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FEDERAL AND STATE SECURITY PROGRAMS; OSEA POLICY; POLITICS

My mail from OSEA members included an objection to the article in the last issue of the Sentinel dealing with federal Social Security benefits being paid to Oregon citizens. It seems that the three signers of this particular letter objected (1) to the inference that relatively few people receive the maximum benefits and (2) to the one-sided presentation of the figures without drawing a comparison of the old state retirement system and the present combination of federal OASI and state PERS.

OSEA Policy Stresses State Benefits

At the last General Council at Astoria, the delegates approved a retirement resolution calling on their Board of Directors to promote a better and more beneficial **state** retirement system with less emphasis on federal assistance; in short, more state responsibility and participation—less dependence on federal social programs.

One reason for this action was the trend on the part of state government to **reduce its costs** and reduce the benefits of its own retirement system by embracing Social Security, at a lesser rate of total contribution.

Since the 1953 legislative action, which reduced the state retirement benefit maximum from $125 per month to $75 per month, the trend of thinking of some of the members of the legislature seems to be to **reduce further** the state's program.

Federal Social Security offers some insurance features that are desirable, and I do not argue against them. Personally, I can vision an **entirely independent** program for Oregon state employees providing anything that the federal government can offer and financed solely by Oregon for the benefit of its own employees. I cannot believe that anyone can long receive "something for nothing" and I refuse to be convinced that welfare problems cannot be handled properly on state, county, city, family and individual levels. My early recollections are that most "security" and social welfare problems were satisfactorily handled at the family level. Were people more self-dependent, independent, responsible and diligent 25 years ago?

OSEA State-Level Elections

At the next General Council meeting in Bend on November 11, 12 and 13, the delegates will be charged with the selection of their state officers for the insuing year, excepting the district directors. The offices to be filled are president, vice-president, secretary-treasurer and six directors of various activities. These nine people, together with the past president and the district directors are the ones who will administer the OSEA policies for the following year.

I wish to stress the importance of selecting qualified people for these jobs. Our problems are many and there is a lot of work to be done. The positions carry no pay and sometimes the work earns no commendation. The compensation is the feeling that one has helped in some small way to have benefited the employees and state because of his efforts in office. Office-holders in the OSEA are expected to have an interest in OSEA objectives, good judgment, a certain amount of earnest zeal and a willingness to sacrifice part of their personal time in behalf of OSEA members, state employees in general and the state as a whole.

In another issue of the Sentinel, space permitting, I hope to give my personal ideas of what a good OSEA officer should be like. Suffice it to say here that I trust every member will be searching for good timber for each of the offices to be filled and that the delegates will be prepared to nominate them at the General Council. Any active member is eligible for state officership. I should enjoy seeing some "hot politics" at Bend.

V. G. O'Neil, OSEA President

HOLIDAYS AND REST PERIODS IN UNION CONTRACTS

Providing pay for holidays on which no work is performed is now a common feature of union agreements. Notwithstanding the prevalence of such provisions, issues relating to paid holidays continue to arise frequently in collective bargaining. Commonly included among these issues are the number of paid holidays, premium pay for holiday work and practice to be followed when a holiday falls on Saturday or other non-work day.

Chief among observed holidays are New Years, Memorial day, Independence day, Labor day, Thanksgiving and Christmas. Religious, regional, and local holidays also are recognized in union agreements, as are election days.

Holidays and Pay

About 50 percent of the agreements specify six paid plus election and regional holidays; about 35 percent specify up to nine.

Premium pay for time worked on holidays is common to most all agreements. About 53 percent require double time, 20 percent time and one-half, 10 percent triple time and the remainder some combinations of the foregoing.

Rest Periods

In recent years paid rest periods have become more and more a subject for collective bargaining.

Several factors contribute to the formalization of rest periods — primarily the psychological and physical demands of the times. Also monotony and routine tend to dull alertness.

Health, safety and output factors are so important that most employers now provide "coffee breaks," time out and smoking breaks, either on a formal or informal basis. Women must be given rest periods under the laws of Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming.