Activists shaping organized fight against Workers' Comp hours change; employee morale dips to low point

Information compiled by
Stephen Madarasz
CSEA Communications Associate

NEW YORK CITY—"The morale at the Board is the worst I've seen in 20 years of dealing with Workers' Compensation issues," says Attorney Elliot Olin, chairman of a group of unionists and other activists who have formed the Ad Hoc Committee for Workers' Compensation to combat the situation.

The Ad Hoc Committee was formed out of concern over a number of issues affecting Workers' Compensation Board employees, but the most current matter of concern involves Board plans to initiate hearings on week nights beginning Feb. 4. Employees assigned the extra hours will get time off the following day.

But CSEA, and the other activists joining force with the union, says the plan is unacceptable for a number of reasons, among them that there is doubt clients' attorneys will be willing to work week nights, and that administrative costs will rise by keeping offices open for extended hours.

CSEA is filing a class action grievance over the hours change, citing it as a violation of the workday/workweek article of the union's contract with the state of New York.

Formation of the Ad Hoc Committee in the New York City area came as Workers' Compensation Board Chairman Robert Steingut continues to move ahead with plans for the new evening hearing schedule.

Steingut's action has upset union officials, and CSEA Region II President George Boncoraglio has responded with anger after a Jan. 18 meeting of union officials with Steingut in an effort to halt the plan.

"Steingut wanted our input only as long as we agreed with his position. We're trying to be reasonable and work the situation out to everyone's benefit, but he doesn't want to hear us," Boncoraglio says.

CSEA says that Steingut has been unable to demonstrate any need for the new night hours of 6 to 8 p.m., and that a client preference survey his staff conducted to show client support is flawed in its sampling and tabulation techniques.

CSEA also notes that while the plan was initially described as voluntary, it has already become a mandatory assignment. CSEA Local 1000 President Rose Sutro says that Steingut's contention that the program would only affect a small number of employees "is nonsense." Sutro, whose local represents about 550 members at Workers' Compensation, says that a "rotating schedule assures that all workers will eventually (Continued of Page 9)
Hospital workers endangered

Unions vow to appeal OSHA decision about ETO exposure

WASHINGTON—AFSCME and other unions representing hospital workers have vowed to return to court to fight the Occupational Safety and Health Administration’s rejection of a short-term exposure limit for the cancer-causing sterilant ethylene oxide (ETO).

AFSCME and several other unions plus a public health research group last June won a court ruling that forced OSHA to issue a new standard for the medical equipment sterilant. That standard reduced the eight-hour average exposure limit for ETO to one part per million (1 ppm) from 50 ppm. However, OSHA postponed a decision on a short-term exposure limit (STEL) after the White House Office of Management and Budget deleted the provision from the new standard, saying it would cost too much.

The unions charge that by eliminating the STEL, the OMB gutted the standard because most of the estimated 144,600 hospital workers at risk are exposed to the gas in short, relatively high concentrations when they open sterilizer doors. Such exposures, although averaging much less than 1 ppm, frequently exceed that level and are likely to be associated with the unfavorable health outcomes estimated by the Department of Health and Human Services.

The issue of a STEL for the EtO standard has been mired in controversy during the Reagan administration. Last year, OSHA scientists charged before a congressional panel that R. Leonard Vance, OSHA’s health standards director, attempted to discourage them from collecting or considering evidence that could justify a STEL. After meeting with an official from Union Carbide, a major ETO manufacturer which opposes a STEL.

Social Security benefits taxable

Starting with 1984, if Social Security beneficiaries have substantial income in addition to their Social Security benefits, up to half of their annual benefits may be subject to income tax.

About 90 percent of the Social Security beneficiaries will not be affected by the new rule, however. If a person’s only source of income in 1984 was from Social Security and/or SSI benefits, he or she probably will not be affected. The amount of benefits subject to tax will be the smaller of:

- one-half of a person’s Social Security benefits, or
- one-half of the amount by which the adjusted gross income, plus tax exempt interest, plus one-half of the Social Security benefits, exceed the base amount.

To figure out if they will have to pay tax on their benefits, individuals would need to determine which of the following base amounts applies to them:

- $5,000 if the person files as a single taxpayer,
- $32,000 if the person is married and the couple files a joint return, or
- $0 if the person is married and lived with his or her spouse at any time during the year and files separate tax returns.

Related Union

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CSEA members in the three state bargaining units (Administrative, Operational and Institutional), as well as CSEA-represented employees in the Office of Court Administration (OCA) are reminded that they may take advantage of automatic payroll deduction to set up an Individual Retirement Account (IRA).

An IRA is a tax-deferred investment plan which allows individuals to save a portion of their income for retirement while legally sheltering income from taxes.
School unit celebrates decade of 100 percent voluntary membership

PORT HENRY — "We have an excellent contract here because of our 100 percent union membership and we want to keep it that way," said Moriah Central School Unit President Pete Rotella.

"That’s what I tell a new school district employee as soon as he or she comes in the front door."

For the past 10 years, six under Rotella, the Moriah school unit — part of Essex County CSEA Local 816 — has had perfect voluntary union membership without any type of agency shop provision in its contract.

In recognition of the unit’s decade of perfect membership, Rotella was recently presented with a certificate of appreciation by CSEA statewide President William L. McGowan.

"We have 32 members and when the union speaks to the district about a problem, the district knows that all 32 employees are talking. That helps a lot," said Rotella.

Located in the North Country of the Capital Region, the Moriah district serves the education needs of 1,008 elementary and high school students. Rotella says the 100 percent membership has helped the union establish "a good working relationship with the district.

"If a problem does develop the district knows that the workers will stick together," he said. "That seems to help move problems along to a quick resolution without using the grievance procedure."

Essex County Local President John McAlonan credited Rotella with "working constantly with school employees, looking to help them in one way or another."

Said Rotella: "Nobody in the North Country gets a free ride. We're all used to doing our jobs and doing our share, and that goes for supporting our union. It can't be any other way if you really want to be effective."

Bag lunch experiment

The Moriah Central School District has embarked upon a brown bag lunch experiment to increase students’ participation in the federal luncheon program. The district is preparing several hundred bag lunches for the students and selling them as an alternative to regular hot meals. Unit President Pete Rotella has been working with Cafeteria Supervisor Martha Helms on the project. Here, he's pictured with the kitchen crew. From left are Jean Sprague, Theda Groshens, Helms, Rotella, Josie Reaves and Betty Conley. Thelma Chapuk is in back row.
A new book, "Don't Let Your Job Kill You," by longtime labor journalist Franklin Wallick has been published with a foreword by former OSHA Director Eula Bingham.


