ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S historic Emancipation Proclamation exhibit at the New York State Museum in Albany is visited by CSEA Executive Vice President Joseph E. McDermott, right. Explaining the significance of the exhibit is Edward Brown, left, supervising exhibit specialist in audio visual design, and Anne Marie Hakeem, second vice president of Education Department CSEA Local 657. CSEA and AFSCME members played major roles in putting together and protecting the unique exhibit. See articles on pages 6 and 7.

CSEA TO LAUNCH FOOD CO-OPS TO CUT FOOD COSTS

ALBANY — Will CSEA soon be in the business of helping members cut food costs? The answer may very well be "yes" if an experimental program, authorized by CSEA President William L. McGowan, succeeds.

Food buying co-ops, which the union leader says could save as much as 25 percent in costs, will be tested at selected work sites. If they succeed, McGowan expects the program to be extended statewide.

Pilot projects will shortly be underway at these locations:

REGION I — Suffolk Developmental Center, Central Islip, Kings Park and Pilgrim psychiatric centers;
REGION II — all Staten Island locals;
REGION III — Rockland County Local 844, Rockland Psychiatric Center and Letchworth Developmental Center.

McGowan expects additional locations in other CSEA regions "to be announced within several weeks."

The pilot program is the result of an agreement with SYSCO Frosted Foods to provide savings to CSEA members on a wide variety of frozen foods, meat, seafood, vegetables, cheeses, cold cuts, dry products and salad oil. Special discounts may also be available on kitchen utensils and tableware.

CSEA locals would establish committees to run the co-ops. They would take members' orders and then arrange distribution once the items were delivered.

SYSCO Frosted Foods is a division of the SYSCO Corporation which is based in New York State. Nationally, SYSCO is the largest distributor of foodservice products. Here in New York State, the company operates warehouses and distribution facilities in Albany, Syracuse, Horseheads and Malone.

STATEWIDE OFFICERS ELECTIONS TO BEGIN

ALBANY — The process of electing CSEA's statewide officers - president, executive vice president, secretary and treasurer — is about to begin. Start of the election period has been delayed due to pending litigation, necessitating some modifications in the procedures and timetable.

All candidates for the four statewide offices will be required to qualify for a ballot position by petition. To qualify, a candidate must obtain signatures of 1,000 CSEA members in good standing.

The petitioning period will begin Monday, March 11, when Nominating Petition Request Forms and official petition forms will be available at CSEA Regional offices and at CSEA headquarters in Albany.

Final date for nominating petitions to be received at CSEA headquarters is Monday, April 15.

Following review of the proposed election procedure at the February meeting of the union's statewide Board of Directors, the full election schedule will appear in the March 8 edition of The Public Sector.
Occupational safety bill introduced

Proposal for setup of multi-million dollar training program

SYRACUSE — By a margin of better than 3-to-1, members of the CSEA Syracuse City Unit voted to accept a new two-year agreement calling for salary increases, improved dental plan and other benefits retroactive to Jan. 1.

According to Margaret Dennis, president of the unit which represents 330 city employees in five departments, the vote was 108 in favor of the new contract package and 36 opposed.

Terms of the agreement include:

• 5.5 percent increase the first year;
• 5.5 percent in 1986;
• Improved dental plan to include family members;
• Increased car allowance for employees who use their personal vehicle for city business;
• Increase in mileage allowance;
• Increase in uniform allowance for meter readers;
• Improved language in sick leave benefits.

In announcing the acceptance of the new pact following an information meeting, Dennis said, "The membership has spoken by ballot and they overwhelmingly approved the new contract by better than 3-to-1. It is a fair contract containing salary increases and additional important benefits, including an improved dental plan."

The agreement wraps up negotiations begun last September by a team which included: Linda Delaney, Nikki Nichols, George Taylor, John Hoover, Ann Casey, Bill Smorol and a special thanks to CSEA Collective Bargaining Specialist Tom Pomidoro.

The contract still must be ratified by the Syracuse Common Council and Board of Estimate, but both groups are expected to accept the agreement.

Syracuse pact nets pay hikes, more benefits

SYRACUSE — A New York State occupational safety and health education and training program can significantly reduce workplace injuries and deaths as well as reduce the financial burden on employers and insurance carriers, said Assemblyman Richard N. Gottfried (D-L, Manhattan) and Sen. John E. Flynn (R-C, Westchester), the sponsors of the bill. "We must take action to help stop workplace accidents and harmful toxic exposures from happening."

Nationally, there are 5 million work-related injuries reported each year and 100,000 deaths from job-related diseases, the legislators said.

The bill sets up a training and education fund which would provide grants to employers, labor organizations, trade associations, educational institutions and governmental bodies for training and educational programs, such as educating workers on preventive health measures and workers’ compensation procedures.

The $5 million fund provided for in the bill would come from special compensation assessments collected annually by the Workers Compensation Board in their current assessment procedure on workers compensation insurance carriers and self-insurers. The fund would be administered by a State Occupational Safety & Health Training and Education Board consisting of three representatives each of the public, labor organizations and employers.

"While the world is sickened at the news of 2,000 people dying from the industrial disaster in Bhopal, India, it is equally appalling that every week in this country the same number of workers die from job-related diseases," pointed out the legislators.

The bill is strongly supported by the State AFL-CIO, the New York State Council on Occupational Safety & Health and numerous labor and health organizations.

CSEA locals honored for part in food drive

ALBANY — Three CSEA locals were honored recently by the Albany Neighborhood Resource Center and the Council of Albany Neighborhood Associations for their support of a county-wide Worksite Food Drive. Receiving recognition for their efforts were New York State Education Department Local 657, Motor Vehicle Department Local 674 and Albany County Local 891.

Last year over 60 participating employee groups raised approximately $4,000 food items and $4,500 for the Worksite Food Drive. This drive has become the means of restocking the Food Distribution Center during the winter and spring seasons. Operated by the Albany County Emergency Food Task Force, the Food Distribution Center at 340 First Street is the central supply point for food pantries throughout Albany County. While most food pantries have their own sources of supply, those running short can get replenished at the distribution center.

JUNE ROBAK, CSEA EDUCATION Local 657 president, and Helen Hardley, Women’s Council, receive a certificate of recognition for the outstanding support of public employees for the Worksite Food Drive which took place in Albany County. Presenting the award are Rev. Robert L. Zerbe, president of the Albany County Emergency Food Task Force and assistant rector of St. Peter’s Episcopal Church, and James Gallagher, president of the Board of Directors of the Neighborhood Resource Center.

CSEA MOTOR VEHICLE Local 674 also received a certificate of appreciation for its part in the food drive. First Vice President Suzanne Waltz and PEF’s Brian Ginett, center, receive the award from Rev. Zerbe, left, and Gallagher.
ALBANY — An EAP Awareness Day program sponsored by the joint EAP committee of the state Department of Social Services attracted a large number of employees to displays set up in the department's facilities at 40 North Pearl Street here recently. CSEA local, regional and statewide officials also stopped by during the daylong program to view the exhibits and talk with union members visiting the displays.

