



WHITE COLLAR

OFFICE AND PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION, AFL-CIO AND CLC

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Leading the Way Into the 21st Century

Goodwin, Beauregard re-elected

Delegates to the 21st Triennial Convention once again elected International President Michael Goodwin and Secretary-Treasurer Gilles Beauregard to lead our 130,000-member organization into the next century and beyond.

Goodwin defeated former International Vice President Patrick J. Tully — Business Manager of Local 32 in Newark, New Jer-

sey — by a vote of 89,738 to 24,520. Beauregard was elected over his opponent, International Vice President Ron Tuckwood — Local 378, Vancouver, British Columbia — by a vote of 87,018 to 27,424.

"I'm so proud that Gilles and I have been elected to continue our work bringing OPEIU into the new millenium," Goodwin said after the election to his second three-

year term. "I look forward to a united front as we move through the next three years, focusing on such goals as increasing organizing, raising the level of wages and benefits for our members, and continuing to fight for the rights of working families

everywhere."

"I thank everyone for their tremendous support," Beauregard said. "Now we must continue to increase our organizing efforts and build on all the great accomplishments our members have already made."

Convention Coverage Continues on Page 2



International President Michael Goodwin and Secretary-Treasurer Gilles Beauregard celebrate their election with Election Committee Chairperson Nancy Wohlforth.



International President Michael Goodwin.

ORGANIZING FOR CHANGE

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Local Union 393's Susan Carey and Director of Organization Jay Porcaro.

and now is back up to \$3 million, Goodwin said. In addition, he said, the strike fund, which currently pays out \$200 a week, has a balance of \$6.7 million, and he is recommending to the convention that the benefit be increased to \$230 over the next three years.

In order to provide better communications between the international and the locals, Goodwin proposed, and the convention approved June 16, a new technology program to allow locals to purchase computers, printers, and software. Under the program, each local will receive a \$1,000 one-time subsidy to purchase a computer with necessary software to connect the local to the international via the Internet. Each local also will receive a \$300 software subsidy, and a \$200 subsidy to purchase a printer. In addition, the international will provide annual training on computer components and software.

Goodwin also talked about efforts to bring greater diversity to the executive board, noting that in compliance with a resolution adopted at the 1995 convention a committee recommended and the executive board approved adding three women to the board with a "voice but without a vote." Later in the convention, Goodwin said he

plans to ask the delegates to expand the board and allow the three women to stand for election with the other vice presidents.

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Goodwin, Beauregard Win Overwhelmingly First Contested Race at OPEIU Since 1974

(June 18, 1998)

Chicago — In the first contested election since 1974, delegates to the 21st triennial convention of the Office and Professional Employees International Union late June 16 overwhelmingly re-elected their two top officers for another three-year term.

Delegates representing some 89,738 members voted to re-elect Michael Goodwin to his second three-year term as president of the 130,000-member union, while delegates representing some 24,520 members voted for challenger Patrick Tully, an international vice president and secretary-treasurer from Local 32 in Newark, N.J.

In the secretary-treasurer's race, delegates representing some 87,018 members re-elected incumbent Gilles Beauregard to his fifth term, while those representing 27,424 members voted for challenger Ron Tuckwood, an international vice president and president of Local 378 in Vancouver, British Columbia.

Tensions between the two sides, which were apparent from the opening gavel June 15, seemed to ease after the results of the vote were announced. Both Tully and Tuckwood congratulated the winners and pledged to work with them to build a bigger and stronger union. They both got a standing ovation from the delegates.

A delegate from Tully's local, who had repeatedly gone to the mike to raise objections during the first two days of the convention, congratulated Goodwin and said that there was nothing personal in her local's campaign against him. But, she warned Goodwin, "If you're not leading

right, we won't follow. As long as you lead right, we will follow."

Earlier in the week Tully challenged the seating of a number of delegates, contending that they had not been selected properly under United States law (115 DLR A-8, 6/16/98). When asked after the election if he planned to file objections with the Labor Department, Tully told BNA he would not discuss the issue until he consults with his attorney.

Executive Board Restructured. Delegates adopted a number of constitutional amendments dealing with restructuring the union's executive board and with the union's finances.

The number of vice presidents who serve on the union's executive board was increased from 15 to 21. There will be 13 vice presidents elected from six regions in the United States and four vice presidents from four regions in Canada.

Three additional at-large vice presidents' positions were created for the United States and one for Canada. The at-large vice presidents will be nominated and elected after the regional vice presidents are elected so that delegates can consider gender and ethnic diversity in filling the at-large positions. The one at-large position in Canada is specifically designated to be filled with a woman. The Canadian director's position, which previously had been filled by one of the Canadian vice presidents, was made a separate position.

Union Finances. Delegates approved an increase in the per capita tax that locals pay to the international. The increase, however, will not apply to the first 500 members of each local. The chairman of the constitution committee explained that the international was trying to help smaller locals by not requiring them to pay additional per capita for the next three years.

Currently, locals pay between \$4.72 and \$8.12 per month per member on a declining scale as the number of members increases. Locals will continue to pay \$8.12 on the first 200 members, \$7.67 on the next hundred, \$7.62 on 301 through 400 and \$7.32 on the next hundred. Beginning Oct. 1, 1998, the current \$4.72 per capita paid on each member after 500 will increase 35 cents per member. That rate will increase



Jay Porcaro accepts his award for organizing from President Goodwin.

another 30 cents Oct. 1, 1999, and another 25 cents Oct. 1, 2000.

Delegates also approved an increase in strike benefits. The current \$200 per week benefit will be increased to \$210 in May 1999, to \$220 in May 2000, and to \$230 in May 2001.

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OPEIU Delegates Elect 11 Women to Seats on Union Executive Board

(June 19, 1998)

Chicago — Delegates to the Office and Professional Employees International Union convention June 18 elected 11 women to the union's 24-member executive board, giving the union one of the highest representations of women on its board among AFL-CIO unions.

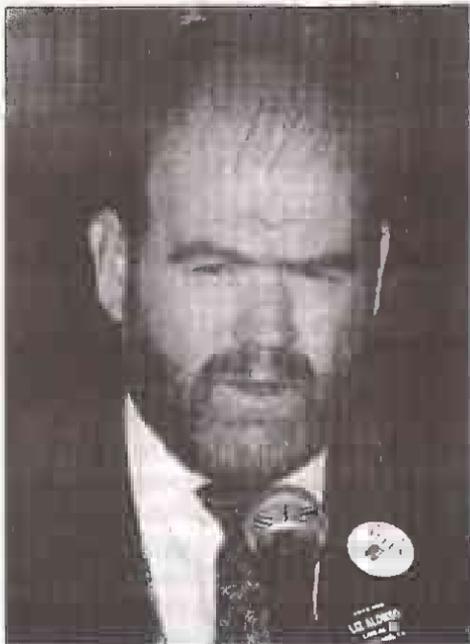
In voting June 17 and 18, delegates first elected 17 vice presidents from 10 regions in the United States and Canada. Of the 17 regional vice presidents elected, seven were women. Then the delegates elected four "di-



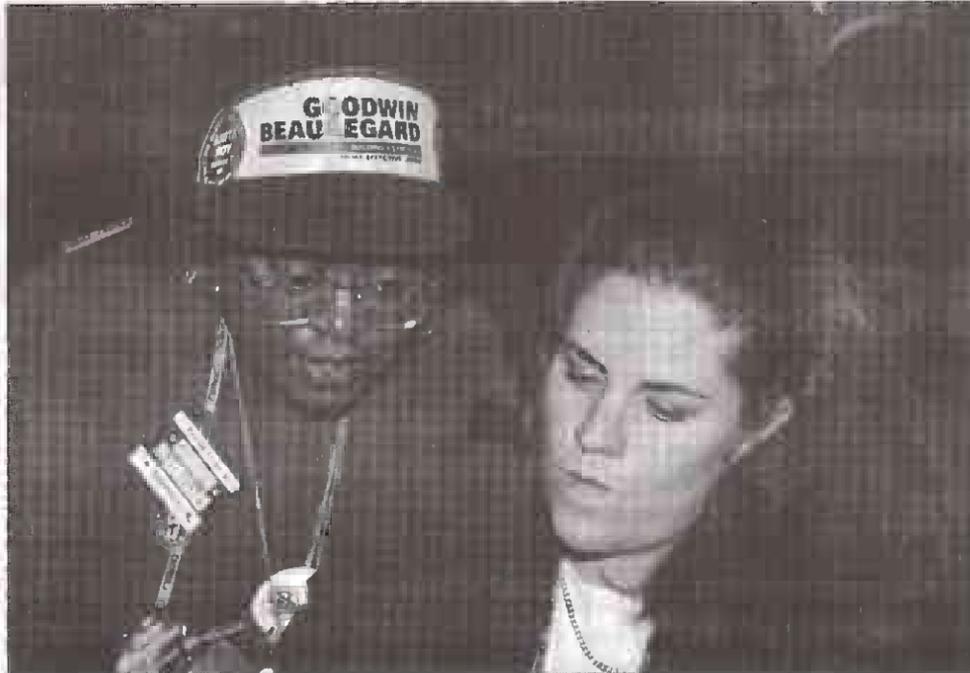
Local Union 2 Secretary-Treasurer Mike Cowan.



