Union gets shift time reinstated in Suffolk

MINEOLA - The CSEA fired the first shot last week in what they hope will be a skirmish rather than a war over subcontracting in Nassau County.

Nicholas Abbatiello, president of Nassau County Local 610, appeared before the Nassau Board of Supervisors on Dec. 17 to speak against a resolution permitting subcontracting of security services saying it violated the employees' shift time.

In his appearance before the Board, Abbatiello attacked the resolution and agreed to meet with county division leaders to argue against changing the 4 p.m. to midnight shift to a day shift. The county had proposed the change under the guise of an energy conservation move.

But according to Suffolk County CSEA Local 852 President Ben Boczkowski, the union successfully showed that changing the work hours did not conserve energy since other employees continued to work night hours and utilized as many lights and other forms of energy anyway, that lights normally turned off by the night maintenance people were left burnin.
A SMILING ED CLEARY, center, waves to well wishers as he is surrounded by CSEA Region I staff employees during the region's annual Christmas party earlier this month in Huntington. Ed, Regional Director, has been on an extended leave of absence for health reasons.

From left are CSEA staffer employees Nick Pollicino, Jim Walters, Nat Zamanski, Irwin Scharfeld, Hugh O'Haire, Mr. Cleary, Acting Regional Director Bill Griffin, John Canio and John O'Sullivan.

CSEA REGION I PRESIDENT Irving Flaschenbaum receives a gift from Santa, portrayed by Sal Russo from the Central Islip Psychiatric Center CSEA Local, during region's annual Christmas party.

ALBANY — The Civil Service Employees Assn. is accepting applications for the position of Administrative Director-Member Services. The union announced applications will be accepted until December 28, 1979, and should be mailed to CSEA, P.O. Box 125, Capitol Station, Albany, N.Y. 12224, Attn: Executive Director.

Duties are described as follows:

Under the general direction of the Executive Director, is responsible for planning, coordinating, directing and evaluating the overall operation of the Departments of Field Services, Education, Legal Assistance, School District Affairs and Retiree Affairs in order to insure compliance with the policies mandated for members of the Civil Service Employees Association represented in Locals and Units organized for the purpose of collective bargaining under the New York State Public Employees Fair Employment Act (Taylor Law) and for retired public employee members represented in Locals organized for the purpose of protecting and furthering the rights and benefits of retirees under New York State and Federal Laws.

Typical tasks and assignments include, approves operating methods of Departments in order to insure compliance with established policies; coordinates the working relationships among the departments to insure the most efficient utilization of the work force; meets regularly with the Directors and staff to be fully apprised of the day to day problems and recommends solutions to the Executive Director; assists in the preparation of budgets for the department and insures compliance with policies for allocated expenses; reviews and approves assignment adjustments based on membership needs and patterns; evaluates departments and staff and makes recommendations to Executive Director for effective and efficient of services; and performs other duties as required.

Minimum qualifications are graduation from a recognized four year college or university with a Bachelor's Degree, and ten years of progressively responsible experience in the field of management personnel, or labor relations. Acceptable additional education or experience may be substituted for either of the above. Candidates must possess New York State driver's license and car for business use in order to be appointed.

There will be no issue of The Public Sector next week. The newspaper is published 48 times annually, with the New Year's week being one of four weeks in which there is no publication. The next issue will be dated January 9, 1980.

Office relocates

WHITE PLAINS — The office of the Westchester County Unit of CSEA Local 980 has moved to Room 106 of 148 Martine Avenue. The office had been in Room 222 of the same building. The office telephone numbers remain the same: (914) 682-3391 and 682-3376.

Applications being accepted for opening

Ready To Retire?

Protect your future with Retiree membership in CSEA.

• Take an active role in CSEA Retirees' legislative campaigns for pension cost-of-living increases
• Share in activities of the CSEA retiree chapter nearest you
• Continue present CSEA's life insurance policies at the low group rate
• Become eligible for CSEA's "Senior Security 55" life insurance policy for members only
• Acquire low hospital cash-to-you protection for CSEA retirees and spouses
• Send coupon below for additional information on benefits of retiree membership in CSEA

Send coupon for membership information.

Retiree Division
Civil Service Employees Assn.
33 Elk St., Albany, N.Y. 12207

Please send me membership form for membership in Retired Civil Service Employees of CSEA.