In publishing the new edition, Wallick says, "The time for horror stories is over—we know we have a problem. The job now facing workers and their unions is what to do about the problems. I hope this book will be a real guide to problem solving of health and safety at the workplace."

Wallick is the 61-year-old editor of the "UAW Washington Report" and was a UAW lobbyist for passage of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970.

"Don't Let Your Job Kill You," published by Progressive Press, 7620 Morningside Drive, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20012. $5 per copy, sent postage paid with receipt of check made out to Progressive Press.
Helping create elderly day care center
latest special assistance for needy
given by Dutchess County CSEA members

By Anita Manley
CSEA Communications Associate

MILLBROOK — An agency’s dream of opening a day care center for the elderly has become a reality, thanks in part to a group of “guardian angels,” including a crew of CSEA members.

In spite of a limited budget, the Dutchess County Community Action Agency was able to open the center in the Dutchess County Infirmary in December.

Site Manager Marilyn Pletzer said that following a study completed last year, it became obvious that some type of day care services for the elderly was desperately needed. “The need for this type of service was referred to (in the study) repeatedly,” Pletzer said.

Pletzer said her agency has had a contract with the county’s Office for the Aging to provide services to the elderly, such as weatherization of homes, a foodbank program and transportation. The local Medicaid study turned up numerous problems involving keeping elderly people at home and properly cared for.

“They needed programs of assistance and they found them difficult to obtain,” Pletzer said, adding that home health care is difficult to obtain because home health aides are hard to recruit in sufficient numbers due to low salaries being offered.

The agency conducted a study of two existing day care programs in Vermont and Connecticut. Following an extensive local needs survey, the agency began looking into funding, with money coming from two private sources. Dutchess County donated space in the county infirmary.

Renovations on the premises were needed, and it was here that CSEA members came through, many donating their own time. “The maintenance people were tremendous, I don’t know what we would have done without them,” Pletzer said.

Dutchess County CSEA Unit Second Vice President Charlie Rexhouse says this isn’t the first time the CSEA members working at the infirmary have given of themselves above and beyond the call of duty. Rexhouse said his crew members often spend their own time visiting with patients, for instance. In addition, both Rexhouse and maintenance man Vernon Storms are on call — voluntarily — during cold winter months to deliver emergency home heating fuel to needy families, another service of the Community Action Agency.

“Charlie Rexhouse is probably one of the hardest working members of the unit, both in his job and in his union. He cares a great deal about people and it reflects in his total involvement. He’s one of the most caring and giving people I know.”

TOURING Dutchess County’s new Elderly Day Care Center recently were Program Aide Marilyn Bauerle, CSEA Unit Vice President Charlie Rexhouse, Infirmary Administrator Tom Fiore, and Site Manager Marilyn Pletzer.

AMONG CSEA MEMBERS who gave extra of themselves to help patients of the day care facility at the Dutchess County Infirmary were James Farrell and Katherine Lawler.
Wondering about the best way to handle that grievance? Confused about how to file an IP? Looking for advice on how to motivate members or negotiate a contract?

Then what you need to read is The CSEA Activist, a bimonthly publication that’s full of tips on how to be a more effective unionist.

CSEA’s Communications Department came out with The Activist a year ago this month. The eight-page publication is much more than a newsletter. It’s an educational tool packed with valuable information CSEA leaders at all levels need to represent the union’s members.

Michael Moran, director of CSEA’s Communications Department and publisher of The Activist, explains how the idea for the publication came about.

“We found we didn’t need a newsletter in the usual sense but rather a publication that would give officers the kind of nuts and bolts information they should know as labor leaders. We wanted the content to be more ‘how-to’ than ‘what’s new.’”

Reaching a wider readership was another goal, he said, noting that Communications staff members assigned to the project worked to develop a circulation that went well beyond local presidents and Board members.

The Activist currently has more than 3,000 readers including shop stewards and members of various local and unit committees as well as Board members and regional, local and unit officers. Issues to date have centered around a major theme—such as setting up labor/management committees or filing improper practice charges—generally presenting a problem and suggesting ways to deal with it.

“We try to use a no-nonsense ‘how-to’ approach,” says Activist Editor Melinda Carr. For instance, one recent issue on spiralling health insurance costs demonstrated why the exorbitant rate increases are occurring nationwide, and what the union can do in negotiations to hold onto benefits and contain costs.

“Case Studies,” a regular feature of The Activist, zeros in on real life labor situations where workers have solved problems. Carr thinks the column adds a human element that people can relate to.

“One of the functions of The Activist certainly is to educate and inform. But we also want to inspire and motivate people and the case study approach of letting activists learn from the experiences of their counterparts in other locals is one way of doing that,” said Carr. “I think we accomplish something if just one local president, for example, reads one of these articles and says ‘if they can pull this off, I think I can make it work here, too.’”

The Activist also includes other regular features not necessarily tied to the main theme. Among them have been “Legal Briefs” and “Know Your Constitution,” both prepared by attorneys of CSEA’s law firm, Roemer and Featherstonhaugh, and “Footnotes,” a piece from CSEA’s Department of Education and Training suggesting resources for more information on various topics. Expertise from a host of other staff professionals also is put to use in the production of The Activist, Moran said. “The publication is very much a team project and we rely on the help of CSEA’s own ex-
'How-to' publication a labor-saver for union leaders

... for information on matters like health insurance or union rights. When we wanted advice on collective bargaining for local government units we went right to Manny Vitale, a CSEA negotiator and one of the toughest around. And when we needed information about health insurance we were able to get what we needed from Tim Mullens of our Insurance Department," said Moran.

The publication incorporates the talents of many on the Communications Department's own staff, including regional communications associates and Graphics Artist Ralph Distin.

Distin, who designs charts and tables as well as some original art for The Activist, notes that good graphics play an important part in the publication. "As with any publication art and cartoons and other graphics enhance the readability and attractiveness," he says. "But we also use it in an attempt to make the material more understandable."

Carr said that in many ways the new publication complements other CSEA programs that support the union's officers, stewards and activists, helping them do their jobs better.

