is finally approved. It will go to $2.90 in 1979, $3.10 in 1980, and $3.35 in 1981, for an increase of $1.05 an hour over the current minimum.

Labor Department officials said 3-million workers now earn at or near the minimum, but this number would increase to 5-million once the minimum wage reaches the $3.35 an hour figure.

The House conferees agree to a Senate amendment that would allow businesses to hire full-time students up to 20 hours a week and pay them only 35% of the minimum wage. Businesses are now limited to hiring four such employees.

Colorado AFL-CIO Rejects
Two Denver OPEIU Women

Two women members of Denver Local 5 have been re-elected to executive offices of the Colorado Labor Council, AFL-CIO, at its 12th Biennial Convention in Grand Junction, Col.

They are Zelda Branstead, reelected by acclamation as its Secretary-Treasurer, and Louise Byrne, reelected to the Executive Board. She will serve four-year terms under an amendment to the Constitution, which also changed the name of the state body to Colorado AFL-CIO.

Sister Branstead is very active in handling Women's Compensation and Unemployment Insurance problems for affiliated members; has been appointed by the Governor to serve on various advisory committees, and is the only lay member on the Supreme Court Advisory Committee for Colorado.

Pension Plan Unit Wins
$4,000 Each in Pay Hikes

Wage gains totaling more than $4,000 per individual, an additional paid holiday and other fringe benefits, were gained by Twin Cities Local 12 in a renegotiated three-year contract for its office unit at Wilson-McShane Corp., pension plan administrators in Bloomington, Minn.

Business Representative Vern Paul reports that the new agreement calls for a 40% an hour across-the-board raise in the first year, and $35 in each of the following two years.

In the first year, Veterans' Day becomes a paid holiday, bringing the annual total to 11. Employees with five years of service may now accumulate sick leave to 75 days (was 60).

The employer pension plan contribution was changed to 9 percent of the regular hourly rate from the previous $24 an hour. A new successor and assigns clause was added.
National Health Bill a MUST

The diagnosis of America's health care is: critical. That's why the OPEIU with other unions and diverse citizen groups have joined in a national campaign for reform in 1978, spearheaded by the Committee for National Health Insurance.

Currently 18 million Americans are without health insurance of any kind. Another 38-40 million have no hospital or surgical coverage. For many of these, health premiums are prohibitively high—more than one month's salary or wage—annually for the average worker. Others forfeit their insurance after years of paying premiums if they lose their jobs, move to another area, or divorce an insured spouse.

Medicaid does not adequately cover these with low income. In rural America, for example, 60% of the population is below the poverty level, yet only one-third of those are eligible for Medicaid. Moreover, health care quality in this country is unimpressive. Life expectancy for making it to age 65 is higher in 20 other countries. Infant mortality in the United States is higher than in 14 other countries, although we have both the resources and technology to match the record of any country. Significantly, all nations with longer life expectancy than ours have some form of national health insurance.

Amid the current level of health care, all Americans requires switching the focus of our current health care system to that of preventive care. Preventive care is true "health care," as opposed to the "sickness care" emphasized by the present health system.

Presently, health insurance companies pay primarily for hospitalization and medical care; they do not pay doctors' fees for regular check-ups or other charges which must be paid by individuals for routine preventive tests. As a result, preventive steps are often not followed.

A comprehensive health plan can, in itself, be a step toward preventive care. By eliminating deductibles and by paying for regular check-ups, a comprehensive plan will enable people to see a physician before they are seriously ill.

Many workers and those now underserved and encouraged preventive care, national health insurance could also help slow the soaring inflation that has characterized health care, especially in over-hospitalization which has become a critical problem in recent years. A national health plan is a MUST in 1978!

Jobless Costs to Nation

The continued emphasis on unemployment by organized labor, including the OPEIU, is understandable because of its negative effect on human dignity. However, there are also monumental economic losses involved.

Examples:

- During the last 20 years, the U.S. economy, or Gross National Product has lost $4.4 trillion because of unemployment.
- The impact each year for every 1% of unemployment is that:
  - 920,000 people are without jobs.
  - $17 billion dollars-$20 billion dollars are expected for unemployment insurance, food stamps, and welfare.
  - Unknown millions of federal revenues are lost because of unemployment.
  - Costs to state and local governments are $5 billion in increased costs and lost revenues.
  - $30 billion is lost in unproduced goods and services.

