



THE STATE EMPLOYEE

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Building a State

"Therefore when we build, let us think that we build forever. Let it not be for present delight, nor for present use alone; let it be such work as our descendants will thank us for, and let us think, as we lay stone on stone, that a time will come when those stones will be held sacred because our hands have touched them, and that men will say, as they look upon the labor and wrought substance of them, 'See! This our fathers did for us.'"

Action never ceases in human affairs and particularly in governmental advancement. The road to perfection stretches ever ahead to new horizons. New York State, while in an enviable position in many ways, has by reason of its very greatness, larger problems than face most commonwealths. New activities make for increase in public service. Beer regulation and milk control, both economic and social problems, are new State responsibilities. As was pointed out in a comparatively recent issue, the people are demanding—and the times indicate will continue to demand—not less, but more governmental activity. The meeting of these new needs with efficiency and economy of administration and success of accomplishment is a concern of every public employee. Each public worker has a direct call to zealous and determined efforts to make the public enterprises of which he or she is a part profitable and beneficial to the people. Each one can do this by constant attention to self-improvement and by unselfish and patriotic sacrifice in their day to day endeavors. State workers are builders and may well draw inspiration from the words of John Ruskin, quoted above.

Salaries

The passing of the annual budget bill for the fiscal year beginning July 1st, 1933, and the passage of separate bills with effective date April 16, 1933, containing salary reduction provisions similar to the budget bill, settles the question of compensation of State workers for the present at least.

The reductions followed the fair recommendations of Governor Lehman and in substance exempt salaries of \$2,000 and less, but in the case of salaries in excess of that sum impose graduated reductions ranging from 6 percent on the first two thousand to 33.9 percent on the higher brackets. The demand from many groups for greater reductions were defeated principally through the efforts of this Association directed toward correctly informing as to the needs of State service, the very moderate salaries now paid, the relation of personnel costs to operating costs generally, and the relatively insignificant gain to be had in tax requirements through reductions in personal service expenditures. The activities of the Association along this line began last December with the issuance of the Association's booklet, "Facts About Salaries Paid State Employees in New York State," and continued throughout the session of the Legislature. Constant conferences with the various executive, legislative and administrative officers of Government, appearances by Counsel before committees and at hearings, letters, news items, bulletins, radio broadcasts and personal work by officers, members of committees, and directly by members and groups of members all served to preserve from further drastic reductions the salaries paid to all classes of state workers. In connection with institutional matters, President Fields and committees of the State Hospital Association cooperated in a vigorous and highly helpful way. These activities were largely effective because of the efficiency of central headquarters of the Association at Albany.

These are trying times in government. The passage of a budget and of tax bills to supply the revenue, are futile unless the money to pay for the operation of government is actually forthcoming. If further emergency economies are required, State employees must look to executive policies to meet any such situations, to the fairness of departmental officers and the cooperation of the Civil Service Commission. Your Association will be alert to safeguard in every possible way the interests of all state workers.

Civil Service Legislation

The Cornaire bill providing for development of a sound compensation plan for State workers and for the proper classification of employees on the basis of duties and responsibilities, passed the Assembly. The Nunan bill, carrying the same provisions, was not acted upon by the Senate Civil Service Committee, and therefore the Senate had no opportunity to vote upon the measure. No hearing was held. This bill was approved by the Civil Service Commission, the Director of the Budget, the Civil Service Reform Association, and by the Legislative Committee of this Association. It was the most progressive civil service measure ever presented and deserved consideration and passage.

The Ross-Sargent bill to prevent demotions in rank without regard for seniority, also failed of passage. The situation which it was sought to correct through this bill could, it is believed, be cared for by rule of the Commission. The theory that demotions in rank are proper without regard for seniority is directly opposed to the civil service principle plainly covered in the Civil Service Law under the provisions that layoffs must be made on the basis of seniority.

Pension Legislation

The fifty-five year retirement measure passed the Senate, but was not acted upon by the Assembly. The same fate met the bill designed to provide death benefit of a full-year's salary after ten years of service. These bills were defeated on the ground of increased cost to the State.