"When you think about it, an officer or steward has to know a lot in order to do an effective job—how to handle a grievance, how to prepare for negotiations, now to chair a meeting, how to manage the finances and so on," says Carr. "CSEA provides a lot of help, including basic training courses through our labor studies program, workshops and seminars throughout the year to keep activists updated, and a variety of publications ranging from manuals to The Public Sector."

The Activist's strength lies in its ability to concentrate entirely on a specific issue and offer practical suggestions unionists can put to use," she said.

Brian Baker, assistant editor, pointed out that the publication is meant to be saved as a reference source and is designed especially to be inserted into a binder.

"The idea is for people to hold onto The Activist and use it for a reference whenever they need it. The information in each issue is compact, gives a concise overview, and is a good starting point anytime you need information for an effort your local or unit is planning to get involved in," he said.

It's also a good idea for subscribers to share their copies with other activists who don't receive it, he added.

Future issues of the publication will focus on political action, combatting contracting out, and member participation in community service projects, he added.

With six issues of The Activist published so far, reader response already has been positive.

"We've been getting great feedback, including additions to our mailing list and enthusiastic comments from readers we've met at conventions and workshops," said Carr.

She expects circulation will continue to increase as more activists such as stewards and committee members become aware of the publication.

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Should you be getting The Activist?

The CSEA Activist aims to reach a broad range of CSEA members in leadership positions — from statewide, regional, local and unit officers to committee chairpersons and shop stewards. If you think you should be getting a free subscription, fill out and mail this coupon.

Name ____________________________
Street ____________________________
City _____________________________ State ______ Zip ______
I currently serve CSEA in the following leadership capacity: Officer (give title) __________________________
Committee Chairperson (name of committee) __________________________
Shop Steward __________________________
Other (please specify) __________________________
Name of Local __________________________
Name of Unit __________________________

Mail coupon to: The CSEA Activist, 33 Elk Street, Albany, NY 12207.
UNION, city of Oneonta at odds over contract's 'on-call' language

ONEONTA — CSEA has filed an improper practice charge against the City of Oneonta, citing failure to bargain in good faith. CSEA says the city refused to sign an agreement calling for "on-call" language recommended by a Public Employment Relations Board fact-finder.

The dispute began when both sides, while at impasse, agreed to present the recommendations of a fact-finder to their respective bodies. CSEA ratified the recommendation a week later, and informed the city by letter of its action. Based upon information received, the union negotiating team believed the city had also ratified the recommendations, until a month later when the union was asked to review contract language that omitted the "on-call" agreement contained in the fact-finder's recommendations.

For the next three months, CSEA continued to demand the "on-call" language be included in the agreement. Meanwhile, the city responded only by signing the signature page. As a result, CSEA Field Representative Gerald Phelan said he had no recourse but to file the IP against the city on behalf of the 66 employees in the bargaining unit.

The union asks PERB to direct the city to sign the complete agreement immediately, and provide the union with a copy. It also requests that the city be directed to post a public notice that its actions were improper and will not be repeated.

For months the city of Oneonta and its paid negotiator have been "dragging feet." They drew the line after their latest tactic to slip in an incomplete agreement that clearly lacks specific language relating to on-call duty as recommended by PERB. We absolutely refuse to accept any agreement without that language and have indicated our position to PERB. The final decision is now in their hands," Phelan said.

Appellate court rules DMNA civilian workers are public employees

ALBANY — "After years of struggle, and despite the state's opposition, we have finally convinced both the Public Employment Relations Board and various state courts that you are entitled to union representation."

With those words, statewide State President William J. McGowan recently congratulated Division of Military and Naval Affairs (DMNA) employees who have been fighting for years to have CSEA as their representative.

The state had argued that the civilian workers are not public employees within the meaning of the Taylor Law. The law recognizes the right of public employees to choose a labor union to represent them.

That union then has the right to negotiate a contract with management that protects all the workers in the bargaining unit.

CSEA went on to win a series of battles before PERB and in various state courts to unionize DMNA employees.

It concluded when Appellate Division judges ruled that the civilians "were public employees and not in the organized militia and, therefore, are subject to the provisions of the Taylor Law."

McGowan is now optimistic "we can achieve great things in the years to come."

Civil service system bypassed in new Reagan policy to hire temporary employees

WASHINGTON — The Reagan administration has implemented a new policy which encourages federal agencies to hire temporary employees on a large scale, ostensibly to save money.

However, the move is in line with advice from the right wing Heritage Foundation, which said "the federal government could be turned upside down" if political executives took control of the bureaucracy in the second term. "Much of the president's conservative mandate could be implemented without legislative changes," the Foundation said in "Mandate for Leadership II:"

Donald J. Devine, director of the Office of Personnel Management, issued a directive which took effect Jan. 2. It gave agency chiefs "broad new authority" to bypass the merit system and hire temporary employees for up to four years; beyond that would require OPM approval.

The rules permit hiring of temporary employees in all kinds of jobs, including professional levels up to GS-12 which pay more than $41,000. An OPM spokesman called Devine's new policy "a big change." It reverses a firm policy of some 15 years of discouraging the use of temporaries to do the work of career employees. Even under the restrictive policy, there were 112,000 temporary employees in fiscal 1983; in total, there are 2.3 million federal workers.

President Kenneth T. Blaylock of the American Federation of Government Employees, said wider use of temporaries would undermine the career service. "Are those the kind of people we want inspecting meat, treating veterans and writing Social Security checks?" he asked.

Devine said the increased use of temporaries would be "very cost efficient" and should be encouraged.

Devine is one of the leading ideologues of the Reagan administration, according to the records of Group Research Report. He headed the Young Americans for Freedom chapters in Brooklyn, N.Y. in 1963 and was elected to the national board at the second YAF convention. He organized a rally for Senator Barry Goldwater in Brooklyn in 1963; Goldwater became the Republican presidential candidate in 1964. In 1973, Devine was elected to the board of directors of the American Conservative Union. In 1981, Devine was a consultant to the National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation. In 1984, he was on the cover of the John Birch Society magazine as part of an exclusive interview.

The Heritage Foundation said the Reagan administration's political appointees failed to control the bureaucracy in the first term. It said they were "captured, worked for narrow interest group goals and, at times, fought among themselves."

The second term offers an opportunity, Heritage said, "actually to control" and reverse the course of the government. A veteran observer said that might be the reason for the new policy.

