Militant members of OPEIU Local 434, the vast majority comprising young women among the 950 employees at the Montreal City & District Savings Bank, won a 12% general pay increase in a one-year wage re-opener settlement reached with the bank after a quick two-day strike, according to their President Yvon C. Rivard.

Canadian Director and OPEIU Vice President Romeo Corbeil estimates that these unionized bank employees now earn an average of $25 a week more than their Canadian non-union counterparts.

The bank's original pay raise offer was turned down flat, resulting in 600 union members from 110 branches staging a one-hour demonstration that night outside the head office. The bank immediately realized that it had a problem and quickly raised its offer to 9½% but this was also rejected.

That same night a strike vote was taken, 90% of the bargaining unit members overwhelmingly endorsing a walk-out the next morning. Around 2 p.m. that afternoon a mediator was appointed and the 12% settlement was reached overnight. The picket lines were then taken down and the employees returned to work the next day. The strike by the determined union members had just lasted two days.

Of the 12% wage package, 11½% applies to salaries with 1% added to the progression scale, moving it to $350 per year from the previous $250. The new agreement is retroactive to January 1 and terminates December 31, 1979. After three years, four after five if taken in the winter; five after 20 years, and eight weeks on the employee's 25th anniversary of service.

In addition, a recently negotiated provision calls for a seven-day leave of absence per year on a 10-day notice to a branch manager. These days may be taken as floaters.

During the strike, the unit members were kept fully informed at 115 separate centers through a telephone communications network set up under the direction of Guy D. Lalonde, Jacques Lalonde and Carolle Couturier who served as Action Committee coordinators.

President Rivard, who headed the negotiating team, credits the strike with any gains to its militant members—particularly the women, who supported wholeheartedly their unit negotiators.

MARCH 1979

Woman Power Wins 12% Pay Hike at Bank

Unit Backs OPEIU Solidly in 2-Day Walkout in Montreal

The OPEIU in a National Labor Relations Board election won a 200-member unit of licensed practical nurses and technicians by a vote of 102 to 81 at the East Tennessee Baptist Hospital in Knoxville, after a strenuous campaign, according to a report to director of organization Art Lewandowski as this issue goes to press.

The campaign received widespread publicity in the Knoxville area in newspapers, radio and TV media. The election between the LPN's and technicians followed an earlier one among some 225 registered nurses at the hospital, the results of which are still in doubt. That election is now awaiting NLRB adjudication on how several challenged ballots are to be counted, or whether another election should be held.

The hospital staff has been divided into four groups, each of which has to be polled to determine its wishes on union representation.

The groups comprise RN's regarded as professionals; the LPN's and technicians; service and maintenance employees numbering 650 and including ward clerks, and the business group which includes the office clericals. The "wall-to-wall" bargaining unit may eventually total more than 1,200.

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The Smithsonian Institution's Museum of History and Technology has decided to work with the OPEIU to find artifacts for a permanent exhibit of labor history in Washington, D.C. In connection with this project, President Howard Coughlin has sent the following letter to all OPEIU Local Unions in the United States asking for their cooperation:

"The American Labor Movement has been able to achieve the millenium by convincing the Smithsonian Institution's Museum of History and Technology to establish a permanent collection of trade union historical items. There has never been any place in the United States where all labor items, artifacts and other memorabilia have been collected, stored and safeguarded. Unfortunately, with the exception of a few labor historians who have performed invaluable service by writing histories of the American Labor Movement, we are losing much in the way of irreplaceable reminders of the progress of working men and women in our country. Very few workers today are aware of the struggles of their predecessors who were forced to survive 'union-busting' company strike-breakers and paid brass-knuckled goons in order to achieve the collective bargaining benefits stemming from unionism. "Trade unionists in our country—long before the National Labor Relations Act—knew that the formation of unions would result in collective bargaining gains over the years. Sometimes it took between five and ten years to establish trade unions before proposals were submitted to management. "Trade union and solidarity had to be created before workers would risk their jobs and their futures by announcing their collective bargaining intentions. "It is fitting, therefore, that the Smithsonian Institution, one of the most famous and prestigious museums in the world, has decided to sponsor and maintain a collection of artifacts. "Somewhere in your Local Union offices, or in your homes, or in the homes of your retired members, you may find old union membership cards or dues books, picnic and outing buttons, notices of meetings, strikes, boycotts, conventions, parades, ballot boxes, black balls, gavels and other types of union or labor-related memorabilia, particularly those associated with well-known leaders. Organizing literature, lithographs, engravings and photos, and motion pictures and phonograph records extolling the virtues of working people and unionism are of particular interest. "I would ask that you forward any of the above, or anything else of historical value, to the Smithsonian Institution's 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006, where it will be sorted and catalogued before it is sent to the Smithsonian Institution. Please let us hear from you."

