



WHITE COLLAR

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

No. 420

July-August-September 1986



OPENING



Special Convention Issue—Contents

Photo/publication orders	2	Officer elections	7
Salute to Roméo Corbeil	3	Speakers	8
Photo spread	4-5	Convention committees	9
Policy statements/resolutions	6	Education conferences	11
Constitutional changes	6	Editorial	12

Challenges for the future

(Continued from page 12)

It is also recommending auxiliary membership for those not covered by collective bargaining agreements.

Organizing activities and field staff

The mission of the labor movement is to "organize the unorganized." OPEIU is dedicated to this philosophy because it is only through organizing that we can continue to negotiate better contracts to protect our membership.

With increased organizing activity, we have dramatically increased field staff. We now have nine female International representatives on staff which is 30% of the entire staff. However, this is not the complete picture. In many organizing drives, we are taking rank-and-file members out of organized groups to work as temporary organizers. Thus many rank-and-file activists are working with their local and International staff on organizing campaigns. This technique has proved the most effective technique to organize the unorganized.

For example, members of Local 6 working in the Massachusetts Court System have assisted in organizing campaigns in Wisconsin and New Jersey resulting in successful elections in both these states.

The same was the case in Monmouth College in New Jersey. Here organized Lafayette College clericals convinced Monmouth College clericals to vote union.

Numerous other elections are scheduled for 1986 and we are optimistic about their success.

In Alabama, OPEIU received recognition at two hospitals from the State of Alabama. The units involved consist of doctors, nurses, social workers, technicians and clericals. In Michigan, OPEIU is seeking a civil service rule change that would give 7,000 state supervisors collective bargaining rights. State police officers, prison officers, mental health and employees of the Secretary of State are functioning as OPEIU local unions.

In Cook County, Illinois, we are on the ballot with

two other unions and no union for 2,000 employees of the Court System.

OPEIU has had election gains with other groups comprised of more and more professionals: Dentists at Fairleigh Dickinson University, Passaic County Community College administrators, Newark Board of Education professionals, Ocean County professional employees, and registered nurses joined OPEIU. Local 1-H has been chartered which has resulted in organization and a collective bargaining agreement for home health care groups.

Thus, we have been particularly successful over the last three years in the following areas: public sector, universities and health care employees. Particular emphasis should be given to health maintenance organizations which have expanded dramatically. Also, we should be more responsive to professionals who are organizing in very nontraditional areas such as MDs and engineers.

The International's program on organizing subsidiaries is continuing. Locals must initiate a campaign, show a commitment to organizing, and, if the campaign is viable the International will help support it. This program has enabled more and more locals to get active in the field of organization in their community. This not only helps the unorganized, but also the existing membership.

We should also mention that affiliations of existing independent unions and accretions in our own existing units have been successful methods of gaining new membership, and should be pursued in the future.

An example of growth through accretion has been the winner of the 1985 Henderson B. Douglas Award. Local 2 aggressively set out to see that when Kaiser Permanente moved into Maryland and Virginia, these people received the benefits of the OPEIU. When the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority added a construction division, the professional engineers were covered under its collective bargaining agreement.

Since our last Convention, OPEIU in Canada has been involved in joint organizing campaigns with various central labour bodies which have proven most

successful. In Quebec, the Eastern Canada Council and Local 57 have been participating in the Quebec Federation of Labour Concor Organizing Committee and have organized more than 1,500 members in companies such as Phoenix Continental Assurance, Trans-Canada Shoes, Quebec Automobile Touring Club, Societe Nationale de Fiducie and 24 different Caisses Populaires (credit unions).

In Ontario, the Central Ontario Council has been involved in a joint organizing campaign with the Canadian Labour Congress and has been successful in organizing over 500 new members at Home Care Employees Association, Underwriter Ltd., Toronto Metropolitan Police Association and a Caisse Populaire at Kapuskasing.

In British Columbia, Local 378 was recently successful in organizing 250 new members at Rapid Transit Company.

The future of organizing

It is clear that the future for organizing white collar workers is brighter than ever, but one that requires new innovative approaches. The old approach—wages and hours—is not sufficient. Mass distribution of leaflets is not the approach. Like their blue collar counterparts in the 1930s, white collar workers in the 1980s have learned about the need for dignity on the job. They have discovered that white collar jobs produce dangerous levels of stress as work and productivity standards are changed by employers without any employee input.

White collar workers are looking for union representation: our union is prepared to expend our resources to organize them. We are now conducting more and bigger organizing drives than at any time in our history. Currently, we are conducting drives for 22,000 workers. We are prepared to meet the challenge of the 1980s which is the organization of white collar workers because that is our future—the future of this union, the future of the labor movement.

Political action

Our VOTE program has never been more successful. We have raised record funds and are now nationally recognized. However, the need for concerted political action in the United States and Canada has never been greater.

Regressive anti-union, anti-worker legislation proposed in the United States soon finds its way to Canada. More and more of our members realize that the job is not finished when the contract is negotiated if the reactionary forces that have been unleashed continue to control the labor boards and the courts.

OPEIU and its local unions were active organizers and participants in Solidarity Day I, II, III, IV in the United States; and in Canada we participated in Operation Solidarity. These demonstrations were planned to raise public consciousness and public support for the gains labor had fought so long to achieve.

In the United States, the labor movement has been fighting legislation on:

- Polygraph tests • Subminimum wage laws • Taxes on fringe benefits • Homework • Cuts in safety and health • Cuts in disability • Modification of Davis-Bacon • Modification of Title VII

In Canada, the labour movement is now seeing passage of regressive anti-worker legislation. For example, in British Columbia privatization of crown corporations has eliminated unionized government jobs and subcontracted them out to private sector firms that provide inferior services.

Bills 2 and 3 wiped out collective bargaining on promotion, classifications, hours, work schedules and job security, permitting termination without cause for employees in the public sector.

In Alberta, a bill was introduced to take away hospital workers right to strike.

Political campaigning can only be effective with strong grassroots support. In Canada, the Canadian Labour Congress' "on the job" canvassing and the AFL-CIO's similar "one-on-one" programs must be supported by all of the locals.

VP Fred Trotter retires



Pictured left-to-right are retiring Vice President Fred Trotter and International President John Kelly.