Evelyn Brooks, Local Union 42, Roxie Simpson, Local Union 494 and Opal Skilling of Local Union 15, are recognized for a lifetime of outstanding dedication and service to the OPEIU. Not pictured is award recipient Ethel Schwartz.



International Vice President Richard Lanigan nominates Michael Goodwin for the office of International President.



Vice President Millie Hall talks with Colleen Pederson, executive assistant to the office of International President.



International Vice President Kathleen Kinnick.

versity" vice presidents, three from the United States and one from Canada, all of whom were women. Earlier, the delegates had approved creation of the four diversity seats (117 DLR A-2, 6/18/98).

OPEIU president Michael Goodwin told BNA that he has a "mission" of making OPEIU the number-one union in representation of women on the executive board to better reflect the union's membership. He noted that approximately 70 percent of the union's 130,000 members are women. He said that the Association of Flight Attendants, with 43 women on its 60-member board, is one union with a higher representation of women.

Last year, in response to a resolution adopted at the union's convention in 1995, the OPEIU executive board added three seats designated for women and minorities. At that time, vice presidents holding those seats were given a voice but not a vote. The convention agreed to add those seats on a permanent basis and voted to look at the gender and ethnic background of the vice presidents already elected when nominating and voting on the diversity seats.

There were contests for several of the regional vice president positions. Patrick Tully, an international vice president who

lost a challenge against Goodwin for the presidency earlier in the convention, ran again for Region II vice president but was defeated. Tully, the secretary-treasurer of Local 32 in Newark, N.J., had been a vice president of the union since 1987.

Vice president Ron Tuckwood, who ran against Gilles Beauregard for the secretary-treasurer position and lost, was re-elected as vice president for Region VIII in Canada where he ran unopposed.

In a reflection of the union's commitment to organize professional employees, delegates elected Dr. John Mattiacci, president of Local 45, the National Guild for Medical Providers, as one of five vice presidents from Region II, which encompasses New England and the mid-Atlantic states. Mattiacci is a podiatrist, and currently his local represents some 10,000 podiatrists and allopathic physicians.

Before the election of the vice presidents, the delegates adopted a resolution renewing the union's commitment to organize and represent all white collar and professional workers in its jurisdiction.

The resolution noted that in recent years the labor market has been forced into "cataclysmic change" because of corporate downsizing and for-profit health care system, which has created new interest in unions by groups of workers affected by these changes.

In addition to the podiatrists, in recent years OPEIU has organized other health care professionals including osteopathic physicians, optometrists, dentists, mental health professionals, chiropractic doctors, and nurses. Other professionals that the union has organized include hypnotists, pilots, teachers, appraisers, attorneys, and professional models.

During discussion of the resolutions, Mattiacci told the delegates that the business of medicine has affected the practice of medicine and the proliferation of managed care has affected the quality of care. He applauded OPEIU for the vision of organizing health care professionals to try to challenge the changes that are being forced on the providers.

Another delegate from Local 40 in Michigan contended that hospitals are taking advantage of their doctors and nurses, and OPEIU needs to organize the 5 million nurses in the United States in addition to the doctors.

Delegates adopted another organizing resolution calling on all locals to re-evaluate their organizing programs and make organizing a priority. To do this, each local must devote more resources to organizing, involve members in the organizing program, encourage a budget for organizing, develop volunteer organizing committees, train organizers through the international's educational program with the George Meany Center, and authorize one person in the local to pursue targets to organize and to make decisions about organizing.

Delegates, however, also called on the international to continue allocating resources to inform locals of the availability of training programs and help locals train organizers and voluntary organizers, and to help with extraordinary expenses incurred in a campaign.

The convention also directed the international to make every effort to increase its organizing and servicing staff to accommodate its ongoing growth in membership.

Staff Organizing. On the last day of the convention, June 18, delegates voted to withdraw several resolutions dealing with attempts by an independent union to organize OPEIU's field staff.

Earlier in the convention, before the election of the top officers, there had been some debate on a resolution that stated that the convention stood in full support of the action of the executive board in refusing groups "claiming less than majority support for representational purposes." The resolution referred to the board's action in refusing to recognize PRO-U as the bargaining agent for the field staff (115 DLR A-8, 6/16/98).

Faye Orr, a staff representative in Tennessee, told the delegates that "not now nor at any time has there been majority support" for PRO-U among the staff representatives. She said that the union "can't force representation on a majority based on the wishes of the minority." She added that it is an insult to the union that there needs to be a resolution passed to put this issue "to bed." She added, if and when the majority of the field staff want a union, she is sure the leadership of OPEIU will grant voluntary recognition.

Richard Lanigan, a vice president from Local 153 in New York City, also said the majority has not shown an interest in being organized and contended that those opposing the leadership had politicized the issue.

Continued on page 13



International Vice President Walter Allen, Jr., Chairs Program Committee.



International Vice President Richard Lanigan, Local 277 Business Representative Becky Turner and International Vice President J. B. Moss.

Democrats press for managed care; OPEIU supports efforts

Nationwide, more than 100 million Americans suffer inadequate health care coverage and yet measures to correct this situation continue to languish and die in Congress. Legislation first proposed on March 31, 1998 by Senator Edward Kennedy (D-Massachusetts) would have forged a real "patient's bill of rights" for anyone who has ever run aground of a health maintenance organization's policies. OPEIU strongly supported this initiative, recognizing it as the managed care bill for which millions of working Americans have been waiting. Unfortunately, it died in session.

An amended version of this bill is expected to be reintroduced early in 1999. Like other proposed health care bills, Senator Kennedy's plan would have included provisions on comparative health care plan information for consumers, given patients the right to appeal to an external body when their plans have denied coverage for a series

of expensive treatments and included access to emergency care. What distinguished this bill from its Republican-sponsored counterparts was its overall flexibility. The Kennedy plan would have prohibited so-called "gag orders" on doctors and would have prevented retaliation by HMOs against physicians advocating on their patient's behalf. The bill would have granted consumers access to basic health plan information, including covered benefits and cost-sharing requirements. It would also have allowed women the option of choosing obstetricians-gynecologists as their primary care physicians.

As expected, insurance companies and their defenders were adamantly opposed to the Democrats' bill, with Senator Don Nickles (R-Okla.) stating, "The Patient's Bill of Rights, a great title, but really what you should call it is a lawyer's right to bill..." The corporate opposition to the bill claimed

that the bill's clause allowing people with employer-sponsored coverage to sue their plans for malpractice would have caused a deluge of new legal actions and would have raised premiums to such an expense that smaller businesses would not provide insurance coverage to their employees at all. Opponents also took exception to the bill's inclusion of a 48-hour minimum hospital stay for certain surgeries.

The OPEIU, however, firmly believed in the virtues of Senator Kennedy's proposal and saw the proposal as exactly what we have been advocating for working Americans all along. President Clinton agreed and, in a statement to Senate Minority Leader Richard Gephardt (D-Missouri),

stated how pleased he was that the bill included every protection recommended by the President's advisory commission.

More than 170 health professional organizations also endorsed the plan because, as Kennedy stated, "... they know that a right without a remedy is no right at all, and they know the importance of having accountability in these programs." The American Medical Association was among the health professional organizations supporting the Democrats' bill. The OPEIU will work to ensure that the amended version will be ratified by the Senate so that, finally, all working Americans can have effective, affordable health care and have their doctors — not HMO officials — deciding their treatments.

Want the hottest news?

Sign up for the OPEIU MemberGram

Sometimes the news is too important. There's legislation coming up for a vote that will affect you and your families, and you have to contact your legislator quickly. There's a rally or march scheduled to fight an abusive employer. Or, a new court decision or governmental regulation that will have immediate effects on your job.

It's times like these when the new OPEIU MemberGram will be invaluable.

International President Michael Goodwin will express the MemberGram to interested local union activists whenever important issues arise. Just sign the form below, which duplicates the MemberGram design, and watch the mails.