Job Opening

Region II safety and health rep

CSEA has announced a vacancy in the position of occupational safety and health representative, grade 14, in Metropolitan Region II. Interested candidates should submit a resume to Dennis M. Battle, director of employee relations and personnel, CSEA Headquarters, 33 Elk Street, Box 1795, Capitol Station, Albany, N.Y. 12224 not later than Feb. 12, 1985.

The occupational safety and health specialist is responsible for investigating complaints received or initiated by CSEA alleging violations of the New York State Public Service OSHA Law, Right to Know Law, National Electrical Codes or other regulations, as well as investigating circumstances resulting in workplace mishaps.

Opening
Region II PALS get prepped

GEORGE BONCORAGLIO — "This region's going to be involved in politics of New York City."

NEW YORK CITY — CSEA Political Action Liaisons (PALS) from throughout the Metropolitan area are taking on assignments to specific state legislators and congressmen as part of a reorganization of the union's political organizing program in Region II. The PALS are also receiving special training on how to mobilize the union's membership for optimum effectiveness in the political action arena.

“We are reorganizing and are going to be involved in the politics of New York City. Our endorsement will mean something to candidates, and they will hear from us when they are in office because we are looking for input," says CSEA Region II President George Boncoraglio.

Recently, some 60 activists from the region's 22 locals participated in a day-long workshop, outlining strategies for individual and collective outreach. CSEA statewide Political Action Director Thomas Haley says the New York program was the first of several sessions planned throughout the six regions.

However, while the other regional workshops will focus on the specifics of CSEA's legislative agenda, the New York program concentrated on improving coordination of political efforts. Because of the huge Region II population, political contact is required with some 300 lawmakers, making efficient interaction essential.

Each of the Political Action Liaisons will encourage member interest and involvement through letter-writing campaigns, phone banks, visits to legislators, and increased awareness of crucial issues affecting membership. According to regional political action chairman Jim Heekin, it is the individual involvement that makes the difference in effectiveness. He stresses that members' help is needed and wanted in the region's political reorganization. A series of local workshops is being scheduled to follow-up on the central effort and strengthen the commitment to full participation throughout the region.

Region IV info day

For your information, they're going to prison

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The facts of life under apartheid

Five of every six South Africans are black. In this majority world, the staggering system of repression, humiliation, and exploitation:

- South African blacks have no say in the government that rules them. They are not allowed to vote or hold office, nor are they citizens.
- South African blacks have no say in the government that rules them.
- Much of the black population—84 percent of the total—live in the cities.
- About 60 percent of black children finish high school. Only about 7 percent of black children finish high school.
- One of every five rural blacks cannot read or write.

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Change at Tax and Finance Local

RETIREMENT CAUSES RESHUFFLING — After completing 20 years of state employment and union service, Helen Butrym, longtime secretary of CSEA Tax and Finance Local 690, retired recently. At left, Butrym receives a gesture of appreciation at her retirement from CSEA statewide President William L. McGowan. At right, CSEA Executive Vice President Joseph E. McDermott swears in Bruce Larsen, Mary Jarosewicz and William Burdick as third vice president, secretary and second vice president, respectively, of the local.

Uniforms an accessory of new Cohoes pact

COHOES—Cohoes and clothes seem to go together naturally. Back in the 19th century, the place was known as the “Spindle City.” Lately, the city has been home for the famous fashion firm that uses its name.

And now the city’s 21 clerical employees—20 of whom are women—may be sitting prettier as the result of a uniform allowance program which is part of a two-year pact negotiated for them by CSEA.

According to CSEA Clerical Unit President Nicki Moryl, the idea for a simple type of uniform for clerical workers in the police department came up last year as a suggestion of a few workers there.

“The idea picked up the support of some of the workers, and management and the unions are going to talk about specifics sometime before July,” said Moryl. “The clerical workers are serious about some type of simple, but fashionable uniform ensemble—blouse, slacks, skirt and so on—which could be mixed and matched to create a variety of different outfits.”

Among other gains in the recently negotiated pact were a maximum pay increase of 6 percent this year and 6 percent again next year based on a cost-of-living trigger formula negotiated by CSEA Field Representative John Cummings.

The contract also included upgraded medical insurance coverage, the observance of Martin Luther King Day as a paid holiday, the right to accumulate sick leave in excess of 150 days and payment of 45 sick days upon retirement.

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 to 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, sten, 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 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.

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

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: Non-CSEA members can obtain the exam prep booklets directly from Cornell University at the same price by contacting: Cornell ILR, 112 State Street, Suite 1200, Albany, New York 12207.
Millbrook school member makes impression around the world with stamp collection

STAMP OF DISTINCTION — Eugene Klein, president of the Millbrook School District Unit, finds philately a rewarding hobby.

MILLBROOK—A CSEA member with a penchant for stamp collecting finds that his hobby is not only educational, but has made him friends all over the world.

Eugene Klein, president of the Millbrook School District Unit of Dutchess County Local 814, began collecting Asian stamps and coins about 25 years ago. He chose Asia because he was interested in its rich history and culture. Klein noted that it is more difficult for Chinese collectors to obtain stamps from their own country than it is for others. It seems that years ago, the Red Chinese government confiscated stamp collections, saying they were a "Capitalistic hobby."

In 1978, Klein began to publish a quarterly newsletter called "The China Trader." The publication includes price lists, a letter from the editor and subscriber letters, and is sent to about 250 subscribers. They come from all walks of life and from such locations as Germany, England, China and Canada. Although he has not met his readers, Klein says he corresponds with many of them.

Asked if he has any advice for novice collectors, Klein says hobbyists should concentrate on one country (or one topic such as art, railroads, sports, dance), collect "mint" (unused) stamps—"if you expect to get a dollar return"—and keep the stamps in an album.

Best sources for stamps include the U.S Postal Service, auction houses, mail auctions, stamp newspapers, other collectors and stamp departments in such retail outlets as Macy's and Gimbels in New York. Stamp shows are also a good source and a number of them are held in New York City each year.

A CSEA member for 10 years, Klein has been president of his unit for eight years and has participated in negotiations for his unit during contract talks. The activist comments that he plans to retire in two-and-a-half years or as soon as he has 1,000 newsletter subscribers—whichever comes first.

