

LOCAL-301 NEWS

IOE-AFL-CIO

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LOCAL OFFICERS ATTEND LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE

Last Monday approximately 200 delegates affiliated with the New York State AFL-CIO attended a Legislative Conference in Albany.

President John Shambo represented Local 301; Business Agent Leo Jandreau was present as a representative of the Schenectady Area Central Labor Council and Assistant Recording Secretary Dave Gunn was the representative from District #3.

Legislative proposals for the 1962 calendar were discussed. Many of the proposals are aimed at improving existing labor laws.

Thirty of these proposals covering Unemployment Insurance, Workmen's Compensation and Disability Benefits are sponsored by the Executive Council of the New York State AFL-CIO.

Noteworthy among them are: Unemployment Insurance -- permanent extension of benefits to 39 weeks, maximum weekly benefit to equal two-thirds average weekly wages of all workers covered by law, \$25.00 to be the minimum weekly rate, additional payments for dependents. Other proposals are: reduce from 20 weeks to 15 weeks of work or \$1,000 earnings to qualify, eliminate the waiting period by paying benefits for the first week of unemployment.

Some of the bills which will be introduced covering Workmen's Compensation are: maximum weekly benefit rate to equal two-thirds average weekly wages of all workers covered by law, increase widow's benefits to 40% of average weekly wage of deceased, pay claimants for time lost at hearings and medical examinations, begin paying compensation for the first week if disability lasts more than 7 days instead of 28 days, additional payments for dependents.

The following bills are designed to improve Disability Benefits: extend benefits to 39 weeks for all workers, maximum weekly benefits to equal two-thirds average weekly wages of all workers covered by law,

(cont'd. reverse)

NOTICE

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

Monday, February 5th, 7:30 p.m.

Officers will meet at 6 p.m.

Union Headquarters-121 Erie Blvd.

NOTE: Meeting is being held on Feb. 5th, due to the fact that regular meeting date, Feb. 12th, is a holiday, Lincoln's Birthday.

SAC VACATION SHUTDOWN NEGOTIATED

Approximately one month ago, SAC Department management posted a notice on bulletin boards in Bldgs. 64, 105 and 109. The notice stated that the SAC Department would use the first two weeks of July as a vacation shutdown. A similar shutdown for the third week of vacation would take place on the 52nd fiscal week which included Christmas.

Needless to say, the workers were not at all happy with this vacation schedule. They immediately registered their protests with the Shop Stewards, who in turn filed formal grievances.

Petitions were also circulated and signed by over 90% of the workers denouncing management's announced vacation schedule. They declared that the position of the SAC Department management was unfair and unreasonable and wanted to meet with SAC officials to work out a schedule that would be more satisfactory to the workers.

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After three meetings were held between Company and Union representatives, SAC management agreed that they would do one of two things, either shut down for the 3rd week of vacation in the month of August or if feasible, to stagger vacations and allow workers their choice.

\$25.00 to be the minimum weekly rate, omit weeks of unusually low earnings in computing benefit rate, additional benefits for dependents.

Many inequities are evident in existing laws covering workers in New York State; therefore, it is imperative that legislation correcting these injustices be enacted.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION

As we grow older, we find that we need glasses to see properly. We also find that generally our ability to hear is not as good as it formerly was. However, what many do not realize is that such loss of hearing, which does not necessarily have to be total deafness, may be due to exposure to excessive noises in the plant. There are many places in G.E. which are as noisy as the old fashioned "boiler factory", and workers exposed to such conditions could very well be suffering from occupational hearing loss.

Such loss of hearing is compensable under the Workmen's Compensation Act. At present rates, a worker may receive up to \$3,000.00 for loss of hearing in one ear, and up to \$7,500.00 for loss in both ears. There is, however, a minor catch to receiving such benefits. The law requires that you be separated from payroll for six months before you can be compensated for an occupational hearing loss. For some workers, this may mean that the claim, if established, may not be paid until after retirement. However, this does not mean that you should wait until you are separated from your job to start making your claim. It is possible to now establish your rights to be compensated, even though actual payment may not be made until many years later.

If you believe that you have been exposed to excessive noise while at work, and have a loss of hearing, we suggest that you should ask for a hearing examination at the Clinic, and for referral to a competent ear specialist. When you see the doctors, be sure to give them a full and detailed statement of the nature of your work, the extent of exposure to excessive noises, and the length of time you have been so exposed.

If the examinations show that you do have a hearing loss due to your employment, you should notify your foreman of this immediately. You will also have to file a claim for benefits with the Compensation Board. Since the Company's insurance carrier will most likely fight the case, we suggest you obtain legal assistance as soon as possible. Remember that the Union can help you in this respect if you call and ask for such help. An established claim may not put any money in your pocket now, but it will sure help when the regular weekly pay checks stop coming in.

NOTE: The above article applies only to an occupational hearing loss. A loss of hearing suffered as the result of an accident, such as an explosion or a direct injury to the ear, is immediately compensable. Do not wait to process your claim in such a case.

ARAKI - TRADE UNIONIST VISITS LOCAL UNION

Mr. Hiroshi Araki, a trade unionist from Japan, paid a visit to our local union office on Thursday of this week.

He is in this country under the auspices of the Agency for International Development, U.S. Department of State. Mr. Araki was here for the purpose of discussing with our local representatives such matters as handling of grievances, how to negotiate a contract, and some of the features pertaining to the bargaining agreement between our Local and the General Electric Company in Schenectady. His itinerary includes visits to Locals in seven States and Washington, D. C.

Mr. Araki, who is 30 years old, is a member of the Tokyo Electric Power Workers Union. He will depart for Japan on March 3rd.