International Vice President Fred Trotter of Local 378 in Vancouver, British Columbia, announced his retirement at the OPEIU Convention. Many speakers from Canada and the United States, including President John Kelly, rose to extend the Union's gratitude for his many years of devoted, selfless service to OPEIU members, to say how much he will be missed and to wish him well in his retirement.

Local 378 submitted a resolution honoring him, on behalf of all the Canadian local unions:

WHEREAS, Fred Trotter, as Canadian Director, has given loyal and dedicated service to the Office and Professional Employees International Union; and

WHEREAS, Fred Trotter has been a member of the International Executive Board as Vice President from Region VIII since 1974; therefore, be it

RESOLVED that this Convention of the OPEIU express its appreciation for his dedicated service to members of the OPEIU both in Canada and the United States.

After unanimously approving the resolution, all OPEIU delegates rose for a standing round of applause for Fred Trotter.

In memoriam

In a moving Convention moment, delegates observed total silence for OPEIU activists who died since the last Convention.

In the flickering candlelight, Secretary-Treasurer Gilles Beaugard read the names of departed brothers and sisters.

We grieve the loss of these members and all other members lost during the last three years:

Josephine Hallock, honorary member, Local 15, Vancouver, British Columbia;

Ruth Hare "Sis" England, honorary member, Local 18, Birmingham, Alabama;

Frank W. Broderick, president, Local 33, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania;

Janet O'Dell, a founder and first officer, Local 42, Detroit, Michigan;

Donald J. Pradarelli, president, Local 85, Milwaukee, Wisconsin;

Robert Maciolek, committeeman, Local 85, Milwaukee, Wisconsin;

Jerry Jackson, past president of Local 273 which merged with Local 119, Chattanooga, Tennessee;

Howard Coughlin, business manager emeritus, Local 153, New York, New York; and International President Emeritus;

Matthew Thompson, business representative, Local 153, New York, New York;

Marguerite O'Connor, supervisor, health and pension funds, Local 153, New York, New York;

Carl Nigen, secretary-treasurer retirees' association, Local 153, New York, New York;

Jerry St-Amant, member, Local 165, Hawkesbury, Ontario;

Ed Beaupre, past vice president, OPEIU, and president, Local 214, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario;

Maxwell Murdock, sgt. at arms, Local 267, Red Rock, Ontario;

Mary White, vice president/recording secretary, Local 269, Chicopee, Massachusetts;

Gilbert Lalonde, former president, Local 386, Thunder Bay, Ontario;

Elizabeth Doyle-Averill, former executive board member, Local 391, Chicago, Illinois;

Paul Seals, member, Local 391, Chicago, Illinois;

Susan Winfield, former executive board member, Local 391, Chicago, Illinois;

Carroll Formby, president, Local 411, Springhill, Louisiana;

Mildred Kopecky, 1st secretary-treasurer, Local 494, Detroit, Michigan;

Donald Cameron, business representative, Local 500, and international representative;

Lucy Fitzpatrick, member, Local 513, State of Ohio; and

Carla Burkhart, former trustee and steward, Local 514, State of Ohio.



U.S. delegates attend education conference.

OPEIU educates delegates

On the day preceding the 17th International Convention OPEIU held its traditional convention education conference. Initially the Canadian and U.S. delegates met in separate sessions—the Canadians discussing policies pertinent to that country and our Canadian members, while U.S. delegates discussed the developing abuse of privacy rights in the workplace.

Discussion in the U.S session was led by Amy Gladstein, attorney with the Gladstein, Reif and Meginniss law firm. She told delegates how workers in the United States are finding their privacy abused as more managements attempt to use invasive testing like polygraphs for honesty/dishonesty testing or urinalysis and blood testing for drug and alcohol abuse. Delegates learned where the law is on these tests currently and what they could do to protect their members either from the tests or from their abuse.

Following the separate sessions, Canadian and U.S. delegates merged to attend one of three available workshops on topics of major concern to many of our local unions.

The *Microtechnology* workshop dealt with the changing nature of work resulting from technological change and the impact on workers. Specific topics covered included health and safety issues, homework and electronic surveillance. The workshop was led by Susan Attenborough, national representative, Research and Legislation Department, Canadian Labour Congress.

Professor Stan Marshall led discussion on the *Quality of Worklife*, which included quality-of-worklife schemes like quality circles and whether they increase

worker participation in the workplace or whether they are used as means to bust unions and deprive workers of their democratic rights in the workplace.

The *Union Weakening* workshop was led by Daniel Mallett, research and programme developer, Educational Services, Canadian Labour Congress. The workshop centered on tactics and strategies associated with the "union weakening" which could ultimately lead to "busting" or "decertification." Topics covered were creating the union weakening climate, the threads of union weakening, union weakening tactics, participative management and management motivational theories, and future trends and directions.

Education and Research Director Gwen Wells organized the conference.



Amy Gladstein explains the law on drug testing to U.S. delegates

Blues delegates deliberate



Director of Organization Mark Reader and Local 32 Business Manager Pat Tully lead discussions at 1986 Blues Conference.

All OPEIU delegates representing workers at Blue Cross/Blue Shield facilities met in conference prior to the Convention, Saturday, June 7, 1986.

Discussion centered around the AFL-CIO's national coordinated organizing drive for Blue Cross/Blue Shield bargaining units, Mark Reader, OPEIU Director of Organization, described at length the preparations for and progress of that campaign. Gene Holt, Business Representative from Local 9 in Milwaukee, worked at AFL-CIO headquarters on research for the drive and described those efforts. Local 32 (Newark)

Business Manager Pat Tully served as chair of the conference, which was coordinated by Education Director Gwen Wells.

All of the 10 OPEIU local unions that represent or seek to represent Blue Cross/Blue Shield workers were represented: Locals 3 (San Francisco), 6 (Boston), 9 (Milwaukee), 23 (Tacoma), 29 (Oakland), 30 (Los Angeles and San Diego), 32 (Newark), 57 (Montreal), 153 (New York City) and 212 (Buffalo). Business Representative Bill Kirby who heads a campaign in Kansas City also attended.



By candlelight Secretary-Treasurer Gilles Beaugard read the names of OPEIU activists who died since the last Convention.



Challenges for the future

by John Kelly
International President

OPEIU International President John Kelly summarized the work and achievements of the union since the last convention. He also looked ahead and recommended prescriptions for growth and progress in the coming years.

Following are excerpts from the President's Report to union members:

The last three years from 1983-1986 have seen a continuation of the conservative trend started by the elections of conservative administrations in the United States and Canada.

