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Union agent Prifrel to retire

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Joseph Prifrel, St. Paul, who this year retired from the Minnesota Legislature after 34 years, said today this is his last week as a union business agent, after 42 years.

Prifrel is secretary-treasurer and business agent of Local 149, International Brotherhood of Teamsters. The union is composed of about 3,000 members employed by Montgomery Ward & Co., St. Paul, with a relative few members at Sears Roebuck & Co., Minneapolis.

In anticipation of retirement from his full-time job, Prifrel did not seek reelection to the Minnesota House, where for many



JOSEPH PRIFREL

years he was a member of the Labor Committee.

"I couldn't afford it," Prifrel said.

Pay as a legislator would have affected his Social Security benefits and the pension he will receive as a retired legislator.

The Teamster business agent pension that Prifrel, 67, will begin receiving next year precludes any activity in the union-management field.

Union financial statements that Prifrel regularly sends to the members show the once-impo- verished local has \$80,000 in its treasury and owns its headquarters building at 1731 University Av., St. Paul, valued at about \$350,000.

Before forming the Teamster local in 1954, Prifrel spent a year as head of an organization of engineers, physicists and draftsmen at Honeywell Inc. He didn't renew his contract after a year.

"I couldn't do anything for them," Prifrel says. "They were too management-oriented."

After Prifrel's depart-

ture, the organization lost a union representation election.

Harry Beck, Local 149 president, becomes acting business agent Jan. 1. The union has an election scheduled Jan. 9.