Name ________________________
Street ________________________ Apt. ____________
City, State ____________________ Zip ____________
Date of Retirement ____________

Calendar of EVENTS

JANUARY
3 — Region III meeting, 7:45 p.m., Holiday Inn, Newburgh
11 — Region 6 meeting, 9 p.m., Rochester / Marriott Inn, Greece, N.Y.
12 — Region 6 meeting, 9:30 a.m., state and county workshop, general business meeting after lunch, Rochester / Marriott Inn, Greece, N.Y.
19 — CSEA President William L. McGowan informational meeting with Region VI presidents, Holiday Inn, Batavia. County Division presidents, 9:45 a.m.; State Division presidents, 1:15 p.m.
26 — Region I workshop, Safety and Health, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Holiday Inn, Hauppauge.

PS 12/26
Union keeps close watch on office move

QUEENSURY — State Department of Health employees whose offices are scheduled to be moved from Queensbury to Glen Falls shortly after the first of the year have been assured by the Civil Service Employees Assn. that measures have been taken to safeguard their welfare.

Department of Health CSEA Local President Allen Mead said the union does not oppose the move “so long as the services and comforts now enjoyed by the employees will be maintained.”

The employees of another Department of Health Office which will be moving from Johnstown to Amsterdam have received some assurances, says Mead. Little information has been released at this time since a definite site for the office has not been found in Amsterdam and no date for the move has been set.

After Mead and other CSEA representatives inspected the Glen Falls site, they expressed concern over the limited parking available to employees. According to Mead, there are only a few sites in the area immediately surrounding the building, while others are located some distance away, and on the street in front of the building. Ample parking is available on the Queensbury premises, he said.

In a meeting with Thomas DiCerbo, State Director for Agency Manpower and Management, the union discussed the parking issue and several safety violations also discovered during the preliminary inspection.

Measures called for by the CSEA include provisions for the handicapped, the installation of ample electricity, elevator stairway repairs and repairs to the heating and cooling systems. Mead noted that the building is old and it will be expensive to be rehabilitated. As soon as the State notifies the union that the building is ready, another inspection will be conducted.

“Why are the employees to move in until we have approved the building,” he said.

Reinstate two after union raises issues

A labor-management meeting between the Civil Service Employees Assn. and Warren County officials resulted in the reinstatement of two employees who had been fired in an overtime dispute, and straightened out some contract language concerning overtime, which had been unclear for sometime.

According to Capital Region Field Representative William Lochner, employees working for the Warren County Child Protective Services Unit, which must be open 24 hours a day, were assigned an overtime schedule which involved using a beeper system to call employees in from their homes when needed. Only three employees would be on call at a time, however, and when two of those employees said they would be unable to comply with the schedule they were fired.

At the meeting, called by the CSEA before taking the matter to an arbitration hearing, the employees were reinstated and a more equitable “on call” system, relying on a greater number of employees, was established. In addition, says Warren County Local CSEA President Joseph Blair, the county agreed to pay $5 to each employee for being on call, and time and a half overtime for any who actually go out on duty.

The union had charged the county with failing to work within the guidelines of the employees’ contract for not negotiating the matter with the CSEA before implementing the system, and with imposing undue hardship on the employees. Lochner called the meeting a “meaningful dialogue which settled the matter in the best interests of both parties.”

Mediator named

ALBANY — A Public Employment Relations Board mediator has been appointed to settle the contract dispute between the CSEA and the Office of Court Administration in the City of Glen Cove and the City of Long Beach bargaining units.

Negotiations for the two units, which are being conducted on a coalition basis, have been going on fruitlessly for six months, according to CSEA Collective Bargaining Specialist Pat Monachino.

PERB has appointed Homer LaRue of New York City to hear the matter. The first mediation session will be scheduled shortly.

Assisting in negotiations for the union are Peggy Lempsinski, chairperson of the Glen Cove CSEA negotiating committee; and Roz Fleischman, chairperson of the Long Beach CSEA negotiating committee.
The social security tax rate will stay at 6.13 percent for 1980 but there will be an increase in the earnings base a social security spokesperson said recently.

The earnings base is the maximum amount of annual earnings subject to the social security tax, the representative said. The base will be $25,900 in 1980, compared to $22,900 for 1979.