Bill to permit credit for Federal service in the State retirement system was approved.

A measure extending to all classes of State workers a retirement allowance to employees who lose their positions through no fault of their own after having served twenty years and who have attained the age of 45 was passed.

Senate Bills, Printed Nos. 215, 604, 1527, 1777 and 2116, and Assembly Bill, Printed No. 880, also section of the annual appropriation bill carrying amount of \$14,100.35 for special benefit, carry appropriations for individuals which are not accorded to all State employees. The Association has taken exception to all special privileges and benefits that have any relation to pensions which tends to disrupt and discredit the pension system and which confer upon special individuals benefits not conferred upon all members of the system.

The Civil Service Commission

Progress in efficiency and therefore in economy of personnel administration in State service will always be in a large measure a reflection of the policies and administrative capacity of the State Civil Service Department. And the State Civil Service Department will never rise higher than the level of the Civil Service Commission.

If the civil service system is to be anything more than a name it must provide uniform personnel administration for every department. If civil service is not good for all branches of the service it is questionable if it is good for any branch,

Continued on Page 4

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Reasonable Hours of Work Through Administrative Action

With the failure of another legislature to pass a maximum eight-hour day bill for State institutional employees, attention is again turned to the hope that the long day will be abolished by administrative action. There are advantages to this method which do not attach to statutory mandate. The end to be gained is the same. The seven-day week could also be corrected by administrative action.

Socially, morally and economically fair and just, these proposals will be urged upon Governor Lehman for his attention and that of his cabinet.

Why Not Bring More State Workers Under the Competitive Class?

This Association believes that the competitive classification in State civil service is unjustly limited in scope. Only fifty per cent of State workers are in the competitive class. This is a surprising condition after fifty years of civil service administration.

An appeal is to be made to the Civil Service Commission to take action to extend this classification to the thousands of workers throughout the State who it seems certain should be and would be benefited by the rules and regulations applying to the competitive class.

Summer Vacation Camp Now Assured for This Year

The Association is pleased to announce that Conservation Commissioner Lithgow Osborne has assured the officers of the State Employees Recreational Club, Inc., sponsored by the Association of State Civil Service Employees, that the Lake Meacham vacation camp may be conducted again this year. The great success of the camp last year, its first year,

was proof that this is a service that members of the Association appreciate highly.

A meeting of the members of the State Employees Recreational Club, Inc., will be held on Friday, April 21, 1933, at 5 p. m. in Hearing Room No. 2, State Office Building, Albany, and arrangements completed as to opening date and management details for the coming season.

William J. Picard Made Member of State Pension Commission

The action of Governor Lehman in naming William J. Picard, a member of the Special Salary Committee of this Association, as a member of the State Pension Commission, to fill the vacancy caused by the death of William M. Thomas, was a splendid recognition of the vital interest which employees have in the success of the State Retirement System. Representation of employees upon the Commission has been sought for many years and this Association made a special plea to the Governor to appoint to the Commission a man who had direct understanding and interest from the standpoint of the workers themselves.

Mr. Picard is eminently fitted to serve upon this Commission.

An Open Letter

To New York State Civil Service Employees:

Dear Fellow Employees:

This Committee, appointed by President Fields of the State Hospital Employees Association to represent the State Hospital Association in the councils of the Association of State Civil Service Employees of the State of New York, believes that this cooperation has served a very important purpose in emphasizing the unity of all State employees and in impressing the earnestness and honesty of their purposes upon the public and upon the executive, legislative and administrative heads of State Government.

One or more members of the committee have sat in with officers and committees of the Association of State Civil Service Employees in conferences with the Governor, with the State Budget Advisory Committee, with the Director of the Budget, the Civil State Commission and on the central meetings of the Association. It is to these conferences of representatives of employees that the whole body of State workers owe the present attention accorded to all of

the vital questions affecting their work. The retention of present salary scales without reduction for over seventy-five percent of State employees and the limitation of reduction of higher salaries in the face of constant pressure from the Economic Council and other groups, as well as from the general hysteria occasioned by the depression, is the most outstanding success gained by any organized group anywhere. It is a victory for intelligent and conservative effort on the part of able leaders. It meant the expending of much time and work on the part of committees serving whole-heartedly and unselfishly, without thought of selves and without material reward, for the common good of State employees.

