

IBEW

Local 336 News & Views



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BUSINESS MANAGER'S COLUMN

JOBS IN JEOPARDY . . . OR CLOSE THE GATE THE HORSES ARE GONE !

Over the last few years we have lost jobs with the companies which employ our members. The obvious culprits are divestiture and technological change. But something more sinister is to blame for creeping job loss. We have literally been giving our jobs away. A portion of the higher job classification work, work which was considered part of the overall job, has and is being given to lower paid job classifications or is being contracted out.

The Company has convinced our membership that it wants to relieve them of tedious and repetitive tasks. Usually the work was unpleasant or somehow thought to be beneath them. This slow erosion is facilitated by both the higher and lower paid craft. The higher paid craft see it as a way to make their jobs easier and as a way to increase the prestige of their job: "I can't be bothered with that." And the lower paid classifications see it as a way to get promoted: "If I do that work I'll get promoted." The reality is -- since there is now less work for the higher classification; the company doesn't need as many employees. Consequently, since they don't need as many employees; there won't be any promotions. Or; the work will be down-graded, or lost altogether.



President-Business Manager
Albert J. Franzen

There are examples in every department; switching, central office, installation, repair, dispatch, and construction.

A concerted individual effort is needed to stem the tide.

We must resolve to:

- 1) If its part of the job -- do it!
- 2) If the workload is too high -- encourage your boss to hire more help; not contract out.
- 3) If a contractor is on the job-- encourage them to organize (non-union contractors pay less and further undermine our wage structure.)
- 4) Remember the next time you let someone do your job or encourage your boss to contract out -- It's **your** job you are giving away.





FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK:

Editors Note: *The following letter has been submitted by Executive Board Member Judy Freeze. The views expressed are hers and not necessarily the position that has been taken by the local.*

REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS ... CHOICE IS A UNION ISSUE

Who decides? It should not be the governments, courts, employers or any person other than the individual women that make the decision regarding contraception, abortion, sterilization, the timing of child bearing and the number of children a family has. The Supreme Court's 1989 decision in Webster v. Reproductive Health Services rolled back the choice on the constitutional right of privacy and allowed state legislatures to restrict reproductive rights further.

Anti-choice forces, unable to ban abortion so far because of 1973 Roe v. Wade ruling which holds that reproductive decisions are personal and private, have sought to restrict who may obtain an abortion and

under what circumstances. As a result, legislatures have imposed limitations on health services that are most burdensome on young, low-income and minority women.

Without safe, legal abortion, our society could return to the days when women risked injury or even death from illegal or self-induced abortions.

Meanwhile, the Bush Administration has urged the court to overturn Roe v. Wade, the newly configured Court is dominated by conservatives and reproductive rights are hanging by a thread.

The CLUW, Coalition of Labor Union Women, Center for Education and Research has received foundation funding for a project to educate and mobilize members on reproductive rights issues. If you care and would like to join us, become a member of CLUW and get involved today. Leave a message for Judy Freeze at the Union office.

A Doubting Texan Changes Her Mind About the Union Label

Editors Note: The following is an excerpt from the Sun Times. I think it addresses the general attitude in our society regarding perceptions held by the general public about Labor Unions. Linda Ellerbee's discovery that Unions are indeed necessary is something that we should be trying to communicate to people who are not within our organization.

By: Linda Ellerbee

When I first moved to New York City from Houston in 1973, I was as green as it gets when it comes to unions. Coming from Texas does that to a person. I remember being pretty shocked when my bosses at WCBS-TV told me I had to join a union to be an on-air reporter. It wasn't that I objected to joining a union. I objected to being told I had to. Coming from Texas does that to a person, too.

I complained. No fair, I said. You can't make me, I said.

"Kid," said my boss, "welcome to New York. This is a union town."

I had two small children to support and I needed the job, so in the end I joined the union. Still angry as hell at having been made to do so.

As a local television reporter

covering "hard" news for the 11 o'clock broadcast, I covered strikes, murders, fires, strikes, politics, and strikes. Everybody in town, it seemed, went on strike every time a contract ran out.

One of the best things about being a reporter is that in order to tell other people things, you must learn them first. I got me a small education in labor. And I began to read, to talk to people, and to listen.

