

Vacation Leave Policy Discussed By C. S. Director; Extra Days Eliminated

By Elizabeth Dotson

It is stated in the Civil Service Law that "vacation with pay shall be granted all regular employees in accordance with rules adopted by the board of not less than one day for each full calendar month of service and may be cumulative. No vacation in excess of 26 work days shall be granted in any one year." This provision was voted into the law when employees, with a few exceptions, were working at least 5½ days each week, thus providing 2 full weeks of vacation, accumulative to a maximum of one month.

Action Protested

A large number of state employees have since changed to a five day work week and many of them feel they should now receive 2 weeks and 2 days of vacation time on the basis of 5 work days per week. An opinion from the office of the attorney-general indicated that Saturday should be considered a business day because many employees are still working on that day. OSEA representatives appeared at the public hearing on August 1 and a letter was submitted to the Civil Service Commission on July 31 by Forrest Stewart, our executive secretary. You may refer to a thorough discussion of this matter in the July-August issue of this magazine, in which also appears a reprint of the letter to the Commission. At the recent General Council meeting, delegates voted to continue Association efforts to obtain vacation time amounting to 2 weeks and 2 days.

Ruling Explained

From an interview with Robert Johnson, Director of Civil Service, we have

obtained information regarding the Civil Service Commission's reasons for maintaining a 2 week vacation leave instead of the 2 weeks and 2 days requested by the OSEA.

"It would not be fair to give 2 weeks and 2 days vacation to employees working 5 days a week and only 2 weeks to those who work 5½ or 6 days each week," Mr. Johnson stated first. "Many state employees are of necessity still working 5½ and 6 days a week."

The Commission wishes to provide 2 weeks vacation for *all* regular full time employees, thus equalizing vacation time between those working 40 hours and those working 44 and 48 hours weekly.

Two Weeks Vacation Intended

Members of the Commission also believe that it was the intent of the legislature to provide 2 weeks vacation because the leave allotted was based on a 5½ day work week. A 5 day work week was not anticipated when the law was adopted.

Surveys have convinced the Civil Service Commission that it is general practice when leave with pay is granted in private industry and business to provide not more than 2 weeks vacation.

The fact that the maximum accumulation of vacation time is limited to 26 days instead of 24 (twice 12), also indicated to the Commission that a month (26 days plus 4 Sundays) was intended for the maximum vacation leave with pay. This maximum accumulation figure appears to them to be based on the total month period rather than individual work days.