



WHITE COLLAR

Office and Professional Employees International Union, AFL-CIO and CLC

No. 401

July-August 1981

The Anti-Union Battle: OPEIU 2, Busters 0

Everyone said the union busters can't be beaten, especially in the South. Everyone said that it was certainly impossible to defeat consultants of the caliber of Modern Management, Inc. or SESCO. And, of course, everyone knows that insurance companies are impregnable and Southern hospital workers are too repressed to vote Union.

OPEIU proved "everyone" wrong twice. In spite of the odds and the doomsday predictions, OPEIU has defeated the union busters in a Southern hospital campaign and at a Southwestern insurance company.

OPEIU President John Kelly said that in spite of frantic, last-minute attempts and distribution of false and misleading anti-union propaganda by high-priced union-busting consultants, the health care and clerical workers at both locations picked OPEIU as their representative. Kelly credited the successes to both the strength and courage of the Southern employees and to OPEIU and AFL-CIO education/research on the union-busting consultants.

The following stories provide the details, often shocking, in both of the campaigns. Both prove that despite incredible odds, the consultants can be beaten and that the South is ready to organize.

Southern Baptist Hospital

The notorious anti-union consultants Modern Management, Inc. (also known as 2M) were decidedly beaten by the LPNs and technicians at East Tennessee Baptist Hospital in 1979 when they voted to be represented by OPEIU.

After a vicious anti-union campaign and equally vicious negotiations, the newly formed Local 475 in Knoxville, Tennessee, believed the worst to be behind them.

Unfortunately that was not the case. According to OPEIU International Organizer Jon Heller, when 2M was replaced in October, 1980, by a new consultant — SESCO — the battle really began. SESCO, which used blatantly illegal tactics and outright terrorism to force the employees to leave their union, made 2M look like a kitten.

Against all possible odds, the employees voted by 131 to 80 to keep their OPEIU representation. And, for the second time, they defeated a supposedly unbeatable union buster.

The details of the story are amazing, sounding more like the campaigns of the 1930s than the 1980s. They are more amazing because they occurred in a hospital run by a religious organization, and because in spite of the terrorist tactics a small group of workers stood firm throughout. Those details follow, as reported by Jon Heller.

Modern Management

Following the first election victory, Southern Baptist retained 2M, who continued to harass the employees and to punish them for voting OPEIU. Immediately following negotiations non-union employees were given an additional holiday and 5 cents more per hour than the

union negotiated. What 2M couldn't give the non-union employees, however, was the job security and other protections guaranteed by the union contract.

SESCO

Enter SESCO in October, 1980. Southern Baptist became disenchanted with 2M. After all, even with 2M—one of the biggest and baddest union busters—on the scene, the employees had remained firm. They supported their union OPEIU through an election and negotiations. They had a contract. And, even following the bargaining and resulting general harassment, the members remained strong.

Southern Baptist Hospital could not tolerate that and the likelihood that the rest of its employees would vote union. They hired SESCO and the war escalated.

The hospital, following SESCO's advice, began firing pro-union supervisors, who refused to threaten and harass employees. They began "progressive discipline" against the Local President, P. J. Thompson. She was transferred, put on probation and written up 12 times in one week. Similar treatment
(Continued on Page 2)



OPEIU's "Norma Raes": Pictured here are the leaders in the victorious election at Southern Baptist Hospital. They are, left to right, Local 475 President P. J. Thompson, LPN; Job Steward Jean Vought, LPN; and Local Vice President Denise Grubb, O.R. Technician.

... and a Southwest Insurance Company

The office employees at Oklahoma Farmers Union voted 80 to 67 to be represented by OPEIU Local 381, according to International Representative Bill Kirby. A strong organizing committee, research and preparedness, and a great deal of courage and tenacity were reasons cited for OPEIU's organizing victory at the Oklahoma City insurance company.

The employees were committed to OPEIU from the start. Although 15 activists served as the core, 80 employees sent their names to the company as organizing committee members, Kirby said.