Suspension dropped for Sidney Hospital employee

SIDNEY—The new year started on the right note for Jeanie Jones, a clerk/telephone operator at Sidney Hospital, when she was notified of an arbitrator's decision to reduce her three-day disciplinary suspension without pay to a written reprimand.

According to Richard Burden, president of the Hospital Unit of Delaware County Local 813, Jones was charged by the hospital with a minor breach of patient confidentiality March 6, 1984, during a conversation with another employee in the hospital coffee shop.

Following the three-day suspension, Jones filed a grievance which proceeded through the two-step procedure and on to a request for arbitration through CSEA legal assistance. The assistance was granted and Jones was represented at the arbitration by Regional Attorney John Rittinger.

In his argument Rittinger brought out that the incident was the grievant's first offense under the hospital's confidentiality policy, and merited no more than a written reprimand as specified in the policy.

On Jan. 2 the arbitrator directed the hospital to reimburse Jones for the loss of three days pay and convert the suspension to a written reprimand.

Martin Luther King services held at Westchester DC

CSEA RETIREE Bluford Jackson, at right in adjacent photo, told guests at a Martin Luther King commemorative service held at Westchester Developmental Center in Wingdale recently to remember the courage and fortitude of Dr. King in his struggle for human rights. An aide to U.S. Congressman Hamilton Fish, Jr., Jackson also serves on the Dutchess County Human Relations Committee and on the Village of Pawling Zoning Board. Pictured with Jackson are, from left, Richard Colson, who serves on the facility's Human Relations Committee; Dr. Ella Curry, director of the center; Andrew Farley, who also serves on the committee; Westchester DC Local 432 President Gary Eldridge; and Region III President Pat Mascioli.
KNOW YOUR NEGOTIATORS

ANN WORTHY
Administrative Services Unit

'I don't give up easily,' union activist says of her goals to help others

"Dead end" clerical jobs, says Ann Worthy, must be remedied.

We should have a better career ladder, and have a chance to advance without taking exams," she insists. "Historically, state clerical workers are the lowest paid and haven't had an upgrading since 1966."

Worthy, a stenographer at Brooklyn Developmental Center for 10 years, is representing her fellow state clerical workers as a member of CSEA's Administrative Services Unit negotiating team. She has been a CSEA activist since 1977 and presently serves as secretary of Local 447 at Brooklyn Developmental Center and as secretary of CSEA's Metropolitan Region II.

"I became active out of a desire to help people and because I was interested in protecting workers' rights," Worthy says. As a result, she has served her fellow members as a grievance committee member and has been active in the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) in her local.

Her interest in career advancement for clerical workers led to her involvement in the Clerical/Secretarial Employee Advancement Program (CSEAP) and to her role in pushing for more educational programs for rank-and-file members.

She says she is facing her first-time participation as a member of the ASU negotiating team with determination. And with a pledge—"I don't give up easily."

CSEA S NEGOTIATING TEAMS

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 Falkenbury and Dominick Ruggieri
Region V — Madeline Harrison and Ruby Meyers
Region VI — Elaine Moorthy and Kathy Pantillo-Button
Collective Bargaining Specialist: Jim Cooney

ALBANY—The more than 100,000 state employees affected by current contract negotiations between CSEA and the state of New York represent one-sixth of state employees nationwide whose contracts expire during 1985.

CSEA state contracts covering employees in the Operational, Administrative and Institutional bargaining units expire effective March 31, 1985. Negotiations between the CSEA and the state have been in progress since late December.

Those three major contracts are among 96 expiring agreements nationwide covering about 596,000 state workers.

In addition, CSEA is also involved in a large number of major local government contracts due to expire this year. Nationwide there are 196 major local government agreements affecting 544,000 local government workers expiring in 1985.

Overall, the 1.1 million state and local government employees covered by contracts expiring this year represent 55 percent of the approximately 2 million workers under major state and local government contracts.

According to the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1985 is considered a heavy bargaining year for state and local government employees, but a relatively light year for private industry. The private sector has 537 contracts covering 2.4 million workers up for negotiations this year, representing only about one-third of the 7.4 million private sector workers under major agreements.
CSEA consultant tells union activists to gear up for long, difficult effort to overturn controversial report on MH

By Daniel X. Campbell
CSEA Communications Associate

ALBANY—"We must dispel the myths concerning mental health care services in New York state before the Select Commission on the Future of State-Local Health Systems uses these inaccuracies to destroy the system and our state and county jobs," Marty Langer told CSEA Capital Region mental health leaders here recently. Langer recently was named a CSEA consultant on mental health issues.

Langer said the commission's report is ill-conceived and poses a threat against the present mental health care delivery system and the union membership. Langer has a quarter of a century of service in the health care field as an employee at Rockland Psychiatric Center, and for years was a CSEA local officer and activist.

His meeting with Capital Region leaders was one of a series of such gatherings with CSEA groups across the state. He is telling the unionists to gear up for a long and difficult grassroots campaign against the controversial report.

Langer is stressing five major points:

1. That capitation funding formulas—the mechanism the commission created to fund the revolutionary restructing of the mental health care system—will prove to be inadequate from a clinical point of view. "Capitation translates into a revolutionary restructuring of the mental health care system that will prove to be inadequate from a clinical point of view," Langer said.

2. That the phasing out or closing of state facilities will ultimately deprive care and treatment of the mentally ill, and will cause massive reductions in the state mental health institutions work force. "By constitution, the state is required to provide these mental health services. This report is an attempt by the state to shirk its duties and transfer the heavy burden to county, city, town and village taxpayers," he stated.

3. That the closing of large psychiatric centers will immediately deprive quality care and treatment from those groups that need those services the most—the poor and the minorities.

4. That county employees in mental health care positions will face a similar reduction in force since local management entities—a new layer of bureaucracy created by the report—"will be shopping for service delivery at the lowest possible cost without true regard to the quality of care being provided."

5. Finally, that the creation of local government management entities will not only create another layer of bureaucracy but will, over a five-year period, cost an additional $400 to $800 million without one of those dollars being spent on direct patient care," Langer said.

Langer was addressing union representatives from the state Mental Health Central Office, Wilson Developmental Center, and the Capital District Psychiatric Center, all of whom will be working with CSEA county local presidents and union staff personnel in making presentations against the Select Commission's report before local government representatives.

"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," Langer stated. "That would be a return to the snake pits and a step backward for our society and the family of New York."

