



WHITE COLLAR

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

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3,500-Member Independent College Union Joins OPEIU

California Clericals Vote to Affiliate; Become CASE Local 555

A 3,500-member independent union, the Clerical & Allied Services Employees (CASE), representing clerical and office employees at state colleges and universities in California, has joined the growing ranks of the Office & Professional Employees International Union.

President Coughlin reported it was given an OPEIU charter designating it as CASE Local 555, on August 1.

Following negotiations with several other unions the action came after a year-long search

by CASE to link up with an AFL-CIO union, according to OPEIU Director of Organization Arthur P. Lewandowski who made two trips to the West Coast to work out affiliation details.

He disclosed that the new affiliate has a growth potential of 25,000 to 30,000 members, depending on a bill granting full bargaining rights to state college and university employees now before the California legislature. The bill, if enacted into law, will become

effective early next year. It already has been passed in the state assembly and now only awaits action by the senate.

Helen Savage, who headed the CASE Affiliation Committee, said the OPEIU was the committee's choice as the best qualified "because of its sole commitment to unionizing white-collar employees in the U.S. and Canada, its understanding of white-collar problems, and its reputation for skilled collective bargaining."

Another plus, she said, is

that "since we will probably soon be involved in a major collective bargaining campaign in the CSUS system, its expertise can be very helpful to us in this area because the OPEIU already has many colleges and universities, both public and private, under contract."

Other CASE speakers, supporting the affiliation action, stressed the benefits of membership in an AFL-CIO union. Margaret Butz, CASE lobbyist, declared: "In California, the State Federation of Labor,

AFL-CIO, in invaluable in our lobbying efforts. It's also important to us because of the strength we gain from cooperating with other working people."

"Though we are officially called OPEIU Local 555 we are still known as CASE," its President Joyce Harlan told the delegates. "We are delighted with the agreement with the Office Employees' union, and we believe that this affiliation marks the beginning of a new successful era of expanding CASE."



Committee on Political Education

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July 15, 1977

Mr. Howard Coughlin, President
Office and Professional Employees
International Union
Suite 610 - 265 West 14th Street
New York, New York 10011

Dear Howard:

My congratulations on negotiating a voluntary check-off provision for contributions to VOTE covering your 1,300 members employed by American Income Life Insurance Company.

I believe this is the first check-off negotiated by any union since we won this right under the 1976 campaign financing law amendments.

It's going to give your members--on a strictly voluntary basis--the opportunity to participate on a continuing basis in our political programs.

Most importantly, it will help candidates for office committed to legislation that is good for all working people and their families. As you well know, friendly candidates need this help from us--the combined strength of small contributions from many working people--to help offset the large contributions their opponents get from corporate political funds and from wealthy individuals.

I hope your union's trail-blazing example will be followed soon by many other unions.

Again, my congratulations.

Fraternally,

Alexander E. Barkan
National Director

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NLRB Adopts New Plan to Speed Up Elections

A new step designed to speed procedures in collective bargaining elections is announced by the National Labor Relations Board.

These are elections in which workers vote by secret ballot to select or reject a union as their collective bargaining representative.

NLRB Chairman John H. Fanning said that it had revised its rules to establish a "vote and impound" procedure so elections could be held on the date scheduled by a regional

director of the board. Previously, voting was postponed whenever the five-member board in Washington granted a request by an employer or a union to review a regional director's rulings.

Under the new procedure, the election will be held as scheduled without regard to any challenges to the regional director's rulings, and the ballots of employee votes will be impounded. They will be tallied after the board acts on the request for review.

NLRB Upholds OPEIU Plea in Hospital Organizing

NLRB Administrative Law Judge Russell L. Stevens ruled that St. Joseph's Hospital in Denver, Col., had violated the labor laws when it posted a notice forbidding distribution of union literature by non-employees on the premises, or by employees in any non-public area except during non-work time.

The unfair labor practice charge was filed against the hospital by Denver Local 5. The case was argued successfully for the OPEIU by International Representative Joe McGee, who says "It is my understanding

that this is the first time this rule has been tested since non-profit hospitals were brought under the jurisdiction of the NLRA."

The NLRB ruling clearly spells out the rights of hospital employees to distribute union literature and soliciting for union membership on hospital premises, "other than immediate patient care areas."

