

The OSEA Sentinel

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"Welfare
of State
and
Employee"

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Opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Association.

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PIN POINTS FROM PRESIDENT'S PEN POINT

It seems as though our first issue of the OSEA Sentinel was well received — I quote from several personal letters received:

"Just received March issue of OSEA Sentinel and congratulate you and your staff on its newsworthiness — and for a very effective improvement in your news coverage . . . Keep up the good work."

Maine State Employees Association

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"I have read with interest your editorial in the Sentinel . . . your comments on 'Threats to Employee Welfare' are truthful and well founded . . . we feel confident in the knowledge that we have an organization capable of dealing with such things as a 'poor system of personnel management' . . . I am confident in OSEA's ability to protect that which we now receive if my attitude and the attitude of all members toward the job at hand is reasonable and just."

Member of SIAC Chapter No. 20

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"I couldn't refrain from congratulating you and others responsible . . . I do not recall any one member having the courage to publicly commit himself on the varied subjects appearing over your signature . . . some had courage but refrained for fear of criticism . . . The employee wants some one at the top to speak out for him. The entire sheet was informative and well received."

Member of Portland Chapter No. 17

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" . . . It is the writer's opinion we are passing up an opportunity to encourage additional membership when distribution of such an informative issue is limited to members. The next time you have an issue of such 'meaty' substance, why not send us 50 extra copies for general distribution?"

Business Manager of a State Institution

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The Highway Commission's decision to put their 1700 maintenance employees on the 40 hour 5 day week as soon as possible is commendable. OSEA

worked diligently to activate this movement and will help in its final accomplishment. Another step forward in good personnel relations and improved service to the State.

* * *

The talents of State employees are many—but many lie dormant. Capable OSEA members shrink from Chapter activities and leadership. Why such modesty? Take the job that is offered! Lend a hand to the OSEA wheel of progress—it is going to roll ahead "like you've never seen before"!

* * *

The OSEA-OPS group medical and hospital plan provides the greatest real protection available to State employees and at the lowest cost. I still say NO State Department should deny payroll deduction participation for any employee who wants this protection. No State Department has yet negotiated for employees as favorably as has the OSEA.

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Employees attending meetings of the AFSC & ME (being the name of Oregon Public Employees Council) report that these A F of L paid organizers spend more time denouncing OSEA than trying to build up their own membership. If they boast of the value of membership strength, does this negative approach ring true? This particular organization existed years prior to formation of the OSEA. Looks like their "strength" is mostly out-of-state.

Virgil G. O'Neil, President, OSEA.

WORK WEEK FOR STATE EMPLOYEES

The federal law fixing 40 hours as the standard work week has been in effect for over 15 years. It does not apply to public bodies, but steadily over the years public agencies have been reducing the work week of their employees to come within that standard. Recently the Oregon State Employees Association appealed to the state highway commission to scale down the work-week of highway maintenance employees which have remained at 44 hours, or in some cases 48 hours. The commission agreed to look into the matter, and it is expected that a four-hour reduction will be instituted before very long.

Private industry engaged in interstate commerce has been subject to the wages and hours act for a long time and has made the adjustment required by that law. Public employment should not be at standards less favorable to workers than for private employment. In some situations longer work weeks than 40 hours may be required, as for short periods, and the overtime should return added compensation; but the base work week should be 40 hours.

The worst situation used to be in state institutions where attendants had to work a ten-hour day or even longer. That has all been changed and employees now work an eight-hour shift five days a week. This has added greatly to cost of operation; but it does bring the state into conformity with federal standards for private employment, and gives better service to inmates. The highway department can make the change too—just as the steel industry found it could cut its work-day down from twelve hours to eight after President Harding appealed to Judge Gary to do so.

—(Editorial from the pen of Charles A. Sprague, ex-governor of Oregon, in the Oregon Statesman on April 10, 1954).