"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."

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Western Regional Director for many years

Lee Frank is appointed union's first director of organizing

ALBANY—Lee Frank, CSEA's new director of organizing, knows New York state well. He has worked in all parts of it—New York City, Long Island and upstate. He also knows CSEA well, having served in every field staff position—field representative, collective bargaining specialist, statewide organizer and, until recently, regional director of CSEA's Western Region VI.

His appointment as the union's first organizing director caps a 24-year career in the union movement. He spent six years as a United Steelworkers of America organizer prior to joining CSEA in 1969.

Frank remembers those first years, just after the Taylor Law gave public employees the right to collective bargaining, as "an exciting time. "Most of what we now have was organized then," he recalls.

The highly decorated Vietnam War veteran and holder of two college degrees bluntly describes his organizing philosophy as "the three R's."

"Retaining internally what we already have. "Recruiting externally into new areas. "Rewarding members and committees that help us retain and recruit."

His immediate goal is to build up membership in existing bargaining units "by standardizing internal programs. "People tend to forget why unions exist," and Frank describes the reason in one word: "security."

"Everything we accomplish stems from it." Frank will direct a staff of six organizers and has already met with them to make future plans. He sees his job and theirs as vital to CSEA's future "because nothing grows unless you feed it, and for our organization to grow you need members."
Mandatory "Made in the U.S.A." label will further lessen the possibility of a requirement that a product made in the United States must clearly say so. The legislation, enacted last September, strengthens country-of-origin label requirements. Foreign-made apparel and household textiles such as sheets and towels will have to be more conspicuously marked than the labeling law previously required.

But these benefits could have not have been accomplished without the political clout of the 50,000 people who already belong to retirees' locals. And it is in the special interest of retirees who have not yet joined their ranks to do so.

Membership gives retired employees for voting through lobbying efforts in state government. In addition there are a number of other benefits including a retirees' newsletter issued bi-monthly, special mailings on selected issues, meetings to share ideas and exchange information, and access to a retirees' department staffed by professionals at CSEA Headquarters.

For additional information, contact the CSEA Retiree Department by calling (518) 434-0191. To sign up, fill out the form below and send it with a $9 check to: CSEA, 33 Elk St., Albany, N.Y. 12207.

APPLICATION FOR RETIREE MEMBERSHIP
THE CIVIL SERVICE EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION, INC.
Local 1006, AFSCME, AFL-CIO / 33 Elk Street, Albany, New York 12207

In January 1985, 40 million people will receive this Social Security Benefit Statement along with IRS Notice 703. This explanation may answer questions you may have.

Consumers will find it easier to identify American-made clothing and fabrics as a result of a labor-backed law that took effect with the new year. The legislation, enacted last September, strengthens country-of-origin labeling requirements. Foreign-made apparel and household textiles such as sheets and towels will have to be more conspicuously marked than the labeling law previously required.

Especially important, unions and domestic manufacturers agree, is a new requirement that a product made in the United States must clearly say so. The mandatory "Made in the U.S.A." label will further lessen the possibility of a buyer mistaking a foreign-made article of clothing for a domestic product.

Another new feature is a requirement that mail-order catalogues specify country of origin. Both the Ladies' Garment Workers and the Clothing and Textile Workers had testified for the legislation at congressional hearings. It will be some months before the impact of the new law is fully realized, since the labeling requirement applies only to goods manufactured after the law took effect, and the Federal Trade Commission has not yet issued regulations to implement it.

Look for the new label on clothing, fabrics
WASHINGTON — An ultra-conservative organization called the Heritage Foundation, whose domestic and foreign policy prescITIONS have been used as a guide by the Reagan administration, now has instructed the administration how to press a second-term assault on unions and wage standards.

Titled "Mandate for Leadership II — Continuing the Conservative Revolution" — the book of some 1,300 proposals by the influential right-wing think-tank includes the following:

- Repeal of the Davis-Bacon and Service Contract prevailing wage laws.
- Amending the Hobbis Act, which deals with extortion and racketeering, so as to subject union members accused of picket line misconduct or other strike-related misdemeanors to federal felony charges.
- Repealing all restrictions on home-based enterprises, which includes industrial "homework."
- Enactment of the proposed youth subminimum wage.
- Stepping up audits of union finances by the Labor Department.
- Enacting the Helms amendment to the Federal Election Campaign Act to prohibit the use of union dues for "political purposes."
- Making it illegal to consider "socially desirable factors," which might include housing construction and job creation, in making pension fund investments.
- Further changing regulations to make it easier to "contract out" federal services.
- Appointing a White House staff member with a technical understanding of labor issues “to coordinate labor policy and agency appointments.”

These recommendations are included in a chapter on the Labor Department and the NLRB written by Steven M. Antosh, executive director of the extreme anti-union Center on National Labor Policy.

The Washington-based Heritage Foundation was started with the financial backing of beer millionaire Joseph Coors and other conservative Reagan supporters.

Heritage Foundation President Edwin J. Feulner, Jr. is a key adviser to presidential counselor Edwin Meese III. Feulner quoted Reagan in the book’s foreword as saying in the early months of his first administration that the 1,000-page 1980 "Mandate for Leadership" had given him and his administration "special substantive help we’ll never forget."

Meese, on the back cover of "Mandate II," wrote, “Knowing Ronald Reagan as I do, I know that he personally will use ‘Mandate II,’ and that it will be an important contribution to what happens in this country in the years ahead."

Feulner also wrote, “By the end of the president’s first year in office, nearly two-thirds of ‘Mandate’s’ more than 2,000 specific recommendations had been or were being transformed into policy.”

But Feulner added that much still needs to be done and that “policies must be fashioned to ensure the continuation and permanence of the Reagan Revolution.”

The book praised the record of Labor Secretary Raymond J. Donovan and NLRB Chairman Donald L. Dotson. Donovan is lauded for cutting Labor Department programs “more than any other cabinet department.”

Donovan also is credited with changing the Occupational Safety and Health Administration from being “the bane of employers everywhere.” For example, it said only 3 percent of OSHA citations are now contested by employers — down from 22 percent in 1980.

However, "Mandate II" faults the Reagan administration and Republicans in Congress for an alleged lack of conservative zeal in some areas. For example, Reagan is advised “to rid his staff of their inordinate fear of union leadership and move ahead forcefully with his program.”