St. Joseph's Hospital was ordered by the NLRB, which upheld the Administrative Law Judge's ruling, to post a notice for 60 days to this effect.

'President's 100 Club' Adds Two New Members

Sec.-Treas. William A. Lowe announces that membership in the "President's 100 Club" has now gone up to 81 with the enrollment of two new members. They are Business Repre-

sentatives Gladys Lee and Mike Thompson of New York Local 153.

Altogether, 29 OPEIU officers and staff members have joined the Club to raise funds for VOTE.

WHITE COLLAR

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

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President

WILLIAM A. LOWE
Secretary-Treasurer

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Local 23 Member Tells It All

The article below by Sister Otilie Markholt, a member of Tacoma's Local 23, recently appeared in its NEWSLETTER. With our compliments to Sister Markholt, her reasons **WHY SHOULD UNION PEOPLE STICK TOGETHER?** are so down to earth that we reprint them for the benefit of all OPEIU members. Her article follows:

On our own jobs the benefits of sticking together (which is collective bargaining) are obvious. Our union dues are returned to us many times over in wages, fringe benefits, and the important intangibles of seniority, job security and dignity. If this were not true we would be wasting our money, and we had better chuck the union.

But besides our importance to our own employers we are equally important to other employers as consumers. If you doubt this, think of the money those employers pay for advertising to tell us how to spend our paychecks.

We belong to a Union for a purely selfish reason: to improve our economic situation. This is as it should be. What distinguishes unionism from the dog-eat-dog scramble among unorganized workers is that we can see how much we each can gain by working together. We combine our individual self-interest into a common, effective whole: a Union.

As consumers where does our self-interest lie? Suppose the grocery clerks in the supermarkets are on strike. Do you cross the picket line and shop at your accustomed place? Or do you burn a little extra gas hunting another store and pay a few cents more for your groceries? Leaving aside noble sentiments, which is in your own self-interest?

Collective bargaining agreements don't function in air-tight compartments. Every strike is a skirmish in the big war of union shops versus open shops. Every strike won makes collective bargaining a little easier for all union people, and every strike lost encourages those forces that want to destroy the unions. So what is the intelligent way to act in that grocery strike? To use your consumer power to help defeat the strike, and thus make your bargaining harder next time? Or to honor the picket line and thus help yourself to get a better return on the dollars you already have invested in union dues?

Sister Markholt expresses the feeling of all OPEIU members everywhere.

Myopic Anti-Union Bias

Brockway Glass Co., of Brockway, Pa., is considering building a plant in Person County, North Carolina, to employ 250 workers eventually. When the local chamber of commerce learned that Brockway plants are unionized, it got upset.

It passed a resolution telling Brockway that "we would welcome you here provided you come in as a non-union company." A county official said it should "reduce proposed wages to be competitive with local market."

The self-styled business leaders, no doubt, include high-powered brains like local pharmacists, hardware merchants, dry-goods stores, and grocery establishments—"good old boys" who play golf together.

These purblind gentlemen can see no further than their prejudices. They ignore the fact that the town's young people, educated at great expense, must now go to bigger cities to find jobs, and brighter prospects for their futures.

Moreover, a new industry providing 250 jobs directly, would generate 1,000 other jobs indirectly, making the whole town much more prosperous and progressive. Even the businesses represented by the so-called chamber of commerce would grow and expand with this new influx of buying power, enabling decent wages for everyone.

The mentality pervading the business brains in the North Carolina community apparently is a reflection of the anti-union bias of the J. P. Stevens Company management, which operates in the area, and insidiously spreads its anti-union poison through similar chambers of commerce. Prejudice ignores basic economics.

We are happy to note that some 500 county residents have banded together and asked the Brockway company to ignore the chamber of commerce resolution. As yet, the company hasn't decided where it will locate the proposed plant.

Reports on Child-Care Overseas

OPEIU Delegate Among CLUW Visitors to 3 Countries

By Sheila Baker, N.Y. Local 153 Vice President

As a member of the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW), I learned on my recent trip overseas that the governments of Sweden, France and Israel have strong commitments to their pre-school children, reflected in exceptionally fine day-care centers and other service programs.

Our three-week tour to study child-care overseas was financed by a grant from the German Marshall Fund in gratitude for the help given by the U.S. following World War II. Delegates selected were Presidents or Vice Presidents of trade union Locals, who were also CLUW members.