During one strike, I stood outside, in the alley behind the Daily News building, listening to working people talk about how this used to be a union town, but how in 1974, it was all over. Strangled by management.

During that same strike, I stood inside the building, listening to Daily News management types talk about how the unions were strangling their paper, how the unions had put so many other papers out of business, how the unions had ruined this town. This union town.

Today nine unions are on strike at the Daily News. There's been a lot of ink under the bridge since 1974, but the arguments are basically the same. What's not the same is how I feel about unions. I came to believe with all my heart that unions have been essential in order to give workers the opportunity to deal on an equal basis with their employer.

Throughout the '70s and especially in the '80s, I watched as thousands of people in New York and throughout America got laid off, saw their jobs eliminated, saw their pay cut -- in the name of profit.

(cont'd on page 7)

Management learned a valuable lesson. It learned it could bash unions and get away with it.

We didn't like unions anymore. In the last 20 or 30 years, we'd gotten to be scared of them, or been told we should be. But if there's one lesson to be learned from those years, it's that there's still more danger that management will swallow up the profits of labor, than that labor will confiscate management. For every instance of unions violating the rights of property, there have been hundreds, thousands of incidents where plain working people in this country have been pillaged by the privileged class.

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF LOCAL 336, IBEW

Albert J. Franzen
President-Business Manager

Donald L. Moseley
Vice-President & Editor

Larry J. Moeller
Recording Secretary-Treasurer

Ira Dean Spencer
Financial Secretary

BUSINESS REP'S REPORT



By: Robert F. Geidner

As of January 1, 1991; I have been appointed Business Representative for Region "A" to replace the retiring Earl "Spike" Tennerman. I worked with Spike for 12 years as a Chief Steward from Unit 3 prior to being promoted to Business Representative for the AT&T and Cable groups one year ago.

I would like to take this opportunity to express to my Brothers and Sisters the importance of attendance at your Union meetings. It is hard enough to keep informed on what is going on in your Union. Our members should realize that they are ultimately preserving and protecting their jobs if they are informed as to the direction that the Company is taking.

Our contract expires June 27, 1992. Is that a long way off? **NO!** It is only 7 more Union meetings. Let the company know you are attending your Union meetings and that you are concerned. Let them know that you plan on protecting your work and you don't plan on giving your work to some outside contractor. Your Union bargained for that work and that work belongs to YOU!

Get involved now for the next seven meetings. Be informed. Give your opinions. Work together and stand united. IT MAKES A DIFFERENCE.

Please attend your next Union meeting in February and the next 6 after that and show the company we will protect our jobs. I'll see you there and at your work locations in the weeks ahead.

AREA STEWARD'S REPORT

By: Jack Mancilla
UNIT #7 Area Steward

On October 1, 1990 I was appointed Area Steward for Unit 7 which has contracts with Indiana Bell, Ameritech Services, U.S. Cable of Northern Indiana and AT&T.

Although the contracts differ in many ways, the need to safeguard the contract language remains the same.

We cannot do it without your help. Not only your individual help, but your help as a crew, a work group, and as a department. Collectively, we can make a difference.

We do it consistently every three years at contract time when the bargaining committees ask for a strike vote, everyone together for a common cause. However, in between contract negotiations we tend to lose sight of our cause at times.

The companies need to know that we, regardless of which department we work in, are willing to stick together and be heard, not just for problems concerning us directly but also for the problems which concern other work groups and/or departments.

"You must be dreaming, you say to yourself. We can't even agree with each other in our own work group!"

Our existence and effectiveness as a Union depends on our ability to stand together. We cannot afford to sit back and allow erosion of our contracts just because it doesn't affect our workgroup.

When asked; the members of this Unit have always responded, and that fact is known to the companies we hold contracts with. The Stewards need to know that when they present a problem to management that the whole crew or group is with them, not behind them, but with them.

They say people can be divided into three categories, the few who make things happen, the many who watch things happen, and the majority who have no idea what's happening.

Considering that a challenge, I urge all of us to become more involved and work together. Attend Unit meetings and support each other on and off the job.

