

# Collective Bargaining Questions And Answers

(Editor's Note: On February 1, the date that the Civil Service Commission's collective bargaining rules became effective, the Oregon State Employees Association began to circulate petitions calling for representative elections in 19 major state agencies. In an attempt to create an understanding of the collective bargaining process, Executive Secretary Thomas C. Enright composed answers to the most frequently asked questions about bargaining. They are reprinted below for the information of all OSEA members.)

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Q. What is collective negotiation?

A. It is a process by which employees, through an elected representative, exercise the right given to them by law to work systematically with their employers for improvement of employment conditions. Employers will be required not only to listen to the desires of employees but also to work with their representatives in good faith towards solutions. They may not make or change rules or discipline employees or take other actions affecting employment relations without first consulting with the employee representative. Agreements reached will be made enforceable as contracts and cannot be set aside without further agreement of the parties.

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Q. OSEA has been representing us for years -- why this process now?

A. First, because the legislature has seen fit to pass a law providing for collective negotiation in public employment. If we do not use it, the doors will be open for outside groups to do so. But more important, we believe it is a step beyond the informal representation process of the past; that personnel administration can be bettered and employment conditions improved through better procedures, to the gain of both the employee and the service.

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Q. Will collective negotiation bring outside labor practices into state employment?

A. Definitely not. OSEA opposed the first collective bargaining bills in 1961 and 1963. OSEA supported collective negotiation only when it could be assured that it would be tailored to public employment and not copy private industry, and that supervision of the procedures would be under Civil Service rather than the bureau which supervises private industry labor matters. The unions generally refuse to give up the "right" to strike; OSEA's constitution prohibits strikes.

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Q. If OSEA is elected representative, will I have to join the association?

A. No. Oregon law does not permit a requirement that an employee join any organization to hold a public job. You will probably decide that it is advantageous to you to belong to OSEA to have a voice in what is decided in your behalf, but you will not be forced to join against your wishes.

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Q. Will collective negotiation get us higher salaries?

A. No. An employer cannot agree to pay higher salaries than those set by the Civil Service pay plan. Our work for higher pay will still be through presentations to Civil Service and lobbying the legislature. Collective negotiation will concern itself primarily with working conditions; those matters where the rules give discretion to the appointing authority to do things as he sees fit; and the situations not now covered by rules. Some examples: hours in work week, shift work, transfer policies, safety practices, merit rating procedures, coffee breaks, vacations schedules (and many more).

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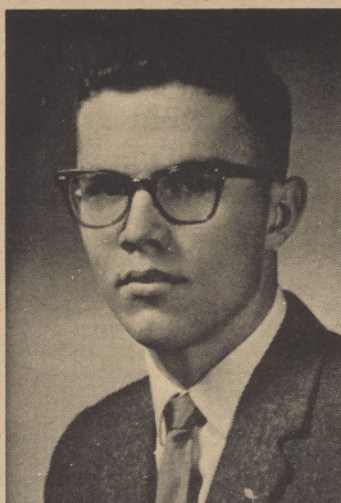
Q. Will collective negotiation change our present grievance procedures?

A. Not necessarily. Individual problems will still be handled through departmental grievance procedures, while collective negotiation will be concerned with matters which affect employees generally. However, something which in the past may have been considered an individual grievance may also affect others and can be negotiated without the necessity of having one employee "stick his neck out" to have it corrected. Your grievance procedure may also be improved through negotiation.

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Q. Will collective negotiation change the functions of OSEA?

A. Only to enlarge them. OSEA will still mainly be concerned with legislative representation; presentation of salary recommendations at Civil Service hearings; representation of employees on classification, pay and other matters before various agencies; work with Civil Service and Dept. of F and A for better fringe benefits, etc. Collective negotiation will be another tool in OSEA's representation kit, but it will not replace its present functions.



GEORGE A. CONVERSE

## Award Winner Close To PhD.

The first student to win an OSEA scholarship has recently passed his qualifying examinations towards a doctoral degree in mathematics at the University of Washington.

George A. Converse was a 17 year old high school senior in 1959 when he applied for an OSEA scholarship under the newly instituted program. He won a \$600 scholarship--the only one awarded that year.

Excellent grades in college helped him win two other association scholarships in 1960 and 1961. Each one was worth \$150.

