Expert Pinpoints Union Gains in Milwaukee B.S. Contract

So that the benefits of collective bargaining can be studied by unorganized Blue Cross/Blue Shield employees in other cities, an assignment was given to an expert in this field—a former Milwaukee Blue Cross employee now an OPEIU Business Representative— to list specific facts that illustrate the advantages of unionization.

She is Judy Burnick who helped unionize Milwaukee Blue Cross, some years ago and, more recently, the new Blue Shield 600-member unit. She also has served on both OPEIU unit teams which negotiated the BC/BS contracts, and knows intimately salary scales and other working conditions that existed before and after the employees unionized. She sets forth simply and clearly the gains made in the following tabulation:

Milwaukee Blue Shield—Comparisons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prior to Organizing</th>
<th>After Organizing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christmas bonus</td>
<td>None related</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grievance procedure</td>
<td>None existed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health coverage</td>
<td>Blue Cross/Blue Shield limited hospital stays; $20 diagnostic coverage; time off care, major illness—$150 max.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental coverage</td>
<td>None existed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holidays—14 days total, ninth and ninth set by employer.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work hours &amp; overtime—7½ hours per day, 57½ per week, time-and-one-half after 4½ hours per day, 47½ per week. No double-time.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer hours—Not each year but employer.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meal allowance</td>
<td>$2.25 for those working two or more hours turned regular shift.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shift premium</td>
<td>$3.25 for 6 to 9 days; 9 to 12 days, 1.50; 12 to 15 days, $1.25.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jury &amp; witness pay</td>
<td>$25 per week for time served but reported for work, if illness; time served credited for overtime purposes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snow deficiency pay</td>
<td>Ten dollars may be excused and paid on an individual basis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacations</td>
<td>3 weeks after one year, 6 after five, seven after 10; could not take vacations in single days, and member must carry over year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wages</td>
<td>$2.17 per hour, plans increased to $2.40. Beginning after every 9 months, plus 4% after every 3 months, maximum 10%.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As this issue goes to press, the Senate still has not acted on the pending AFL-CIO Legislative Director Andrew J. Biemiller has notified the 100 Senators of the 26-proposed bills aimed at them by opponents of the measure. He sent each Senator an outline of the planned blitz they face. It includes massive "fly-ins" in corporate jets and shopping among pollsters until they (Continued on Page 2)
Message to BC/BS Employees

Few Blue Cross/Blue Shield employees are aware that indirectly they owe their jobs to organized labor. During the Great Depression in the 1930's union demands for a non-profit organization that would provide health insurance at a reasonable cost led to the formation of Blue Cross. Later Blue Shield was organized to supplement it.

In their beginnings, individuals eagerly subscribed as members for hospital-surgical insurance coverage. But with the growth of unions this coverage part of a union contract covering hundreds and then tens of thousands of workers, both health insurance agencies grew like mushrooms.

When organized labor finally got Medicaid and Medicare enacted as a government program, they lost the employers they had befriend during the large company mergers, acquisitions, and divestitures, which are acquisitions by buyers for the benefit of the capitalists, and their friends who have used the National Labor Relations Board and the courts in the past to defeat the union. This bill does not give unions any special advantages, but will entail and maximum procedures that will assure fairness.

Presently, this nation is engaged in a policy of promoting the interests of humans all over the world, an issue that we all support. So why, Senator Allen, would you, especially at such a time as this, want to deal a crushing blow to the job millions of American workers by not supporting the Labor Law Reform Bill? Have you ever been told that if you had to go to the Senate Deluged By Union Mail

(Continued from Page 1)

find the results they want.

"Nowhere in the 'battle plan' is there a single item attempting to factually address, point by point, the substance of the bill," he told the Senators. "It is obvious to anyone who has not read the legislation on its merits."

Particularly galling, he said, was the plan to raise funds among businesses involved in NLRB elections. And particularly revealing were the plans to exploit the coal strike — on which S. 2467 had no impact whatever.

The bill's proponent, in addition to the 'rents' and massive advertising, has many other projects designed to smother the Senate in paper. It includes massive distribution of an 'economic' study by business tool Pierre Rinfret; state-by-state polls by the Business Roundtable; cornering 400 news reporters on 'coal strike' coverage; and weeks of press, and business petitions actually signed by 200 national associations, and "dear colleague" letters by chosen Senators.