"It's important to improve our communications with you, the members, to involve you more actively in decision-making and in actions of the union. And communications should never be one-way. I, therefore, look forward to your responses on the effectiveness of the MemberGram as well as the subjects we cover," President Goodwin says, as he urges members to sign up.

From the desk of President Michael Goodwin



MemberGram

Yes, sign me up to receive the MemberGram whenever hot topics come up. I want to be kept informed on issues, activities, and decisions that affect me, my family and my local union.

Name _____ Local Union _____

Social Security # _____

Address _____

Phone (Daytime) _____ (Evening) _____

FAX _____

Complete and send to:
MemberGram, OPEIU, 1660 L Street, N.W., Suite 801, Washington, DC 20036.

Wheel of Fortune celebrates Labor Day

Wheel of Fortune, America's most popular television game show, aired a week-long special salute to America's working families and their unions beginning Labor Day, September 7. The week featured twelve contestants who were selected from the ranks of all of the unions affiliated with the AFL-CIO. Each union member teamed up with a family member to spin the Wheel for prizes that were all Union Made in the USA. Union members from auto workers to hotel workers showed the fruits of their labor as cars, family vacations and other exciting prizes were up for grabs.

The special series of Wheel of Fortune shows were taped on location in Pittsburgh.

"Americans are working harder and smarter than ever before," said the show's producer, Harry Friedman. "We think a salute to workers, their unions and the products and services they provide our society is a fitting tribute to offer on Labor Day."

The series was a great way for millions of Americans to see union members and their families having fun together competing for the kind of union-made prizes that any American family would enjoy having.

CONVENTION SCENES



International Vice President
Maureen Bo.



Kathryn Lee, Local Union 339,
Akron, Ohio.



From left to right are Secretary-Treasurer Gilles Beauregard, International Vice President Richard Lanigan and International President Michael Goodwin. Vice President Lanigan receives the Henderson B. Douglas Award for Organizing.



Local Union 153 President Emeritus Alton Merchant and International Vice President J.B. Moss.

Several other international representatives said they were appalled that the issue was coming forward at the convention. At least two said they believed the staff should be organized. But, both said it had become a political issue. One said she believes in unionization for the staff but doesn't believe in the way it was done.

A National Labor Relations Board regional director last month issued a complaint against Goodwin, Lanigan, and the union's organizing director allegedly resulting from the organizing drive (115 DLR A-8, 6/16/98). Goodwin told BNA that the international has no intention of settling the complaint and will go forward with a trial before an administrative law judge, which is set to begin July 13.

Kaiser Partnership Addressed. In an address to the convention, Peter diCicco, president of the Industrial Union Department of the AFL-CIO and head of the federation's Kaiser Partnership, told delegates that the labor-management agreement with the country's largest health maintenance organization is already showing results. "We have turned the tide on what was going on at the bargain-

ing table" and gone from "extraordinary hostile relationships." Now, he said, Kaiser has ceased seeking benefit reductions, the unions have reversed some of the wage freezes they had accepted earlier, and there have been several early contracts settlements.

The partnership between Kaiser and seven AFL-CIO unions, including OPEIU, is the largest labor-management partnership in the United States, affecting some 76,000 Kaiser workers across the country, diCicco said. The partnership has been in place for about 18 months.

About two years ago, Kaiser was seeking major concession bargaining with many of its unions as it tried to keep up with the pressures being brought on them by for-profit hospitals, diCicco said. The unions decided they needed a coordinated strategy and went to the IUDD, which "geared up for war against Kaiser." However, the unions decided that before they did anything they would explore other avenues and looked at labor-management partnerships that already existed.

One that was looked at, diCicco said, was a partnership between OPEIU and Northwest Natural Gas in Portland, Ore. The

unions approached Kaiser and gave them the choice of all-out warfare or a partnership with the unions. He added that it was helpful that Northwest Natural Gas's chief executive officer was on the board of Kaiser and was available to share his experience with the labor-management partnership with Kaiser management.

According to diCicco, Kaiser agreed to neutrality in any organizing drives among its non-represented employees, card check recognition, and non-board unit determinations. Of the 12,000 employees eligible to be organized, he said, hundreds are joining the respective unions. He added that a major organizing drive is about to get underway at Kaiser facilities in the Northwest.

DiCicco told BNA that three unions will be involved in the campaign among more than 1,000 workers — OPEIU, the American Federation of Teachers, and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees — at Kaiser facilities in New England and New York. OPEIU already represents some Kaiser employees in Connecticut, he said.

Another provision of the partnership, diCicco said, is that the unions agreed to mar-

ket Kaiser to their members as "union-provided care and services." He said that now is the time for unions, as purchasers, to look beyond the lowest cost and look at the quality of care being provided. He urged the union members to ask their employers at the bargaining table to allow Kaiser to make a bid on providing health services and give them fair consideration on the "standard of care as well as the standard of price."

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Dan Dyer, Local Union 2, Washington, D.C.



International Vice President Anita Roy delivers the report of the Legislation Committee.



Idamis Cabra, President of Local Union 402, Puerto Rico.

OPEIU to participate in Working Women Conference 2000

Thousands of union women expected in Chicago

The OPEIU is actively participating in the planning of the AFL-CIO's Working Women Conference 2000, scheduled to take place March 11-12, 2000 at Chicago's McCormick Place. The event is expected to top the 1997 conference's attendance of 1,800 union members. In anticipation of such a large response, the AFL-CIO has reserved more than 4,000 hotel rooms in the Chicago area for the conference.

International President Michael Goodwin has appointed International Vice President Kathleen Kinnick to oversee the OPEIU's planning efforts. In meetings thus far, it has been determined that the conference will

focus on three main issues: organizing, politics, and the setting of AFL-CIO policy with respect to women workers.

According to the AFL-CIO, thousands of working women from across the nation will come together to build strategies to change our workplaces, mobilize around key issues and send a message to political candidates that working women will not be taken for granted. As Kinnick points out, 2000 is an election year, so it is particularly important that working women make their collective voice heard on both a local and national level.

According to Kinnick, it is anticipated

that a number of international unions will be planning their own working women's conferences in connection with the AFL-CIO event. The OPEIU will be hosting its own event on March 10 at a location yet to be determined. Kinnick says the event will stress many of the themes of the larger AFL-CIO conference, but will focus more on OPEIU issues, in terms of organizing targets and how female OPEIU members can assist in organizing efforts.

OPEIU members are encouraged to join in this historic gathering. Any questions can be directed to Kinnick at (415) 777-3444.

Speakers *Continued from page 7*

If unions can do in 1998 what they did in California, we will win the House back." He asked that unions get their members registered, informed, excited and ready to vote.

"The fountainhead of democracy is in danger in this country, and we need a rejuvenation now. We all can do it, it's just a matter of wanting to. It's up to the working union families to save this country."

Sweeney urges continued union support of pro-worker candidates

AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney warmly thanked the OPEIU and its leadership for all it has done for the working families of America and all it does for the AFL-CIO.

Sweeney shared his thoughts with the delegates about Congressman Richard Gephardt and what he means to the labor movement, saying that Gephardt "always puts people in front of politics," and that "with his leadership, we've been winning."

He then spoke about the defeat of Prop. 226. "The defeat changed the entire 1998 political landscape," Sweeney said. "It is a preview of what we're going to do in the elections this fall and shows that after three years of incredibly hard work, it's obvious that we are going to make it."

He warned, however, that we cannot get too comfortable, as there is still a lot of unfinished work to do. "We must continue to change," Sweeney said. "Millions of families are still feeling more pain than gain and millions of our jobs are still being shipped off overseas."

We must begin endorsing candidates who share our beliefs, change the way the political system works and start encouraging union members to run for public office, Sweeney said. He announced two AFL-CIO goals: to register four million new



John J. Sweeney.

union family members to vote and to have 2,000 union-member candidates run for office by the year 2000.

Sweeney also asked for the OPEIU's continued support for American working families. "Thanks to everyone here today and thousands of union members around the country, you made a new voice heard. We're winning and we have a voice. Let's make it heard in every community, in every workplace, and in every level of government."

RWDSU President Emeritus Lenore Miller thanks and praises OPEIU



Lenore Miller.

President Emeritus of the Retail, Wholesale & Department Store Union (RWDSU) Lenore Miller warmly praised OPEIU and its leadership and said she was eternally grateful for its constant support and solidarity. She pointed out similarities between the RWDSU and OPEIU, including the fact that they are both open houses for anyone to become organized and that both grew from small unions to large organizations encompassing all kinds of industries.