The administration also is accused of being “far too cautious” in trying to fill vacancies on the NLRB.

The 1981 Professional Air Traffic Controllers (PATCO) strike is cited as a reason for lining up independent contractors in advance to quickly take the jobs of public employees who go on strike.

The book criticizes both the White House and Congress for a "serious lack of legislative accomplishment." It said, “It is hard to imagine that the AFL-CIO and the NEA could have opposed President Reagan any more vociferously than they did. Yet there were virtually no votes on labor issues in either house of Congress around which the president’s supporters could rally.”

Naming Senator Lowell Weicker (R-Conn.) as a key obstructionist of administration initiatives, the book said "steps should be taken to secure more supportive Senate Labor Committee membership in the next Congress.”

Presidential inaugural non-union audition call sparks storm of protest

WASHINGTON — Bowing to a storm of protests, President Ronald Reagan’s inaugural committee reversed its decision to hire 200 amateur performers for free during inauguration week and agreed to pay them triple the union minimum wage.

The controversy brewed when the inaugural committee ran an ad for “clean-cut, all-American types” to audition for singer and dancer roles for inauguration week events in Washington. But the ad also told would-be performers not to expect to be paid for their work, and above all, not to get caught with a union card.

The term “non-union” was emphasized in the audition call. Entertainment unions quickly called on President Reagan to override his committee’s decision, the Television & Radio Artists and the Screen Actors Guild, which Reagan once headed, all voiced outrage over the ad. AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Thomas R. Donahue protested to the President on behalf of millions of other card-carrying union workers as well.

The unions said they weren’t necessarily trying to deny anyone chosen from performing, but that anyone who was selected should be paid the prevailing wage.

Last week the Association of Actors Equity, the Televisio & Radio Artists and the Screen Actors Guild of America, an umbrella group of entertainment unions, signed a memorandum of agreement with the inaugural committee’s producer which guarantees payment to the singers and dancers hired at a rate of $757 for four days’ work.

Unions, wage standards targeted by influential right-wing group
Calendar to aid Phelps Dodge strikers

TUCSON, Ariz. — Some 1,700 members of 13 unions locked in a bitter strike with Phelps Dodge Corp. in Arizona and Texas need support from union members nationwide to continue the struggle.

The United Steelworkers of America (USWA), one of the unions involved in the struggle.

The USWA is the largest of the 13 unions that represent the copper workers who have been on strike in Phelps Dodge facilities in Morenci, Ajo, Douglas and Bisbee, Ariz.

The AFL-CIO last month in support of the unionists, USWA President Lyn Williams called Phelps Dodge "the premier corporate outlaw in North America."

The strikers have suffered unprovoked police attacks, unilateral evictions from company housing and cancellation of health care during the 17-month strike.

Meanwhile, the weary strikers are facing strikebreakers.

The strike with Phelps Dodge Corp. in Arizona and Texas need support from unions nationwide to continue the struggle.

A multi-union Phelps Dodge Task Force is continuing to battle the company through a corporate campaign. Meanwhile, the weary strikers are suffering under the tolls of the long and bitter struggle.

AFL-CIO

The USWA is the largest of the 13 unions that represent the copper workers who have been on strike in Phelps Dodge facilities in Morenci, Ajo, Douglas and Bisbee, Ariz.

Phelps Dodge has never settled a contract without a strike.

The medical problems may range from high blood pressure and ulcers to insomnia and depression. The costs associated with these illnesses accrue to the individuals suffering from them, as well as to their families and the community at large.

The best guesses are that they will do some of the first—make jobs for engineers and technicians—and a lot of the second—eliminate jobs for blue collar workers, minorities and probably women.

So much for what robots can do for us. But larger questions remain about what they will do to us—our communities and the individual workers who comprise them.

Little research has been done so far in this vital area of concern. Controversy still surrounds the questions of whether such "unmanned factories" of the future create or destroy jobs.

The best guesses are that they will do some of the first—make jobs for engineers and technicians—and a lot of the second—eliminate jobs for blue collar workers, minorities and probably women.

Women also may feel the effects of a restricted job opportunity structure. Minority groups, especially blacks and Hispanics, will likely bear the brunt of the displacement. They are over-represented in the blue-collar, low-skill jobs that either will be reduced or eliminated by the new technology.

Women also may feel the effects of a restricted job opportunity structure. The new high-level jobs in the unmanned factory in all likelihood will require a background in mathematics and science. As Professor Ferman points out, these subjects traditionally have not been central to the higher education curricula for women.

For the individual, being out of work from whatever cause—economic slowdown or technological speedup—can create psychological stress. That kind of stress can show up in a number of illnesses, both physical and mental.

The medical problems may range from high blood pressure and ulcers to insomnia and depression. The costs associated with these illnesses accrue to the individuals suffering from them, as well as to their families and the community at large.

There are just some of the major issues that are coming to a head at a rapid pace. They need to be met with wisdom, realism and—above all else—compassion for the human heart and soul of America.

Phelps Dodge has never settled a contract without a strike.

The USWA is the largest of the 13 unions that represent the copper workers who have been on strike in Phelps Dodge facilities in Morenci, Ajo, Douglas and Bisbee, Ariz.

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Do you know your medical rights?

Troublesome questions and some answers that may surprise you

By Phillip L. Polakoff, M.D.
Director, Western Institute for Occupational/Environmental Sciences

How much do you know about your medical rights?
Do you have a right, for example, to see your medical records?
Do you have a right to be told the truth by your doctor if he or she finds you have a terminal illness?
As the spouse or relative of a terminally ill patient, do you have a right to that information?
Do you have a right to a medical procedure — let’s say an organ transplant — if that’s the only thing that will save your life?
Here are some answers to these troublesome questions. Some may surprise you.

Contrary to what many people think, your medical records belong either to your doctor or the hospital where they were compiled — not to you. However, court decisions have held that you have the right to the information contained in such records. But gaining access to the records is often a hurdle.

While a few states have laws that give you the right to inspect your medical records upon request, or through your attorney, in most states you have no such legal right to inspect on demand. Hospitals will make a copy of your record available to a doctor of your choice upon your written authorization. Unfortunately, in many situations the only way to see your records is to sue your physician or hospital. In every state, medical records can be subpoenaed as evidence.