Anti-Union Columnists Loses TV Debate

Kilpatrick's Arguments Debunked on 60-Minutes Program

OPEIU President Howard Coughlin congratulated Shana Alexander for upholding the special protection accorded to professional workers in a recent "right-to-work" debate on the 60 Minutes show on CBS. The transcript, in view of the anti-unionism propaganda these days, we are sure will interest our readers who missed the program.

JAMES J. KILPATRICK: The cause of right-to-work took a setback in Missouri on Election Day, but the issue won't go away.

For the issue is human freedom—and that's the only issue.

Should working men and women, be compelled to employ their will, to be members of a labor union or lose their jobs?

In a shop employing 100 persons, should 51 of them have the power, with the connivance of management, to drag the other 49 into compulsory membership?

Don't tell me about the union shop. Until Bill Buckley and the National Right to Work Legal Foundation went to court, I was compelled to be a member in good standing of the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists—or get fired from 60 Minutes.

I no longer have to be a member, subject to fines or expulsions for conduct detrimental to the union, but I still have to pay extortion in the form of dues.

And I get no services or benefits I ever asked for. Now you may argue that non-union workers become free riders. Humbug! They're captive passengers. Well, Shana, I'd like a system of voluntarism in private life. Live or let live; join or don't join. I always thought that kind of freeedom is what America is all about.


Sometimes even Taft-Hartley in 1947, workers have been protected against discharge for nonmembership in the union so long as they pay their dues and initiation fees.

So-called right-to-work laws would enable workers to get their benefits without paying. The real purpose is to weaken unions.

You're wrong when you say that until the Buckley decision you had to be a member in good standing of our union, or get fired from 60 Minutes.

As long as you paid your dues, you could even scab during a strike, and the union couldn't forced 60 Minutes or any other TV show to fire you.

Old Bill Buckley is just up to his usual dirty tricks with the English language, and you're right in there with him, Jack—neck deep.

About your 51%-more baloney.

Taft-Hartley says that if a majority of employees want a union, the union represents everybody.

That ain't dragooning, that's democracy. If the majority votes for Jimmy Carter, he represents everybody, too.

And the Army and Navy protects everybody, and everybody's got to pay taxes—even the 49% who voted for Gerald Ford.

P. S. She could have added that unions, by law, must represent all employees whether or not the pay dues. They must pay expenses for grievance machinery, arbitration, and court costs, if necessary, for the free-loaders.

OPEIU Wins 200-Member Unit

(Continued from Page 1)

The campaign at the hospital was initiated by the Kansas City office, under the direction of International Representative Charlie Harris. In the latter stages of the campaign he was assisted by two other International Representatives, Mark Read- er and Jim Bloodworth.

According to Harris, immediately after the LPN's election, he was approached by numerous service employees asking "When are you going to unionize us?"

The hospital was the first target, according to the OPEIU in the Knoxville area for new organizing according to Lewandowski, who said the campaign would be continued for the "wall-to-wall" unit.

A Reminder!

Please don't buy Coors Beer. The boycott is hurting this anti-union employer.

Also pass up all J. P. Stevens textile products.
Multi-National Firm Loses to OPEIU
Vancouver, B.C., Local 15 Wins Anti-Union Battle

Unfair labor practices by a firm of Canadian-based Companies led the British Columbia Labour Relations Board to certify Vancouver Local 15 as bargaining agent for the union office unit at Kuehne & Nagel International, Ltd., without a representation election. It is the first time a customs brokerage firm has been unionized in Canada.