In Sweden, we found they have leisure-time centers for young children for after-school hours, or until the parents return from work to pick them up. Moreover, in that country they also have recognized the importance of integrating handicapped children into social and school programs in a natural way, thus reducing any stigma attached to physical differences.

Maternity and parental leaves are also provided in Sweden, making it possible for a man to be home during critical family situations. Incidentally, quite a few men are involved in child-care programs in that country.

Centers in France, Israel

In France, we found the *creches* were immaculate, the care being given to infants was obviously warm and nurturing, in atmospheres that were colorful, cheerful and creative. The child-care programs in France are a prelude to school-going for youngsters, and are educational as well as creatively stimulating.

In Israel we visited a variety of such child centers. Typical was one in a kibbutz, and another adjacent to a factory where the parents worked. There were centers in which both Arab and Israeli children share in communal activities, and they provided an object lesson to adults on how well they get along with each other.

In fact, in all three countries we found that the programs were designed to respect the cultural and ethnic familial backgrounds. In each country, we were met by representatives of government child-care agencies, who conducted seminars on their systems and answered all our questions willingly.

We also met our union counterparts in the three countries, and realized that we have the same goals, that of bettering the human condition everywhere. The overseas unions play strong roles, in conjunction with their governments, in showing deep concern for children and the family unit. Practically no child-care services were found to be operating on a profit-making basis in the countries we visited.

The child-care centers I have



VISITING ISRAELI CENTER: CLUW delegation, with OPEIU representative Sheila Baker (top right), during visit to child-care center where both Israeli and Arab pre-schoolers share in communal activities.

visited in this country—both private and subsidized—also had great merit. They are staffed by dedicated people, educated in child-care and psychology, and I would have no reluctance to have a child of mine attend them. The children were happy and involved, the centers providing an integral part of the learning process, and preliminary training for entrance into the school system.

But I do feel we have a job to do in getting QUALITY child-care for all working mothers who need it, also for the one-parent family, and for other mothers who need the services on a temporary basis such as during a family crisis.

Unions Back Child-Care

Unions over the years have done much to improve conditions of the American worker on the job, as well as upgrading living conditions in the home. Unions are now taking the lead in seeking child-care legislation, health security, and many

other measures that will make the American way of life a model for others.

We do have the know-how and resources to accomplish much more in the child-care area. But we must view our children as a top priority, one of our prime resources, and our future. We must regard them, as they do in those countries we visited, as "our treasures."

Consequently, we must develop more concern toward these particular social goals, and get behind our own Union's efforts in such areas by participating more fully in our Legislative and Educational Committees.

A good start in this direction is to make certain that each of us takes part actively in our current VOTE Drive. If anything is to be done—YOU are the one who must do it. Through the VOTE Drive and in the election booth we can together accomplish much.

N.Y. OPEIU Retirees Rally to Support VOTE Appeal

Within two weeks after VOTE appeal letters were sent out to members of the N.Y. Local 153 Retirees' Assn., some 62% had replied enclosing contributions of \$358, according to President Ed Edom. He said this was an average of \$2.60 for each reply.

He disclosed that the largest contribution was \$20 from one member; two others for \$10, and 24 gifts of \$5 each. None of the contributions was for less than a dollar.

"Because our retirees are keenly aware of what OPEIU has done for them in the past, and needs to do in the future," Edom said that he expects the VOTE contributions by retirees this year will top \$600.

16.75% Pay Hike, COLA Gained at Sandia Labs

Across-the-board wage gains totaling 16.75%, plus a no-cap cost-of-living escalator, in addition to other fringe benefits were won in a new contract renegotiated by Local 251 for its 400-member office unit at Sandia Laboratories in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Local 251 President Maxine Stephenson reports that the new agreement calls for a first-year general increase of 9.75% retroactively to July 6, together

with a guaranteed wage hike of 3.25% on July 8, 1977, and a further boost of 3.75% on July 7, 1978.

She adds that fringe benefit gains were also scored on holidays, sick leave and overtime.

The Sandia negotiating team comprised President Stephenson, Vice President John Ayala, Sec.-Treas. Nancy Barela, Chief Steward Marie Luna, and member John Martinez.