She called for delegates to remain strong, love their union, help each other and, most importantly, leave the convention in solidarity.

"Whatever happens, we must leave this room in a spirit of solidarity," Miller said. "You must remember that your strength is in being here, in being together. Nothing can break you apart if you stay together."

Moseley-Braun calls for pay equity



Senator Carol Moseley-Braun.

Carol Moseley-Braun (D-Illinois), the first African-American woman ever elected to the Senate, said that it is important that the country be reminded of OPEIU's sector of the workforce. "Yours is the workforce of the future," she said. "If the economy is to continue to grow, it will be because of the people you represent."

Moseley-Braun then turned to the subject of pay equity for the nation's 60 million working men and women. She pointed out that it has been more than 30 years since the

Equal Pay Act became law and that women are still earning much less than men. In fact, she said it takes women 15 months to earn what men make in a year — they earn only 74 cents for every dollar men earn. She said that this has a direct impact on families and is particularly hard on children.

Moseley-Braun explained that strengthening pay equity laws is not only an issue for today, but that it is strongly tied to the future because of retirement security. Since women earn less, they receive smaller pensions when they retire. She said that, on average, women spend 11 fewer years in the workforce than men and that their jobs are less likely to provide private pensions — only one third of women earn private pension benefits — half of the rate for men. And, saying that "women are only an afterthought in pension laws," she pointed out that women comprise 60 percent of people over the age of 65, but make up 70 percent of the elderly poor.

She concluded by urging the delegates to take action. "Abraham Lincoln was right when he said to the country that public opinion is everything," Moseley-Braun said. "Each and every person's voice makes a difference, each opinion makes a difference, each activism makes a difference."

Kathleen Kinnick to serve as Assistant to the President

It was announced that Kathleen Kinnick, Vice President (Region V) has been named to serve as Assistant to International President Michael Goodwin as of June 29, 1998.

"We are very fortunate to have Kathleen join the staff, as she has proven to be an exceptional leader and representative of the OPEIU," Goodwin said.

She will be working on women's issues and representing the International Union on special assignments. Part of her initial assignment will be to act as liaison between the OPEIU and the AFL-CIO's Working Women's Department. She is currently involved in making plans for the "Working Women Conference 2000" to be held March 11-12, 2000, in Chicago, Illinois. Kinnick's participation in the Coalition of Labor Union Women will continue with additional duties. She recently completed a successful



International Vice President Kathleen Kinnick.

assignment as OPEIU monitor in Local 29.

Kinnick has served on the Executive Board since 1977. She is also the President of Local 3 in San Francisco.

Frontier strikers strike it big

The good news just keeps coming for the workers who survived a six-year strike at Frontier Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada. Now that they are back on the job working for a new owner under a union contract, the NLRB ruled their strike was due to unfair labor practices and ordered \$5 million in back pay and pension fund reimbursement. The former owner had stopped pension payments. Some workers will get as much as \$100,000 in back pay.

Convention Coverage

Leading the way into the 21st century

Vice Presidents chosen to lead

Elections were also held to fill the 21 Vice Presidential seats on the International Executive Board. The following were elected to serve three-year terms.

Region I:	Maurice LaPlante
Region II:	Walter Allen Jr. Daniel B. Dyer Richard L. Dignan John A. Mattiacci Patricia Priloh
Region III:	Phillip Pope
Region IV:	J.B. Moss
Region V:	Kathleen Kinnick Judy Solkovits
Region VI:	Gary Kirkland
Region VII:	Theresa L. Horner Anita Roy Julie Weir
Region VIII:	Ron Tuckwood
Region IX:	Nick Kapell
Region X:	Janice Best
Vice Presidents	Maureen Bo
At-Large:	Elizabeth Alonso Millie Hall Claude Grenier

Bo, Alonso, Hall and Grenier were elected to fill the four newly-formed diversity Vice President positions on the Executive Board (three from the United States and one from Canada).

Lajeunesse re-elected; Canadian structure reformed

The unchallenged incumbent Michel Lajeunesse was also re-elected to serve as Canadian Director for the next three years.

As part of the restructuring of the International Executive Board, the Canadian structure was reformed. The positions of Canadian Director will be a separate position, opening up a Vice Presidential vacancy, and one additional Vice Presidency reserved for women was added to the Executive Board.

All Canadian delegates elected the persons to fill these positions. The new structure also includes five additional Regional officers.

Beginning with the Canadian National Convention in 2000, the Canadian Director and all Canadian Vice Presidents will be elected at those Triennial Conventions. As a transitory measure, Canadian Executive Board members were elected at this Convention.



Canadian Director Michel Lajeunesse.

Delegates chart course for 2000 and beyond

A number of important constitutional revisions were considered and adopted at the convention which will decide the union's course of action for the next three years.

Among those matters adopted was the restructuring of the International Executive Board. The number of vice presidents who serve on the OPEIU executive board was increased from 15 to 21. The Canadian Di-

rector position will now be part of the executive board. There were 13 vice presidents elected from six regions in the United States and four vice presidents from four regions in Canada.

Three additional at-large vice presidents' positions were created for the United States and one for Canada. These at-large vice presidents were nominated and elected after the regional vice presidents so that delegates could take into consideration both gender and ethnic diversity. The Canadian vice presidency is reserved specifically for a woman.

Delegates also considered constitutional amendments which dealt with the OPEIU's finances, approving an increase in the per capita tax that locals pay to the international — this increase will not apply to small locals with less than 500 members, however, and will not apply to the first 500 members of any local union.

Also approved was an increase in strike benefits that will be paid to members in a strike situation. The current \$200 per week benefit will be increased significantly to \$230 in the next three years.



Members of the International Executive Board are sworn into office.

11 women elected to the Executive Board

Unprecedented move ensures greater representation of women

In a move being hailed by the AFL-CIO and many of its affiliated unions, delegates to the convention elected 11 women to serve on the OPEIU's 24-member International Executive Board — ensuring that OPEIU now has one of the highest representations of women on its board among AFL-CIO unions.

"The OPEIU has a mission of making OPEIU the number-one union in representation of women on the executive board," said President Michael Goodwin. "This move better reflects our union's membership, as approximately 70 percent of our membership are women.

"We are so excited to have these talented and committed women on our board," Goodwin continued. "I've had the pleasure of working with all of them in the past — many having already served as vice presidents — and I'm sure that we now have the strongest, most capable board in the history of our union."

Seven of the 17 regional vice presidents elected from 10 regions in the United States and Canada are women. Four women were also elected to fill "diversity" seats set aside specifically to increase participation of women and minorities on the board. The executive board established these diversity seats (three in the United States and one in Canada) in response to a resolution passed at the 1995 convention. At that time, the vice presidents holding the seats were given a voice but no vote; delegates then voted at this convention to permanently add these seats to the board. Elected to fill these seats were Maureen Bo, Elizabeth Alonso, Millie Hall, and from Canada, Claude Grenier.

The other women elected to the board were: Patricia Priloh, Region II; Kathleen Kinnick and Judy Solkovits, Region V; Theresa L. Horner, Anita Roy and Julie Weir, Region VII; and Janice Best, Region X.

WHITE COLLAR

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Convention Coverage Continues on Page 6

CONVENTION SCENES



Annie B. Martin, President of NAACP, New York Center.



Singing the national anthems of the United States and Canada.



Director of Field Services Kevin Kistler.



Newly elected Vice President Julie Weir, one of four women elected to fill the International Executive Board's diversity seats.



Also elected to fill a diversity seat is Vice President Claude Grenier.



International Vice President J.B. Moss delivers the report of the Constitution and Laws Committee.



Canadian Director Michel Lajeunesse.



Carolyn Combs accepts her award for years of dedicated service to the OPEIU, and is named International Vice President Emeritus.



Members of the Sergeant-at-Arms Committee.



Romeo Corbeil Scholarship winner David Bell with Secretary-Treasurer Gilles Beauregard.



Lionel Corbeil and Ginette Corbeil Nault, the son and daughter of Romeo Corbeil, accept a plaque in recognition of their father and the scholarship that is named after him.



Michael Walker is conferred International Vice President Emeritus status at the convention, recognizing his many years of service to the Union.



Arthur Leidecker, board member of the National Federation of Hypnotists, OPEIU Local 104; Dwight Damon, President of Local 104; and Reverend Scott Gilles, Legislative Liason of Local 104.



Jearlean Fleming, President of Local Union 391, Chicago, Illinois, addresses the convention.



Isidro Diaz, President and Business Representative of Local Union 28, Chicago, Illinois, welcomes delegates to the convention.

Local News

640 employees at Providence General Medical Center vote Union Yes!