CSEA PRESIDENT William L. McGowan, right, looks over some EAP information material along with William McMahon, left, Department of Social Services representative on CSEA's statewide Board of Directors. Looking on in the background is CSEA Region IV Director John Corcoran.

AMONG UNION OFFICIALS visiting the exhibit were, above, Region IV President C. Allen Mead, left, and John Francisco, Authorities representative on CSEA's statewide Board of Directors.

AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION display is explained, above right, by Heart Association Program Coordinator Betsy Hardy to, from left, CSEA statewide President William L. McGowan, CSEA statewide Executive Vice President Joseph E. McDermott, and CSEA Region IV President C. Allen Mead.

CATHY VALLEE, left, second vice president of Department of Social Services CSEA Local 688, hands literature to CSEA statewide Secretary Irene Carr in photo at right.
Any activist can take CSEA treasurers’ training

ALBANY—Treasurers’ Training isn’t just for treasurers, declares CSEA’s statewide treasurer, Barbara Fauser, while announcing the schedule for March training opportunities in Region V. “Safeguarding and wisely managing union funds is an important responsibility that should concern all local and unit officers and activists,” Fauser maintains. “So while the treasurers’ training course is mandatory for local and unit treasurers, I strongly urge others to attend these sessions. I particularly like to see locals and units being represented by their presidents, executive committee members, and members of Audit Committees.”

Training is scheduled throughout the year for the convenience of members. Fauser and Region VI Treasurer Jim Kurtz trained 37 treasurers recently in Buffalo; and 46 local and unit officers, including seven presidents, completed the training last month in Fishkill. That session was conducted by CSEA’s Internal Auditor David Knutti and Assistant Director of Finance Judy Fauser.

City of Newburgh contract ratified

NEWBURGH — CSEA members in the city of Newburgh have ratified a two-year contract which provides for 4 percent in wage increases each year plus increments.

The CSEA unit consists of 110 members and includes all city workers with the exception of fire and police department employees.

The new contract is effective retroactive to January 1.

The listing, led by Collective Bargaining Specialist Manny Vitale, have been going on for about six months.

Carr wants names and numbers

ALBANY — CSEA Statewide Secretary Irene Carr reminds local presidents to continue sending her updated lists of union delegates which include Social Security numbers.

The listing, in addition to Social Security number, should include the delegate’s home address and telephone number, office address and telephone number and CSEA local number. It should be sent to: Irene Carr, CSEA Statewide Secretary, 33 Elk St., Albany, N.Y. 12207.

Carr also requests that she be kept aware of changes in local officers as they occur.

CSEA to take part in New York City conference on South African labor

NEW YORK CITY — CSEA will participate in a two-day conference March 1 and 2 to support the emerging labor movement in South Africa. 

The New York City program will welcome three South African union leaders in their first U.S. appearance on a nationwide speaking tour. The three represent nearly 300,000 black workers.

General Secretary Pirishaw Camay will speak on behalf of the Council of Unions of South Africa (CUSA) which represents about 100,000 members in construction, food and beverage, chemical, steel, and mining trades. Emma Mashinini, General Secretary of the Commercial Catering and Allied Workers Union (CCAWU) also represents 100,000 workers, mainly in retail trades. Mashinini has been arrested and detained without trial or charge by security forces in South Africa for her union activities.

A third representative from the Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU) will also join the conference. FOSATU, the largest labor organization in South Africa is made up of unions in auto, textile, steel, iron, paper, food, transportation, and jewelry industries.

The South Africans were invited to visit and provide information on their organizing struggles by American labor leaders. The New York conference will also feature workshops on international labor solidarity, U.S. corporate involvement in South Africa, and social effects of apartheid. For more information on participating in the program, contact CSEA's Region II office.
By Stephen Madarasz
CSEA Communications Associate

NEW YORK CITY—Although the State Division of Parole CSEA Local 259 had a safety committee for several years, it wasn't until workers started getting sick last summer that the committee's importance became clearly evident.

The local safety committee and CSEA got deeply involved last summer when a number of problems plagued the offices in Manhattan and employees began complaining of nausea, dizziness and loss of memory. Now, because of the union's activity, major problems have been cleared and some related minor matters are in grievance procedures.

Local 259 safety committee member Shi Price, who was one of several employees hospitalized with symptoms last summer, says the union's successes in dealing with the problems of last year have led to a greater trust in the effectiveness of the committee and the union by members. "They know we can't do everything, but we're a place for them to go, and the situation gets put on paper," Price said.

She said the safety committee, in fact, regularly called management's attention to unsanitary and unhealthy conditions through a series of grievances. And while some improvements were made as a result, it was when some workers had to be hospitalized that management could no longer ignore the committee's constant message that things were not right.

Last summer's incidents have since been traced to a combination of factors—a freon leak from the building's air conditioning system, ongoing elimination operations, office painting and bad circulation of air. While none individually violated any health or safety codes, the committee feels that through its efforts management now has a greater awareness of the possible dangers associated with such problems.

Local 259 President Jean Jenkins said of the serious situation last summer, "we'd never had anything like this happen before, but fortunately the safety committee was ready to act." Prior to that time the committee, Jenkins says, had to concern itself with more mundane problems like requests for more heat and hot water and making certain the garbage was regularly removed.

Region II Occupational Safety and Health Specialist Mitchell Brathwaite says the success of Local 259's committee has made it one of the most active in the Metropolitan Region. "It's easier to keep up interest in safety when there's a crisis, but 259's committee has done a good job of getting information to members. People were scared, and they let them know what was going on." Local President Jenkins agrees, saying members now are much more willing to bring complaints or information to the committee.

Member involvement, Brathwaite says, is the key to whether or not a local safety committee succeeds. "All you need is one person to be active in a worksite, someone to look at conditions and talk to people." Brathwaite says that in the past there was often confusion about what safety committees do. "People would contact me, or Albany (CSEA statewide headquarters) about their problems, but most safety and health questions can be handled right in the workplace. It only takes an individual to become familiar with OSHA guidelines and be available to co-workers."

Basically the local committee or its representative will review local situations initially to determine if, in fact, dangerous circumstances exist. If violations are discovered, the committee will attempt to work out the problem with management without calling in outside help. At times, worksite representatives will need to call for the assistance of the regional safety committee or regional OSHA staff expert to deal with more serious problems or persuade management to take corrective actions.

Shii Price sees the role of the safety committee as that of a watchdog. "Even after everyone got sick, management was still loose about conditions in this place. I wish they'd be more considerate of our health." And so the safety committee's role is to watch and take whatever action is necessary whenever a health and safety issue arises, she says. "Conditions at Parole may be far from perfect, but they're a lot better than they were," says Price, and she credits the concern and persistence of the local safety committee with achieving that improvement.

The conference room at CSEA Metropolitan Region headquarters will be renamed the Frances DuBose Batiste Memorial Conference Room at a special ceremony March 18 at the regional headquarters, 11 Broadway, Manhattan.

