

# Talks With State Broken-Off

## Members Plan "Solidarity" Rally June 6

At least 3,000 people are expected to march through the streets of downtown Salem to deliver what is being described as "the strongest statement yet" that state employes will not stand for the State's "take back" proposals.

The "Solidarity March," which is scheduled for June 6, will begin at Marion Square Park and conclude on the Capitol Steps.

"Victor Atiyeh is going to see the members of this union deliver the strongest statement yet, that they will not stand for the State's calculated campaign to take back provisions they have won in previous contracts, that they will not be forced to accept less than equitable wages and that they will not give-in to union busting tactics," said Thomas Gallagher, OPEU Executive Director.

"Members and their families will come from all over the state to participate in this event," he said. "The more people that participate the larger its impact will be. I urge all members to invest one day in helping to secure a better contract for themselves and their fellow workers and to come have a good time while doing it."

Members and their supporters will begin assembling at 10 a.m. at Marion Square Park, located on North Commercial Street at the east end of Marion Bridge in Salem.

Rally organizers are urging marchers to arrive early, because the Salem Police have ordered that marchers be on the street at 11 a.m.

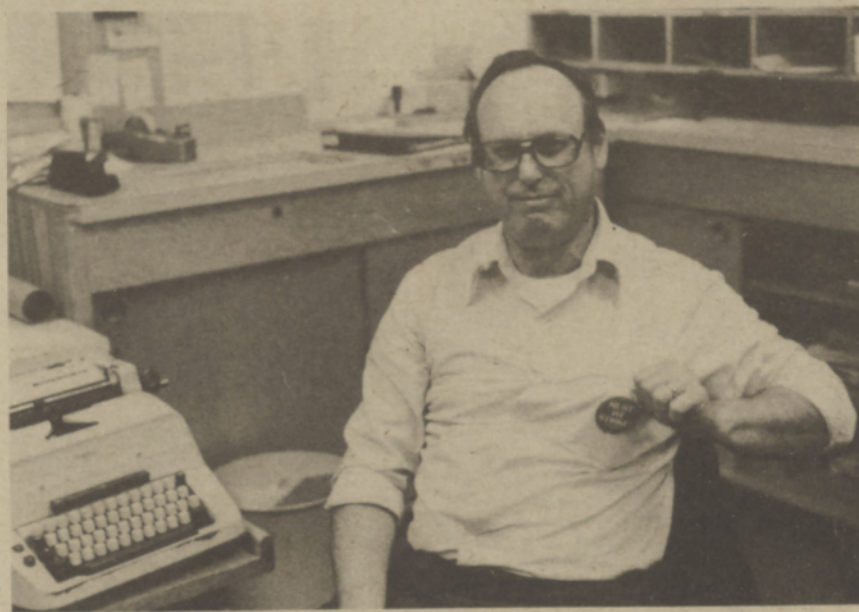
Buses and carpooling are being arranged in many cities around the state. OPEU business agents will have details on how interested persons can take advantage of these rides.

There will be considerable parking around and close to Marion Square Park. Salem Police will not be checking parking meters around the park. Free parking will also be available under the bridge adjacent to the park.

In addition, free parking is available two blocks south in the Chemeketa Parkade, located at the corner of Chemeketa and Commercial Streets. Commercial Business Supply has also offered free use of their parking lot (the old Capitol Chevrolet lot), located across the street from the park on the northwest corner of Union and Commercial Streets.

Buses will drop marchers off at the park and pick them up at the Capitol.

Prior to the march, helium-filled balloons will be distributed and marchers will organize into their coalitions. Members are asked to come up with a theme for the march and to put it on a banner. The theme that is chosen by the marchers at the park will lead the parade.



## May Protests

During May, state employes began to show their agitation over the State's bargaining position. Over 10,000 state employes wore "Must We Strike" buttons (top), approximately 6,000 members gave their reaction to six of management's contract proposals in a workplace vote (middle) and nearly 1,000 state employes participated in a statewide informational picketing.

## State Refuses to Remove Take-Backs

Contract talks between the State and OPEU ground to a complete standstill during the last week of May, when OPEU broke-off mediation over what they characterized as the State's "total unwillingness to bargain."

State mediator Ken Brown said that any more meetings would be a waste of time and began the process of moving the talks into factfinding.

The actual break-off of mediation was a dramatic event involving OPEU's central table negotiating team and over 150 OPEU members.

After presenting the State with a major compromise on its economic proposals earlier in the day, OPEU negotiators were pressing the State for justification on each of its seven major "take-back" proposals. State negotiators repeatedly refused to offer justification and in each case said that their take-back proposal was their final position on that issue.

When the State removed a key article covering employee's layoff rights from the table, OPEU chief negotiator Alice Dale chastized the State negotiating team. She noted that the layoff provision was the only major non-economic area where the two sides had made any progress.

"We have made every effort to reach compromise with you on the issues in this proposed contract," she said. "This move on your part (withdrawing the layoff clause) is a clear indication that you are not willing to compromise."

Dale then told the State team that as long as their major take-back provisions were on the table "it is a clear indication to us that you do not want to reach an agreement."

She concluded by informing the State's negotiators that as long as the major take-backs remain on the table, OPEU will not continue with mediation.

At that point the OPEU team and the entire audience of OPEU members and supporters got up and left the room.

Later in the day, Dale said that the employes who showed their support during the mediation session were more upset over the State's take-back proposals than they were over economic issues.

"They are trying to force us to give up what we have won in previous contracts in order to get an agreement," Dale said later in the day. "This is totally unacceptable to the members of this union; they will not accept a contract with losses of major work rights."

The State has proposed major take-backs in shift differential, penalty pay, union rights, grievance definition, grievance arbitration, trial service and holidays.

On May 26, John Demusiak, State

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