CLC Slams RTW's False Propaganda in Canada

Brands Tactics to Enact Such Laws up North as 'Hypocrisy and Deceit'

The hypocrisy and deceitful tactics being used by employers in an attempt to impose so-called "right-to-work" laws in Canada are exposed by the Canadian Labour Congress in a recent article by its Director of Research and Legislation, Ronald W. Lang, in its official publication—Canadian Labour. A digest of his remarks follows:

Pointing out that the battle over "right-to-work" (for less) laws have raged in the United States for the past 30 years since the 1947 Taft-Hartley Act was enacted, Lang notes that the Canadian Construction Association and similar U.S. employer associations have brought the issue north into Canada in the past few years.

He says the CCA is the major proponent of RTW legislation in Canada, having first proposed it in British Columbia and Alberta. It has now moved the issue into the Northwest Territories in view of the proposed pipeline construction there. Thus, it is preying on the

fears of NWT residents that they will be pushed aside in favour of imported union labor from the south.

He adds that CCA also is attempting "to capitalize on an explosive political situation by touting the 'right-to-work' issue as a solution to native hiring." He points out that "RTW legislation doesn't guarantee work for any individual or group," and "furthermore, there is no compulsion in RTW legislation on employers to offer anyone a job or to pay decent wages." Lang declares:

"The title, 'right-to-work' is intentionally misleading because it implies the right to a job. It is a play on words and deceptive because its only purpose is the destruction of union security." The article continues:

"Those who advocate 'right-to-work' laws as a means of protecting NWT residents are, in reality, proposing a captive work force for the employers, particularly when native workers have never experienced the

employer-employee work situation. There can be no doubt, in this situation, that exploitation of native residents by employers will occur because of their vulnerability in the new and unfamiliar work environment. . . .

"'Right-to-work' laws have a superficial attractiveness about them. They raise the illusion of freedom for workers from the tyranny of their own organizations. Yet trade unions go through a more stringent process than any other association. The hypocrisy of the advocates of 'right-to-work' laws is there for all to see for, in many instances, while they themselves are a member of the 'closed shop' professionals, they would deny workers similar protection.

"There can be no question about the opposition which the workers and their organizations will wage if 'right-to-work' laws are imported into the NWT from the United States."

Pointing out that Canada devised the Rand formula to cover a situation where a worker

didn't wish to belong to a union, Lang continues:

"Right-to-work" laws would only succeed in creating a class of freeloaders who receive all the benefits while accepting no obligations or responsibility. It would be a classic example of the bludgeoning of majority rights by a preferred minority. If workers do not wish to belong, to support and pay the costs of union membership, then they should not receive the benefits either. This should be their choice but they cannot have it both ways.

"In any discussion of 'right-to-work' and collective bargaining, it is often overlooked that the most important tool historically in eliminating injustice and poverty has been collective bargaining.

"Since 'right-to-work' laws strike at the very heart and strength of trade union security and therefore also, of collective bargaining, they are but one more means of perpetuating the 'poverty cycle' and the discrimi-

nation in which employers would be free to indulge in the absence of trade unions.

"On a more philosophical level, there has never been any guarantee from industry to workers of an unconditional 'right-to-work.' The employer imposes conditions except those that are covered by the collective agreement. Indeed, there is no employer in Canada who can or will offer a 'right-to-work' guarantee. In truth, 'right-to-work' laws are a misleading catch-phrase, masquerading under the guise of protecting the freedom of individual workers in order to enhance the power of employers and their associations at the expense and destruction of the organizations of working men and women.

"To date, no jurisdiction in Canada has passed 'right-to-work' laws. They have been viewed solely as a product of employers in the United States, and a disruptive rather than a constructive force in industrial relations."

Canada Unit Wins 9.64%; Rebuffs Wage Controls

An average salary boost of 9.64% was won in a new one-year agreement reached with the help of a Conciliation Officer by Local 397 for its 900-member unit at the Saskatchewan Government Insurance Office (SGIO) in Regina, Sask., Canada.

The agreement followed four months of fruitless negotiations, impeded by Canada's wage controls which would have limited the increase to 8%. For the first time since 1948, members were forced to withhold their services, on October 14 last,

Canada's National Day of Protest, Local 397 President Bill Wittal reports.

He welcomes the recent Saskatchewan government decision to discontinue its control of Public Sector agreements expiring on or after Sept. 30, 1977.

Business Representative David Maki headed the negotiations, assisted by a unit team comprising Wittal, Sec.-Treas. Harry Van Eyck, 2d Vice President John Schmidt, and Trustee Marj Serverson.