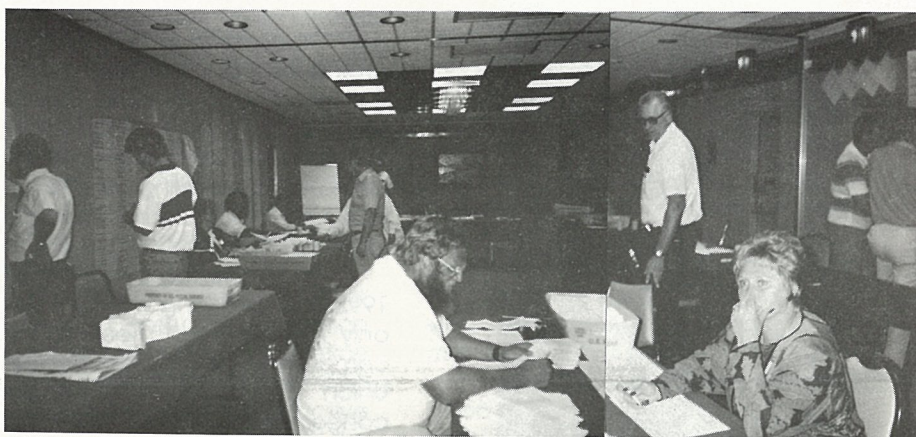
I'd personally like to take this opportunity to wish you all a most Happy and prosperous New Year.

Thank you for your continued support.



Why we need labor law reform

1990...



Election Board members. During Vote Count.



The Niles Center Stewards and Area Steward during happier times; prior to the lay-off



President Franzen swearing in Unit Officers in September, 1990.



Albert J. Franzen elected President Business Manager of IBEW, Local 336 on June 26, 1990.

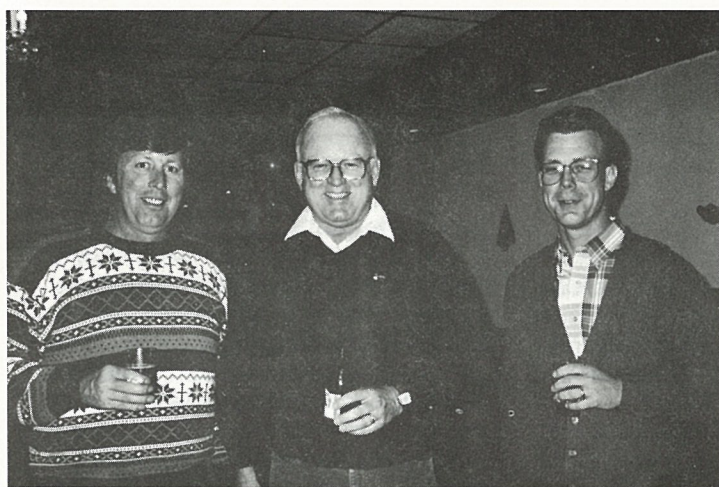
In Retrospect



Retired Chief Steward from Indiana Bob Tunnell (left) admiring the gift presented to Unit 6 Chief Steward Bill Girtman (right) at his retirement party in April.



Left to right: Dean Spencer, Bill Cooper, Al Franzen and Don Kieper are pictured at Bill's retirement party in October.



Steward Gerald Gast (left) and Steward Bruce Steinke (right) congratulate retired Chief Steward Don Moran (center) at his retirement party in November.



Chief Don Kieper also retired this year. Don was active with the Union for over 13 years. His party will be held on January 19, 1991 at the Contempo Restaurant in Chicago Hts. (Contact the Union office for further information.)



Chief Steward Don Cherwin is retiring effective January 2, 1991. Don has been active in the Union since 1969. Information forthcoming regarding Don's party.



Earl "Spike" Tennerman retired January 2, 1991. Spike has been active with the Union for over 40 years. He has held various titles including: Business Rep, Executive Board Member and IBEW Delegate. His party will be held on February 9, 1991 at the Gurnee Holiday Inn. (Contact the Union office for further information.)

Congress Passes Biggest Child-Care Bill Since 1940s

Washington acts to help parents with child care about as quickly as a 3-year-old puts on cloths, complained one critic. But after almost two years of debate, Congress slipped the first major child-care bill since World War II into its 1991 budget.