An election was scheduled for June 25, and the victory seemed assured. The company, however, immediately hired a notorious anti-union law firm from Oklahoma City—Lytle, Soule, Curlee, Harrington, Chandler and Van Dyke. According to Kirby, Edward Soule handled the company's campaign.

But, OPEIU kept two steps ahead of the union busters throughout the campaign. Working with the International Representative Kirby, the committee researched the consultant's tactics against other Oklahoma City unions. Using literature and tactics from those campaigns, the committee was able to forewarn the employees. They always knew what to expect.

Employees were angry that the company could spend thousands of dollars on the union busters, while they had never been able to find money for wage increases or benefits in the past. The consultants, as a result, became one of the main campaign issues, according to Kirby.

The Final Days

The busters stepped up their campaign against OPEIU in the final three weeks—a typical Soule tactic—Kirby said. Employees received an average of three letters per week. Twice a week employees were forced to attend captive audience meetings where top management delivered speeches prepared by Soule. Kirby, however, briefed committee members, who were, therefore, well prepared. They embarrassed the company continually by anticipating their points and asking incisive questions management could not answer. "I believe the company made a big mistake in continuing these meetings because of the tenacity of our committee," Kirby said.

Although the company continued to put out false and misleading information on the Union up to the last hour, OPEIU and the committee kept the employees well educated about the facts. As a result, the employees were victorious in beating the consultants and gaining OPEIU representation.

This strong, tenacious committee deserves congratulations, as does Local 381 and International Representative Jack Langford, who assisted Kirby in the campaign.



OPEIU International Representative Bill Kirby celebrates victory with organizing committee at Oklahoma Farmers Union.

See Details of a Third Victory, page 4

WHITE COLLAR

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OFFICE AND PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION
affiliated with the AFL-CIO, CLC

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Fact Sheet and Tentative Schedule

WHO? OPEIU and all trade unionists, including those not currently affiliated with the AFL-CIO. Invitations have also gone from AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland to major groups which in the Spring 1981 joined the Budget Coalition. The NAACP, for example, sent an immediate YES from its convention, which was in session when Kirkland sent the Solidarity Day Sept. invitation. Nearly 200 groups joined the Budget Coalition and many are joining in Solidarity Day.

WHAT? A demonstration, only in Washington, D.C., and only for one day. Basically the recruiting, transportation and logistics are being handled by the local unions or Budget Coalition groups taking part. Each of those groups has named one person as coordinator to assist its own members. The AFL-CIO has a Solidarity Day Sept. 19 office (202) 637-5380 which can provide the names of those coordinators. Thus individuals should voice their interest first to the local to which they belong.

WHERE? Marchers will gather first on the West Slope of the Washington Monument for entertainment, picnics, and introductions of celebrities and VIPs. Preliminary plans call for marching by organization up Constitution Ave. past the National Archives and Departments of Labor and Justice to the West Front of the Capitol. Once at the Capitol, there will be entertainment and addresses by prominent leaders.

WHEN? Sept. 19, 1981, beginning with a 10 a.m. for the assembling on the Mall. At about noon, the march begins to the Capitol. There's a firm wind-up time of 5 p.m. so it can be a one day Saturday outing for as many people as possible—primarily those from the Eastern and Middle Atlantic states.

WHY? Basically, it's a chance for an expression of opinion by all those Americans who believe there is a role for government in their daily lives—especially a government which says it's of the people, by the people and for the people. They'll be marching for jobs, justice, human rights and social equity—but they'll also be saying that if social security is going to be cut, occupational safety laws abandoned or minimum wage and Davis-Bacon undercut, then the public officials who support all that should have said so when they were candidates in the Fall of 1980.

Southern Baptist

(Continued from Page 1)

was afforded to other union supporters.

Finally, at SESCO's instigation, anti-union workers began signing a decertification petition *on work time, in work areas*—clearly in violation of the law. Although signers were told the petition was for a "new union," no new union existed. The election was set for June 18, and according to Organizer Jon Heller, "The battle lines were thus drawn for the toughest campaign in this Organizer's career." That's something when you consider that Heller worked on both the Farmworkers and J. P. Stevens campaigns.