These plots "let up in the press on the marginal Senators whose support is vital to our success in defeating S. 2467."

Unions Shrug Off 'Sacrifice'

Say Inflation Puts Pressure on Wage Hike Demands

Union leaders express deep skepticism toward President Carter's latest proposal for sacrifices on the wage front. They say their contract demands are more influenced by the real inflationary pressures on their members than by new calls for restraint.

The President's program was formally denounced by leaders of major industrial unions within the AFL-CIO who met in Washington, D.C., shortly after his proposal was publicized — that wage increases of federal employees would be held to 5.5%.

"It cannot have a serious ef- fect in fighting inflation," the unions' statement said. Unions would "participate wholeheart- edly in any anti-inflation pro- gram that is both just and work- able. We are also convinced, however, that experience has fully disproved the discredited theory that working people must bear the brunt of corrective measures."

The evidence is clear — the Nixon experiments showed un- mistakably that worker sacrifice is no panacea for economic ills."

Unions cite particular problems with voluntary restraint programs. If a businessman tries to hold prices but costs go too high he can always raise prices. But if a union takes less than it normally could get and prices continue to rise, it is too late; the agreement is signed and wages are then locked up for one to three years, unions point out.

In addition, contract bargain- ers for low-paid workers insist they should not be kept from improving their condition, and high-paid workers such as the coal miners generally have the power to enforce their demands.

Senator Deluged By Union Mail

Efforts to curb the public sector unions have been met with a barrage of letters, reports, and other printed matter.

Senator Wm. Proxmire (D-Wis.) got a letter that essentially dismantled the argument of the anti-union物价.

Senator Allen would have his work cut out for him in the next few weeks. He probably will get even more mail from the unions, of course, that has been extensively publicized.

John Fitzmaurice Retires

As Int'l Representative

John F. Fitzmaurice, for more than 20 years an International Representative for the New England region, has announced his retirement. He says he plans to keep active in the organized labor movement in a volunteer capacity, in addition to traveling and other pursuits in the local community theatre.

John's entire career has been devoted to the labor movement. Before joining the OPEIU staff he had served in New Haven, and also on the Mayor's Advisory Council for its central city redevelopment program.

At one time, he was secretary of the Diocesan Labor Institute in New Haven, an Executive Board member of the New Haven Central Labor Council, and also served as the labor member on the Board of Directors of the Workers' Aid Society, affiliated with United Way.

We wish John many long and happy years to enjoy his well-earned retirement.
Food Company Unit Forges Ahead

20.8% Wage Boost, Other Benefits Won at Fisher Nut

An across-the-board 20.8% wage boost in addition to other fringe benefit improvements were gained in a new two-year agreement renegotiated by Two Cities Local 12 for its office unit at Fisher Nut Co., a Beatrice Foods, Inc. subsidiary in St. Paul, Minn. Business Manager H.R. Markussen announces.

He reports that it calls for a 12.3% increase retroactive to January 1, 1972, and 8.5% next January. In the second contract year, it sets a starting rate of $154 a week in the lowest office grade rising to a $178.2 maximum. In the top grade, the starting minimum will be $192.8 rising to a $233.2 maximum.

The vacation schedule was improved to provide three weeks after eight years. A new sick leave plan was negotiated.

The health-welfare program was expanded to include a dental plan with a $3,000 lifetime maximum. The plan has a $25 deductible and provides 80% of covered charges per year to a $1,000 maximum. It was also agreed that a union-management team would meet within 60 days to review and analyze qualifications for each job now in the bargaining unit for purposes of promotions or transfers.

The company also agreed that it would try to continue its annual Christmas gifts, provide company products to employees at selling prices, and furnish coffee for rest breaks.

The negotiating team was headed by Business Representative Vern Paul and included Chief Steward Carol Steele with Stewards Strandberg and Rhonda Braun.

Unions to Set Up Memorial to Late H.H.H.

The AFL-CIO Executive Council has voted to endow a chair at the Hubert Humphrey Institute for Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota as a memorial "to the greatest working people ever had."