The action by the CSEA Region II executive board during its regular meeting on that date will honor the memory of the late Frances DuBose Batiste, who rose through the union ranks to become president of the 20,000-member CSEA Metropolitan Region.

DuBose Batiste died unexpectedly on March 18, 1984 and was regional president at the time of her death. Several CSEA statewide officers and other union officials are expected to attend the ceremony. Rank and file members are encouraged to attend and participate in the memorial program as well.
MUSEUM EXHIBITION SPECIALISTS — These CSEA members were responsible for setting up the Lincoln document, which is taken out of its vault and put on display only once every decade. From left to right are Steve Shashot, John Yost, George Betke, Ed Brown, Greg Brown and John Whaley.

The preliminary document was acquired by the New York State Library through an interesting series of events. In February and March 1864 the Army Relief Bazaar was held to raise money for the U.S. Sanitary Commission, a precursor of the Red Cross that helped provide medical care for Union soldiers. Lincoln donated the preliminary proclamation to the relief fund, and it was subsequently won in a lottery by Gerrit Smith, a well-known abolitionist. Smith gave the proclamation to the Sanitary Commission to be sold to raise more money.

Three days after Lincoln’s funeral train passed through Albany on April 25, 1865, the Legislature acting with dispatch purchased the proclamation for the New York State Library.

CSEA retiree takes pride, overcomes prejudice

PAWLING—Bluford Jackson has officially retired from his 26 years of state service, but the 68-year-old is as active as ever — in politics, health and human services.

“I think I owe something to society. I can repay a debt,” says the CSEA retiree, a former employee at Harlem Valley Psychiatric Center and Downstate Medical Center.

Bluford began working in 1951 as a mechanic at Harlem Valley and later was an attendant and a patrolman. In 1968 he became head of security at Downstate. He was instrumental in forming a CSEA unit there with the late Frances DuBois Batiste, former Region II president.

These days, Jackson is involved in local politics. An old friend of former Congressman Hamilton Fish Sr., he has accompanied Fish on many of his speaking engagements.

In addition, he is the zoning administrator for the Village of Pawling in Dutchess County, a member of the Board of Directors of Health Shield, a health maintenance organization in Poughkeepsie, and a member of the newly formed Dutchess County Human Relations Commission. He was the first black county commander in the American Legion and is a member of NAACP.

“When I went to sit in the front, I was told I was not considered a soldier.” But Jackson is not bitter.

“The country has been good to me in spite of everything I was deprived of,” he says. Jackson credits CSEA with bringing black and white workers together to solve common problems. “The unions have done a lot to ease prejudice,” he said. “We can all work together — but can we play together?”

CSEA retiree takes pride, overcomes prejudice

PAWLING—Bluford Jackson has officially retired from his 26 years of state service, but the 68-year-old is as active as ever — in politics, health and human services.

“I think I owe something to society. I can repay a debt,” says the CSEA retiree, a former employee at Harlem Valley Psychiatric Center and Downstate Medical Center.

Bluford began working in 1951 as a mechanic at Harlem Valley and later was an attendant and a patrolman. In 1968 he became head of security at Downstate. He was instrumental in forming a CSEA unit there with the late Frances DuBois Batiste, former Region II president.

These days, Jackson is involved in local politics. An old friend of former Congressman Hamilton Fish Sr., he has accompanied Fish on many of his speaking engagements.

In addition, he is the zoning administrator for the Village of Pawling in Dutchess County, a member of the Board of Directors of Health Shield, a health maintenance organization in Poughkeepsie, and a member of the newly formed Dutchess County Human Relations Commission. He was the first black county commander in the American Legion and is a member of NAACP.

“When I went to sit in the front, I was told I was not considered a soldier.” But Jackson is not bitter.

“The country has been good to me in spite of everything I was deprived of,” he says. Jackson credits CSEA with bringing black and white workers together to solve common problems. “The unions have done a lot to ease prejudice,” he said. “We can all work together — but can we play together?”

CSEA retiree takes pride, overcomes prejudice

PAWLING—Bluford Jackson has officially retired from his 26 years of state service, but the 68-year-old is as active as ever — in politics, health and human services.

“I think I owe something to society. I can repay a debt,” says the CSEA retiree, a former employee at Harlem Valley Psychiatric Center and Downstate Medical Center.

Bluford began working in 1951 as a mechanic at Harlem Valley and later was an attendant and a patrolman. In 1968 he became head of security at Downstate. He was instrumental in forming a CSEA unit there with the late Frances DuBois Batiste, former Region II president.

These days, Jackson is involved in local politics. An old friend of former Congressman Hamilton Fish Sr., he has accompanied Fish on many of his speaking engagements.

In addition, he is the zoning administrator for the Village of Pawling in Dutchess County, a member of the Board of Directors of Health Shield, a health maintenance organization in Poughkeepsie, and a member of the newly formed Dutchess County Human Relations Commission. He was the first black county commander in the American Legion and is a member of NAACP.

“When I went to sit in the front, I was told I was not considered a soldier.” But Jackson is not bitter.

“The country has been good to me in spite of everything I was deprived of,” he says. Jackson credits CSEA with bringing black and white workers together to solve common problems. “The unions have done a lot to ease prejudice,” he said. “We can all work together — but can we play together?”

CSEA retiree takes pride, overcomes prejudice

PAWLING—Bluford Jackson has officially retired from his 26 years of state service, but the 68-year-old is as active as ever — in politics, health and human services.

“I think I owe something to society. I can repay a debt,” says the CSEA retiree, a former employee at Harlem Valley Psychiatric Center and Downstate Medical Center.

Bluford began working in 1951 as a mechanic at Harlem Valley and later was an attendant and a patrolman. In 1968 he became head of security at Downstate. He was instrumental in forming a CSEA unit there with the late Frances DuBois Batiste, former Region II president.

These days, Jackson is involved in local politics. An old friend of former Congressman Hamilton Fish Sr., he has accompanied Fish on many of his speaking engagements.

In addition, he is the zoning administrator for the Village of Pawling in Dutchess County, a member of the Board of Directors of Health Shield, a health maintenance organization in Poughkeepsie, and a member of the newly formed Dutchess County Human Relations Commission. He was the first black county commander in the American Legion and is a member of NAACP.

“When I went to sit in the front, I was told I was not considered a soldier.” But Jackson is not bitter.

“The country has been good to me in spite of everything I was deprived of,” he says. Jackson credits CSEA with bringing black and white workers together to solve common problems. “The unions have done a lot to ease prejudice,” he said. “We can all work together — but can we play together?”

CSEA retiree takes pride, overcomes prejudice

PAWLING—Bluford Jackson has officially retired from his 26 years of state service, but the 68-year-old is as active as ever — in politics, health and human services.

“I think I owe something to society. I can repay a debt,” says the CSEA retiree, a former employee at Harlem Valley Psychiatric Center and Downstate Medical Center.