Hardly anyone denies that something must be done. After all:

-- **Only one American family** in ten is the traditional model where dad goes to work while mom stays home with the kids. Over 35 million American kids under 14 have moms who work. Yet there's only room for five million in licensed or registered child-care facilities.

-- **Most new mothers** go back to work before their babies are a year old. But young families still can't make ends meet. Between 1973 and 1987 the average young family with children suffered an astounding 25% drop in earnings. And child care eats up nearly a quarter of the meager earnings of low-income families, reports the Children's Defense Fund.

-- **That's led to one horror story** after another. Millions of "latch-key" kids are left alone all day. Others are hurt by hazards in unregulated child-care homes and centers. Worry over where their kids are or how they'll pay child-care bills plague many workers.

What congress won

The child-care debate was peppered with veto threats from President Bush, who didn't want middle-class families to get help and ruled out any measure to improve the quality or availability of child care. In the end, he had to compromise.

The bill that was finally passed could help more than 750,000 kids and their families. Here's how:

-- **Uncle Sam will give states** \$2.5 billion over three years, and \$3 out of \$4 must go to parents or child-care centers; the rest goes to after-school or pre-school programs.

-- **Working families** trying to support kids on incomes of \$20,000 or less get \$19 billion in tax credits or payments. Those who buy health insurance for the kids get the most.

-- **For the first time**, child-care providers must meet health-and-safety standards.

The last time Congress passed a major child-care bill was in 1971; President Nixon, who claimed it "threatened the sanctity of the American family," vetoed it. Between 1977 and 1986, federal spending to help low-income families with child care was cut by nearly 25%. But today, finally, Uncle Sam is starting to respond to the tremendous needs of American families.

IT'S ONLY A BUSINESS DECISION



By: John Greenwald
Business Representative

The other day I walked into the Union office and found a message to call Labor Relations at AT&T as soon as possible. While dialing the phone I was trying to collect my thoughts on what unfinished business I had going with them. When the secretary answered the phone she told me that she would be adding me to a conference call in progress in New Jersey. After being connected in I recognized voices of Union and Company officials that I have dealt with in the past.

"John," they said "we are sorry to report that the Board of Directors at AT&T have decided to halt its Services Operations by the end of the year and we expect to only keep a few personnel on payroll for only a couple of months."

As I reached to the floor to pick up the phone that I had dropped; I replied, "Who's buying the business?"

There was a pause and a reply of "Nobody. It's just a business decision."

"But what about all of our members who have given all their years to this Company?" I asked.

"John, it's just a business decision."

"But where is all the work going to?"

"John, it's just a business decision."

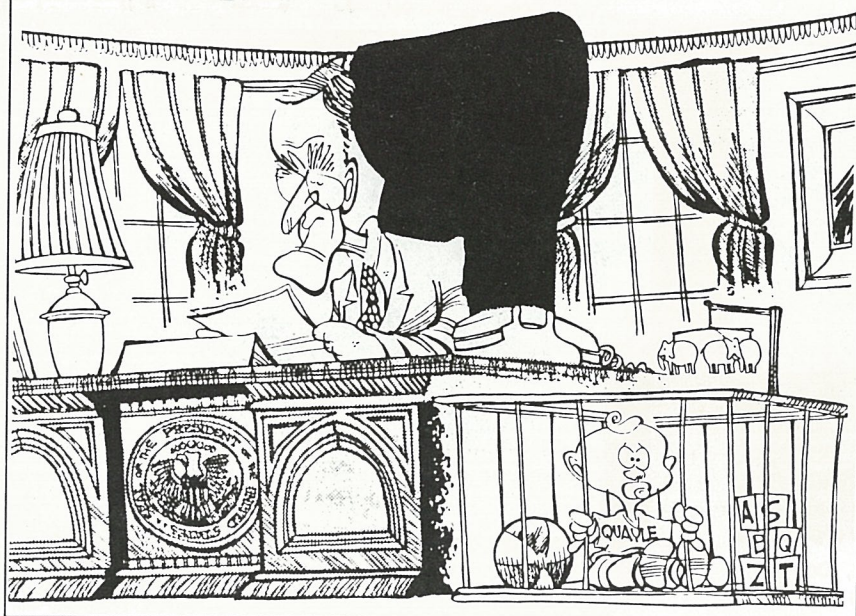
"How many employees are affected?"