The company has some 285 offices around the world and the Canadian agent unit operates in 12 cities. It provides global transport, freight forwarding, pool car operations, warehousing and customs brokerage services.

The organizing campaign began in November 1977 when a long-service employee was fired without just cause. Two weeks later fellow employees sought OPEIU representation and after a meeting with Local 15 representatives the cards were obtained to apply for unit certification.

The very next day, the OPEIU’s contact was fired with another card signer, both being told to leave the office immediately. A day later, a probationary employee was also discharged.

Local 15 promptly filed a request for automatic certification, charging the company with intimidation and interfering with the formation of a trade union, illegally seeking to find out who attended the meeting with union representatives, and who had joined the union.

After an Investigating Officer was assigned to the case by the Labour Board, a representation election was held in March 1978 although the company continued its anti-union tactics. Local 15 challenged the appropriateness of the board, and the ballots were sealed by the board.

The board then set hearing dates on the unfair labor practice charges for April, but instead of proceeding the company challenged its jurisdiction claiming that this belonged to a federal, rather than a provincial, board.

However, following three days of hearings and a lengthy delay, the B.C. Labour Board chairman ruled that the case was appropriately under provincial jurisdiction. The hearings were then held by a board panel on the unfair labor practice charges during six days in September.

The panel ruled that two of the employees had been properly notified that they would be terminated December 31, 1977, and were paid accordingly but found that the third employee was fired for union activities. She got another job on January 15, 1978, didn’t want to work for the firm again, and was fired.

The panel upheld all Local 15 charges, declaring it “was convinced that if the employer had not interfered with the union drive it would have succeeded,” adding that it was “satisfied that a representation vote would not disclose the true wishes of the employees and we choose to certify the trade union.”

OPEIU Wins Savings Plan Dispute

Arbiter Finds Illinois Firm’s Ban on Union Was Unlawful

An NLRA panel has ruled that the GTE Automatic Electric Inc., of Northlake, Ill., acted unlawfully when it distributed literature to employees stating that non-union employees would be eligible to participate in a new savings and investment plan, and implying that Chicago Local 28 members who became eligible, Business Manager Bill Cox reports.

The panel ordered the company to amend the literature by eliminating any misrepresentation, and to negotiate implementation of the plan with Local 28 within 30 days pursuant to the GTE bargaining unit.

The OPEIU charged that since October 1977 the company refused to bargain on implementation of the plan, declining its policy by citing a waiver clause in the agreement. The panel rejected the company’s argument, declaring that it “is inconsiderate that a party to an agreement can waive something which was not in existence or even proposed at the time of the alleged waiver.” The panel continued: “Therefore, the union could not have waived its right to bargain about it (the plan). Furthermore, there is no evidence of any exchange of benefits or contractual provisions at the time the waiver was included in the agreement. Consequently, we find that the language of the waiver clause is not an express waiver of the union’s right to bargain about the implementation of the plan.”

Accordingly, the panel decides that the employer violated Sec. 8(a)(5) and (1) of the NLRA by refusing to bargain with respect to the plan, and violated Sec. 8(a)(1) by distributing literature that “in a manner calculated to discourage the availability of the plan and left employees unaware of the possibilities of negotiation for the inclusion of unionized employees.”

Odie Stratton, 60; Headed Houston’s Local 382

We deeply regret to announce the sudden death of Odie Stratton, 60, president of Local 382 in Houston, Texas, following a stroke in early February.

A World War II veteran, he had served in the U.S. Army in the Southwest Pacific, and had been employed in Houston by American Can for the past 29 years.

He had been an active member of Local 382 since it was organized and served as its president with distinction for 12 years. He will be sorely missed by all who knew him and worked with him.

He is survived by his wife, Odie Stratton, 70; Norma, and two daughters, Paty and Belva; three brothers and two sisters, to whom we express our deepest sympathy.

8% Pay Raise Won by Unit at Federal Credit Union

An 8% across-the-board wage boost with some positions getting 10% in 1977 was won in a long, hard-fought drive. Improvements made in a new one-year agreement renegotiated by Local 2 for its 30-member bargaining unit of office employees at the Agriculture Produce Credit Union in Washington, D.C.