Workers who earn less than $22,900 will pay no more tax in 1980 than they did in 1979. Those who have earnings of $25,900 or more in 1980 will pay an additional $183.90.

The maximum 1980 social security tax will be $1,587.67 for workers with annual earnings of $25,900 or more. The maximum tax for 1979 is $1,403.77.

Q. I plan to retire next year when I reach 65. Can you give me some hints about applying for social security benefits? I'd like to be prepared when I file my application.

A. At 65, you'll be eligible for Medicare as well as for monthly retirement checks. To make sure your checks start on time you have full Medicare protection the month you are 65, you should apply about 3 months before you reach 65.

Q. My husband is younger than I am and will be working for several more years. I'll be 65 in a few months, but have never worked. Do I have to wait until he's 65 to get Medicare?

A. No. Your husband can file an application now to establish that he will be entitled to monthly benefits when he does retire. This will permit you to get Medicare when you reach 65, but you will also have to apply.

Q. I just took a part-time job. My wife and I get monthly Social Security payments. How does my salary affect our SSI payments?

A. If a person or couple has earnings from current work, the first $65 a month does not count. After that, $1 is deducted from the basic SSI payment for each additional $2 in earnings. If a person has no income apart from earnings, then $85 a month of earned income is exempt before the one-for-two rule applies. These are special income exclusions and other provisions for blind and disabled people. You should notify social security that you are working, and the people there will tell you exactly how your payments are affected.

Q. My wife's doctor is making arrangements for her to receive home health services when she comes home from the hospital next week. Will Medicare pay for these services?

A. When certain conditions are met, Medicare hospital insurance will pay the reasonable cost of up to 100 covered home health visits after the start of one benefit period and before the start of another. These 100 visits can be used for up to 12 months after a person's discharge from a hospital or participating skilled nursing facility. Medicare medical insurance also can pay for home health visits under certain conditions. For detailed information, look in Your Medicare Handbook. If you don't have a handbook, you can get one at any social security office.

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Local 834 contributes

SYRACUSE — Onondaga County CSEA Local 834 has donated $100 which will be used to buy Christmas toys for children at Syracuse Developmental Center.

The executive board of the local voted at its Dec. 4 meeting to make the donation.

The money was turned over to Frank Quatrone, an employee of the Syracuse Water Department, who then buys approved toys dressed as Santa Claus and delivers the toys to the retarded children, Lee Fordock, president of the City of Syracuse unit, explained.

Fordock said his unit has been supporting Quatrone's activities on behalf of the children for a number of years.

Win substantial benefit gains

YONKERS — It's going to be a nice Christmas, from an employment standpoint, for approximately 12 employees of the Westchester County Office of Economic Opportunity who have been represented by CSEA since last July.

The employees, holding the title of tutor, had been in the College Professors Union for two years, where they received very few benefits and had been paid $2.60 an hour. Raymond J. O'Connor, president of the County Unit of CSEA Local 860, said.

O'Connor said while they held the title of tutor, the employees performed clerical work. Since CSEA became bargaining agent for the employees, the following benefits were obtained:

• All medical and dental benefits under the CSEA-county contract which they had not been receiving.
• Night differential for employees on the evening shift.
• Some of the employees received permanent county titles, including annual salaries, benefits and three weeks back pay for vacation in 1978 of approximately $600.
• Hourly employees were raised to the appropriate salaries on the CSEA hourly rates and received the benefits of the contract. They also received retroactive pay ranging from $350 to $450.

The retroactive checks will be paid before Christmas, O'Connor said.

Importance of involvement stressed during MH workshop

By Brendan Coyne

KERRHONKSON — Speakers stressed the importance of Local fact finding and lobbying concerning the future of mental hygiene workers' jobs in a workshop at the recent annual meeting of CSEA mental hygiene local presidents.

In the workshop Dan Donahue, chairman of the presidents, presented an update of what is commonly called the Morgado Agreement. He stressed the need to force the state to live up to the agreement.

In the same workshop Donahue also voiced CSEA's opposition to the district management system of Mental Hygiene Commissioner James Prevost, under his newly proposed five-year plan.