In a stunning two-to-one victory, 640 clerical, service and maintenance employees at Providence General Medical Center in Everett, Washington, voted to be represented by OPEIU, Local 8. The election, which was conducted on June 26, 1998, resulted in a vote of 318 "yes," and 142 "no" votes. That makes 60 percent of the hospital's 2,000 employees union members — in June 1996, the hospital's 660 nurses voted to join the United Staff Nurses Union.

"The vote represented a clear message to the hospital that employees want a voice on the job and a chance to bring their concerns to their employer with a united front and the protection of their union," said Organizer Cindy Schu. "Employees saw the gains that the nurses made when they successfully organized with USNU 141 UFCW two years ago, and have fought to win the same opportunity for themselves and their families."

Schu credits a strong in-house Union Organizing Committee, comprised of more than 100 employees, with the success of the campaign. These employees made sure that their co-workers knew the benefits of unionization. Here are some of their reactions to the campaign:

Why did workers contact OPEIU in the first place?

Health care changes all the time. Changes are part of our everyday life at the hospital. We just needed to have some control so we could have a secure job future for ourselves and our families. With a union we will work better and feel better if we know we'll be treated with respect, dignity and the truth.

Roy Root, Maintenance

We needed a union. We were having problems with personnel responding to our concerns, for example no pay increases for three and half years. We never knew when we would see our next raise or what it would be. We believed management didn't listen to our problems. There was favoritism among supervisors. We believed the only way to deal with this was to go union. Besides, we saw what the nurses were getting (they organized the UFCW two years ago) and we wanted the same rights and benefits.

Pat Axline, Maintenance

What helped workers to have the courage to organize?

By going to Union meetings and seeing how much support there was for a Union in other departments. That's what made me

open my eyes to it. I didn't realize that so many people wanted to improve their work environment. Knowing that I wasn't alone and there were others. Seeing the different faces and knowing my co-workers were a part of this. We talked to each other if we had doubts to bolster our courage.

Barb Barmore, Dietary

What was your role as a Committee Member?

My role was to get the word out about the union to as many co-workers as I could, not just in my department. I had to be able to answer their many questions and if I couldn't I found the answer and got back to them. I passed out flyers, made phone calls, went to all the meetings and helped decide what information we needed to get from the union.

Jennifer Myers, Admitting

I first went to a union meeting and met with organizers. They told me how I could then help my co-workers get organized. I went back to my work place and talked and listened to many co-workers. I helped get people to sign union cards to show support for having a union. Once we got enough cards we were able to hold our union election.

Bill Smith, Lab

How did Providence respond to employees organizing?

Management asked us to give them one more year. We heard that before. They might give us something one year but then it could be taken away the next year. They held department meetings where we were strongly encouraged to attend. They asked us why we wanted a Union, when they could give us what we wanted and we wouldn't have to pay dues. We asked them why they cared if we paid dues. One of my co-workers asked about the union-busting attorney they hired. Another person asked about the inequities of pay for those of us who had been there a long time and the people coming in making the same. They never did answer our direct questions. In other meetings they talked about strikes and other scare tactics... which didn't work.

Sharon Bennett, Medical Records

What was the election process like?

It was really interesting for me because I had never been through anything like this before. The vote was conducted by the gov-

ernment by secret ballot at the three Providence locations starting at 5 a.m. on the morning of June 26. I was asked to be an observer during the election. I found myself watching the clock during the time the polls were open. When it came time for the vote count, I was praying with all my heart that there would be more yes votes than no votes. I watched management and every time there was a yes vote, their mouths dropped a little lower. I had never wanted anything so bad in my life, and when the final total of 318 yes votes to 142 no votes was verified, I couldn't hold back the tears. I'm glad I got involved as much as I did.

Chris Fitch, Lab

What advice do you have for other workers who want to form a union?

Don't get discouraged and stick with it. Sometimes workers don't think anyone cares about their working conditions. After I met with and talked to union organizers I realized people do care. I would encourage all workers who want to organize not to get

discouraged and to stick together. It took us a year and a half, but now we're Union.

Ken Blake, Dietary

How will workers stay organized now that you've won your election?

We'll stay organized by keeping the lines of communication open. We still need to talk to each other and remind ourselves why we wanted a union in the first place. The Union can send out newsletters with updates and hold meetings, but it's going to take us, the workers at the hospital, talking with each other one on one or in groups to make our Union strong.

Barb Meyers, Labor & Delivery

Forming a union takes courage, strong leadership and perseverance. Congratulations to the employees at Providence General Medical Center. They join thousands of union health care workers in the Puget Sound area who are dedicated to improving and protecting their industry standards.

Gore visits Lockheed Martin and Local 277

Members of Local 277 acted as escort committee for Vice President Al Gore on his recent visit to Lockheed Martin TAS in celebration of the selection of LMTAS F-16 fighter plane for a foreign military sale. This \$7 billion contract is key to keeping the Fort Worth facility operating until the selection of the Joint Strike Fighter after the year 2000.

All unions at the Lockheed facility were invited to participate in the celebration, and Local 277 employees Ronnie Jones (President of Local 277), Jackie Curry, Marty Schmoker, Ramona Alexander and Gene Patton were among those on hand. International Vice President J.B. Moss was also representing the OPEIU.



Pictured with Vice President Gore are OPEIU's Ronnie Jones (top, right) Marty Schmoker and Ramona Alexander (center, bottom). Moss was unavailable at the time the photo was taken.

Canadian Locals in the News

Local 57 — Montreal, Québec

Upheaval in the school boards

The least we can say about the education sector in Québec is that things are definitely heating up. Several thousand S.E.P.B. Local 57 members are currently experiencing major upheaval, and the union is facing considerable challenges that will have a critical effect on its representatives.

In Québec, the government is altering the structure of the school boards, merging them to reduce the existing 152 denominational school boards into 72 new language-based boards. An operation such as this necessarily entails mergers of administrative services and upheaval in the workplace and in work positions. Our members working in school board administrative centers have to choose new posi-

tions that are often in other institutions, given the new boards' expanded territories. Such choices may involve moving residencies.

Our members are experiencing hardships and insecurity as a result. S.E.P.B. Local 57, however, is keeping an eye open for problems, and is present throughout the process of transferring and integrating staff in our school boards.

The merger will also have an affect on union affiliation. There are unions in all the school boards slated for merger: unions affiliated with the C.E.Q., the C.N.T.U. and the Q.P.L. (ours, of course, as well as C.U.P.E. and S.E.U.-Local 800), not to mention a few independent unions.

The Education Act was modified to provide for votes to be held wherever two or more unions are competing.

The stakes are high for S.E.P.B. Local 57 and its members from the school sector. They have to maintain and expand their representation. The local recognized the need to rally all its forces and did so at the end of April when it received confirmation from the Labour Commissioner of the certification of the technical and administrative support staff at the Chomedey Laval School Board. A few days later, it received the same for the specialized education technicians, handicapped students' aides as well as the student supervisors at the Châteauguay-Valley School Board. Local 57 is very busy

with the transfer and amalgamation of members in the new school boards that went into effect July 1, 1998.

Negotiations, which began recently, have required that the school board unions' executives spend a vast amount of time gathering all of the members' requests as well as the other improvements which the union wants to bring to its collective agreement — the last real negotiation was nearly 10 years ago. These members have since experienced salary freezes, rollbacks by the government and an almost total extension of the agreement. Some of the demands pertaining to monetary clauses have already been submitted and, judging by the Treasury Board's reaction, it seems the union has a difficult road ahead.

Local 434 — Montreal, Québec

Laurentian Bank employees march

On May 24, 1998, more than 500 people marched in front of one of Laurentian Bank's oldest branches, which dates back to 1904, to protest the bank's plan to close it and 23 others on June 22, 1998.

"To serve you better, they're closing your branch," chanted the employees, emphasizing that these closings are motivated by profit — not in the best interest of customers or employees.

These branch closings come on the heels of the Bank's virtually eliminating human contact for its over-the-counter services in 28 branches in May 1997, then in 17 others in May 1998 (four branches

were closed altogether). While 87 of the 161 Laurentian branches that provided full services at the end of December 1996 still had tellers at the end of June, they are being phased out. All this despite a Léger et Léger poll commissioned by the union in Fall 1996 which showed that 92 percent of respondents disagreed with the strategic plan to eliminate tellers. The employees simply want the Laurentian Bank to respect the wishes of its customers.

Is it a coincidence that the closings are occurring in districts where customers are less "profitable?" Yet the Laurentian Bank, founded by Mgr. Bourget in 1846, has its roots in Montreal's working districts. The parish priest, Roger Dufresne, came to remind the former Banque d'épargne that clients in the area had always been loyal and that their loyalty should be better valued by an institution such as the Laurentian Bank.