Bluford began working in 1951 as a mechanic at Harlem Valley and later was an attendant and a patrolman. In 1968 he became head of security at Downstate. He was instrumental in forming a CSEA unit there with the late Frances DuBois Batiste, former Region II president.

These days, Jackson is involved in local politics. An old friend of former Congressman Hamilton Fish Sr., he has accompanied Fish on many of his speaking engagements.

In addition, he is the zoning administrator for the Village of Pawling in Dutchess County, a member of the Board of Directors of Health Shield, a health maintenance organization in Poughkeepsie, and a member of the newly formed Dutchess County Human Relations Commission. He was the first black county commander in the American Legion and is a member of NAACP.

“When I went to sit in the front, I was told I was not considered a soldier.” But Jackson is not bitter.

“The country has been good to me in spite of everything I was deprived of,” he says. Jackson credits CSEA with bringing black and white workers together to solve common problems. “The unions have done a lot to ease prejudice,” he said. “We can all work together — but can we play together?”
The
Emancipation
Proclamation
September 22, 1862

Here, a closeup of Lincoln's epoch-making proclamation, which is considered one of the three or four most significant documents in American history.

'I have in my hands a large piece of history'

Portrait of a museum exhibit specialist

ALBANY — Edward Brown's maternal great-great-great-grandparents were plantation slaves in Georgia, but the CSEA member says handling the document that freed America's slaves was in many ways just another aspect of his ever-interesting job at the New York State Museum.

A grade 17 supervising exhibit specialist in audio visual design, Brown was part of a group of museum employees who helped prepare and install Abraham Lincoln's Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation of 1862 for display (see accompanying story). The exhibit, which coincides with Black History Month, runs through Feb. 28.

"The proclamation means my ancestors were a little bit freer to do what they wanted to do, like sharecropping land, and to live where they wanted to live, such as I do today," said Brown. "The proclamation was supposedly for all blacks, but in the end it was for all humankind," he added.

A member of CSEA Education Department Local 657, Brown heads a team of four CSEA members who design, maintain and repair museum audio visual exhibits, including in such special events as children's programs, festivals, film series and other video presentations.

"Anything in the building that uses AV, we do," he said, adding that his crew also installs and maintains much of the museum's security devices, including video cameras, monitors and alarms.

They were responsible for dressing and lighting the fragile, 123-year-old Lincoln decree and preparing the showcase for security.

In some ways, Brown says, the proclamation was "just another important historical document. I felt, I have in my hands a very large piece of history."

A soft-spoken, articulate man, Brown started working for the museum in 1975 and became a CSEA member two years later. A native of Macon, Ga., the son of a career army man, he lived for several years at a time in France, England, Switzerland, Germany and Hawaii.

The family finally settled in the Boston area, and Brown attended East Coast Aero Tech and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. He was in the Naval Air Reserves for several years, where he trained in electronics.

He and his wife, a medical records technician, moved to the Capital Region in 1973. They have two sons, 13 and 11.

He says he has been interested in discovering more about his roots ever since attending a family reunion six years ago in his hometown at which more than 240 relatives showed up.

"My kids are very interested in where we came from, how we got where we are," he said, noting that in his spare time he enjoys carving African statuettes and going to African dance performances.

But he is not only interested in his black heritage — he's part Cherokee and Blackfoot Indian, too. And so he counts a rare Indian wampum belt as one of the more fascinating historical artifacts he helped set up at the museum.

Located at the Empire State Plaza in downtown Albany, the museum is one of the oldest and largest state museums in the country, and is devoted to exploring the people, history, art, science and natural environments of New York state.

Brown says some of the more interesting projects he has worked on over the years have been a jazz festival series, an exhibit/lecture series on Irish art and literature, and "all the special programs with the kids."

He enjoys the diversity of his work and says his job has "taught me a lot about history and science."

Working on the Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation with Brown were fellow CSEA members Gregory Brown, Steven Shashok, Thomas With, John Whaley, George Betke, James Jackson, John Yost and Keith Prior.
Health insurance, pensions, day care among 'fringes' targeted for federal taxes

WASHINGTON — AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland has sharply criticized a Treasury Department proposal to tax such worker fringe benefits as health insurance, pensions, day care, education and pre-paid legal plans as part of “tax simplification.”

“Any revenue attained by taxing fringes would be directly and exclusively taken out of the pockets of working people,” Kirkland said.

Kirkland also attacked the Treasury’s proposals to tax fully unemployment insurance and workers’ compensation benefits.

The federation chief said, “In the so-called fringe benefit group now being considered for taxation are widely used programs that fulfill major, demonstrable needs and social purposes that affect the great majority of working Americans.” He said such employer-paid benefit programs “have been subjected to the checks and balances of the legislative process as well as the collective bargaining process.”

“These benefits,” Kirkland continued, “are not frivolous ‘perks’ or gimmicks to shelter income, generate phony losses or otherwise reduce the taxes of a privileged few.”

Kirkland stressed that the AFL-CIO “supports just and fair measures to reduce the deficit and make the nation’s tax structure more efficient and productive. But merely to increase the taxes of working people and jeopardize benefits and protections that are essential to their welfare and that of their families would be unjust and unfair.”

If employee health insurance benefits were taxed, Kirkland said, “the most likely effect of scaling back benefits would be loss of coverage for preventive care, outpatient diagnostic services, dental care, eyeglasses and other benefits which, in fact, save money.”

Kirkland noted that pensions already are taxed when they are received by employees and their beneficiaries.

He pointed out that unemployment benefits also are taxed above certain thresholds, and said “the suffering of unemployed workers should not be compounded by increased taxation of their unemployment benefits.”

Workers’ compensation benefits, Kirkland said, “are already inadequate to meet the needs of disabled workers and their families.”

Kirkland urged Congress “to concentrate on the long list of alternative means to increase revenue through improving, not sacrificing, equity.”

U.S. Chamber of Commerce President Richard Lesher has also issued a similar statement opposing taxation of fringes.

CSEA routs Teamsters in Lakeshore challenge

ANGOLA — A spirited effort by CSEA loyalists and activists has turned back a representation challenge in the 192-member Lakeshore Central Schools Unit of Local 868. The challenge was mounted by the Teamsters.

“Now we can go forward,” said Unit President Joyce Tomaka, “and continue to work for improvements on behalf of all our members. CSEA is here to stay, and I’m glad the majority of our members weren’t intimidated by the tactics of the opposition.”

“This show of confidence will help give us momentum toward a decent negotiated contract,” noted Jack Schlenker, Local 868 president. “Our record of accomplishments on behalf of our members can’t be beat, but we don’t rest on our laurels. Our members want results, and that’s what we’re planning for in upcoming negotiations.”

The spectre of subcontracting transportation services had to be defeated before the unit could complete planning for bargaining, according to Bill Thomson, field representative.

“The combined efforts of our members, elected officials and field staff was instrumental in gaining agreement by the district to halt subcontracting efforts and continue transportation services as a district operation,” said Thomson.