The basic funds for the endowment will be raised through a 2-cent per year assessment over the next five years. In addition, the council also wants to give individual union members the opportunity to contribute to the institute.

The funds will be raised from individual members will be used for scholarships for union people to attend the Institute, for special books and materials for the labor chair, and for other needs related to making certain that Hubert Humphrey's special relationship with union people is recognized in the work of the Institute.

Help the Labor Movement Honor his memory.

Send your contributions to:
Hubert Humphrey Institute
U.S. Senator's office
c/o Lane Kirkland
815 16th Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005

Check Local TV, Radio to Air Labor Law Debate

A recent Washington debate on Labor Law Reform was filmed for TV and will be available around May 1 from the Public Policy Forum series. The debate has been converted to a one-hour show, with a tape also available for public radio stations.

The AFL-CIO Task Force urges union members to check their local TV and radio stations now to make them aware of local interest in scheduling the debate as well as to find out the date to alert the maximum number of workers to see it.

Organized labor's case was represented by Senator Harrison A. Williams (D-N.J.), co-sponsor of the bill, and Thomas R. Donahue, executive director of the AFL-CIO President George Meany. Williams and Donahue won easily.

OPEIU members can tell their local TV and radio outlets that the debate was filmed by the American Enterprise Institute as part of the Public Policy Forum series, with which they should be familiar.

Union groups can buy or rent a film or tape from the Public Affairs Program, Robert Doyle, BNA Communications, 9401 Dover Hall Rd., Rockville, Md. 20850.

Local 2 Member Appointed to AFL-CIO Executive Post

Jean Ingrao, a long-time member of OPEIU Local 2 in Washington, D.C. has been named as Advisor of the Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO, in which this union is an affiliated member.

Under the MTD Constitution the Advisor functions in the capacity of Secretary-Treasurer of the Department, an office vacant since the passing of Peter M. McGavin. Mrs. Ingrao's appointment was unanimously approved by delegates to the Department's Convention in Los Angeles.

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Musical Instruments Firm Put on Labor's Boycott List

Striking workers at the 144-year-old C. F. Martin & Co. plant in Nazareth, Pa., have voted to end the company's membership in the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO). The vote was $154 a week in the lowest office grade rising to a $178.2 maximum. In the top grade, the starting minimum will be $192.8 rising to a $233.2 maximum.

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West Coast United Way Pact Wins 16% Pay Boost

Wage gains totaling 16% across-the-board over two years, plus a cost-of-living allowance in addition to quarterly automatic increases ranging from $15 to $17 depending on grade, were won by Portland 11 for its office bargaining unit at United Way and Tri-Caucus. Local 106, which represents 144 workers.

Business Representative John T. Bral reports that employees in the lowest grade will start at $662 a month, rising to $894. Starting rate in the top grade will be $777, rising to $1,088. In both years, a COLA will be paid if the CPI increases more than 3% during each year.

A floating holiday was negotiated; bringing the annual total to 11. The vacation schedule calls for two weeks after one year; three after four, and four after 15. Affairs

Old Friend of Labor's Cause Needs Help in N.J. Primary

U.S. Senator Clifford P. Case, (Rep.-N.J.), a long-time friend of organized labor who has one of the finest legislative records in the U.S. Senate, has received the official endorsement of the New Jersey State AFL-CIO in the June 6 Republican primary election to hold his seat for another six-year term.

In this election he is being opposed by a right-wing candidate who, his friends, has removed $150,000 on a first installment of right-wing money to defeat Senator Case for renomination.

He has also received the endorsement of national COPE D.C. Bank Contract Ups Pay Another 15 1/2% Across-the-board wage boosts totaling 15 1/2% over two years, with improved fringe benefits, were won by Local 2 for its bargaining unit at the National Bank of Washington, D.C., comprising more than 500 tellers and clerical employees, according to President-Business Manager Jim Sheridan.

He says the new agreement calls for a boost of 8 1/2% in the first year, and 7 1/2% in the second. Average pay under the expired agreement was $197.03 a week.

For the first time, the contract provides dental and long-term disability plans. Lifetime maximum medical coverage is increased to $1-million from the previous $100,000.