Cab Unit Gives Reply to RTW

Denver's OPEIU Local 5 members at Yellow Cab voted unanimously to continue the union shop clause in their contract in a test by management of a new amendment to the so-called "Colorado Labor Peace Act," a mini-"right-to-work" law.

The new law requires 75% of the employees in a bargaining unit, in a state conducted election, to approve a union shop before it can be incorporated in a contract with their employer.

In an election held on this question, by a 21-to-0 vote, the Yellow Cab bargaining unit eloquently demonstrated to management that they wanted a union shop.

Housing Pact Ups Wages by 20%

Wage gains totaling approximately \$4,300 per unit member, plus improved health-welfare and pension plans, were gained in a new three-year agreement renegotiated by New York Local 153 for its office unit at Riverbay Corp., which operates Co-Op City—said to be the largest cooperative housing development in the United States.

The new agreement calls for an 8.8% across-the-board wage boost in the first year (37½¢ an hour; 32½¢ an hour (7%) in the second, and 27½¢ in the third year (5%).

The company also agreed to contribute an additional \$2 per week for each employee into Local 153's health-welfare fund, plus a similar amount into its pension fund.

New Campus Pact Raises Wages, Benefits in N.J.

A new dental plan, expanded health-welfare coverage and salary gains ranging from \$815 to \$1,442 per individual were gained by Newark Local 32 for its bargaining unit on three campuses of Union College located at Cranford, Plainfield and Elizabeth, N.J., Business Manager John P. Ronches reports.

A salary boost of 6½% became effective on July 1 last, and will be followed by another 1% on January 1, 1978, setting a minimum of \$9,922 in the lowest grade and a \$23,782 maximum in the top classification.

Blue Cross coverage is upgraded from the 120-day basic to the expanded 365-day comprehensive plan. Blue Shield coverage is also increased from the 500 to the 750 series.

Effective January 1, 1978, all employees will be covered by a dental program, the employer paying full individual premium costs and 50% of those for dependents.

The negotiating team assisting Ronches comprised Douglas Greenwood, Delores Capetola, Jim Kane and Fred Perry. The two-year agreement expires June 30, 1978.

Georgia Unit Scores Well at Utilty in Savannah

A general first-year wage increase of 6½% retroactive to Dec. 1, 1976 with a reopener in the second, plus greatly improved fringe benefits, were gained by Local 455 in a two-year agreement renegotiated for its bargaining unit of clerical employees and technicians at the Savannah Electric & Power Co., in Savannah, Ga.

OPEIU Vice President J. Oscar Bloodworth reports that numerous employees were upgraded to higher classifications. In the lowest classification of mail clerk, the new scale sets a starting minimum of \$527 a month rising to \$820. In the top grade of Director of Sales and Development, it sets a salary rate of \$1,445 a month.

Effective in 1978, employees with 29 years' service will be entitled to five weeks of vacation.

Other gains are the addition of Good Friday as a paid holi-

day, and grandparents to the bereavement clause. The shift differentials were raised to 12¢ an hour on the evening and 14¢ on the night shift, and mileage allowance was increased to 15¢ from 14¢.

The company agreed to increase its hospital-medical coverage to \$25 per month for single employees (was \$20), and to \$45 for family coverage (was \$40). It also agreed to recommend to its Board of Directors that the Employees Retirement Plan be amended as of May 1, 1977, to further reduce the early retirement reduction factor for those retiring at ages 62, 63 and 64.

The Local 455 unit negotiating team was headed by President Paul Feldman and included John Lynes, Georgia Doolittle, Donnal Batts and James Winbush. The new agreement runs to Dec. 1, 1978.

Unit of County Employees Wins Solid First Contract

An initial one-year agreement covering a new unit of 149 county employees and providing a 6% across-the-board wage hike, a union shop, and improved health-welfare and dental plans has been reached by Portland Local 11 with the Clark County Commissioners in Vancouver, Wash.

Local 11 Sec.-Treas. Stuart W. Crosby says the new agreement is retroactive to January 1 and runs to December 31, 1977. It calls for 12 paid holidays annually, including one for the employee's birthday and the other, a floating holiday.

With the new 6% raise salaries range from a starting minimum of \$513 per month in the lowest grade to a \$624 maximum. In the top classification, the scale is \$1,297 rising to a \$1,656 per month maximum. It

also calls for a 10¢ an hour differential for shifts after 3 p.m.