The demographic basis for the OPEIU's full employment bill designed to correct the situation. It goes without saying that this bill will have the full support of the OPEIU and organized labor when it is presented to the Congress.

Let's Write Our Senators!

A major victory for organized labor was scored when the House passed the Labor Law Reform Act of 1977 by a 257 to 163 vote. The measure goes to the Senate where, having failed to defeat it in the House, the organized and biannually financed forces of business and industry plan a new offensive.

We urge all OPEIU members to heed President Couchlin's advice by flooding your Senators with mail urging passage of the Labor Law Reform Act in its present form. Remember. labor and industry are mobilizing to defeat us unless we do.

For example, they suggested they "put the word out that the plant is going to move down South if the union cannot do to counter it, he added: "All it can do is a get an order making you say you won't do it any more... we will stop."

"However, if the vote is scheduled and it doesn't look good for the company, he advised "pull out all the stops... take the risk."

De Maria stressed that in the eye of the employer, the confidence of the supervisor; and the first-line supervisor is the key to the anti-union campaign. He said that "training the supervisors to fight the union every day on the job is essential... you can't have an organization fight only. You have lost it if the real job of persuasion isn't done on a day-to-day basis by the supervisor."

"Motivated" Supervisors

Because supervisors have no right to organize, the OPEIU and no legal protections if they become involved in a union, they "are vulnerable to company discipline," he pointed out. Thus supervisors can be turned into "a powerful anti-union weapon."

De Maria then described how supervisors can be "motivated" to fight the union, also providing a 214-page packet with the going with the training fee on how to accomplish this. During the union-bustin' seminar, time and again he stressed the importance of maintaining exclusive access to the employees by through personal contact and captive meetings.

He warned the corporate executives that they should never take up an offer to debate with a union organizer, or IOCTL. He said, "Do the same, he advised, "arrogant what they (management) don't realize is that they have the right to talk with employees unilaterally—why give the organizer a shot?"

Delays Are Key Tactic

"Delay is crucial to your strategy," was a constant De Maria theme through the sessions, all to disseminate and empower the give management time to put on the pressure. He suggested working closely with the company's attorney in setting up a series of stalls:

- Delay in setting up the first conference.
- Dig up issues on appropriate units, supervisors, confidential employees, part-time work.
- Don't consent to an election until all issues are resolved... then delay hearings.
- Delay briefs with excuses... and so on.

De Maria also said he had several union elections as only one of the battles in the war against unions, citing one of his recent clients who lost a union election. Unwilling to accept the union victory, he said he plans "to bargain to the point of boredom over the next year."

When a corporate executive asked about unfair practice charges, De Maria answered that there ways to "handle the charge... if you know ahead of time what you're doing, you can avoid charges of surface bargaining." 

Dick Wilson is director of the Labor Division, Minneapolis Bar Association. He formerly served as a national educational director for an AFL-CIO affiliate.
Office Automation Speeds Up; Jobs At Stake
N.Y. Citibank Pioneers Move, Has Laid Out 10-Yr. Program

Automation in banks and other industrial enterprises in the next decade "is likely to bring about an organizational revolution among white-collar workers comparable in magnitude to that resulting from the introduction of the assembly line to blue collar work."

That was the startling prediction made by James H. Carlisle, assistant professor at the University of Southern California and an office systems consultant, in a paper presented at the automated office conference of the American Institute of Industrial Engineers held in New York recently, according to a report in the American Banker.

Citibank, an automation pioneer in banking and other corporate industries, is implementing a vast futuristic electronic office project which is still in the early stages, the report says. The tentative schedule calls for a 10-year timetable that began in 1976.

Citibank Vice President Bruce Hasenyager, who heads the bank's electronic office project, told the conference that some management personnel have balked at the new technologies because they are required to punch a keyboard and felt such tasks are only for clerical personnel. "Experts to Ease the Transition"

Consequently, he said, "industrial psychologists and sociologists as well as data-processing experts will be called upon to ease the transition to the office-of-the-future. It will combine computerized word-processing systems, already in wide use, with electronic mail and other telecommunications systems to bring instant communication and computer capabilities into a manager's office."

A film shown at the conference revealed that Citibank, Citibank's parent company and a giant multinational bank holding company, is spending $800,000 a year in development costs for the electronic office, with equipment expenses rising from $3 million next year to $23 million in 1986 when the program is expected to be complete.