The credit union services U.S. Department of Agriculture employees, according to Local 2 Sec.-Treas. Emmett Ethridge who headed the negotiating team.

He reports that the probationary period was reduced, and change in the health-welfare plan reduced the costs to employees to pay 100% of the premiums for family coverage.

The new agreement runs to October 20, 1979. Shop Steward Jerry Dooley and Bill Dobbin, assistant shop steward, comprised the unit negotiating team assisting Ethridge.

John J. O’Connor, former OPEIU Local 153 shop steward of its bargaining unit at the Amalgamated Bank of New York, has been named a Vice President in charge of business development, directing the bank’s efforts in marketing its services to labor organizations. He joined the Amalgamated staff in 1965. It’s the only unionized bank in New York City.

Jean Ingroa, long-time member of Westchester Local 2, was elected unanimously without opposition as Secretary-Treasurer of the AFL-CIO’s Maritime Trades Department at its recent meeting in Florida. The MTD represents 115 International Unions whose membership is in the maritime trades. She succeeds Peter McGavin who died some time ago.

Approximately a year ago, she was named Administrator to succeed Bill Moody of the SIU who retired from that post at the last convention. Her new job is the highest elective office that any woman has achieved to date in the organized labor movement.

Sister Ingroa worked for many years as an assistant to AFL-CIO President George Meany in the Organizational Department before going to work in the Maritime Trades Department.

President Coulson says he is “very proud” that an OPEIU member is the first to achieve such a high elective office in the organized labor movement.
Computer Man was Fired Unjustly
Arbitrator Orders Credit Union to Rehire Local 367 Member

Dismissal of an accountant-computer operator employed by the United Automobile, Aerospace, and Agricultural Implement Workers Union was prompted by personal hostility of a manager toward the grievant and not by "just cause," according to an arbitrator. The employee's contract with Local 367, Arbitrator Alberta Murphy decides. She orders that the employee be reinstated with back pay.

The grievant was hired in May 1976 and discharged in March 1979 because the supervisor informed Wharton and said that he was going to dismiss the employee for chronic tardiness. The arbitrator explained: "Oh no, you don't."

Approximately three days after the discharge, the supervisor informed Wharton that she was getting a raise. Whorton replied that she didn't believe it and that she was an observer for the Union. Later, the supervisor informed Wharton that she wanted to promote her.

On Saturday, July 16, Whorton phoned her supervisor to inquire about the bank's funeral leave policy, explaining that her grandfather had died and her funeral was set for the following Thursday. About an hour later, Whorton learned that her friend's grandfather also had died, leaving her with no funds to take off on Monday.

On Monday, the supervisor called Whorton and said that she was going to dismiss Whorton on Thursday. Whorton then told her she wouldn't be in that day because of the funeral. The supervisor asked if she had any leave time accumulated so she could be paid for the day.

Whorton replied "no" but she would take the leave without pay. The supervisor said "okay." On Tuesday, July 19, Whorton was discharged for taking time off allegedly without authorization.

Disagreeing with the Administrative Law Judge's interpretation of the record, the NLRC panel concluded that Whorton's discharge was a reflection of union hostility by the bank and the reason it preferred "was no more than a transparent rationalization intended to hide the real cause of the discharge."

Office Unit Wins 15½% At Minnesota Utility

Wage gains totaling 15½% over two years, with other improvements, were won by Twin Citys Local 12 for its office unit at United Power Association, an electric power utility in Elk River, Minn.

Business manager H.R. Markussen says that the effective date of the agreement was June 1, providing a 5½% first-year increase and a 4½% second-year increase. The new agreement calls for triple-time pay for holidays worked, and an increase in the meal allowance to $4 (was $3).

Other improvements are a change in the sick leave clause providing for a maximum of 30 days, regarded as any other form of disability.

It was also agreed that for the purpose of rearing a newborn child, the mother will be entitled to a three-month leave of absence from date of birth. A new penalty of an 8% across-the-board increase was set up ground rules in writing for permanent part-time or temporary employees.

The unit team assisting Markussen in the negotiations included Siewards Mickey Meiner and Sharon Wierkin. A new clause for negligence in the performance of duties by an employees was inserted into the agreement.

If you move, send your old and new address, including zip code and social security or social insurance number to

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