Of course, these closings and cutbacks in customer service have an impact on jobs. Some 300 employees are currently being reassigned. And this is just the beginning. How many employees will no longer have their jobs when the collective bargaining agreement expires in December 1999?

Nor is the legal battle regarding the financial advisors over. Despite four decisions in favor of the union (Canada Labour Relations Board, the federal Court of Appeal and arbitrator Fernand Morin), the Bank still does not apply the labor agreement to this employee group. "It's another Québec Métro Richelieu case," stated Serge Cadieux, union representative in charge of the file. As a matter of fact, Laurentian Bank hired Métro Riche-

lieu's director of communications and recently mandated the same firm as did Métro Richelieu to represent it in its dossier versus the CNTU (Confederation of National Trade Unions).

The business plan will have great financial impact for the major shareholders who, according to Claude Grenier, International Vice President and President of Local 434, "have probably already put the champagne on ice. But 1998 will be another year!"

Clément Godbout, President of the Québec Federation of Labour (QFL), sees Laurentian Bank's course as a self-serving one, "to serve itself better rather than to serve its clients better."

The employees decided to take action, positioning themselves for the next round of negotiations. The atmosphere is ripe for union action: the government of Jean Chrétien is waiting for a task force looking into the future of the Canadian finan-

cial services sector to table its report in the Fall after which it will draft legislation. The task force is supposed to analyze bank mergers, among other things, and to base its recommendations on jobs and customer service. The union's concerns exactly! Neither the employees nor the public are fooled. The same Léger et Léger survey revealed that 89 percent of the population were all for the government legislating that financial institutions maintain personalized services. OPEIU Canadian Director Michel Lajeunesse asked the QFL to form a Québec coalition grouping together the numerous stakeholders — central labor bodies, community groups, small and medium-sized businesses, etc. The QFL approved this request at once at its Executive meeting May 25, 1998. A parliamentary committee will hear the coalition.

This was a great day. Together, from everywhere in Québec, the employees told the Laurentian Bank that they also want to retain all clients, and continue to do what they do best — meet the needs of those clients.



S.E.P.B. 434 members march in protest of Laurentian Bank's plan to close 24 branches.

Local 57 — Montreal, Québec

Renaud-Bray employees join SEPB Local 57

Employees at Renaud-Bray have joined the ranks of Local 57. Approximately 80 employees in the Renaud-Bray Côte-des-Neiges and Park Avenue bookstores filed for certification on June 26, 1998. Renaud-Bray has five bookstores in the Montreal region and employs about 200 people.

"Renaud-Bray employees formed a union because they want better working conditions and to break their isolation," explained OPEIU ROC Organizer Bogidar Perucich. "They are concerned about their wage structure, movement of personnel, promotions mechanisms and insurance plans."

Convention Coverage

Leading the Way Into the 21st Century

Speakers stress need for union solidarity

In addition to the business of the convention, the gathering was an excellent opportunity to hear from some of the nation's leaders from both the political and labor arenas. Among those who traveled to Chicago to be with the OPEIU were House Minority Leader Richard Gephardt (D-Missouri); Senator Carol Moseley-Braun (D-Illinois); AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney; Canadian Labour Congress President Robert White; Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union (RWDSU) President Emeritus Lenore Miller; Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union (HERE) President-Elect John W. Wilhelm; Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW) President Gloria Johnson; Council of Canadians Chairperson Maude Barlow; United Farm Workers President Arturo Rodriguez, Peter diCicco, Industrial Union Department Kaiser Partnership President; and Michelle King of the Union Privilege program of the AFL-CIO. Dan Turner, President of the Chicago Labor Council and Don Johnson, President of the Illinois State Federation of Labor were also on hand to welcome delegates to Chicago.

No room for division says CLUW's Johnson



Gloria Johnson.

Gloria Johnson, President of the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW), called for union solidarity to accomplish the OPEIU and CLUW's common goals — especially in acquiring rights and benefits for working women.

"There is no room for division within the labor movement," Johnson said. "The problems are out there. The only way we can overcome them is to work together in solidarity."

Johnson said the fastest-growing segment of the working population is women, and that CLUW is dedicated to fighting for the things that are important to women — among them fair wages, child care, affirmative action, and gay and lesbian rights. CLUW is also fighting against domestic violence and sexual harassment in the workplace.

"It's time for us to join forces more than we have ever done before in recent history," Johnson said. "To fight back, to protect the

rights and the standards of people living in this country."

Johnson remarked that, while progress has been made, much remains to be done in the struggle for equality in the workplace.

"Every gain we've made is under attack — privatization and downsizing are strategies now being used by business," Johnson said. "We must do something, and I'm proud to say, CLUW is there."

She referred to the many large corporations that pay astronomical salaries to their CEOs, while workers are paid less than a living wage. She also noted the pay inequity that still exists between working men and women.

"There's something wrong that women have to work until April 3 of this year to earn what men earned by December 31, 1997," Johnson said.

Organizing — CLUW's Primary Goal

CLUW's primary goal, Johnson said, is to organize. The group's other three goals are to increase the number of women involved in legislative and political action efforts, put a greater focus on affirmative action, and to enable a greater movement of women into higher levels of the labor movement.

"Progress has been made in each of these areas. Look at the changing faces of the executive boards of the many unions. Look at the changing face of the Executive Council of the AFL-CIO," Johnson said. This is a realization of what is right and what is fair for working women, Johnson observed, to recognize people on the basis of their talent and their ability to perform and promote the

goals of the entire labor movement.

Despite these changes at the highest levels of the labor movement, the average working woman still does not share the same rights as her male counterpart, Johnson said.

"It's a disgrace that out of almost 60 million women working, only 10 million belong to the labor movement," Johnson said. "We must organize and many opportunities are present. Certainly, [OPEIU] has shown that with a little fortitude, you can win."

She then congratulated the OPEIU on its many recent organizing victories, citing

OPEIU's addition of 11,000 members of the National Federation of Clinical Social Workers and 2,500 members of the Pennsylvania Nurses Association.

She also spoke of CLUW's constant outreach to young women throughout the country. CLUW is now reaching out to high school girls, and has formed a young workers task force. This task force will work to not only bring young women into CLUW, but also to ensure that the organization helps these women reach their goals and aspirations.

Farm Workers President Rodriguez thanks OPEIU for support

Describes plight of Calif. strawberry workers

Following a moving tribute to the late Cesar Chavez — the founder and leader of the United Farm Workers (UFW) until his death — the convention delegation warmly welcomed his successor, UFW President Arturo Rodriguez.

Rodriguez spoke about the very special relationship that existed for many years between the OPEIU and the UFW, and the friendship of both unions' leadership. Rodriguez recounted how both unions lost their long-time leaders at approximately the same time (Chavez died in 1993; OPEIU's John Kelly in 1994). He then said how important the friendship of the OPEIU was to the farm workers after the loss of their "founder and spiritual leader" for so many years.

He spoke of the historic march that was conducted to mark the one-year passing of



Arturo Rodriguez.

Chavez, and how officers of the OPEIU, including President Goodwin, joined in the march — a celebration that energized the UFW members, united them and encour-

OPEIU pledges \$20,000 to support UFW's strawberry battle

President Michael Goodwin informed the delegation that the OPEIU — in addition to the many contributions it has made over the years — would be making a \$20,000 contribution to the UFW's strawberry campaign.

"The work of the farm workers is the heart and soul of our labor movement," Goodwin said. "Arturo and his leadership are an inspiration to all of us here and to all of our Local Unions, and we thank him very much."

An emotional Rodriguez warmly thanked the OPEIU for its support.

aged them to continue.

He then told of the many successes the UFW has enjoyed in the years since. "In those short years, we were able to find the end of one of the longest labor battles we've ever had," Chavez said, referring to the signing of a contract with a major lettuce grower. "For the first time, we have unionized lettuce to put on your table." He also told of organizing successes with rose and tomato growers, and a wine vineyard in Washington state.

"Soon we'll have a whole table full of products that you can eat that are union picked," Rodriguez promised.

Despite these victories, Rodriguez cautioned, there are still hundreds of thousands of farm workers in this country that are at the bottom of the economic ladder.

Strawberry workers oppressed

Rodriguez noted the huge profits being realized in the strawberry industry, and compared it with the shamefully low wages of the workers upon whom the industry is built.

CLC President White says United States, Canadian relationship crucial

Canadian Labour Congress President Robert White echoed the sentiments of other convention speakers by stressing the need for continued solidarity between the Canadian and United States' labor movements.