Space will not permit us to outline the large number of projects covered in the program of progress of the Association of State Civil Service Employees for 1933, which include:

1. Economical and efficient State service.
2. Continued improvement of Civil Service system.
3. Fair and adequate compensation for all workers.
4. Stabilization and safeguarding of Retirement Fund.
5. Abolition of long day in institution work.
6. Abolition of seven day week.

The projects are well detailed from time to time in *The State Employee* and frequent bulletins. Nothing could be more certain than the fact that without organization employees would be helpless in protecting their rights, and their single efforts would be futile in progressing any desirable reforms.

This letter is to advise you that we believe the best interests of hospital employees as well as the best interests of departmental and other groups of State workers lies in supporting by membership and otherwise the Association of State Civil Service Employees as the fully established Statewide-All-State-Employee Association properly equipped and organized to serve the employees in State service. We believe that every State employee should belong to this Association. It is obvious that only by united and loyal action can State employees gain the respect or support of the public.

The officers and committees of the Association of State Civil Service Employees strongly urge upon all hospital employees to lend active and loyal support to their local hospital associations and to the State Hospital Employees Association. The Statewide Association, the Association of State Civil Service Employees of the State of New York, with its headquarters in the State Capitol at Albany, should have enrolled as members every worker in State service, and this is a plea to you to join with the ten thousand present members of that Association and to aid in carrying on the great, unselfish program for State employee betterment now in progress. The dues of one dollar per year to the State Employee Association at Albany, and your dues to your local association and in the State Hospital Employees Association are the cheapest investment in your own welfare that you make throughout the year. It costs a great deal of money to pay for the printing, postage, correspondence, cost of counsel, office assistance, and the many needs involved in the representation of the 30,000 State employees, and it is clear that dues of one dollar a year will not suffice to continue the work unless all of the employees do their share.

At no time in history has a State-wide organization of State employees been so desirable or so necessary. We ask you to give your immediate membership support to the local and State hospital associations, and to our Statewide association, the Association of State Civil Service Employees, with headquarters at Room 156, State Capitol, Albany, N. Y.

Sincerely yours,

STATE HOSPITAL COMMITTEE

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Employees Assn., Middletown State Hospital

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Hudson River State Hospital

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Association Strengthens Organization in N. Y. City

Following a series of meetings of employees in the New York City State Office Building, a New York City Chapter of the Association was established with officers and departmental representatives as noted below. The New York City State workers have been among the most loyal supporters of this statewide organization made up entirely of State civil service employees. With the opportunity for closer contact present through the New York City State Office Building Chapter, greater impetus will be given to the important program of progress being fostered by this Association. The New York City group is now in constant contact with the headquarters of the Association in the State Capitol, at Albany.

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Mrs. McDonald—State.

M. A. Stephenson—Transfer Tax.

The Civil Service Commission

Continued from Page 1

and disregard for civil service law and rules upon the part of single departments or bureaus serves to break down respect for the system as a whole.

The state needs nothing so much at the present time as rational regard for efficiency and economy in employment matters. The Civil Service Commission is responsible for sound employment practices. Demotions without regard for seniority violates the spirit of civil service. Lack of a uniformly fair compensation plan interferes with the application of civil service principles. Emergency adjustments affecting civil service status as to rank and salaries should be worked out under civil service rules and passed upon by the Civil Service Department. Reports indicate an early vacancy in the Civil Service Commission. Should this occur a capable man or woman from the civil service ranks should be appointed. Such a person would be in full possession of the necessary information concerning the practical problems of civil service administration and because of this could greatly benefit the civil service system.

The spoils system still has many followers. The maintenance of the high character of the Civil Service Commission is the only safeguard against complete demoralization of the Civil Service System in this State.

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