Donahue noted that the Morgado Agreement, reached June 15, 1978, was made with Gov. Hugh L. Carey just before an election. He said it was up to CSEA to make sure the pre-election commitment was lived up to.

The agreement calls for improving the quality of life for mentally ill and mentally retarded people and outlines provisions that would enable public employees to bring about such improvement.

Donahue said that both Prevost and Thomas A. Coughlin, Commissioner of the Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, have said they would follow through on the agreement, which calls for, among other things, state owned, operated and staffed community residential services. Donahue warned, however, that they have an out: They can plead lack of funds.

"We're not here to put the private sector out of business," Donahue said, "but we must push the concept that we can re-tool our institutions; we can re-train our people."

Paula A. Lambert, a CSEA program consultant, spoke of the Morgado Agreement provision calling for new training for public employees to bring about proposed improvement in service.

"We aren't going to accept training in old areas, such as bed making," Ms. Lambert said. "We will not allow the issue to be bought without a battle."

One member of the audience added that CSEA must make the public aware that public employees are the ones who should operate community based programs. He stressed the need for public support in any attempt by public employees to keep their jobs.

"We should make it known that existing facilities and grounds are underutilized," Ms. Lambert said.

Donahue repeatedly stated that CSEA could not live with the five-year plan, which he said would eliminate the regional mental health offices and replace them with district boards, created on the basis of geography and population.

Donahue's chief objection was to the plan's granting budget control to the private sector.

He noted that, perhaps for the first time, CSEA employees would have allies in the regional directors, who would lose control over their budgets under the plan.

Donahue urged all present to study the five-year plan and note their objections. He said CSEA would submit all objections to Prevost.

Noting the importance of keeping on top of such issues as the implementation of the Morgado Agreement and the defeat of the five-year plan, the group of presidents heartily agreed that it was necessary to continue to hold their annual meetings.

Above left, CSEA'S ROBERT GUILD, a Collective Bargaining Specialist, addresses presidents of CSEA Mental Hygiene Local units at a workshop recently, voicing displeasure over many provisions of the department's just released 5-year program.

CSEA CONSULTANT Paula Lambert stressed the need to work toward training in new skill areas for employees.

DANNY DONOHUE, President of Central Islip Psychiatric Center CSEA Local 404, is president of the CSEA Mental Hygiene presidents association. He urged local presidents to strive to force the state to live up to the Morgado Agreement.
Union tells Mental Hygiene to clean up 44 Holland Avenue

By Deborah Cassidy
Staff Reporter

ALBANY — A top State Department of Mental Hygiene official has promised the Civil Service Employees Assn. in writing to clean up the Mental Hygiene facility at 44 Holland Avenue, which is now replete with safety violations.

The promise came after Mental Hygiene CSEA Local 673 President Wanda Lubinski and Capital Region CSEA Field Representative Joseph Bakarian presented Dennis J. O'Brien, assistant director of personnel DMH, with photos and written descriptions of the hazards at 44 Holland Avenue.

The violations, reported to Ms. Lubinski by employees and verified by she and Bakarian during a floor-by-floor tour of the three story structure, centered on lack of storage space for computer and personnel supplies and materials, exposed electrical wiring and electrical units with a lack of fire safety precautions.

The CSEA gave O'Brien two weeks from the date of their meeting in late November to address the situation and to begin measures to correct it. He responded with a letter detailing the action he and his associates plan to take on each of the union's complaints.

Bakarian says he is now giving DMH time to put their promises into effect and will take another tour of the building in mid-January to survey the progress.

In response to the union's concern over the accumulation of computer waste paper, which computer waste paper has been piling up, creating a fire hazard. Some of the waste, O'Brien added, is to be collected and shredded by an outside contractor and he has been advised by the Office of General Services, which manages the contract, that he is working with the contractor to improve his services to all state agencies.

An apparent lack of fire extinguishers, some instances of missing fire extinguishers, the lack of a sprinkler system and confusion among employees about emergency escape routes, all major concerns of both parties, have been reviewed in a fire marshals survey, which findings may be obtained from OGS, where it is "Where filed." It's the union's understanding, says Bakarian, that the report will be returned as soon as possible and corrective measures based on it will be taken immediately.

"They're fooling around with lives in this instance," said Lubinski, and we will make sure changes are made to our full satisfaction.