About being informed of one’s diagnosis, there is no explicit law or statute that guarantees a patient’s right to such information. However, many state courts have recognized that patients may need to know the truth if they are to make sound decisions about their treatment and their personal affairs. Medical societies also have codes of ethics urging that patients be told as much as they wish to know about their prognosis.

Far from being harmed by knowing the truth about their condition, many patients often show a deep sense of relief. As for anyone else — even members of the immediate family — having a right to another’s medical diagnosis, the rule of confidentiality holds strong. Unless the patient wants you to know, the doctor has an obligation not to reveal his findings to anyone.

Dramatic new surgical techniques, such as organ transplants, have raised interesting questions about “rights.” Some people believe they have a right to a life-saving operation just as they would have a right to emergency treatment in a hospital.

This is not necessarily true. Many hospitals require advance payment in cash for you to be considered for transplant surgery. Some of these procedures, such as heart-lung transplants, are considered experimental by both medical experts and insurance companies. Physicians can use their discretion in deciding whether to use these procedures.

The one exception to the no-pay-no-transplant is kidney transplantation. These are fully covered by the federal government’s End-Stage Renal Disease Program administered by the Health Care Financing Administration. Organ donors and potential donors have rights. No one can be forced to donate an organ, no matter how desperate the need, no matter how safe the procedure may be — not even members of one’s own family.

You or any person 18 or older has a right, of course, to donate organs at death. Nearly all the organs used in transplantation are obtained from persons who have been declared brain-dead.

In most states, you can indicate your wish to become an organ donor when you renew your driver’s license. You can also get information about organ donation from these two sources: The American Medical Association, Communications Div., 535 N. Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill. 60610; or the National Kidney Foundation, Two Park Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016.

Big benefits and pay gains in Pearl River pact

PEARL RIVER — A three-year contract that was settled at the first bargaining session provides for employees of the Pearl River Public Library a $2,500 across-the-board pay increase in the first year plus 12 percent in annual increments.

The 12 employees, who are members of Rockland County Local 844, will receive 4 percent per year in increments in addition to the across-the-board in-

crease and disability insurance at no cost to the employee.

Region III Field Representative Chris Lindsay added that workers who provide four months notice prior to resignation or retirement will receive the cash value of half their accrued sick leave upon separation. In addition, Martin Luther King Day will be observed as a floating holiday to be taken in the month of January.

The new contract will go into effect in June.

Impasse declared in Nyack School District negotiations

NYACK — The Nyack School District CSEA negotiating team has declared an impasse following 11 months of frustrating negotiations.

According to Region III Field Representative Chris Lindsay, a number of outstanding issues have contributed to the standoff.

Lindsay added that school district officials have cancelled many scheduled bargaining sessions. A mediator is expected to be assigned in the near future.

The 23 custodial and maintenance employees have been working without a contract since last June.

Nyack is located in Rockland County.

Sullivan County workers get negotiations tips

AN INFORMATIONAL MEETING was held recently for CSEA-represented employees of Sullivan County BOCES. Among those present were, standing from left, Sullivan County Local 883 First Vice President Walter Durkin, Sullivan County BOCES Unit President Marion Brewer, and unit members Mary Lee Adamson and Irma Rios. Seated are Beverly Muthig and Judy Goldsmith.

-Speakers included Region III Field Representative Steve Chanowsky, Organizer Richard Blair, Jardine Insurance Representative Alan Christianson and Communications Associate Aultin Manley.
CUOMO'S TAX CUT PLAN

We're not opposed, but let's be sure it's fair

ALBANY—Tax cuts were the centerpiece of Governor Mario Cuomo's state of the state message to members of the state Legislature on Jan. 9. The traditional message outlines the governor's proposals for the new year and beyond. The governor spelled out his proposal for more than $1 billion in tax cuts over the next three years.

Tax Reduction

One of government’s most basic obligations is to manage the people’s money wisely. Just as we agree that there are things it is essential for government to do, we have learned that we cannot spend regardless of the burden we impose on the private sector.

There is widespread agreement that a reduction in New York’s income tax burden — the highest in the nation — will enhance the State’s attractiveness as a place in which to live, to work and to do business.

I therefore propose that we undertake a new, three-year, $1.2 billion program of income tax reduction — a program that will cut taxes for all New York taxpayers:

"CSEA will be watching the budget very closely to make sure the state has the money to provide a fair contract settlement and enough staff to do the job," said CSEA President William L. McGowan. "CSEA members are taxpayers too and could benefit from tax cuts, so the union is not opposed to the idea. But, we will watch the plan carefully to make sure it is a fair one and that the budget is not being balanced on the back of the state workforce."

One proposal in the state of the state message comes directly from CSEA's own legislative program. That is a call for making the agency shop fee deduction permanent. Currently, the agency shop law expires every two years and must be renewed by the governor and legislature.

"Agency shop is a simple matter of fairness," said President McGowan. "Everyone who benefits from the collective bargaining process should help pay for it. Now the challenge for both the governor and the union is to convince both houses of the legislature that agency shop should be made permanent."

Also in the state of the state the governor outlined a plan to make changes in the Office of Mental Health.

"Agency shop will be watching the budget very closely to make sure the state has the money to provide a fair contract settlement and enough staff to do the job," said CSEA President William L. McGowan. "CSEA members are taxpayers too and could benefit from tax cuts, so the union is not opposed to the idea. But, we will watch the plan carefully to make sure it's a fair one and that the budget is not being balanced on the back of the state workforce."

Gov. Cuomo said, "In order that all who benefit from the collective bargaining process share equitably in its financing, I shall also support making the agency shop fee deduction in its present form permanent for all public employees in the State.

There is a demonstrable need to take immediate steps to begin a long-term reconfiguration of the mental health system. Accordingly, my legislative program, budget and additional administrative initiatives will focus on three main areas: the reform and simplification of the local assistance program; the creation of a variety of residential care options for the mentally ill; and an administrative reorganization of the Office of Mental Health which will enhance the agency's ability to accomplish new program goals.

"CSEA will watch the governor's proposals in the mental health area very carefully and make our position known to the legislature," President McGowan vowed.

Because the state of the state is a very general message the actual impact of many of the governor's proposals won't be clear until bills are before the legislature. CSEA will be monitoring bills which have an impact on public employees very carefully.

Throughout the legislative session The Public Sector will carry news and information about CSEA's legislative program and all of the legislative activity that concerns CSEA members.