The contract also provides that if Veterans Day is not made a federal bank holiday, an additional paid holiday off in lieu of Veterans Day may be taken between November and March each year. The new agreement runs to March 31, 1980.

Unionism Pays Off in Big for Nurses

Registered nurses and licensed practical nurses represented by unions earn an average of 17% more than those who are not, according to a survey by Nursing 77, a professional nurse publication.

More than 30,000 nurses belonging to unions affiliated with the AFL-CIO and the number is growing. The OPEIU represents hundreds of nurses among its bargaining units.

Showing U.S. Engineers That It Pays to Unionize

American engineers earn less than their counterparts in Denmark, Germany and Japan, according to a study by the Conference Board, a business research organization.

Registering a drop from first place in earnings in 1971 to sixth place in 1975, the study found that U.S. engineers were $14,900, while engineering graduates in Denmark averaged $20,400. Even when differences in “real” income were considered, allowing for different price levels and spending patterns, engineers in Denmark, Norway, and Germany did better than the Americans.

It’s no coincidence that engineers are one of the least unionized professional groups in the U.S., but they are strongly organized in Europe.

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from the desk of the

PRESIDENT

How Editorials Bait Labor

We find some amazing contradictions in editorials of numerous newspapers throughout the United States. On one hand, we see articles which decry the losses in membership of organized labor and, on the other hand, editorials that actively support the Labor Reform Measure (S. 2467) now under consideration in the U.S. Senate.

These writers would have you believe that they are sympathetic with the failure of union membership to keep pace with the growth of the American labor force and, consequently, criticize organized labor because it has too much political power and should not be attempting to amend or defeat our existing laws to protect the passage of a much needed Labor Reform measure.

In addition, many of the figures used by the authors of such articles are incorrect. For example, a feature writer in The Wall Street Journal indicated that organized labor represented 40 percent of the U.S. labor force some 30 years ago and this figure had dropped drastically to 25 percent today. The same newspaper, in a later editorial, stated that labor represents only one-fifth of the non-farm work force today as opposed to one-third 20 years ago.

The truth of the matter is that organized labor has failed to keep pace with the growth of the American labor force, particularly in the last 10 years. Organized labor, however, never represented more than 25 percent of the non-farm work force and today represents approximately 20 percent.

In the private sector of the economy, organized labor has been hurt by numerous causes, including the export of industries overseas by American multimations for economic reasons. These include cheap labor in underdeveloped and developing nations, in addition to numerous tax advantages overseas and in the United States. Electronics, television, typewriters, apparel, textiles and automobiles are only some of many examples.

Organized labor's union membership in the public sector has grown, but it is definitely running in increased resistance from taxpayers and public sector employers spurred on by anti-labor forces who are opposed to unionism generally, and specifically opposed to the unionization of civil servants. Growth of union membership in the public sector will, in many respects, be dependent upon the passage of the Labor Reform measure, even though this bill is not specifically aimed at public sector organizing.

If a sector does not organize at an increased rate, then the failure to keep pace with the growth of the labor force will have a dampening effect on public sector organizing. Politicians will encourage or discourage public sector unionization based upon the strength of organized labor in the private sector.

While The Wall Street Journal in an article written by Peter F. Drucker, a Professor of Social Sciences at the Claremont Graduate School, lays the failure of organized labor in the private sector to successfully organize a larger percentage of American workers to increased schooling of workers, inept leadership, a decline in political power and public esteem, and numerous other incorrect reasons, it continues to editorialize against the passage of the Labor Reform bill.

The editorial refers to the Labor Reform Bill as an "ingenious combination of amendments to the National Labor Relations Act that look fairly innocent when viewed separately. When combined, however, there is a considerable power in the hands of union organizers, and sharply weaken the ability of employers to resist unionization organization."

It is simply amazing that the same newspapers, shedding crocodile tears about the failure of the organized labor movement to keep pace with the growth of the American labor force, at the same time are doing their utmost to defeat the Labor Reform proposal which would take us a few steps closer toward achieving the goals of organized workers.