O'Brien has assured them clean up 44 Holland Avenue.

The building superintendent, according to Smith and O'Brien, has been asked to move electrical outlets which are located in the path of office traffic. In cases where outlets are occupied with cords or do not hold tightly, O'Brien says supervisors will be advised to request the installation of additional units.

He has promised to give "immediate attention to correcting the problem" of exposed wiring coming through a hole in the floor of the computer room, where Lubinski noted out that a mechanical draft coming through the hole could fan a fire ignited by the wires.

The building management has been instructed to clean up tabulation units sore often during the day, where computer waste paper has been piling up, creating a fire hazard. Some of the waste, O'Brien added, is to be collected and shredded by an outside contractor and he has been advised by the Office of General Services, which manages the contract, that he is working with the contractor to improve his services to all state agencies.

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Employees victims of patient violence

By Bill Butler

Two Mental Hygiene Therapy Aides have been cleared by arbitrators of charges of patient abuse; instead, the arbitrators said both employees were victims of patient violence.

In one case, involving an MHTA on the Suffolk Developmental Center, arbitrator Jonathan S Liebowitz ruled that the employee had been falsely accused of knocking down a patient and knocking the patient’s head against a cement floor repeatedly.

In the other case, involving an MHTA at Pilgrim Psychiatric Center, Liebowitz ruled that the employee had been falsely accused of knocking down a patient and knocking the patient’s head against a cement floor repeatedly.

Prolonged exposure to high levels of asbestos contamination can result in cancer and other lung diseases, noted the union.

At the request of CSEA, the State Department of Health has been testing maintenance men from the Office of General Services who have been working around high concentrations of asbestos at both the State Campus and the Empire State Plaza.

All parties have acknowledged that the sealer must penetrate the asbestos and adhere to the girder permanently.

The testing was initiated by CSEA some nine months ago following reports of suspected contamination from members.

Once precautionary measures have been cleared, the state has agreed to monitor the air in the buildings every three months and to provide the committee with written reports of findings.

“Both sides have been dealing in good faith, so far,” commented Weeks. “And we are confident the matter is being handled properly and in a timely fashion.”

FISHKILL — Establishment of a CSEA FAMILY FUND to benefit the families of three State Transportation Department employees killed on June 5 when they were struck by a truck on Interstate 84 at Newburgh has been announced by CSEA Region III President James Lennon, who has also issued an appeal for all CSEA Locals and Units statewide to contribute to the fund.

In commenting on the purpose of the fund, Mr. Lennon said, “We want to reach out and offer some tangible help to the families of those men who lost their lives. As we close out the year, and look ahead with hope to 1980, we would like to see every CSEA Local and Unit in the state contribute to this worthwhile cause. We are confident the giant CSEA “family” will demonstrate the true spirit of union brothers and sisters by sending substantial checks to the fund.”

Mr. Lennon has appointed Bob Harris, President of Orange County DOT Local 515, and Jack Cassidy, President of DOT District 8 Local 507, as co-chairmen of the CSEA FAMILY FUND. They will coordinate the drive. All funds received will be distributed equally to the families of the accident victims.

All state, county locals or units wishing to contribute are urged to send a check to:

CSEA FAMILY FUND
% Civil Service Employees Assn.
Old Albany Post Road, North Fishkill, New York 12524

For additional information, call CSEA Region III headquarters at (914) 896-8180.
CONTINUITY BRIEFING — Top CSEA officials met recently with the former Continuity or Employment Committee and its successor, a subcommittee of the so-called ‘Kumquat Committee’ created under the new CSEA-State contracts. The committees work to continue the employment of displaced workers and to study the effects of job security on productivity. President William L. McGowan, left, shares some views with former Committee Chairman Robert McKersie, second from right, and new Chairman Rodney Dennis, next to Mr. McGowan. At right, Thomas Hartaet, Deputy Director of the Governor's Office of Employee Relations, listens. Both the CSEA and the state agreed the committee's efforts should continue.

Awards made

Twenty State employees received a total of $2,410 in cash awards in October and November for money-saving ideas submitted to the New York State Employee Suggestion Program. The program is administered by the New York State Department of Civil Service. Estimated first-year savings from these suggestions total more than $20,000.