The effort saved 66 bus driver and mechanic jobs and honed the unit into a tight-knit core of CSEA members, he said.

Schlenker praised the election campaign input of Thomson and Region VI Organizer Thomas Mullen, and vowed renewed determination in the processing of member grievances.

“We have an outstanding record at Lakeshore,” Schlenker said. “We’ve won more than 84 percent of all grievances filed and numerous arbitrations. I think that’s why the employees voted to retain us.”

The unit’s present contract expires June 30, and Tomaka looks forward to meeting the school board members, who “were very good in seeing the benefits of district-run transportation.”

“In the subcontracting negotiations, we were working on behalf of the bus drivers and mechanics,” said Tomaka. “Now we’ll be pushing for the benefit of all our members.

Charlie Jacobson remembered

IN MEMORIAL — Friends and colleagues of the late Charlie Jacobson joined together recently for a memorial ceremony at the Arthur Kill Correctional Facility on Staten Island. Jacobson, a plumber and CSEA Local 010 grievance representative at Arthur Kill, was a member of the union for more than 16 years before his sudden death last November. Among those participating, from left, were: Robert Richards, Jacobson’s successor as grievance rep; Ann Marie Delinkolou, alternate grievance rep; Rose Sutro, president of Local 010; Kenneth Dunham, superintendent of Arthur Kill; Dorothy Jacobson; and Charles Bell, CSEA field rep.
ROCHESTER — The seldom-addressed potential for assault or harrassment of public employees on the job received maximum attention in a recent series of mandated seminars for Monroe County’s more than 2,000 employees.

The program included a presentation on managing and surviving potentially violent situations, and an explanation of procedures that will be used to expedite prosecution should a county employee be attacked.

“The average county employee is a potential target for harrassment or assault from a frustrated client or consumer, said Florence Tripi, president of the county employee unit of Monroe County CSEA Local 828.

“For understandable reasons, social services personnel come under attack more often than others,” Tripi said. “But workers in the health, environmental, parks, auto bureau and highway department also come in contact with the public. Therefore, it is important to have the knowledge that allows one to assess the potential for conflict and confrontation in the work situation, whether in the office or the field.”

Tripi said that for these reasons it was a big boost to employee morale when Monroe County arranged four half-day sessions, allowing virtually all employees to attend on county time.

“County Executive Lucien Morin and District Attorney Howard Relin emphasized the county is concerned with avoiding attacks, but will prosecute to the full extent of the law should any occur,” said Local 828 President George Growney.

Ammunition to avoid and reduce the risk of attacks was provided by a presentation of James R. Clark, Ph.D., director of the county’s Mental Health Clinic for Socio-Legal Services.

“The first step in attaining a degree of personal safety is the realization that we are each primarily responsible for our own protection,” said Clark, who is also a member of Local 828.

“You can’t do a good job if you’re scared,” Clark said during his “Surviving the Violent Situation” workshop.

The psychologist explored a wide range of potential situations. He discussed the role of stress within oneself and the client, body language, dealing with weapons, and proxemics, the science of maintaining proper distance for the situation.

The session also included a sampling of violent behavior theory by Sigmund Freud and other psychoanalysts. A 10-point model for human services contacts was designed to provide a condensed group of guidelines to follow.

District Attorney Relin outlined for employees the extensive measures that will facilitate criminal processing by his department in cases involving assaults upon county employees. The procedures include instructions to supervisors of every department to immediately notify an assistant district attorney or the D.A.’s office administrator to expedite the prosecution. An assistant district attorney will personally assist in drafting criminal information forms and will keep the involved employee informed of the progress of the case.

“It is the policy of Monroe County to prosecute such cases vigorously and effectively in order to prevent such incidents from occurring in the future,” declared Relin.

Employees were given printed copies of the procedure at the sessions, which were developed in cooperation with CSEA and other unions, according to Tripi.

Tripi said “we have had positive feedback on this,” and said she will propose such a presentation for a future regional conference. “It would also make a great model for every county in the state to follow,” Tripi said.
The CSEA Employee Benefit Fund (EBF) provides health benefits to CSEA members in the state’s Administrative, Institutional and Operational bargaining units and to CSEA members in states of local government bargaining units through contractual agreements. EBF presently provides benefits covering in some 120 bargaining units throughout the state and employs about 120,000 members of New York State.

Indeed, EBF celebrated its fifth anniversary last June with an impressive record of accomplishments in a sound financial position. For instance, the Fund administered $34 million in benefits during the previous fiscal year which translated into 1,180,300 prescriptions, 343,675 dental treatments, and 45,119 vision care vouchers honored. The utilization of various programs by members has grown substantially each year and results of the fiscal year which ended March 31, 1985 will certainly produce even more impressive figures. EBF management has instituted several cost containment measures to help offset inflationary increases in medical costs and the Fund continues to provide better benefits with greater economy than ever before.

The Employee Benefit Fund (EBF) provides health care benefits to CSEA members in the state’s Administrative, Institutional and Operational bargaining units and to CSEA members in states of local government bargaining units through contractual agreements. EBF presently provides benefits covering in some 120 bargaining units throughout the state and employs about 120,000 members of New York State.

...steady and consistent progress in providing an invaluable benefit...
STAFF MEMBERS OF CSEA's statewide Legislative and Political Action office and regional political action coordinators get together at a breakfast meeting in Albany prior to lobbying at the state Legislature. Pictured in background, from left, are: Gus Nielsen, Region I political action coordinator; Joyce Dimitri, administrative associate; Robert Haggerty, director of operations; and Thomas Haley, legislative and political action director.

ALBANY — CSEA's Legislative and Political Action office Feb. 4 held a Lobbying Day to help make the state's politicians more aware of the disastrous effects for the mentally ill of a proposed major overhaul of the mental health system.

The union's regional political action coordinators, recent additions to the political action office, worked the halls of the state Legislature, meeting with state senators and assemblymen and criticizing recommendations by a special governor's study panel for radical changes in mental health services. Primarily, the commission has advised decentralization of the services, under which there would be a shift from state-run facilities to more community residences that would be governed by regionally-established offices or boards.

Prior to meeting with legislators, the political action coordinators met with staff members of the union's political action office.

"We met to brief them on the issue so that they could properly represent CSEA's position on the matter," said Legislative and Political Action Director Thomas Haley.

"We wanted to make it very clear to legislators that CSEA is not against deinstitutionalization of the mentally ill, but against releasing them into the community without adequate state-run support services," Haley said. "What we are against is the proposal for community facilities run by private interests for profit instead of the well-being of the mentally ill."

Haley said that coordinators reported "mixed responses" regarding opinions of the lawmakers on the matter.

REGION III POLITICAL ACTION Coordinator Doris Mason, above, looks over a copy of "Compassion and Care" with Assemblyman Robert Connor (D, Rockland). The report, a comprehensive document put together by CSEA and AFSCME, criticizes recommendations by a special governor's study panel which proposed an overhaul of the state's mental health system.