The eventual global communications network will be huge. By the end of 1979, some 1,000 Citibank office should be so equipped, with 3,000 more in North America and Europe added by 1980, and a total of 6,000 around the world linked together by 1986, the report says.

Citibank's New York personnel has been reduced by some 6,000, or 10%, since the automation program was initiated in 1976. Staff reductions have increased 13% over two years, plus longevity boosts and many new fringe benefits, were won in an initial agreement negotiated by De-
424 Pay Hike Won at Texas Firm
New 3-Year Pact With A.R.A. Mfg. Also Boosts Benefits

Across-the-board wage boosts totaling 24% over three years, plus a cost-of-living allowance and other improved fringe benefits, were won by Fort Worth Local 277 for its 70-member office unit at A.R.A. Manufacturing Co., in Arlington, Texas. President-Business Manager J. B. Moss reports that the new agreement calls for a 10% wage increase in the first year, to be followed by 7% in each of the following two years. The previous $22 an hour COLA was frozen into base pay, and the current clause continued.

One additional paid holiday was agreed upon, to be determined by the company and the union at a later date, bringing the annual total to 104. A fourth vacation week was added for employees with 20 years of service.

The employer agreed to increase contributions to Local 277's Health-Welfare fund by $5 per month. Improvements were also made in seniority and job posting procedures.

A new provision was added whereby employees who do not take any of their 20-day per year sick leave will receive a five-day bonus on their anniversary. The new pact became effective October 1, and runs to September 30, 1980.

Gale Unit Wins 35% Pay Boost
New Pact Ups Lowest Office Grade to 3-Figure Bracket

Wage gains averaging 35% with a cost-of-living allowance and improved fringe benefits were won in a new three-year agreement renegotiated by Local 221 for its office unit at Gale, Inc., in Galesburg, Ill. Alan D. Stephenson, unit chairman, reports that in the first contract year it sets a minimum monthly starting rate of $993.75 in the lowest office grade of file clerks and typists, and $1,154.73 for senior account.

In the final year these rates will rise to $1,063.07 minimum and a maximum of $1,139.07 for clerks and typists. In the top grade of senior accountant, the starting rate will be $1,224.07 to a $1,357.07 maximum.

A COLA will be paid each quarter during the life of the agreement, based on one cent per hour for each increase of 0.4 change in the Consumer Price Index. All employees on night work will receive an additional $29 per month for the second shift, and $36 per month for the third shift.

Eligibility for longer vacations was reduced by one year, and in 1978 and 1979 will be reduced by two years, respectively. Employees also will receive an additional $20 as a vacation premium for each week of eligible vacation due.

Health-welfare and surgical plans were greatly improved, life insurance coverage also being increased to $6,000 (was $5,000) for each employee. Major medical was increased from the present $30,000 to $40,000 in the first year, and to $50,000 in the final year. It will now pay for psychoanalyst fees, and complications due to pregnancy. All eligible active employees

Initial Pact Wins Large Gains for City Workers

Across-the-board wage boosts of 10.2%, with many new fringe benefits, were won in an initial 27-month contract negotiated by Portland Local 11 for its new unit of city employees in Battle Ground, Washington. Sec.-Treas. W. W. Croby reports that it sets a starting minimum rate of $882 per month in the lowest grade, rising to $972 maximum, and $1,020 in the top classification raising to $1,125.

It provides 10 paid legal holidays a year, including a day off; 13 days vacation after two years, three weeks after five, and four weeks after 15 years. It sets one day of sick leave per month, cumulative to 90 days.

The city agreed to set up a group medical plan for the employees and pay the full premium costs. It also agreed to pay $27 a month for dependent coverage, rising by $10 each year to a $47 per month contribution on January 1, 1979. The negotiating team was headed by Business Representative Wayne Shelton, assisted by Larry C. Williams and Michael J. Gilroy.

NEW OFFICERS INSTALLED: At Groton, Conn., Local 106 representing about 3,200 clerical employees at Electric Boat Co., a division of General Dynamics, which builds submarines, installed its new officers. From left are Stephen Haucko, Rec. Sec., George Alger, Vice President; International Representative John F. Fitzmarrone, Paul Bruno, President, and Joseph Quattromani, Sec.-Treas.