PATCO, which set the stage for a new vehement aggressive anti-union business policy, was parodied at Continental Airlines, TWA, Greyhound Bus Corporation, Phelps Dodge, Lone Star Cement, National Steel and other companies.

The union-free environment cloud in the States has now moved over to Canada. The Ontario Supreme Court has on its docket the Merve Laving case which as we know in the United States, will hamstring the Canadian labour movement.

Concession bargaining and two-tier-wage systems have become the norm in collective bargaining, with medical cost containment being used as a subterfuge to reduce the benefits of workers.

In the United States we have seen a tax policy that has encouraged major corporations to avoid taxes. This tax program, instead of stimulating the economy, has encouraged corporations to use their new-found wealth to buy other corporations. We have been witness to the largest corporate mergers, buyouts, and acquisitions in our history producing jobs not for workers but for accountants and lawyers.

Billions of dollars have been spent in this process, but this only serves to eliminate jobs as corporate research and development go starved for funds. In addition to the millions of workers displaced, we are now seeing thousands of professional, managerial and supervisory workers put out on the street as newly merged corporations attempt to streamline staffs.

It has become clearer and clearer that these giant corporations have lost any commitment they may have had to communities and the workers they employ.

In fact, new technology has made this cheaper and easier for corporations with satellites, computers and telecommunications to relocate to cheaper labor markets.

Eastern Airlines, for example has set up branches in Puerto Rico; and American Airlines has moved its reservations center to Barbados. The Best Western hotel chain uses prisoners as their reservation clerks and pays them the federal minimum wage—this in the name of rehabilitation. Atari has closed plants in the Silicon Valley and reopened in the Philippines where there are no child labor laws.

Finally, with the explosion of this new technology, corporations have redesigned work. Deskilling, automation, quality control are our new buzzwords. Part-time work at "mother's hours" with no benefits is becoming the rule not the exception, and we have yet to see the real impact of "homework."

Therefore, the 1980s have become one of the major watershed periods for change in society, and it is happening at a faster rate than any previous period.

In response to the challenges before us, the AFL-CIO in a dramatic move, conducted the first major public study of the problems of the labor movement. The study, *The Changing Situation of Workers and Their Unions*, was conducted by the AFL-CIO Com-

mittee on the Evolution of Work.

The committee's findings were published in a report with recommendations and brought before the AFL-CIO 1985 Convention in Anaheim, California. The OPEIU spoke in support of this program at the convention and endorses it wholeheartedly.

The report studied the composition of the present work-force and predicted its future growth. It pointed out the decline of jobs in manufacturing and construction and the continued growth of service industry jobs. In fact, it was predicted that by 1990 three-quarters of the jobs will be in that area.

It analyzed the retrogression of labor laws from the 1930s to the present and the desires and perceptions of workers toward unions and employers. It also proposed new methods of advancing the interests of workers and a program for improving the methods of organizing techniques.

Cooperative organizing

Cooperative Organizing must be adopted industry by industry. In the past, OPEIU has participated in the Houston Organizing Project, the IUD's Southern Organizing Project, the Florida Cooperative Organizing Project, the High Technology Project and the LA-Orange County Project.

Thus, when numerous unions suggested a Blue Cross/Blue Shield Program, OPEIU became the leader in the project as we represent some 8,500 members working for Blue Cross/Blue Shield. A few thousand other employees are represented by the Teamsters, the UAW, and the Steelworkers. OPEIU's contracts and expertise have been called upon over and over by the AFL-CIO in this program.

Nine unions, under the direction of the AFL-CIO Organizing Department, are participating in the program: OPEIU, SEIU, IUE, AFSCME, CWA, USWA, RWDSU, UFCWIU and the UAW.

Binding arbitration

The Blue Cross/Blue Shield Program, the Litton Program and the Beverly Nursing Home Campaign call for corporate campaigns in which labor uses its muscle to achieve employer neutrality. The key to success is cooperation instead of competition between unions.

Therefore, on March 1, 1986, the AFL-CIO moved away from its longstanding policy of staying out of jurisdictional disputes and adopted *binding arbitration*. The procedure is administered by AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland and provides for expedited mediation and arbitration to ensure speedy resolution of organizing disputes.

Benefits

One of the dramatic programs adopted by the AFL-CIO Council and the convention is one wherein the movement continues to keep a relationship with members no longer working and with groups who have attempted to organize and, as yet, have not been successful.

A Committee on Benefits was established and your President is one of the six members on the committee. After much study, the first benefit that will be made available to these and current members is a credit card issued by the Bank of New York at no annual membership fee and, more importantly, at a reduced rate of interest for unpaid balances.

The committee is studying other programs such as insurance, travel clubs, medical and legal coverage.

(Continued on page 10)



Vice President L. J. Sheridan accepts organizing award. To the left is Secretary-Treasurer Gilles Beaugard; to the right is President John Kelly.

L.J. Sheridan, president of Local 2 in Washington, D.C. and long-time International Vice-President, won the Henderson B. Douglas Award for organizing the largest number of new members in 1985. In addition to the OPEIU plaque honoring him, he also received a stipend which he immediately contributed back to the Union's political action fund Voice of the Electorate (VOTE).

In accepting the award for OPEIU Local 2 Sheridan said that the local firmly believed in the obligation to bring the benefits of unionization to unorganized workers. "And, if we do succeed," he said, "it is only because we try." With that he encouraged the other OPEIU locals to become more actively involved in organizing campaigns.

He and Local 2 received a standing ovation from the delegates.

U.S. Price Index

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

1984	
October	312.2
November	311.9
December	312.2
1985	
January	312.6*
February	313.9
March	315.3
April	316.7
May	317.8
June	318.7
July	319.1
August	319.6
September	320.5
October	321.3
November	322.6
December	323.4
1986	
January	324.3
February	323.2
March	321.4
April	320.4
May	321.4
June	323.0

Canadian Index

Statistics Canada
New Base 1981 = 100

1984	
October	123.2
November	124.0
December	124.1
1985	
January	124.6
February	125.4
March	125.7
April	126.2
May	126.5
June	127.2
July	127.6
August	127.8
September	128.0
October	128.4
November	128.9
December	129.5
1986	
January	130.1
February	130.6
March	130.9
April	131.1
May	131.7
June	131.9

* The old CPI (U.S.) figures have been replaced with a new series that includes a rental equivalence measure for homeowners' costs

If you move, send your old and new address, including zip code and social security or social insurance number and Local Union number to: Gilles Beaugard, Sec.-Treas., 815 16th Street, N.W. Suite 606, Washington, D.C. 20006.