SESCO's Terrorism

The hospital and SESCO ran a total fear campaign, according to Heller. For over three weeks, they issued at least one scare letter a day. Supervisors met daily with the consultant, who told them outright that if the Local stayed in, they would be fired. . . . First, the meetings were with two or three employees at a time; but in the last week, they were often one-on-one.

At the same time, each employee was called to meetings with the top management of the hospital. Here the climate changed. Management's theme was "What can we do for you to prove that we can represent you better than Local 475?" Top management, then, came on as "big brother," while the floor supervisors were scaring the people to death.

As the propaganda shows, the main fear themes were strikes, violence and Union dicta-

torship. But, if the people weren't scared enough after the meetings, they were after the Hospital fired a Union supporter two days before the election.

Union Victory

Even so, the unit held together, supported constantly by a committee of 35 employees, including the registered nurses who belong to the Local. The committee was able to dispel the fear by openly exposing SESCO and their terrorist tactics.

Morale was kept up with Union buttons worn openly in the hospital; sign trucks with nurses riding, waving and exhibiting strong Union support the day before the election; demonstrations; a fried chicken picnic, but mostly through a lot of one-on-one contact between committee members and the rest of the unit. The support of the rest of the Knoxville labor movement was also a great boost to morale.

For two reasons the Local 475 members were able to remain firm in the face of SESCO's terrorism—because they believed in their Union and in the collective bargaining process. But, also because of their anger—anger that resulted from SESCO's terrorism and from their divisive and disruptive tactics. Because of the fear and distrust instilled in the hospital employees, these dedicated health care workers could no longer perform their jobs as well as they had. The decline in hospital services, which was a direct result of SESCO's tactics, was what finally lost the campaign for the hospital and its consultant.

OPEIU Mourns Long-Time Activist

John F. Fitzmaurice

OPEIU deeply mourns the death of John F. Fitzmaurice. Fitzmaurice worked for years to protect the rights of office workers and the interests of the Office and Professional Employees International Union. It was only in 1979 that he retired as an OPEIU representative for the New England region, although he continued to give support to his Union and its members.



John F. Fitzmaurice

International President John Kelly said of Fitzmaurice: "He dedicated his life to the labor movement. He helped countless OPEIU members through the years—through the Union, his

political activities, and personally. I am very proud to have had him as an OPEIU representative and as a close personal friend. He will be greatly missed."

Fitzmaurice, son of the late Michael J. and Mary McKiernan Fitzmaurice, was born in New Haven on September 7, 1917. He began his long career in the labor movement as a union delegate for the Railway Clerks Union in New Haven during the 1940s. Following that he represented the Hotel and Restaurant Union Local 217 in New Haven. He then joined the staff of the Office and Professional Employees, where he remained until his retirement.

Fitzmaurice, who died at 63, leaves a wife, Helen Sedralenko Fitzmaurice; a son John J. Fitzmaurice, both of Hamden, Connecticut; and a brother Thomas J. Fitzmaurice of West Haven. Additionally, he leaves his many friends at OPEIU and the many members he has served throughout the years.

The family has asked that memorial donations be made to the American Cancer Society, 8 Lunder Drive, Woodbridge, CT, or to the Connecticut Hospice, Inc. in Branford, CT.

Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan has said that the reason the Administration is proposing a reduction in Social Security has virtually nothing to do with the program—"It was yet one more attempt to raise money—by cutting programs—to offset the huge budget deficits that would have been produced by the President's original tax proposal."

For long-term solutions to the predicted "financial crisis," therefore, it makes much more sense to use interfund borrowing, partial financing from general revenues and income tax credits, than to throw our current retirees into poverty or onto the welfare rolls.

If we permit the contract with the people to be broken, do you think that other adverse changes will not take place in later years?

That is why it is important that we all support Solidarity Day, go to Washington and protest Social Security cuts. (See more details on page 2.) It is equally important that we all write our congressional representatives to protest these cuts. Finally, we have to contribute to VOTE and support candidates in 1982 and again in 1984 who are willing to keep their promises to the nation's workers and elderly.