He attended Southern Oregon College for his first two years, and then transferred to Oregon State University where he received a B.S. degree in 1963.

His parents, Mr. and Mrs. Alvin Converse, live at 110 Van Ness Avenue, Ashland. His father is a repairman at Southern Oregon College. He has served as President of Siskiyou Chapter 84 once, Vice-President twice and Delegate to General Council twice in the ten years he has been an OSEA member.

His mother teaches English at Ashland Senior High School.

Mrs. Converse told the NEWS that her son has frequently expressed his appreciation for the help and encouragement that his OSEA scholarship gave him. She said the award made it possible for him to go to college without interruption, and also made it possible for him to cut his winter employment to the extent that he could consistently carry full work loads in school.

She said he nearly always worked during the school year and summer vacations to help pay for his college education.

"As George's mother, I wish to personally thank the OSEA membership for making such help and encouragement available to young students through the scholarship program," she said.

## Jobs Reclassified

The jobs of two state employees at the Tongue Point Job Corps Center will be reclassified as the result of action by OSEA's Wage and Salary Analyst Everett B. Stiles.

The reclassification will mean an additional \$60 per month for each worker.

The men contacted Stiles in January and claimed they were not classified properly. Stiles investigated their claim and found that a discrepancy existed between men's job description and the actual work being performed.

Stiles contacted the Tongue Point Administration and pointed out the discrepancy. The men will be reclassified from Laborer I to Labor Foremen.

## OSEA To Present Case...

# State Contribution Towards Employee Insurance Sought

A state contribution towards the payment of employee medical-hospital insurance premiums will be sought by OSEA prior to the time the Civil Service Commission adopts Oregon's 1967 compensation plan, according to Wage and Salary Analyst Everett B. Stiles. The 1964 OSEA General Council unanimously adopted a resolution calling for state participation in the payment of such insurance premiums.

As a result of that resolution, Stiles has recently completed a 12 month research project to determine the number of public and private employers who participate in the payment of employee medical-hospital insurance premiums.

Stiles said the results of the study, which point out the general practice of employer participation, will be presented to the commission in an attempt to make the state's contribution part of the overall compensation plan.

According to Stiles, the preliminary results of the study show that 22 states contribute a portion of the employees medical-hospital insurance premiums. Four of the 22, including Oregon's neighboring state of Idaho, pay the entire amount of the premium.

Three of the four states whose boundaries join Oregon--California, Nevada and Washington--also participate in paying a portion of such a plan.

"Washington's 1963 Legislature authorized that state's participation in the payment of medical-hospital insurance premiums, but did not appropriate the necessary funds. However, the 1965 Legislature authorized the use of a portion of the salary funds for medical insurance premiums," Stiles said.

"Governor Evans has stated that Washington will pay a maximum of \$5 per employee or one-half of the employees medical insurance premium per month, whichever is the lesser amount."

Stiles said that the federal government sponsors a health insurance program for its employees.

The government contributes about one-third of the premium.

Better than 75% of the private firms contacted in Oregon provide a contribution toward the employees medical-hospital insurance premium, Stiles said. "The percentage of contributions ranged from those firms paying 100% (30% of the firms contacted) to those paying 40% (which was the minimum contribution of those participating)."

According to Stiles, one-half of the firms contacted also paid a percentage of the premiums for dependent coverage. Three firms paid the total employee and dependent medical-hospital insurance premiums.

In all cases, Stiles said, the private employers contacted had a minimum of 100 employees.

"Results of this study indicate that the employer who provides employee benefits is no longer the progressive crusader. He is merely following an intelligently established trend," Stiles said.

"Employees tend to gravitate towards the employer offering the most complete program of fringe benefits simply because the existence of the benefit program makes it a better place to work.

The question is no longer one of whether or not fringe benefits will be provided; rather, it is one of which benefits can be installed at a given time.

In order for the State of Oregon to be competitive, it must establish a medical-hospital insurance premium contribution for its employees as a part of the total compensation plan."



WARNE NUNN, EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO GOVERNOR MARK O. HATFIELD, addressed members of Capitol Chapter 19 on the Governor's recent trade mission to Europe. Over 50 persons attended the February meeting. Seated are Chapter 19 President William LaClair and Vice-President R. L. Reimann.

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