Award Recipients include:

$600 — Robert J. Ridley, Food Inspector, Department of Agriculture and Markets, Utica.
$550 — Robert J. Ridley, Food Inspector, Department of Agriculture and Markets, Utica.
$500 — Robert J. Ridley, Food Inspector, Department of Agriculture and Markets, Utica.
$300 — Ann Lombardo, Senior Data Entry Machine Operator, Department of Labor, Albany.
$300 — Donna Stewart, Tax Auditor, Department of Taxation and Finance, Mineola.
$100 — A joint award shared by William H. Young and Gary Davis, both of Agriculture and Markets, Albany; Kathleen E. Rauchbach, Department of Environmental Conservation, Albany; and Kristin Bliven, Tax, Albany.

Halt transfer of reporters

ALBANY — An agreement CSEA reached last week with the Office of Court Administration will ensure a happier new year for the senior court reporters in the State's Court of Claims: they won't have to spend one week out of every five in New York City in 1980. The OCA had that schedule planned for 21 reporters, 17 of whom live and work in the Albany area, and the rest of whom are scattered throughout the state.

Because of a backlog in the State Supreme Court in New York City, the OCA intended to order these reporters to spend one week in New York, on a rotating basis, in New York in 1980. As soon as the union got wind of it, the temporary transfers became the subject of a labor-management meeting between CSEA and the OCA in Albany. Result: no such transfers will occur. Any temporary assignments of Court of Claims employees to New York will be strictly voluntary.

The union members who worked out the solution with OCA were Julia Filippone, president of CSEA local 694; Thomas Jefferson, CSEA board representative for the court employees; and senior court reporters Gilbert Schlamowitz and Arthur Veleff. They were assisted by CSEA Collective Bargaining Specialists Manny Vitale and Pat Monachino.

"We are very pleased with the way the committee worked this out," Mr. Monachino said. "These reporters would have been greatly inconvenienced, at no increase in salary, but a great increase in work load, and they would have had to spend at least 10 weeks a year away from their families, in unfamiliar surroundings. And this was all going to start Dec. 31. I think the way the committee worked it out is much more reasonable."

If there aren't enough volunteers for the temporary assignments in emergencies, Mr. Monachino noted, employees will be assigned to New York on the basis of inverse seniority.
Attention State Employees:

IF YOU WERE REEVALUATED,

CSEA has received information that in some instances employees in the state's Administrative, Institutional and Operational bargaining units were evaluated twice. In some cases, evaluations were degraded. The CSEA is preparing information to take action in these instances. If you are an employee in these three state bargaining units and you received a written, signed evaluation which was subsequently recalled and changed or a second evaluation was issued, please fill out the attached coupon and send it, and copies of the evaluations— if you have them — to: Employee Evaluations, CSEA Headquarters, 33 Elk St., Albany, New York, 12224. These forms must be returned prior to January 15. This information applies only to cases where a signed evaluation was issued to an employee and then subsequently changed or replaced by a second evaluation of lower rating.

Employee's Name
(Last)

Social Security Number

Dept. or Agency Code

Work Location

Your payroll Number

(Middle Initial)

If your supervisor gave you any oral or written explanation for why your first, official evaluation was being changed, please summarize his/her explanation:

REMINDER: Please include copies of any evaluation form still in your possession, preferably the original and the subsequent form. If you have only one, you may be asked later to submit an affidavit supporting your claim.

ALBANY — CSEA is asking State Division leadership to blow the whistle if the state makes an attempt to draw a link between union activity and a leader's performance evaluation.

CSEA President William L. McGowan has received a few reports that managers have mentioned an employees' union activities on performance evaluation forms. If that happens, the president said, he will personally take the matter up with Meyer S. Frucher, Director of the Governor's Office of Employee Relations.

"We had a clear understanding in negotiations that union activities were not to be considered in evaluations," Mr. McGowan said. "In any instances where a Board Member, Local President, Steward or Delegate finds union activity mentioned anywhere on a performance evaluation form, I want a copy of the evaluation and this practice will be stopped."