Kirkland — Reasons for Solidarity Day

And why are all those people marching on Sept. 19 in Washington? Well, different workers have different stakes in different programs—but with unemployment above 7 percent and the government threatening cutbacks in worker protections of virtually every kind, none of those American workers is doing very well. So on Sept. 19, they're going to say so.

AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland gave one capsule summary: "Solidarity Day will show those who have written off the labor movement that we have lost none of our driving force."

He said labor must resist "with all our strength and resolution the effort that is under way to bring back the days when our nation was a two-class society—with great wealth and privilege on one side, supported by all the largesse and solicitude of government, and insecurity, privation and neglect on the other."

A first priority, he said, is "to make sure that America's working people understand the issues in the most real and human terms" and are not fooled "by right-wing economic fakers." It is workers whose lives and health are threatened by crippling of OSHA and the dismantling of protective regulations, Kirkland said.

It is workers "whose children's schools will deteriorate" and whose neighborhoods will lose police and fire protection "because of the strangulation of federal aid to the states and cities and the destruction of federal job pro-

grams." And retired and disabled workers "are the targets of the efforts to put the Social Security system on the budgetary chopping block."

The Reagan Administration is seeking to dismantle "the social programs that hold together the relatively humane society that the labor movement has helped to build in the last half-century," Kirkland warned.

Kirkland challenged the Administration's philosophy of "getting government off our backs" and spoke of his own recollection of growing up in the depression-era South where "the only Social Security system was the county poorhouse." And "in cotton mills and steel mills, clubs and guns were the tools of labor relations, backed up by the police and the National Guard."

It wasn't until "government got on our backs" that conditions improved, he stressed. "In a just society, it is the business of government to look after the interests of the poor and the weak," Kirkland insisted. "The rich and the powerful can and do look after themselves."

LOCAL BRIEFS

Local 32 Business Representative Pat Tully reports a 15-percent wage hike for the employees of Union College in Cranford, N.J. in their new two-year agreement. Additional gains included the reduction of pension requirements from one year of service from three and improved Blue Cross coverage for the clerical staff.

The negotiating committee assisting Tully was composed of Rosalie Cardinale, Marie Luckhurst, Nancy Pellegrino, Dorthy Walko and Charlotte Weber.



Herman W. Pope, who served as President of Local 174 in Los Angeles from 1957 to 1981, has retired. Pope, described by his members as "courageous in his beliefs and stalwart in his defense of them," has been and is a dedicated servant of the labor movement and of Local 174's membership.

Both the International and Local 174 wish him health and prosperity in his retirement. He will be missed by all of us, but especially by those whom he has served for many years.

OPEIU welcomes our new Local 504 in Mt. Pleasant, MI. The new members are employed at Giantway Computer Center and have recently negotiated their first contract, reports International Representative Mike Walker. The new Local officers include President Albert Gershon; Vice President Gail Woodruff; Secretary-Treasurer Deanna Van Buskirk; Recording Secretary Pam Bass; Executive Board members Sue Chubb, Karen Cashen and Sharon Kasper; and Trustees Patt DuCharme, Cathy Evola and Sue Thatcher.

INT'L BRIEFS

At the June OPEIU Executive Board meeting, the Board voted unanimously to support affiliation with the AFL-CIO Industrial Union Department (IUD). The vote was taken after a presentation on the department and its activities by IUD Secretary-Treasurer Elmer Chatak. Reasons for affiliation were the IUD's active organizing activities and assistance in affiliates' campaigns, its recognized role as coordinator and developer of coordinated bargaining committees throughout the U.S., its pension plan which is available to all affiliates, plus other advantages.

On July 11, OPEIU Research Director Gwen Wells taught two classes on Collective Bargaining with an emphasis on women's issues to the participants of Working Women's Summer Institute. Working Women, if you will recall, is that organization that supports women's rights in the workplace.

Following a presentation on the basics of bargaining (forming committees, drafting demands, and research), Wells spoke at length on issues of special concern to women workers. Although focusing on issues such as comparable worth, maternity and childcare leave, flextime and overtime hours, and promotional opportunities, she emphasized to the largely unorganized audience that these were equally beneficial to male employees.