"Thousands, John, thousands."

"What is the Company planning to do to help our members?"

(cont'd on page 7)

Why child care is an important concern for the Bush Administration...



FLOOD UPDATE: Highland, Indiana



By: Don Moseley
Business Representative

From time to time events take place that require immediate and sometimes drastic action. Such an event happened recently in Highland, Indiana.

When the flood waters receded, Indiana Bell was poised and ready to get our people in that subdivision in order to provide quick and temporary service to those homeowners trying to put their lives and homes back in order. It was a typical response by the people in an industry that provides as much help as possible at a time when victims of disasters need it most.

The plan was a fine one until the morning I received a call from Jerry DeRose, Cable Repair Steward

for those people being sent in to do the restoration. He had received word before I did about the PCB contamination in that area and went on to explain that our people were working in that area without proper protective equipment.

My response to Jerry was, "pull them out!" I immediately called labor relations and informed them of the situation and also explained what action I had taken.

To put it mildly, they were not pleased. They preferred that I go thru the normal channels with local management and allow them to pull the plug on the operation.

As the dust settled on this event, it appears that the situation was not as severe as originally reported by the EPA Officials on site. The area of PCB contamination seems to be very limited.

It is perhaps very easy at this point in time (hind-sight evaluation) to conclude that an over-reaction on my part occurred. However, at the time the reports began to surface about a situation that had potential severe impact on our members; I did what I thought was in their best interest, and had them removed.

I do indeed make mistakes. But in this case, if I'm going to err; I prefer to err on the side of safety.

BUSINESS DECISION

(cont'd from page 6)

"What is the Company planning to do to help our members?"

"John, it's just a business decision."

Thank GOD, I'm a light sleeper or I might have finished this dream.

The new year is upon us and we all sometimes have a resolution we like to make to ourselves. One WE all consider is to have a harmonious united relationship with our Sisters and Brothers where we work. One does not have to read newspapers or watch the evening news to see what is happening with this country's economy.

Foreign Investments have left no corporation from being bought out. Some think their job is secure; so why care. When you go to sleep at night . . . just hope your not a heavy sleeper.



"Frankly, the Christmas parties were more fun before all the layoffs."

BOB KIEPER ASSIGNED TO BENEFITS



On December 18, 1990; President-Business Manager Albert J. Franzen assigned Chief Steward Bob Kieper the duties of processing insurance problems for our members employed by Illinois Bell Telephone Company. Those members who encounter problems in their insurance coverage or claims may contact Bob at the Union office.

Ellerbe (cont'd from page 2)

Is this still a union town? Is this a union nation? I don't know. I doubt it. And I can't do anything about that. But what I can do is not cross a picket line. I can choose not to buy the Daily News, produced at the moment by scabs. And so it goes.

UNIT MEETINGS

Unit	Date	Time	Location
1	Tuesday, February 26, 1991 Tuesday, May 28, 1991	8:00 P.M.	The Edge Restaurant (Lower Level) 147th & Cicero Mid-Oak Plaza Midlothian, IL
2	Thursday, February 21, 1991 Thursday, May 16, 1991	8:00 P.M.	Knights Of Columbus 2720 W. Jefferson Joliet, IL
3	Tuesday, February 12, 1991 Tuesday, May 14, 1991	7:30 P.M.	Gurnee American Legion Routes 132 & 21 Gurnee, IL
4	Thursday, February 14, 1991 Thursday, May 9, 1991	7:30 P.M.	Elmhurst American Legion Hall Butterfield & Spring Rds. Elmhurst, IL
5	Wednesday, February 13, 1991 Wednesday, May 14, 1991	7:30 P.M.	Elgin Elks 18 Villa Ct. Elgin, IL
7	Thursday, February 28, 1991 Thursday, May 23, 1991	8:00 P.M.	Slovak Club 6920 Broadway Merrillville, IN
9	Tuesday, February 19, 1991 Tuesday, May 21, 1991	7:00 P.M.	Comfort Inn 2175 E. Touhy Ave. Des Plaines, IL

Unit Meetings are held Quarterly
During the months of:
February, May, August, and November.

LOCAL 336 I.B.E.W.

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