TOYS FOR TOTS — Needy children had a brighter Christmas, thanks to the employees in the Department of Social Services and members of Social Services CSEA Local 688. Employees organized a drive to obtain toys and money for the Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots program. Marine Sgts. Moore and Swanson, left, accepted the toys and a check from Alan Siegel, third from left, President of CSEA Local 688; First Vice President Cathy Arduini, Second Vice President Jary Lubinski, Secretary Doris Williams and Social Services Commissioner Barbara Blum.
TROY — Turmoil which has been bubbling between CSEA and City of Troy management for months and which erupted a couple of weeks ago with the firing, and subsequent rehiring, of the Troy CSEA Unit president, now shows signs of settling down after a heated uprising by the union led to a series of meetings between union and city officials.

Negotiations for a new contract for Troy city employees represented by CSEA are continuing, but for a time were threatened with disruption as a result of harsh exchanges between both sides. CSEA has continually charged that the proposed 1980 city budget contains a surplus of cash, and that certain services originally proposed to be abolished should not have to happen, and that the city can afford more than the 7 percent maximum contained in the original proposed budget for raises.

Then, suddenly about two weeks ago, CSEA Unit President Edward LaPlante was fired the day after he attended a meeting of an official Charter Revision Commission, to which he had been appointed by Troy Mayor Steven Dworsky. CSEA, enraged over the action, demanded an immediate hearing, claiming LaPlante was being railroaded by City Manager John Buckley. Buckley, with heavy pressure brought by CSEA, held an informal hearing almost immediately and reinstated LaPlante, dropping all charges against him. Still angry because of more than a dozen grievances still outstanding by other city workers, CSEA has vowed to press an improper practice charge against the city.

Then, a week ago, CSEA members packed the city council meeting room as CSEA officials attacked the proposed city budget as well as Buckley’s inaction on the pending grievances he had sat on for months, in some cases.

All of this led to a weekend labor-management committee that has finally led to some important actions. The city agreed to a union request to form an official labor-management committee to study difficulties between the parties now and in the future. And a number of the outstanding grievances were immediately acted upon, finally. The city also agreed to remove the 7% figure from the proposed budget for 1980 and leave open the negotiations now underway for a new contract. A plan to eliminate emergency callboxes in the city was dumped, thereby retaining the jobs of a pair of city employees who would have been fired. And the city has pledged the new labor-management committee will carefully study the reasons for so many grievance filings by city workers — 80 in 1979 and upwards of 280 over the past two and one-half years.

CSEA REGIONAL PRESIDENT Joseph E. McDermott, with the news media recording his words, delivered a strong attack against the City of Troy management for its handling of relationships with the Troy Unit of CSEA members.

The core problem still exists

Editor’s note: The following is the text of an extremely hard-hitting speech delivered by CSEA Capital Region President Joseph E. McDermott before the Troy Common Council. It was part of a hard-line union stand which ultimately led to a number of a Union members being denied the right to bargain in a negotiated situation that threatened to disrupt contract negotiations.

My name is Joseph Edward McDermott. I am the Civil Service Employees Association Capital Region President and a Vice-President of CSEA/AFSCME Local 1000-AFL-CIO. As such, I have the primary responsibility and oft-times impossible duty of representing and administering the services for well over 40,000 public employees, your city employees, your citizens, denied a simple hearing against citizens vocalizing that their basic rights are being denied. The City of Troy Union membership, indeed their Local elected Union Leaders, could have been considered, but were not, among these statistics.

To have over a dozen of our members, your employees, your citizens, denied a simple hearing of their pleas before they are summarily punished is something the City of Troy, your government, seems to agree to.

Worse yet — to have their spokesperson intimidated for raising objections to this violation of your contract, by your hirelings, is abominable. Worse yet, he has been publicly vilified for protecting or utilizing your contract rights and he is basically accused of being a thief. Yes, a thief of services from the taxpayers of this City.

While an attempt has been made by management to lay to rest this portion of the overall problem, the core problem still exists. Your contract with us, which as far as I know we have been meeting our obligations to, is a sham document in respect to that area of our greatest concern, the rights and protection of our aggrieved members, unless and until the grievance procedure is to be followed by management as well as the Union.

We call upon you, as the elected body of the citizens, to require that the individuals that you hire to administer your business, our business, adhere to your contract with us or be brought to task.

Just procedures to administer justice for grievances are not written to be only on a piece of paper. They are there to utilize. The City of Troy/CSEA Contract provides for this type of just procedure. We insist, in fact, we demand, it be properly followed.