The county agreed to set up a new medical plan, no later than April 1, 1977, and to pay an average of \$72.59 a month for each employee; \$31.53 for single employees to a maximum of \$88.51 for family coverage. It also agreed to pay a maximum of \$16.47 a month toward a dental plan to cover employees and their families after six months of continuous service.

The unit negotiating team assisting Crosby included Chief Shop Steward Diane Lyngholm, and Stewards Bonnie Rice, Sylvia Cosgrave, Pat Kirby, Pat Lee, Caroline Virgil and Wilma Thorp. Local 11 Business Representative Lance A. Meier also assisted in the negotiations.



from the desk
of the
PRESIDENT

Facts on Minimum Wage

As this column is prepared, Congressional Committees are in the process of debating numerous proposals dealing with social improvements. One of the most important deals with minimum wages.

There are a number of misconceptions about minimum wages which must be corrected in the minds of both organized and unorganized workers. The present law states that the minimum wage should yield "a minimum standard of living necessary for health, efficiency and general well-being of workers."

Until minimum wages were established during the Roosevelt Administration, it was conceded that certain employers would pay the lowest possible wages, far below needs for a minimum standard of living if they could get away with it. The truth of the matter is that numerous employers still pay the legal minimum, even though a much higher wage is required to bring workers up to the poverty level. Workers receiving today's minimum wage of \$2.30 an hour require a minimum of 45 cents an hour to gain the level known as the poverty level.

Minimum wage workers are generally women, young workers, blacks and other minorities. These workers have no bargaining power with their employers and are, therefore, completely dependent upon the government to protect their interest. Despite the fact that unions have few if any of these workers in their ranks, the AFL-CIO has been the principal spokesman in the United States for minimum wage workers.

Opponents of minimum wage increases would have us believe that a higher minimum wage causes inflation; that those working for minimum wages are young people going to school, with little in the way of responsibilities. A government study made in 1969-1970 found the following characteristics of employees paid less than the then applicable minimum wage:

1. Two out of five were primary wage earners in a family;
2. One out of two was a woman;
3. One out of five was black;
4. Nearly one-half worked outside metropolitan areas, and almost two-thirds worked in the Southern states;
5. About one-quarter of the employees had two or more dependents.

A Bureau of Labor Statistics study in 1975 found that 67 percent of women then working for minimum wages did not do so to earn "pin money" as some opponents of improved minimum wages have charged—but rather had to work for economic reasons. Either they were their own sole support or were heads of families, or were working to supplement the income of husbands earning under \$10,000, the minimum budget for a family of four.

The Census Bureau reported in 1975 that 4,000,000 women worked full-time year-round and earned less than the poverty level. Of the 2,430,000 female heads of families with incomes below the poverty level, 41.8 percent are black.

AFL-CIO economists estimate that two-thirds of all workers earning within five cents of the present minimum wage of \$2.30 an hour are women. Therefore, a minimum wage increase would have its greatest impact on women who must work to support themselves or their families.

The Chamber of Commerce recently issued a study which stated that a decent minimum wage would cause severe unemployment and high inflation. Actually, government studies of the impact of minimum wage increases, conducted by both Republican and Democratic Administrations, have found the opposite to be true. In fact, every time the minimum wage is increased, employment has increased. After the last minimum wage increase, the F. W. Woolworth Company said in its annual report: "Our experience with prior minimum wage legislation shows that our salary increases are more than offset by the increased purchasing power generated by these general wage boosts to the general public."

In both 1955 and 1961, when the minimum wage was increased 33.3 percent and 15 percent, respectively, the annual inflation rate was 1.5 percent and 1.1 percent, respectively, for the first year under the new rates. Secretaries of Labor Wirtz, Shultz and Hodgson in 1966, 1970 and 1972 found that minimum wage increases had no discernible effects on overall prices.

The evidence is overwhelming. The case for a substantial increase in minimum wages is proven. It is imperative that our membership support the AFL-CIO in getting this legislation approved by the Congress. Letters to our respective Representatives and Senators in Washington are a **MUST!**

Group Legal Plans Move Forward

Still in Development Stage, Says Law Expert

Pioneering efforts of unions, consumer organizations and lawyers have cleared away barriers for further development of prepaid and group legal services.