Official Convention photo available

Official convention photographs are now available. This excellent photo, in either of two styles, makes a wonderful souvenir and sample of our union's history.

As you can see, it is available in a standard, high gloss, ruled style; or in a matte finish with the appearance of matting surrounding the photo. Either picture measures 11 x 14 inches and costs \$10.

All pictures will be ordered together as a group, so please send your orders in quickly to:

OPEIU Convention Photo
815 Sixteenth St., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

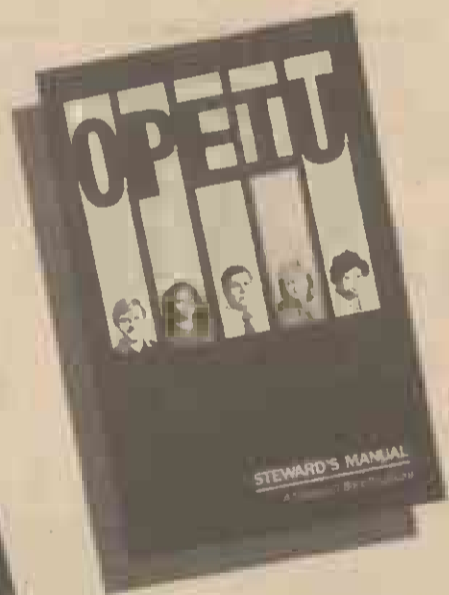
Make checks payable to Office and Professional Employees International Union. Be sure to indicate which style you wish.

New publications

In addition to a number of other new publications first presented at the Convention, the Office and Professional Employees International Union has produced three new manuals for our local unions—the *Steward's Manual*, *Secretary-Treasurer's* and *Trustee's Manual*, and the *Strike Manual*.

Any of these can be ordered in quantities by writing or calling our Washington, D.C. office. Send requests to OPEIU, 815 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036; or call (202) 393-4464.

A sample of each will be mailed to each local shortly with further details on ordering. The *Steward Manual* bears a cost of \$2.50 each to cover printing costs only.



WHITE COLLAR

Official Organ of
**OFFICE AND PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES
INTERNATIONAL UNION**
affiliated with the AFL-CIO, CLC

JOHN KELLY
President

GILLES BEAUREGARD
Secretary-Treasurer

POSTMASTERS, ATTENTION — Change of address Form 3579 should be addressed to: Office and Professional Employees International Union, 815 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006. (202) 393-4464.

GWEN WELLS
Managing Editor



PRINTED IN U.S.A.

Published quarterly by Office and Professional Employees International Union, 815 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006. Second class postage paid at Washington, D.C. (ISSN 0043-4876)
Reproduction by the Labor Press of any or all material herein contained is not only permitted, but wholly desirable in the interest of workers' education.

Subscription Price \$1 a Year

Delegates salute Roméo Corbeil

After more than 30 years with the Office and Professional Employees International Union, International Secretary-Treasurer Roméo Corbeil retired on May 1, 1986. A special tribute was paid to him at the Convention. The comments of his peers, proteges and fellow trade unionists express the sentiments of all of us OPEIU members best.

I first heard of Roméo in 1956 when he joined the OEIU after working for the Chemical Workers. I had the good fortune to meet him at the last convention in Montreal, and what I saw was a dedicated trade unionist with a sense of humor. Over the next 10 years we continued to meet at staff conferences and conventions. I saw that he continued to be a real trade unionist—both idealistic and practical.

The locals he was assigned to service continued to grow. The reputation of the OEIU was no longer "a quill pusher union" but was now a part of the mainstream of the labor movement. I was a little jealous of him because of his bank organizing but proud to be part of the organization that had done so much for these workers.

In 1971 we established a relationship that was to grow, to where I am now proud to call him friend. Some of my fellow oldtimers will remember we had a different system of election at the 1971 Convention. The International Executive Board was informed that at the Canadian caucus they had selected Roméo for vice president. I am proud to be able to say I was the first on the board to support him.

Later that night we met and talked of his vision of how to bring thousands more into our ranks, both Canadian and U.S., and in this I saw another side of Roméo—a visionary. Over the next year, as vice president and Canadian director, the OPEIU continued to grow in numbers and respect. Roméo was, in fact, "Mister OPEIU" in Canada.

Having seen this, when we had to fill the position of Secretary-Treasurer, we all turned to Roméo. He resisted, not because of the inconvenience to himself and his family, and that was great, but because deep down he is also a very humble man. After some time

he came to the conclusion that it was not like him to refuse an assignment and he became Secretary-Treasurer. Once again he came through for us, bringing a youthful enthusiasm to the office that enabled him to work closely with the staff to streamline our procedures. While writing these few words I keep thinking how can I say what is really in my heart for Roméo,

*We've worked together;
We've dreamed together;
other than to say, he will always be my friend and I hope he can say the same for me.*

John Kelly
OPEIU International President

Roméo and I met when I was an Executive Officer and, from that moment on, the respect I have for this man whom I consider quite exceptional, never stopped growing.

Most of you, I am sure, will understand the words "spiritual adviser"; and I feel that Roméo Corbeil was mine in terms of unionism.

Roméo made us proud members of Local 434. In us he brought out our strength, capabilities and independence . . .

We consider ourselves lucky to have met Roméo Corbeil, a man who has so much to offer, a man who is a born leader.

Thank you 1,134 times on behalf of the 1,134 members of Local 434, for the work accomplished together.

Yvon C. Rivard
President, Local 434

It's easier to talk with Roméo than to try to describe him. A friendly and loving man, Roméo always has the right word to bring discussions a little further, he has a questioning look, a positive attitude and words of cheer. Always concerned, he so often says: "Every problem has its solution; it is up to you to find it."

Nevertheless, he could not resist asking how things were going at the first opportunity he got. I do not



Roméo Corbeil thanks delegates for honoring him on his retirement. In his hand he displays the booklet "A Tribute to Roméo Corbeil."

know what we would have done without him . . . The sincerest way to pay him tribute is a simple "Thank you." Thank you for your tenacity, for your collegial spirit, for your straight forwardness, for your dedication, for your self-sacrifice . . .