International Representative Judy Burnick was a featured speaker at the University of Wisconsin's Public Forum on "The Working Woman in A Crisis Economy" on June 25. Burnick explained the difficulties of organizing the "9 to 5" workers, the predominantly female clerical workforce. Some of those difficulties include family responsibilities of women and their fear of losing their jobs.

Although women are largely uneducated to unions, they are coming to see that unions are not only steelworkers and truck drivers. While only 20 percent of working women are currently organized, OPEIU members and other organized women earn 30 percent more than non-union women, Burnick said.

Support V.O.T.E.



from the desk of
**PRESIDENT
JOHN KELLY**

Social Security

Ax Falls On The Elderly

The Office & Professional Employees International Union believes that Social Security is not a handout, but rather a contract with the American people, earned through a lifetime of work.

The Administration has pressured the Senate to breach the contract by eliminating the minimum Social Security benefit of \$122.00 a month. The OPEIU, the AFL-CIO, and other groups are lobbying the House of Representatives at this time to see that the Federal Government keeps faith with us.

Other cuts are proposed: a reduction in benefits for those who retire before age 65; elimination of benefits paid to dependent children who are 18 and attending college; a one-third reduction in the disability program; and cuts in future benefits on an average of 10 percent, as well as postponement of the 1982 cost-of-living increases for all beneficiaries.

Another proposed change would raise the normal retirement age to 68. No one who has worked in an office from the time they were 17 or 18 seems to make this proposal. It is always made by those learned individuals who have started work after many years of education.

The Social Philosophy

Social Security was passed because the American people believed that the elderly of this country should be assured a minimal existence upon completion of their working career. This need has not been eradicated and it still exists. Nearly one-half of retired workers live at or below the poverty level as determined by the Federal Government.

Contrary to what the press and members of the Legislature would have us believe, most people are not covered by private pension programs in addition to Social Security. Only approximately one-fifth of the current working population have private pensions. An additional one percent are covered under individual retirement accounts, and many of our members and the rest of the trade union movement in this country have their pensions tied to Social Security benefits.

They also attempt to justify the reduction of the minimum benefit by the talk of "double dippers," i.e., those government employees who after eligibility for government pension programs then work in private industry a minimum amount of time to become eligible for Social Security. While it might be possible to review this situation, these people are not indicative of those who are receiving minimum Social Security benefits. Three hundred thousand of these are women—many of them widows who did not work but receive Social Security based on the earnings of their spouses.

The Case of One Retiree

We must not look at generalities and theories, but at real people and how these cuts will affect them. To 19 percent of the retirees, Social Security is their only source of income. Typical of this group is Minnie McCollough, 79, living in Maryland. She has worked more than 40 years and is receiving \$331.00 a month in Social Security. She is fortunate in that her monthly rent is only \$125.00. She pays \$11.49 a month for insurance, owns a 1973 car which permits her some mobility. She tries to budget \$20.00 a month for gas and hopes that the car works since any cost of maintenance must come out of this figure. She now has \$50.00 left over or about \$1.66 a day to purchase food and other necessities.

She has told us that she splurges once or twice a month by going out to dinner at a local cafeteria and she is able to get a meal there for about \$3.40. This, of course, is only possible if she does not have any "extraordinary expenses."

Mrs. McCollough is typical of many who not only count on the benefits they now receive but who look forward to the cost-of-living increases that have been assured will be forthcoming.

What Are the Alternatives?

The Administration and the press have attempted to have us believe that the 300,000 widows, the Minnie McColloughs, have other programs that are available to them. They can go on welfare. It is my belief that only one insensitive to the needs of workers

(Continued on Page 3)

Organizing Victory No. 3

Health Plan Employees Choose OPEIU

The more than 100 employees at Community Health Plan of Suffolk, Inc. (CHPS) in Suffolk County, NY voted overwhelmingly to be represented by Local 153, reports Local Organizer Pat Hoffman. Hoffman attributed the win to the use of organizing techniques taught to OPEIU full-time staff by the AFL-CIO Organization and Field Services Department. The 4-to-1 vote among the clericals and 2-to-1 in the medical unit proves the concepts work, she said.