DOUGLAS PRESCOTT (R-C, Queens) takes some time to talk over the issue with Region II Political Action Coordinator Lauri Cohen.
By Irene Carr
CSEA Statewide Secretary

ALBANY — Meeting in Albany on Jan. 10, the statewide Board of Directors overruled the report of the Legal Committee in three instances, granting legal assistance in each case.

It was announced that the State Workshop will be held in Syracuse May 1-3 and that the Local Government Workshop is scheduled for June 7-9 in Albany. The Local Government Executive Committee received a report from CSEA's Research Department on the Civil Service Abuse Study. The Board then recommended that within 90 days they be furnished with a report of the disposition of and/or recommendations for the resolutions of problems identified within the report.

Two appointments to the union's statewide Political Action Committee were approved: Joan Newman, representing Region III, and Keith Zielko, representing Region V. Sal Grieco was named as a member of the Region III Political Action Committee.

The Board also recommended that the statewide Treasurer send a definitive status report to the appropriate unit or local president and treasurer when financial records are taken for an audit at headquarters. The report should be provided every 30 days while the books are being held.

Questions by CSEA members concerning the union's Board of Directors should be directed to that member's board representative, local president, or to the office of the statewide secretary. Copies of the secretary's Board minutes are mailed to all board representatives and local presidents.

During the World War II years, CSEA continued to grow and obtain substantial and important gains for public employees. In 1941, CSEA was a strong backer of the law creating the Flie Commission to develop rules and procedures to bring all public employees in the state under the merit system. CSEA's president and counsel were both members of that commission. In 1942 CSEA won statutory protection relative to leaves, increments, reinstatements, etc. for employees entering military service. In 1943 CSEA was instrumental in gaining overtime pay for work beyond 48 hours, and in 1944 CSEA began supplying members a regular weekly newspaper, the forerunner of today's Public Sector. In 1945 the union won increases in state emergency pay ranges, and secured a measure permitting 10 percent additional pay for hazardous work.
ALBANY — CSEA political action liaisons in Region IV were busy renewing old acquaintances and establishing new ones during the recent legislative breakfast held here.

"This is a great opportunity to get an early pulse of the tempo that the session will be operating under," said John Francisco, CSEA Region IV Political Action Committee chairman. "We have an early opportunity to introduce our positions on numerous items without any type of political pressure."

A dozen elected Assembly and Senate representatives attended the breakfast, and C. Allen Mead, Region IV president, was busy table hopping to make sure all of the officials were aware of the region's views on a number of topics — from CSEA's opposition to recent proposals to revamp the existing mental health system, to its support for a permanent agency shop law.

"This breakfast is a tradition which has proven its worth and must be continued," said Mead.
Sanford T. Tanksley, left, representative to Assemblyman Michael McNulty (D. 106th), Region IV President C. Allen Mead and Assemblyman Andrew Ryan (R. 110th).

Assemblyman Richard Conners (D. 104th) and Region IV Director John D. Corcoran Jr.

BREAKFAST

ABOVE: Assemblyman Larry Lane (R. 102nd), PAL Gloria Rutkey, and Assemblyman Jim Tedisco (R. 107th).

Assemblyman Paul Tonko (D. 105th) and PAC Chairman John Francisco.

RIGHT: Assemblyman Arnold Proskin (R. 103rd) and Region IV Third Vice President Barbara Skelly.
Profiles of some of the members of your union’s negotiating teams in the CSEA/state contract negotiations

SARAH JACKSON
Administrative Services Unit

“I have a great concern for people and it is a real challenge for me to be part of seeking and approving what I think is best for all my sisters and brothers,” says Sarah Jackson.

A state worker and CSEA member for 22 years, Jackson is chairwoman of the Administrative Services Bargaining Unit. Secretary of her local, she is a member of the statewide Board of Directors and the CSEAP and Education committees, and chairs the Human Relations Committee. She has trained in labor history and labor law.

Jackson is just as involved in community service. She is first vice president of the New York State Board Association of Community Action, chairwoman of the Board of Directors of Rockland Community Action Council, chairwoman of the Spring Valley NAACP Membership Committee, and past chairwoman of the Woman’s Auxiliary of the First Baptist Church of Spring Valley.

This is her first time on the negotiating team. “I feel I can be an asset because of my leadership ability,” she says.

MADELINE C. HARRISON
Institutional Services Unit

“I have been actively involved in CSEA for the past three years and in that time I have become a staunch supporter of CSEA and the value of negotiating for our members,” says Madeline C. Harrison.

A union member for five years and currently a shop steward, Harrison says she believes she is in tune with the needs of her co-workers. She says she has been successful at settling negotiations over safety, clothing requirements and training with her supervisors.

CSEA’S NEGOTIATING TEAMS

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES UNIT Negotiating Team
Region I — Elizabeth Holt and Barbara Reynolds
Region II — Elliot Bernstein and Ann Worthy
Region III — Carolee Peets and Sarah Jackson
Region IV — Lee Johnson and Dann Wood
Region V — Chris Carletta and Claire Mcgrath
Region VI — Sara Sievert and Dawn Lyman
Collective Bargaining Specialist Jack Conoby

OPERATIONAL SERVICES UNIT Negotiating Team
Region I — Arthur Loving and Lou Mannellino
Region II — Benjamin Hayes and James Wilson
Region III — Jack Cassidy and Richard Riley
Region IV — Milo Barlow and Leroy Holmes
Region V — Tom Ward and Chuck Eynon
Region VI — John Wallenbeck and Thomas Petrone
Collective Bargaining Specialist John Naughter

INSTITUTIONAL SERVICES UNIT Negotiating Team
Region I — Joseph Nova and Anthony Ruggiero
Region II — Joel Schwartz and Miguel Cruz
Region III — Jeff Howarth and Beatrice White
Region IV — Joel Farkenbury and Dominick Ruggieri
Region V — Madeline Harrison and Ruby Meyers
Region VI — Elaine Mosley and Kathy Pontillo-Button
Collective Bargaining Specialist Jim Cooney

CHARLES J. EYNON
Operational Services Unit

President of his local, Charles J. Eynon has served as an AFSCME delegate and has been involved in EAP, helping to negotiate the EAP language into the contract at the last round of negotiations.

Previously he was president of Binghamton State Employees Local 002, and served as vice chairman of the OSU negotiating team during the 1982-85 contract talks.

“I see the need for some real important language changes in the operational contract,” he says, noting that current language inadequacies have “cost us many grievances.”
Two new prep books available for political subdivision tests for welfare examiner and caseworker job titles; stress management tapes now available for all members

New exam prep booklets available for caseworkers, social welfare examiners

ALBANY — CSEA is now making available two new exam preparation booklets to workers in the political subdivisions. The new booklets, one for caseworkers and the other for social welfare examiners, add two already existing instructional series on secretarial and custodial skills.

The new "Social Welfare Examiner Series" contains review work in the areas of supervision and administration, interviewing, and understanding social and human relations problems.