He noted how legislative victories in one country can greatly affect labor policy in another. Congratulating the U.S. labor movement on its defeat of Fast Track and of Prop. 226 in California, White called these victories "not only good for you, but for the labor movement in Canada."

White also condemned the inequity between corporate salaries and workers in both countries, rising tuition costs, privatization, and rising unemployment. He also vowed to protect the access of all Canadians to adequate health care.

"Our position is very clear, the right to good quality health care is based on what is required to keep your health and not based on your ability to pay," White said. "We're going to fight for that, to keep that kind of health care in Canada."

He also spoke of advancing technologies,

He told delegates of the poor working conditions, unsanitary bathroom facilities and of drinking water taken from irrigation ditches.

"Change will only come about through the solidarity of hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of people throughout this nation."

Last year, the AFT held the largest march in farm history in California to kick-off the strawberry season. More than 30,000 people attended to demonstrate to strawberry pickers the tremendous support there was for their efforts, Rodriguez said.

He called for help in the fight with Driscoll Associates — one of the nation's largest strawberry growers — to let the company's leadership know that if a contract is not signed soon, the AFT is prepared to take action.

"The millions of people who harvest our fruits and vegetables have not been treated the way they deserve to be," Rodriguez said. "But it's going to happen." He called again for the OPEIU's help in getting the message to Driscoll Associates and growers like them, and to do everything possible to apply pressure and facilitate an election — to bring dignity and justice for farm workers.



Robert White.

and how these new technologies should not destroy the system that has built our countries over the years. "New technologies should not mean the elimination of an existing system," White said. "We still need a foundation. Our vision must be built on what those before us built."

Maude Barlow makes plea against Multilateral Agreement on Investment

Maude Barlow, Chairperson of the Council of Canadians, made an impassioned plea for delegates to fight against the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI), which she said is the latest global institution to remove democratic power from the government and people and place it in the hands of large, transnational corporations.

Calling global economization an assault on the public sector, she told the delegates of the horrors that have resulted from NAFTA and GATT and that would only worsen if MAI were to pass. She spoke of atrocious working conditions, devastation of the environment and the ability of corporations to bypass their governments and directly sue other countries.

"We must stand up and say no," Barlow



Maude Barlow.

said. "I call on everyone to spread the word throughout the world."

House Democratic leader calls on OPEIU, labor movement to save country

The House Democratic Leader Richard Gephardt (D-Missouri) received thunderous applause from the delegates throughout his spirited call to action — as he praised OPEIU for its part in bolstering the labor movement through increased organizing activities.

Gephardt congratulated OPEIU for bringing the union forward and for including physicians in its membership. "It is a great day in this country when physicians can call themselves part of a union," he said.

Gephardt then spoke of two recent union victories, the defeat of Proposition 226 in California and the stoppage of unfair trade. In Prop. 226, he said that "you put your money and your effort where your mouth is and we won a victory for the working people of this country," and that "we will not be silenced."

He shared with delegates his background, saying, "My dad was a Teamster and he always said to me that if it weren't for the unions, we probably wouldn't have food on our table." He said that he "never forgot what it meant to my family that we had a chance because a union was fighting for us."

"We would not have the economy we have in this country if it weren't for labor unions," Gephardt said. "Unions put money back into the economy. I believe in building the economy from the bottom up, not the top down. We must keep labor unions going forward for the sake of the country and the economy."

Gephardt said that the House is not focusing on the work that needs to be done, but instead is carrying on with unending in-



Congressman Richard Gephardt.

vestigations. He noted that there are currently 50 separate investigations going on in Congress and called this the "Congress of Inspector Clouseau." As a result, he told the delegates, they are not dealing with the agenda of the American people.

Gephardt also called for an increase in the minimum wage, a taming of the current health care system, and repairing of the educational system — which he called "the most important issue for the future of the country."

He asked OPEIU members for their continued support, saying that "everyone of you is vitally important," and that "you have the power because you have the vote."

Continued on page 14

The OPEIU Convention as reported by BNA's Daily Labor Report

The Bureau of National Affairs provided extensive coverage of the OPEIU Convention in its publication, the Daily Labor Report. The Daily Labor Report reaches leaders in the worlds of labor, business, academia, and government. With permission, White Collar reprints those articles for our members.

OPEIU body weighs seating delegates from Canada, nontraditional locals

(June 16, 1998)

Chicago — After lengthy debate that took up a great portion of the first day of a four-day convention, delegates to the 21st constitutional convention of the Office and Professional Employees International Union voted to seat delegates elected from Canada and from locals representing non-traditional workers.

Patrick Tully, an OPEIU vice president, who is running against incumbent President Michael Goodwin for the top job, challenged the election of some delegates from Canada, who he claimed were not elected by secret ballot, which is required under rules set out by U.S. labor law and enforced by the Labor Department. He contended that the election could be overturned by the Labor Department if it found that the outcome would have been affected by the votes of those delegates that were not elected properly.

Tully also challenged the seating of delegates from nontraditional locals, such as those representing models, hypnotists, and doctors, claiming that these members are not employees and thus are barred from voting under the DOL rules. Several delegates, who serve on the union's executive board, told the convention that some of these

groups were admitted on the basis that they would not be voting members.

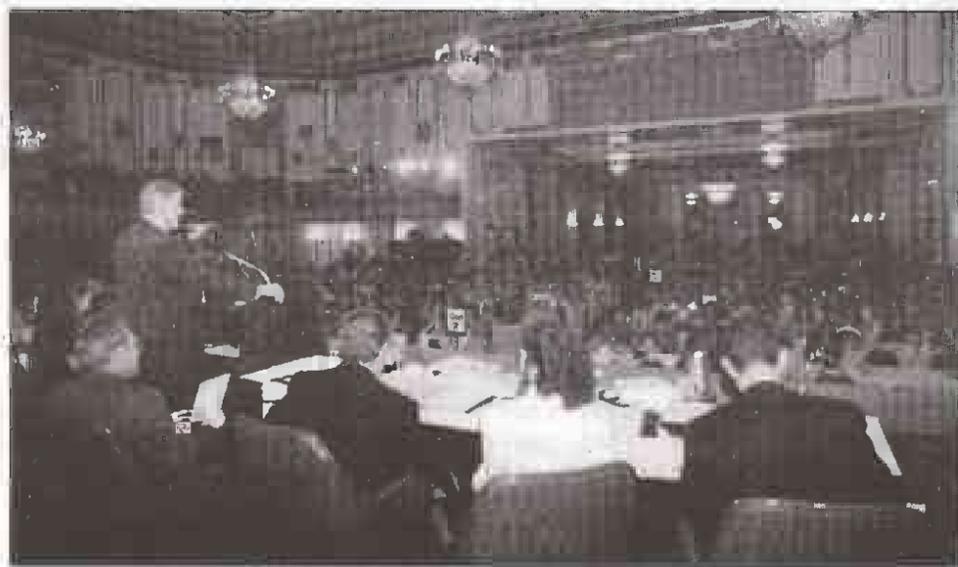
Larry Yud, chief of the division of enforcement of the Labor Department, told BNA that the election of international union officers is covered by U.S. law and that any delegates from Canada have to be elected under the provisions of U.S. law; if the election results are challenged, and violations are found to have occurred, he said, the department would take action only if the violation would have affected the outcome of the election.

While Tully claims that the results of the election could be "close," Goodwin told BNA that based on a roll call vote taken earlier in the day he believes that if the challenged delegates were found to be elected in violation of the law, they would not affect the outcome of the election. Voting on whether to seat a delegate from Local 30 in Los Angeles, whom Tully claimed was not elected properly, delegates representing 79,000 members voted to seat the delegate while those representing 32,000 members voted against seating her.

Locals that are supporting Tully and his running mate Ron Tuckwood, an international vice president from Canada, tried to move the election, which is scheduled for June 16, first to June 18 and then June 17, but delegates overwhelmingly rejected both proposals.

When asked about the issues in the campaign for the two top offices, several delegates told BNA June 14 that they believed the contest was a struggle over power rather than specific issues.

Campaign material handed out by Tully supporters, however, pointed to several reasons for his challenge including the attempts of the union's field staff to organize a union, and the current leadership's direction of funds to organize nontraditional



The 21st Triennial Convention general session.

groups such as models and doctors.