Maurice LaPlante
President, Local 57

Roméo, you deserve all the honors due for your active participation in the labor movement. For the past 30 years you have proven that conscientious work is always rewarded . . . You were, and still are, a great builder of the Office Employees Union.

Through multiple sacrifices and dedication you have transmitted unity, good old-fashioned solidarity to those who want to build on solid ground, for the betterment of working people and their families.

"Meo," we wish to thank you for a job well done and we wish you a great retirement.

Denis Freshette
President, Local 463

Under the banner "Old-fashioned Solidarity" delegates set union's course



The more than 300 delegates to the Seventeenth OPEIU Triennial Convention came to Montreal, Quebec, from all over the United States and Canada. They came to represent their local unions in establishing the policy of the International Union over the next three years and to elect the leaders of the union.

They came to work. And, they were not disappointed.

Nearly all of the delegates met in committee prior

to the Convention and then again off-and-on throughout the Convention. They deliberated, debated and voted on many policy issues.

For the first time, far-reaching and comprehensive policy statements were adopted on a myriad of topics, as recommended by the International's executive board. These statements will be published for use by the local unions. They provide background on each issue, as well as OPEIU's position, in an easily

readable and understood form.

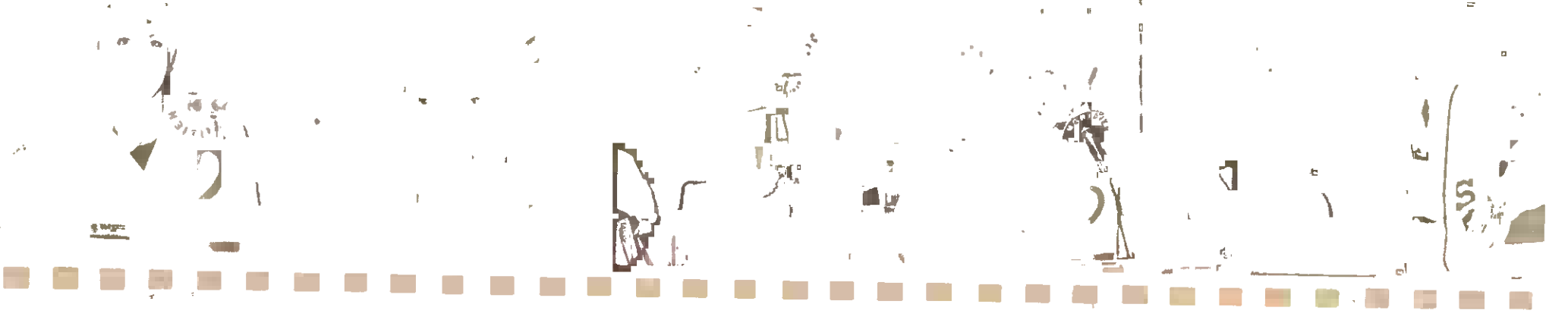
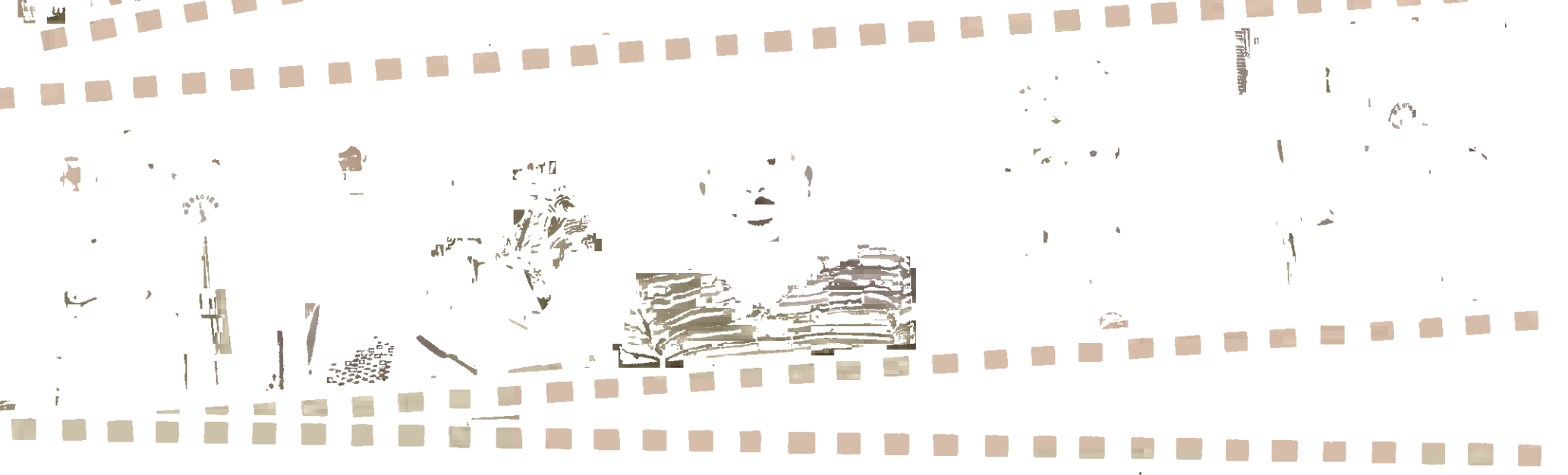
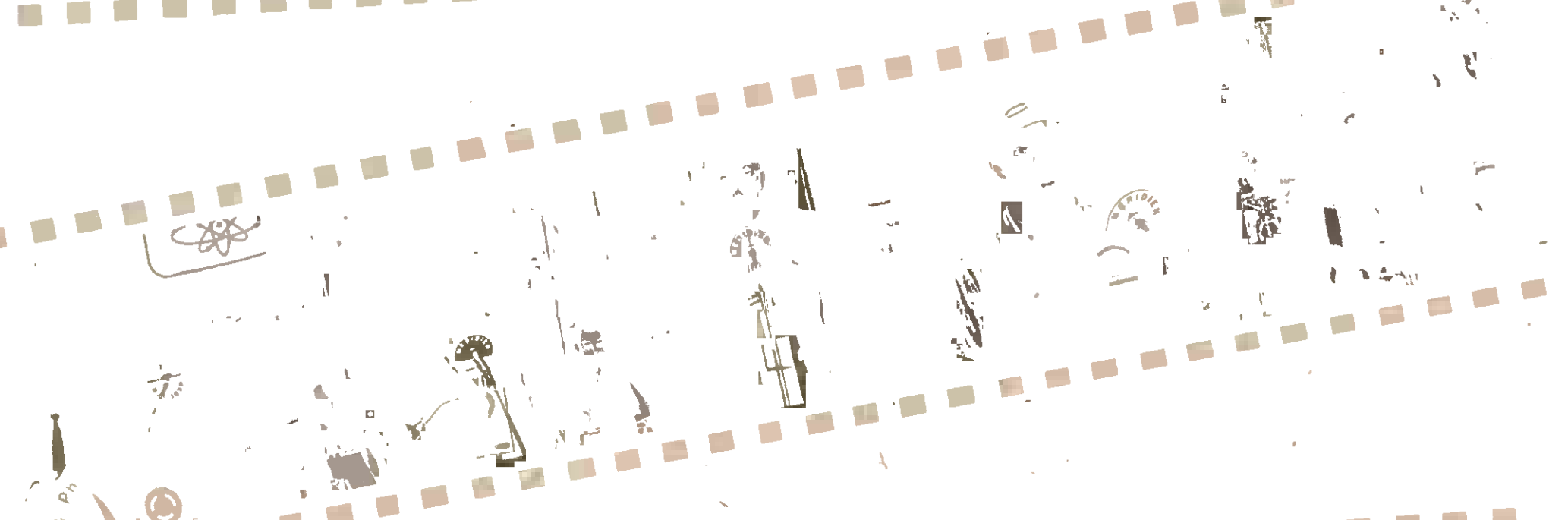
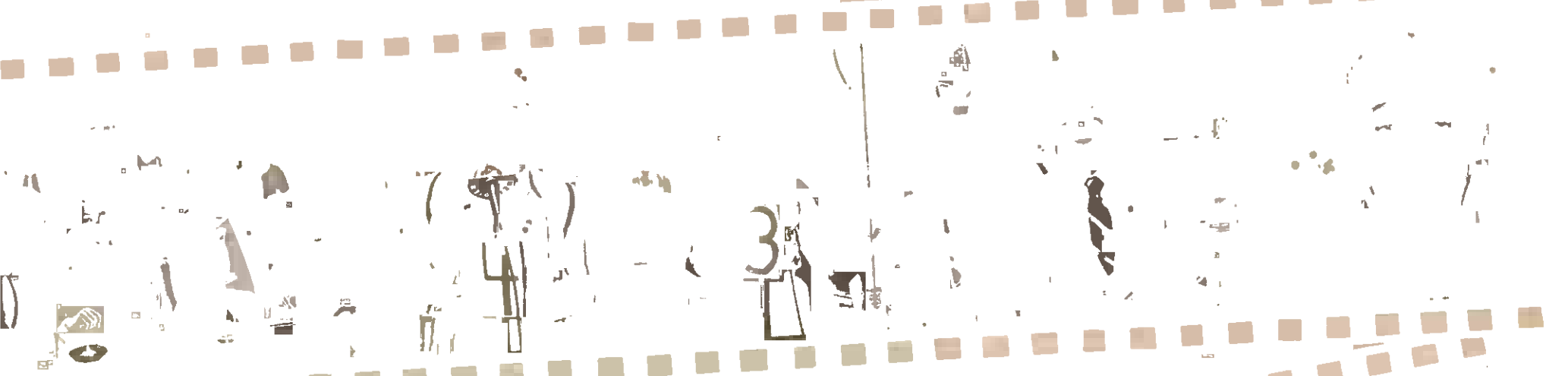
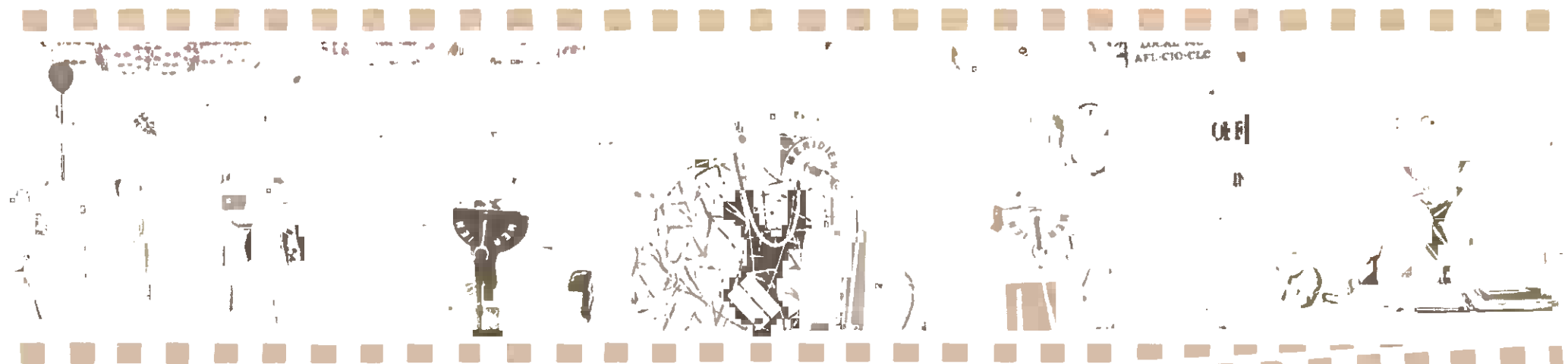
But, the union also acted on many resolutions submitted by local unions on both domestic and foreign policy.

Following is a summary of some of the enacted policy statements and resolutions. Contact the Research Department for the full text of any in which you are interested.

(Continued on page 6)

"New Technologies—Old Fashioned Solidarity"





(Continued from page 3)

Policy statements

Organizing

Noting that "the founding principle of our union has been to organize the unorganized," delegates committed the union to more organizing drives using alternative strategies and innovative tactics. Targeting corporate and cooperative campaigns, statewide and regional campaigns, pursuit of employer neutrality and creation of attractive organizing literature were all urged.

New technology

Delegates expressed their concern with "uncontrolled use of technology to raise productivity" and pledged local unions to pursue safeguards for workers at the bargaining table and through legislation. Just a few of these are: union participation in the planning for and introduction of new technology; company training policies that benefit workers; flexibility between occupations; ban of monitoring, machine-paced work and electronic homework; safe and healthy working conditions, and a protection against dismissal.