Principles and practices of social casework, interviewing and supervision are included as part of the preparation in the "Caseworker Promotional Exam Series."

Still available through the CSEA Education and Training Department are the "Secretarial and Typing Series" and the "Custodial Series."

The former booklet is for secretaries in the counties and municipalities and for non-teaching school district personnel. Designed for employees holding typist, steno, and secretarial titles, it contains review work in areas of supervision, secretarial and typing practices, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization and usage.

The series for custodians contains review work in supervision, cleaning, building operations and maintenance as well as in ability to read and follow written instructions.

Each booklet is available for the price of $1.50 from the union's Education and Training Department. Use adjacent coupon for ordering.

Region IV workshop set

LAKE GEORGE — A workshop dealing with such topics as domestic violence, legal rights of battered women, rape, sexual abuse, self defense and legalities will be held March 8-10 at the Ramada Inn, Lake George, under sponsorship of the CSEA Region IV Women's Committee.

A discussion on alcohol and drug abuse and its relationship to domestic violence will be held Friday night, March 8.

Saturday's program will include discussions by experts of the effects of domestic violence on children, the legal rights of battered women, and related subjects.

Sunday's program will discuss rape, sexual abuse and self defense.

Information about the workshop can be obtained by contacting the CSEA Capital Region office, (518) 489-5424.

ORDER FORM

ATTN: CSEA Education Department
33 Elk Street
Albany, N.Y. 12207

Please send me the booklet(s) indicated. I understand the price is $1.50 (includes postage) for EACH booklet ordered.

_ Secretarial and Typing Series _ Social Welfare Examiner Series
_ Custodial Series _ Caseworker Promotional Exam Series

Please send me ___ relaxation program(s) on cassette tape at the price of $2.50 each.

I have enclosed a check or money order in the amount of $ to cover the cost of this order.

Please send booklet(s) to:

Name ____________________________
Address __________________________

City __________________ State/Zip ______
Social Security Number ___________ CSEA Local ______

EMPLOYER __________________________

PLEASE NOTE: The relaxation tape is available only through CSEA's Education Department. Non-CSEA members can obtain the exam prep booklets directly from Cornell University at the same price by contacting: Cornell ILR, 115 State Street, Suite 1206, Albany, New York 12207.

CSEA efforts get upgradings for 3 Suffolk local members

HAUPPAUGE — Three employees of the Islip Career Center of BOCES II have received approvals for upgradings which will represent an annual increase in pay of at least $600 apiece.

The employees, members of Suffolk County Local 652, will be upgraded to the title of Warehouse Worker II. Currently, they work at the center in Laborer and Driver/Messenger positions.

BOCES II Unit President Yvette Warren says that CSEA petitioned the Civil Service Department for the upgradings last fall after receiving complaints from the workers that they were performing additional duties and responsibilities.

"Their duties called for them to move furniture, stocks and supplies," explains Warren. "However, these workers found themselves doing a lot of inventory and clerical work like recordkeeping and filing. They felt there was a lot more responsibility to the job than there was supposed to be for what they were getting paid."

The Civil Service Department agreed that the three workers were performing some duties not in their job descriptions. Recently, it selected an existing title it believes better fits their responsibilities.

The Civil Service Department decision for an upgrading must go now to the BOCES II board for approval. According to Warren, the board is expected to approve the upgradings.

"Each of the workers upgraded will receive up to $650 more a year in addition to regular raises which they are entitled to through the contract," said Warren.

Region I President Danny Donohue noted that the BOCES workers' upgradings is an example to others who find themselves with added responsibilities.

"A lot of these blue collar titles are getting additional workloads and responsibilities. When a title no longer fits the kind of work actually required, then employees deserve and should go after an upgrading and a title change," said Donohue.
Brentwood school members win early retirement

HAUPPAUGE — CSEA-represented workers and other non-teaching employees of the Brentwood Union Free School District have secured an early retirement option as a result of recent actions by CSEA's law firm and representatives of Region I.

The school district offered the retirement incentive plan to members of CSEA and three other employee unions in the New York State Employees Retirement System Feb. 6 as the Brentwood Teacher Aides Unit of Suffolk Educational Local 870 went into a new round of negotiations. The offer came after some heavy petitioning and on the heels of threatened legal action by CSEA.

The controversy began last November when the Board of Education of the Brentwood School District elected to participate in the early retirement option as a result of recent actions by CSEA's law firm and three other employee unions in the New York State Employees Retirement System Feb. 6 as the Brentwood Teacher Aides Unit of Suffolk Educational Local 870 went into a new round of negotiations. The offer came after some heavy petitioning and on the heels of threatened legal action by CSEA.

The two-day event, sponsored by CSEA, PEF and AFSCME Council 82, was conducted Feb. 2 and 9 in the main lobby of the OMRDD facility in Binghamton.

Employees learned of the program through a facility-wide campaign that included posted fliers and extensive CSEA coverage to area newspapers, radio and television stations.

"The flyers explained the program and recommended that the employees make reservations to bring their children either Saturday. Thanks to Sandi Slobki, Carl Stecker and other committee members we were able to handle nearly 300 children. After the first session we learned we needed an extra fingerprinting kit to reduce waiting time. The younger children may not understand the purpose of the program, but they surely enjoyed the refreshments," Smacher added.

The photographs and fingerprints were turned over to the various agencies in the Binghamton-Broome County area for future use in the event of an accident or missing person.

CSEA locals interested in an I.D. program may contact Sue Smacher at Broome Developmental Center, (607) 770-0472.
FISHKILL — A shortage of vocationally trained workers and inadequate pay scales in local government have created a serious problem in the Mid-Hudson Valley, according to two CSEA officials there.

President Pat Mascioli and Director Diane Campion of CSEA Southern Region III addressed these concerns in a special edition of the Middletown Times Herald Record at the request of the local daily newspaper.

While educational institutions in the area offer the specialized training necessary to sustain the local computer industry, say Mascioli and Campion, "a by-product of all our institutions of higher learning is a workforce too well-trained and too technically-oriented to meet the demand for blue collar, clerical and basic service employees.

"It becomes more difficult to attract these employees to public service because of salary competition from the private sector."

In the special edition, titled "Mid-Hudson at Work," the two cited a reluctance to reward public employees for their services.

They also attacked the attitude of those local government officials "who prefer to balance their budgets on the backs of employees rather than looking to top-heavy administration.

"Public employment will continue to expand out of necessity. The state prison system is expanding locally. State officials are also being forced to look at the plight of the homeless and the de-institutionalized mentally ill," they said.

"The shortage of a workforce to address these problems is a critical one, one that the taxpayer will bear when government finally realizes that in order to properly train and maintain a quality employee, one must offer quality wages and benefits and be willing to invest in these people."

Nassau local VP to speak at workshop on 'fair play'

HEMPSTEAD — Nassau County CSEA Local 830 Executive Vice President Rita M. Wallace will be among an impressive list of panelists participating in "A Conference on Fair Play at Work" on Saturday, March 16 from 8:45 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Hofstra Law School, California Avenue, Hempstead.