Now in its formative years, the movement of these legal service plans is facing a more crucial test than in its infancy period, Theodore J. St. Antoine writes in the *American Federationist*.

In his article in the AFL-CIO magazine, St. Antoine notes that sponsors of prepaid legal service plans will make vital choices on financing, the structure of the programs and delivery of services. Experimentation with the development of plans best suited for specific groups will continue, he predicts.

"An important concern of these formative years will be to avoid repeating the experience of prepaid health service plans — an experience marked by haphazard, undirected, and uncontrolled development that resulted in spiraling costs and poor quality control," the article says.

St. Antoine cites the critical need for cost and quality controls as a key motivating factor in establishing the Resource Center for Consumers Legal Services, a national clearing house for such programs.

St. Antoine, dean of the University of Michigan Law School, is the president of the center. It was set up last year to take over the functions of the National Consumer Center for Legal Services, which had been formed in 1972 with labor support and has served as the legislative arm for the group legal services movement.

As a clearing house, the center makes information available to unions and consumer groups on the development of legal services plans. By helping to design prototype plans, the center can devise models that offer standards of comparison, St. Antoine says.

Such programs provide a "great opportunity to workers who have long been denied access to the legal services system," he points out, adding:

"The richest 10 percent of Americans can afford lawyers and the poorest 20 percent are at least partially served by such entities as legal aid societies and public defenders' offices," he notes. "This leaves the 140-million middle-class Americans who are either unable to pay standard attorney fees or are unable to pay the 'right' lawyer to help them with a particular legal problem."

Group legal plans also provide opportunities for thousands of young lawyers who otherwise

might have trouble making a living in the practice of law, the author observes.

The group legal services program is the ideal mechanism for bringing together lawyers in need of clients and clients in need of lawyers, St. Antoine concludes.

At its recent meeting in Bal Harbor, Fla., the AFL-CIO Executive Council endorsed the center and recommended that all affiliates support it in developing effective programs of information, guidance and assistance in the area of legal services.

The council noted that the labor movement is "concerned with the quality and cost of legal services" for workers. It said that group legal services had been incorporated in the collective bargaining programs of a number of unions.

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

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

Wisconsin Rapids Local 95 Wins Dispute With School

Wisconsin school employees learned that it's good to have a union when their employer refused to pay 100% of increased health plan insurance premiums, and even rejected a union plea to bargain on the issue, specified in their OPEIU contract.

As a result, Wisconsin Rapids Local 95 filed an unfair labor practice charge against the Mid-State Technical Institute with the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission, which assigned Examiner Thomas L. Yaeger to hear the case.

He ruled that the school had violated Wisconsin labor laws by refusing to pay the increased

Blue Cross/Blue Shield premiums, and by failing to bargain on the issue with Local 95. He ordered the school to compensate the employees for the premiums it required them to pay, and in future to notify the union and bargain with it if such changes are being considered.

Local 95 Business Representative Larry V. Cross says that the monetary award to the employees amounts to \$30.43 per month, in which the school violated the laws, for those covered in the family plan, and to \$10.71 a month for single individuals. He adds that "several clerical employees will collect well over \$100 each" under the award.

Edward F. Lingo, 62; AFL-CIO Official

We regret to announce the recent death of Edward F. Lingo, 62, AFL-CIO Field Representative in Los Angeles, Calif., as the result of a heart ailment. As a member of the Los Angeles-Orange Counties Organizing Committee, he had assisted the OPEIU in many organizing campaigns in that area.

A native of Berwick, Pa., where his father was a miner,

he joined the labor movement at an early age. He was appointed to the CIO staff in 1950 by the late Philip Murray and served as an organizer in Tennessee until the CIO and AFL merged.

He is survived by his wife, Mary, two sons, Edward, Jr., and Victor; a daughter Gloria and three grandchildren, to whom we offer our sincerest sympathy.

U.S. Price Index

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

1976	
July	171.1
August	171.9
September	172.6
October	173.3
November	173.8
December	174.3
1977	
January	175.3
February	177.1
March	178.2
April	179.6
May	180.6
June	181.8
July	182.6

Canadian Price Index

Statistics Canada
New Base 1971=100

1976	
July	149.3
August	150.0
September	150.7
October	151.7
November	152.2
December	152.7
1977	
January	154.0
February	155.4
March	157.0
April	157.9
May	159.2
June	160.3
July	161.8