Jobs and training

"Full employment is a moral, social, political and economic imperative," delegates unanimously agreed. To fulfill the union's commitment to full employment, delegates pledged that the union would seek the creation of jobs and training opportunities, training allowances and income support during training, provision of day care, a permanent unemployment program, unemployed health care protections and improved education for all workers.

Polygraph tests

Because of their abuse of employer rights and their inherent inaccuracy, OPEIU delegates strongly condemned the use of polygraphs in the workplace and called for their outright prohibition.

Acid rain

Delegates opposed any unregulated use of coal and urged the "local unions in the U.S. and Canada to strongly urge the Federal, provincial and state governments to pass meaningful legislation to curb and control this serious threat (acid rain) to our health, welfare and livelihoods" and to investigate alternative energy sources.

Equal opportunity and affirmative action

In a far-reaching commitment to "integration and the goal of full and equal opportunity for all Americans," delegates pledged the union to an even greater effort "to accelerate the upward mobility of members of minority groups into the nation's mainstream." Delegates committed the union to a major political action and legislative effort to thwart all attempts to weaken civil rights laws or their enforcement, insure all OPEIU contracts are non-discriminatory and contain strong affirmative action language, and include women and minorities at all staff levels.

Working women

In addition to recommitting the union to pursuit of Equal Rights Amendment ratification, delegates passed a sweeping policy statement in support of working women's rights.

Noting the pervasive sex discrimination and undervaluation of women's work in the labor market, delegates urged locals to attain equality for jobs of comparable worth in all bargaining units, to organize women in the workforce and provide them with equal job and training opportunities, to pursue employer and government subsidized child care, to provide safeguards against sexual harassment, to prohibit

discrimination against women in insurance and pensions, and to provide protection against reproductive hazards in the workplace.

Voice of the Electorate

Delegates recommitted the union to expanding participation in OPEIU's political action fund—Voice of the Electorate—through political checkoff. Locals are urged to obtain checkoff in their agreements and to sign up members. Locals were also urged "to establish VOTE Committees in every local union, not only to raise VOTE monies, but to organize for political action—to locate and educate activists and to mobilize the members behind OPEIU's political program."

Resolutions

Unemployment

Delegates indicated strong support for a reduced workweek to ease unemployment and urged locals to seek the 32-hour week through both negotiations and legislation.

On the other hand, delegates opposed job-sharing and part-time employment as a means to reduce unemployment. Noting that "employers as well as our present government(s) have attempted to disguise the practice of eliminating full-time jobs and benefits as 'job-sharing'" and "these part-time workers are exploited by their employers in terms of lower wages, hours of work and no benefits", delegates resolved to press the U.S. and Canadian governments to stop the job erosion.

Delegates also strongly supported negotiating a strict ban on overtime with only one exception: 1) in an emergency situation, 2) where the employee has the right to refuse the overtime.

A boycott of automatic teller machines was urged, since ATMs have caused widespread replacement of tellers.

International affairs

Delegates voiced their support of the democratic trade unions in Central America that "have organized in order to achieve freedom, peace and social justice for their people" and for a nonmilitary solution to the Central American problem "based upon the 'contradora' peace process."

Delegates also called for disinvestment in South Africa and the repeal of apartheid by that government, condemned all forms of terrorism, and favored a mutually verifiable bilateral "limitation and eradication of nuclear weapons" by the U.S. and U.S.S.R.

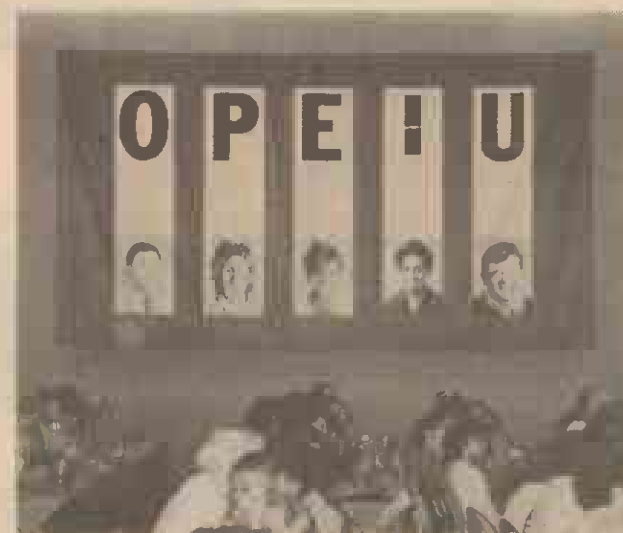
Gainers Strike Edmonton Alberta

Delegates voted full support for the striking UFCW members at the Gainers Meat Packing Plant in Edmonton, noted the employer's use of violence and scabs to bust the union, and voted to boycott Gainers products.

Following the vote delegates eagerly contributed more than \$3,000 to assist these workers in their struggle.

Saskatchewan and British Columbia

Delegates condemned the anti-union policies of the Saskatchewan and British Columbia governments—the former for allowing "employers to unilaterally impose changes to the collective agreements during the bargaining process" and British Columbia for restricting the right of office workers to a free choice in union representation. It was resolved to pressure both governments to change their policies.



Constitutional changes

At the recommendation of the OPEIU International Executive Board—following extensive study—delegates passed several constitutional changes designed to increase the union's viability.

Strike benefits

Benefits to OPEIU striking members will be increased to \$60 per week initially; \$70 per week as of May 1, 1987; \$80 weekly effective May 1, 1988; and \$90 May 1, 1989.

To finance the changes, increased contributions to the Strike Benefit and Defense Fund were approved. For each per capita tax unit an additional 5¢ per month will be paid to the Fund in 1986, 10¢ in 1987, and 10¢ in 1988.

Per capita tax

To continue the forward progress of the union on contract negotiations, arbitrations and organizing, delegates approved an increase in per capita tax to the International Union, outlined as follows:

	Effective 10/1/86	10/1/87	10/1/88
1-500 members	50¢ per month	40¢/mo.	40¢/mo.
501 members & more	20¢ per month	15¢/mo.	15¢/mo.

Scholarship

Delegates also approved a transfer of 3¢ per member from the OPEIU General Fund into a separate Scholarship Fund. Rules on eligibility, amount, and selection will be announced at a later date.

Associate membership

Delegates created a new associate membership category, but left all details to the executive board for study and determination. This new category, it was reasoned, would enable the union to maintain ties with laid off members and with workers participating in unsuccessful organizing drives.