The conference is being sponsored by several groups, including the New York Civil Liberties Union, Nassau County Human Rights Commission, and the Long Island Federation of Labor.

Participants planning to attend should complete the registration form at right.

CSEA SATELLITE OFFICES

BINGHAMTON SATELLITE OFFICE
Suite 218, Executive Office Bldg.
Binghamton Plaza
33 W. State Street
Binghamton, NY 13901
607-772-1750

CANTON SATELLITE OFFICE
P.O. Box 488
Canton, NY 13617
315-386-8131 or 8132

MAYVILLE SATELLITE OFFICE
P.O. Box 225
Mayville, NY 14757
716-753-5290

UTICA SATELLITE OFFICE
289 Genesee Street
Utica, NY 13501
315-735-9272

WESTCHESTER SATELLITE OFFICE
222 Mamaroneck Avenue
White Plains, NY 10601
914-946-6905 or 6906

Plattsburgh SATELLITE OFFICE
Broad Street Professional Bldg.
53 Broad Street
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
518-563-0761

ROCHESTER SATELLITE OFFICE
C.M.C. Building
3699 W. Henrietta Road
Rochester, NY 14623
716-334-7140

Nassau local VP to speak at workshop on 'fair play'

HEMPSTEAD — Nassau County CSEA Local 830 Executive Vice President Rita M. Wallace will be among an impressive list of panelists participating in "A Conference on Fair Play at Work" on Saturday, March 16 from 8:45 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Hofstra Law School, California Avenue, Hempstead.

The conference is being sponsored by several groups, including the New York Civil Liberties Union, Nassau County Human Rights Commission, and the Long Island Federation of Labor.

The conference is being sponsored by several groups, including the New York Civil Liberties Union, Nassau County Human Rights Commission, and the Long Island Federation of Labor.

Participants planning to attend should complete the registration form at right.

ADVANCE REGISTRATION FORM

Name
Address
Organization
Daytime Phone ( )

There will be a $5 pre-registration fee payable by March 9. Registration at the door will be $7.50. Please detach and return check or money order payable to:

NYCLU Nassau
210 Old Country Rd.
Mineola, New York 11501

WORKSHOP PREFERENCE

Please number all four workshops in your order of preference.

[ ] What the Boss Can and Cannot Do
[ ] When Equal Opportunity Isn't Enough
[ ] Making Fairness the Law
[ ] Equal Pay for Comparable Worth

For more information call (516) 741-8520

THE PUBLIC SECTOR, Friday, February 22, 1985
IN RENSSELAER COUNTY:

County Legislature follows CSEA urging, presses state not to implement MH plan

TROY - A resolution strongly backed by CSEA, urging the state to retain the current system of service delivery for the mentally ill and disregard recommendations contained in a report by the Select Commission on the Future of State-Local Health Systems, has been passed by the Rensselaer County Legislature.

The Rensselaer County resolution calls upon the state to conduct additional studies before implementing any phases of the commission's report. CSEA's local and regional political action organizations had urged the Rensselaer County Legislature to take action rejecting the report.

CSEA has been battling the findings of the commission's report, claiming implementation would in effect destroy the system and eliminate many state and local jobs without any improvements to the mentally ill.

The Rensselaer County resolution notes, "although the report presents an analysis of the historical and current problems and issues regarding the organization of services, policy issues, funding issues, and systems management issues, it does not give specific solutions."

The resolution further states that "even though many of the objectives of the report have been accomplished in Rensselaer County under the Unified Services format, it is critical that these gains which have been made in the County as well as many other jurisdictions throughout the State should not be compromised by premature implementation of new and sweeping legislation which does not preserve the strengths of the current system."

Additionally, according to the resolution, "the commission's findings relate only to mental health and not to the other mental hygiene disabilities groups," and therefore "unilateral implementation by OMH would fragment in Rensselaer County an integrated services and management system."

CSEA officials have been appearing before local and county groups all across the state working in opposition to implementation of any portion of the commission's recommendations. The union's theme is echoed in the statement by Marty Langer, CSEA's consultant on mental health issues, who has said time and time again, "We cannot let the state use this report to walk away from its constitutional responsibility for mental health care and foist it and all of its problems onto the counties."

CSEA CAPITAL REGION PRESIDENT C. Allen Mead, second from left, congratulates Rensselaer County Legislator Paul Mindiole, chairman of the county health committee, after the county legislature passed a resolution calling for more study of a report on revising mental health services before implementation. Among those who worked to convince members of the legislature to take that action were Rensselaer County CSEA Local 842 President Marianne Herkenham, left, and Ed LaPlante, right, CSEA's political action coordinator for the Capital Region.

IN WESTERN NEW YORK:

CSEA gains wide support in bitter battle against Workers' Comp hours change

BUFFALO — A bitter battle which began last month in New York City against night working hours for Workers' Compensation Board employees has spread across the state to western New York, where CSEA activists say they plan to take to the streets to conduct information picketing in protest of the work hours change.

Pet Froebel, a steward in CSEA's Buffalo State Employees Local 903 and a WCB employee, says CSEA is joined by members of other unions affected as well as representatives of several private firms that do business with the WCB in adamantly opposing the change to night hours. She says she has gathered a long list of signers from those groups to petitions stating strong opposition to the change.

"We also have signatures of many claimants who are opposed to this change," Froebel said. "In fact, we haven't heard of anyone speaking out in favor of the move, which was unilateral and is a violation of the CSEA-state contract, article 32 among others."

Froebel says claimants, employees, attorneys, insurance carriers and self-insured employers have all signed the petitions, along with members of ten other area labor unions.

The Board began initiating hearings on week nights earlier this month, and employees assigned the extra hours are receiving time off the following day under the plan. Even before the new schedule took effect, angry protests erupted among WCB employees in New York City, who cited the plan as unacceptable and a violation of the union's contract.

Workers supporting CSEA's fight against the change have mounted a pair of heated demonstrations in New York City, and according to Froebel, "we're not stopping with the filing of a grievance and the petitions. We plan on joining the initiative of our brothers and sisters in New York City in informational picketing to further inform the public of the hazards of this order. And our Local 903 President, Kathy Fetzer, is planning to testify before a state commission that is investigating the entire WCB program."

That hearing, by the Temporary State Commission on Workers' Compensation and Disability Benefits, was scheduled for Feb. 21 in Buffalo, as this issue of The Public Sector went to press. Froebel said many CSEA members planned to use their lunch break that day to carry signs into the hearing area to show displeasure with the hours change. And, she said, an advocacy group for claimants called "Victims of Compensation" has "declared war" on the WCB.

"The hardships on working mothers and disruption of workers' personal lives by this unilateral order are unbelievable," says Froebel. "And what's so disgusting, so far only about 35 percent of the scheduled night hearings have been held because the claimants aren't showing up. So there's a big waste of taxpayers' money going on here."