According to information handed out by the Rank and File for Reform Committee, which is backing Tully, the National Labor Relations Board has issued several complaints against Goodwin, Vice President Richard Lanigan, and Organizing Director Jay Porcaro relating to activities that occurred during an organizing drive by the field staff. According to the latest complaint, issued May 29 by the NLRB regional director in Boston, Goodwin fired OPEIU field staff representative Howard Turberville after he refused to sign an agreement that waived his rights under the National Labor Relations Act. The complaint alleges that the firing was effected to discourage the organizing activity and to prevent him from cooperating with the NLRB.

Porcaro told BNA that Turberville resigned after he was confronted with errors in his reports. For instance, Porcaro said, he reported organizing activity that did not take place, and couldn't account for some money he reported on his forms. He also alleged that Turberville used an international credit card for personal purchases.

According to Porcaro, Turberville said he would resign if the union kept the charges quiet, so the union allowed him to resign. Then, Porcaro said, Turberville claimed to the NLRB that he was forced to resign and then fired. Porcaro maintained that the union had "clear grounds for termination." He added that the union had not provided the NLRB with all its information yet, and he doesn't expect the complaint to be held up.

Goodwin told BNA earlier that the Professional Representatives and Organizers Union (PRO-U) has never represented a majority of the staff representatives, but the union's executive board previously had said it would recognize the union if it had a majority. An NLRB election was scheduled, but the staff union withdrew its petition,

Goodwin said.

Competing Resolutions. There are competing resolutions that address this issue. The executive board has proposed a resolution stating that it would recognize the field staff union if the majority indicated their choice of bargaining representative through appropriate signed authorization cards or petitions, that the bargaining unit is legally appropriate, that if there is a disagreement over the bargaining unit a third party neutral would determine what comprises the appropriate unit, and that once an appropriate unit is determined OPEIU would recognize the results of a card check or a mail ballot and meet in an "expeditious manner" to begin good faith bargaining.

A resolution being proposed by members of three locals proposes that OPEIU recognize the union for full-time international field representatives and organizers and that OPEIU begin bargaining at the earliest possible time.

In its campaign literature, the Tully campaign alleges that the International has "lost its focus of providing service to our current members. Instead, they have directed large amounts of money and resources to the 'nontraditional' groups (for example, models, doctors, hypnotists). To a certain extent, our 'traditional members' are paying the freight for many of the 'nontraditional' members."

The differences on this issue were apparent during the debate on whether to seat the delegates from these nontraditional groups. Some delegates said it was important to bring these workers into the union, adding that they have some of the same needs as other workers. One delegate said that there are other unions in the wings waiting to organize these workers if OPEIU does not want to.

Another delegate, who described himself as a nontraditional worker, charged that "those who are trying to deny us our rights" are the ones who are running against the in-



Local Union 457's Dennis Metcalf, Alberta Orndoff and Alfretta Ardobell.

cumbents. Although he acknowledged that Goodwin could get in trouble if the contested delegates are allowed to vote, he added, addressing Goodwin, "If you don't allow us to vote then there will be trouble."

In his report to the convention, Goodwin said much of the union's recent success in organizing health care and professional workers began when some of these nontraditional workers — podiatrists — joined OPEIU several years ago. Last month, he said, the National Federation of Clinical Social Workers, which represents 11,000 mental health professionals, voted to affiliate with OPEIU. Recently, he added, the Pennsylvania Nurses Association affiliated its collective bargaining division with OPEIU, adding 2,500 nurses to the union's ranks. He also noted that recently Local 153 in New York City affiliated the Federation of Catholic Teachers representing 3,000 teachers employed by the Archdiocese of New York.

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Gephardt, Sweeney urge union members to participate in fall congressional elections

(June 17, 1998)

Chicago — If unions can do what they did in California to defeat Proposition 226, the Democrats "will win the House back big time," in the fall congressional elections, House Minority Leader Richard A. Gephardt (D-Mo.) said June 16.

Gephardt told delegates to the 21st triennial convention of the Office and Professional Employees International Union that when the Democrats lost control of the House in 1994, only 13 percent of the entire vote for members of the House was from union households. When the Democrats

gained nine seats in the 1996 election, he said, 23 percent of the vote was from union households. And the vote on Proposition 226, which would have required unions to get annual written authorization before they could use any of their members' dues for political purposes, saw about 50 percent of union households voting to defeat the initiative, he said.

Gephardt urged delegates to get their members registered to vote, explain to them the stakes in the election, and get them to the polls to vote.

The defeat of Proposition 226 on June 2 was a "big victory" for working men and women, Gephardt said, because the right wing thought they could silence workers. "We will not be silenced," he said, adding that the defeat showed what labor unions can achieve.

Gephardt contended that the country needs a new direction because the current Congress is not dealing with the agenda of the American people. House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) is refusing to bring to the floor bills dealing with managed health care and education, he said, adding that he is starting a discharge petition to bring the health care bill (H.R. 1415 — The Patient Access to Responsible Care Act) to the floor. "If the discharge petition doesn't work," he said, then the Democrats will take back the House and put the health care bill on the agenda.

Gephardt got a standing ovation when he promised that if the Democrats take back control of the House he would lead the fight to prohibit companies from permanently replacing workers who are on strike. Also, he pledged to fight to reform the nation's labor laws so that labor unions that are trying to organize are "finally on a level playing field — no more intimidation, no more unlawful practices. Let's get unions on a level playing field so they have a chance to organize the workers of this country."

Defeat of Prop 226 Seen as Pivotal. ALF-CIO President John J. Sweeney echoed some of the same themes as Gephardt. "With the defeat of Prop 226 in California," he said, "I think we changed the entire 1998 political landscape." He added that the labor movement there "gave the country a preview of what we're going to do in the elections this fall."

Gingrich and his supporters counted on Prop 226 to "dry up our political funding" Sweeney said. Instead, he said, workers got involved in fighting the initiative "unlike anything we've seen before," with some 24,000 union activists involved in the campaign.

Defeating Prop 226 showed what unions can do, Sweeney said, but more union members need to be registered to vote. He pointed out that of 40 million members in union households nationwide, some 16 million are registered to vote. The AFL-CIO convention in 1997 set a goal of registering 4 million voters by the year 2000, he said.

The federation also has a goal of recruiting 2,000 union members to run for political office by the year 2000.

Labor also has created a new litmus test for endorsing political candidates, Sweeney said. Candidates will be asked three ques-

tions: Will you vote to support the right of workers to organize? Will you stand up against employers who violate labor laws when their employees are trying to organize? If workers are fired "will you stand with us, march with us, and go to jail with us?"

Noting that the 400,000 new members organized last year "just kept us even," Sweeney said the movement needs to find ways to get members involved in organizing as was done in politics.

"One key to doing that," Sweeney said is to use a more education-oriented approach to organizing. Union members told their leadership that they were tired of being asked to blindly follow their leadership's recommendations on who to vote for and instead wanted more information to make their own choices. When members got that information, he said, they turned out in bigger numbers to vote.

A second key to more organizing, Sweeney said, is to take a "broad-based community approach" as was done in politics. He said labor needs to get entire communities involved in campaigns and get the entire labor movement involved in helping each other organize.

At the conclusion of his speech, OPEIU President Michael Goodwin told Sweeney that the union in the next couple of months will for the first time in its history pass the 100,000 member mark for workers in the United States. Including its Canadian membership, the union currently has 130,000 members.

OPEIU's growth in the last three years since the last convention has been a key theme throughout the convention in reports, nominating speeches, and video presentations.

OPEIU Won 54 of 90 Elections in Last Three Years. In the president's report to the convention June 15, Goodwin stated that in the last three years the union has organized more workers than at any time in its history. During that time, the union participated in 90 NLRB-supervised elections and won 54 of them, he said, adding that one-third of the elections involved health care related workers.



Union Privilege's Michelle King.

According to AFL-CIO statistics, Goodwin said, OPEIU is only one of several unions that experienced growth in the last two years. "We ranked eighth among all unions posting organizing gains, and 10th in actual net percentage growth," he said.

Goodwin attributed part of the union's success to the regional organizing cooperatives established during the last convention to use more volunteer organizers. "Our members are the best organizers," he said, noting that hundreds of members have volunteered to organize others. He added that some of the most successful campaigns involved volunteers.

Goodwin credited the successful organizing campaigns, in part, with restoring the union to financial stability. He recalled that when he assumed the presidency the union was in the middle of the "fourth consecutive year where disbursements exceeded receipts." Currently, he said, the "red ink" has been eliminated for the first time since 1992.

The union's general fund, which was \$4 million in 1992, fell to \$2.1 million in 1996,

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International Vice President Gary Kirkland, Chairs Resolutions Committee.



Dr. John Mattiacci, International Vice President.



International Vice President Nick Kapell delivers the convention's organizing report.