Delegates elect OPEIU officers

The OPEIU's top officers were installed for new, three-year terms after being elected by acclamation during the union's 17th Triennial Convention.

President John Kelly, Secretary-Treasurer Gilles Beauregard, and Vice Presidents James Bloodworth, Michael Goodwin, Gerald D. Iushewitz, Kathleen Kinnick, Gary Kirkland, James Mahoney, J. B. Moss, Gwen Newton, Michel Rousseau, L. J. Sheridan, and William Wittal were reelected.

Also elected for the first time by Convention delegates were four new Vice Presidents: Janice Best, Carolyn Combs, Ann Harvey and Michael Walker.

In addition, Vice President Michel Rousseau was elected unanimously to his first term as Canadian Director.

The following are brief profiles of the new officers:

• **Michel Rousseau** has been a member of Local 57 in Montreal, Quebec, since 1968; a member of Local 57's executive board 1969 to 1971; the Local's Secretary-General since 1983. He has also been active on the Canadian and International scene, serving as coordinator of the Eastern Canadian Council and as International Vice President since 1983.

• **Janice Best** joined OPEIU Local 343 (Toronto, Ontario) in 1971 where she served as organizing chairperson and secretary-treasurer. She was hired as a business representative by the Central Ontario Council in 1976, as an International Representative in 1986 and became coordinator for the Central Ontario Council in 1986. Currently she is a member of Local 520 in Toronto.

• **Carolyn Combs**, who works at Roosevelt University, has served as secretary-treasurer of Local 391 in Chicago, Illinois, since 1950, as well as holding many other officers in her local since that time. Internationally she has served as chair of the Officers' Report Committee at every International Convention since 1971, has several times been on appeals committees, and was a delegate to the FIET (an international labor organization for white collar unions) World Women's Conference in Washington, D.C. in 1981.

• **Anne Harvey** has served as business representative for OTEU Local 378 (British Columbia) for the past five years; was originally head of the local's communications program; has served on the BC Federation of Labour education committee; is currently a delegate to the Vancouver Labour Council, and is on the Board of Directors of the Educational Research Institute of BC. Harvey has been involved in the trade union movement since 1972, when she was a member of the National Union of Journalists and later the Vancouver-New Westminster Guild.

• **Michael Walker**, who has worked for the OPEIU as an International Representative since 1974, joined OPEIU in 1969 when he was a key organizer with Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Milwaukee. In 1972 he became Local 9's business representative, and in 1967 he organized the Milwaukee Council. From that time until today he has remained the Council's coordinator.



Roméo Corbeil swears in the newly elected OPEIU International Executive Board.



International President John Kelly



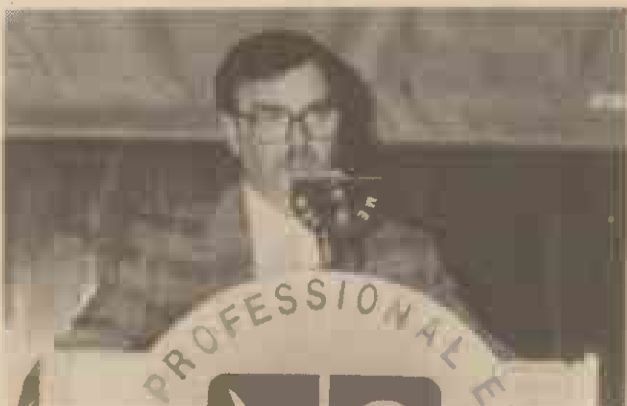
International Secretary-Treasurer Gilles Beauregard



Vice President Janice Best



Vice President Carolyn Combs



Canadian Director Michel Rousseau



Vice President Ann Harvey



Vice President Michael Walker

Voices for solidarity



Paul Burnsky, President, AFL-CIO Metal Trades Department



Ian Deans

"We must recognize where the economic enemy is—where people are working for 20¢ per hour, in the underdeveloped countries, not Canada or the U.S. . . .

"Our relationship is strong. The personal one even stronger than the political/economic one.

"We need a system taking care of people, not profits, first. It is our responsibility to demand change—people running for office who support the principles we believe in."

Ian Deans
New Democratic Party



John Brady on Voice of the Electorate



Thomas Donahue

"We are a trade union movement of the 1980s and 1990s, eagerly adapting to change. But, we don't want workers to take all the risks . . .

"As trade unions we have no life apart from our members. We must adopt and change as the needs and desires of our members do.

"We will continue to improve the lives of our members. It is our obligation and sacred duty. Changing life for the better is the business of unions."

Thomas Donahue
Secretary-Treasurer, AFL-CIO



Nancy Riche

"I am comfortable with the direction we are heading. The bent of the right-wing fundamentalists is anti-union and even anti-worker. And, workers are saying 'no more' . . .

"We have to have solutions. One is sitting here in this room—organized labor. We're the only opposition to the right wing. We must elect people who care about us . . .

"What we do for us, we do for many more . . ."

Nancy Riche
Vice President, CLC



Joyce Miller

"This is the only International Union I have visited with one-third of its executive board women. In addition, John Kelly is one of the best feminists I know . . .

"Women—who make up 44 percent of the U.S. workforce—now earn 63¢ for every \$1 earned by men. These wages are sex determined with little recognition to women's contributions.

"Until the needs of women are met—the need for child care, skill development, parental leave—the promise of reality and equal opportunity are only a dream . . .

Joyce Miller
President, Coalition of Labor Union Women



Robert Torricelli

"We have a 7 percent unemployment rate, larger than at any time in 40 years. Government revenues are not increasing. We have a \$150 billion deficit—a 400 percent increase in 5 years.

"Excuses we've heard are: union contracts are too high, workers get too many benefits, the tax system, too many safety and health regulations, too many environment regulations, etc.

"The administration has gained union concessions, decreased regulations, etc. and the trade deficit is still growing . . ."

Robert Torricelli
Member of Congress (D-N.J.)



Setting the stage— convention committees



Resolutions chaired by Vice President Gary Kirkland



Constitution and Laws chaired by Vice President J.B. Moss



Rules chaired by Vice President Gwen Newton



Official Publications chaired by Vice President William Wittal



Publicity chaired by Vice President Carolyn Combs



Organizing chaired by Vice Presidents Gerald Iushewitz and L.J. Sheridan



Officers Reports chaired by Local 119 President Jeanne Farmer



Legislative chaired by Vice President Kathleen Kinnick.