J. P. Stevens Company has been found guilty of violating the National Labor Relations Act some 15 times. The U.S. News and World Report magazine twice refused an advertisement from a company owned by J. P. Stevens, and they referred to the fact that hundreds of corporations were found guilty of violating the National Labor Relations Act and a large number were repeat offenders, such as the J. P. Stevens Company.

The growing number of employer violations of employee rights (15,800 in 1960 and 34,302 in 1970) is substantial evidence of the little respect employers have for the National Labor Relations Act as it is presently written and enforced.

You will never read anything of this nature in the major news-

New Retirement Law Poses Queries

Answers on Pensions, Benefits Await Labor Dept. Rules

The retirement-age law signed by President Carter may complicate things a bit for pension plans and other benefits.

The law ensures most private-sector employees the right to work at least to age 70 without being pushed into retirement because of age.

For most workers the new law takes effect next January. But for employees subject to collective bargaining contracts requiring retirement at age 65, the law's effective date for superseding those labor-manage agreements is delayed to the expiration of the agreements or January 1, 1980, whichever comes first.

But some officials familiar with the measure have expressed private concerns that it could complicate the operation of employee benefit programs.

While many of the questions concerning the new law's impact haven't been answered explicitly in the legislation, its sponsors have taken care to place on the record Congress' legislative intent surrounding the bill.

Officials say they hope the complications can be dealt with as the Labor Department writes regulations for putting the new law into effect.

But officials emphasize that nothing in the bill requires employers to keep employees who can't perform their jobs adequately, even if their professional inadequacy is the result of age.

"You can always fire someone for cause," said a Congressional official. "This bill doesn't change that."

Yet, controversy surrounding the legislation is likely to be even greater when the Labor Department takes up the task of writing the highly complex rules required by the new law.

AILICO's Board Chairman Urges Labor Law Reform

President Bernard Rapoport, American Income Life Insurance Company in Waco, Texas, sent a personal letter on March 22 to every United States Senator expressing his support of S. 2467 (Labor Law Reform bill).

The text of his letter follows:

"The American Income Life Insurance Company is one of a number of organized insurance companies that have represented 1,300 of our employees, both agents and clerical workers, are organized under the banner of the Office & Professional Employees International Union, AFL-CIO. We have negotiated with that union for a number of years. The collective bargaining agreements of that organization have been firm but fair.

Our collective bargaining agreements have been of constructive value to both our employees and the company."

As an organized employee, therefore, I support legislation (S. 2467) designed to give the same type of representation to all workers throughout the United States. While we have no desire to tell other employers how to conduct their business, we feel that unionism and collective bargaining will benefit unorganized employees and the companies in which they are employed as well.

"We see nothing in the proposed Labor Law Reform Bill which we cannot live with. Therefore, we feel that the same thinking should apply insofar as all other employers in the United States are concerned."

The industry indicates 6% of all employees are on flexitime—up to 3 1/2 million.

For example, authors, Stanley Nollen of Georgetown University and personnel consultant Virginia Martin, predict that the trend will grow, because as many as 85% of the 805 respondents in their survey were considering a flexitime policy.

Flexitime Schedules Now Cover 6% of All Employees

Use of flexitime by U.S. firms has doubled since 1974, according to a survey by the American Management Associations showing that 13% of all private employers, with 50 workers or more, allow employees to vary their daily starting and quitting times while working a contracted number of hours.

Some officials emphasize, for example, that under the law employers are free to cease contributing to workers' pension plans beyond their "normal retirement age," typically 65.

Thus, workers who choose to wait beyond the normal retirement age can merely defer their retirement benefit until their actual retirement, and any increase in pension benefits they realize in the meantime would be based solely on pension investments rather than on further employer contributions.

Also, years of service beyond age 65 need not be credited to an employee for purposes of determining pension levels, officials say.

Such questions, as well as those concerning life insurance and health protection, will not be answered until such time as the Labor Department draws up its rules and regulations to implement the new law.

If you move, send your old and new address, first name and social security or social insurance number to:

William A. Lowe, Sec.-Treas.
815 16th Street, N.W., Suite 606
Washington, D.C. 20006

U.S. Price Index

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Note: The U.S. Price Index reflects changes in prices in the United States, while the Canadian Price Index reflects changes in prices in Canada.