The strategy, she admits is not a new one. It rests primarily on building a strong committee whose members represent the various departments at the office or plant. Hoffman says her committee could not have been stronger.

"They did everything, which is the way it should be. They talked to all the employees individually, answering all questions, right up to the last night of the campaign. If it had not been for the committee leaders, who held everything together, we could not have won," she said.

Those committee leaders, who deserve con-

gratulations, are Sharon Ackerly, Kathy Fahey, Margaret Montgomery, Kathy Marotto, and Lorraine Marsone.

Hoffman also asked that thanks be given to Local 153 members from other health facilities and Dowling College for their generous assistance to the campaign. These members, she says, met with CHPS employees to explain the benefits and protections they had gained with OPEIU contracts. "Their help was immeasurable," said Hoffman, in "a vicious anti-union campaign."

OPEIU Members Contribute to Political Education Funds

For the sixth consecutive year OPEIU reached 100 percent of its COPE quota. COPE is the AFL-CIO political action arm, known as Committee on Political Education. All contributions were voluntarily made by OPEIU members who realize the importance of and necessity for political action and education.

The boost given to COPE's coffers was illustrated by the check from OPEIU presented by International Secretary William A. Lowe to COPE Director Al Barkan.

This, however, does not include all political contributions of OPEIU members, staff and officers. OPEIU also maintains its own political action fund, the Voice of the Electorate (VOTE). In the last issue of *White Collar*, we began to publish a list of those full-time staff and officers who contribute annually to the "President's 100 Club," that is, those who donate \$100 per year to VOTE either through a contribution or checkoff. The following have signed up for this program since that issue: Vice President Billie D. Adams, Vice President W. Charles Harris, International Representative Richard W. Holober; and International Organizer Ann Oberer, and President Emeritus Howard Coughlin.

Many, many more OPEIU members have contributed as much or more to VOTE through checkoff. We would like to thank them as a group, since there are far too many for publication.

Canadians Educate on Technology and Arbitration

The Mid-Canada Council recently held its annual educational conference in Thunder Bay, Ontario. The more than 80 participants attended courses on Grievance Handling and Arbitration and Health and Automation in the Office, reports the Mid-Canada Public Relations Director John van Dyk.

Prior to the opening of the classes, locals met for a business session at which new Council officers and committees were elected. Pictured here are the newly installed officers.

Following the business session and Conference luncheon, participants were free to choose the topic in which they had the most interest or on which they desired more information. Ultimately almost 40 students attended each of the classes which are detailed below.

OPEIU International Research Director Gwen Wells led the one and one-half day discussions of office safety and health and the impact of technological

change in the office.

Doug Tobin, Director of Education for the Canadian Labour Council (CLC), instructed the course on "The Preparation of Grievances and Arbitration Cases," for one afternoon. This was followed by a one-day course entitled "Advanced Arbitration" conducted by Ralph Ortlieg, instructor for the CLC.

Van Dyk reports that the Council fully believes in keeping the locals up-to-date on all issues that affect their members and bargaining. Considering the turnout and level of expertise of the members, they have been doing that very well.



Pictured left to right are the new officers of the Mid-Canada Council: First Vice President Bill Dickerson, President Mary Knauss, Treasurer Gordy Boress, and 2nd Vice President Bill Fevor.

U.S. Price Index

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
New Base 1967 = 100

1980	
January	233.3
February	236.5
March	239.9
April	242.6
May	245.1
June	247.8
July	248.0
August	249.6
September	251.9
October	254.1
November	256.4
December	258.7
1981	
January	260.7
February	263.3
March	265.2
April	266.8
May	269.1
June	271.4

Canadian Price Index

Statistics Canada
New Base 1971 = 100

1980	
January	200.1
February	201.8
March	204.0
April	205.2
May	207.6
June	209.9
July	211.5
August	213.5
September	215.4
October	217.3
November	220.0
December	221.3
1981	
January	224.1
February	226.4
March	229.4
April	231.1
May	233.2

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

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