



Convention HIGHLIGHTS

37TH CONVENTION - CLEVELAND, OHIO

FRIDAY

SEPTEMBER 15, 2006

Unanimous Approval for Strengthening PBF Law Committee Completes Report

After viewing a presentation by Secretary-Treasurer Walters and hearing a Law Committee resolution, delegates unanimously supported increasing Pension Benefit Fund (PBF) contributions to protect the fund's solvency and provide enhanced benefits.

Following the PBF vote, the Law Committee completed its report as delegates adopted several amendments and

rejected one other.

The ratified PBF amendment, revising **Articles IX and XI**, raises contributions by \$.70 per month on January 1, 2007; \$1.00 per month on January 1, 2008, and \$1.00 per month on January 1, 2010.

Currently a member who retires with 20 years of service contributes \$2,712 over the course of his or her career, resulting in a present benefit of \$79 per month at

retirement. The new measure raises total contributions for a 20-year member to \$2,995 and provides a payout of \$90.

Walters recounted the proud 80-year history of the PBF, reminding delegates that the fund has not raised its contribution rate in 40 years. In 2006, the PBF paid out \$80 million in pensions and \$18 million in death benefits, totaling \$98 million. The PBF members' contribution totaled

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Delegate Action on Resolutions Begins

Delegates began their work Thursday on the Report of the Resolutions Committee, presented by Chairman Marvin P. Kropke, Los Angeles Local 11, and Secretary Mary Jo Arcuri, Syracuse, N.Y., Local 2213. In order of consideration, the disposition of the resolutions considered on Thursday was as follows.

Resolution Nos. 1 and 31 deal with renewable energy sources and were combined by the committee. The combined resolution puts the IBEW on record in support of alternative energy sources and nuclear energy. It proclaims that IBEW members will be on the forefront of these evolving technologies and will take the major role in the production, installation and maintenance of the new alternative energy supply and distribution. The resolution also expressed support for steps to expand the safety and utilization of nuclear power. Delegates approved the committee's recommendation of concurrence on the combined resolution.

Resolution No. 2 recognizes the American and Canadian flags as unique symbols of our two great countries and of our basic freedoms. It puts the IBEW on record as urging the U.S. and Canadian governments and all others who purchase and display American or Canadian flags to purchase only flags made by workers in the respective countries. It advocates legislation to encourage school systems to begin the day with a pledge of allegiance to the flag, and to indemnify schools from litigation. Delegates approved the committee's recommendation of concurrence.

Resolution No. 3 puts the IBEW on



Committee Chairman Kropke, right, and Secretary Arcuri, listen to floor debate.

record in support of the Boy Scouts of America and Canada. In view of the Boy Scouts' positive contributions to youth, the committee recommended concurrence and delegates approved.

Resolution No. 4 puts the IBEW on record as supporting deployment of uni-

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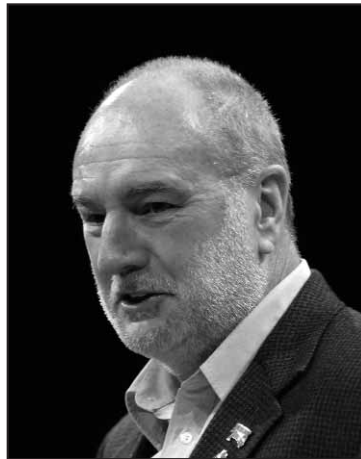
Australian Unionist Stresses Common Ground

Australia may be on the other side of the world, but the issues of concern to its trade unionists are very much the same as those in the United States, said Peter Tighe, general secretary of the Communications, Electrical and Plumbing Union (CEPU), Australia's leading electrical union.

Australia is wracked by manufacturing losses due to the influx of low-cost Asian goods, and labor unions are getting squeezed by greedy employers while cynical political parties are taking advantage of wedge issues to manipulate voters.

"Global capital has no loyalty," Tighe said. "It's about how many bucks you can make and how you can [exploit] workers, and unfortunately, it's something that we have to live with."

Tighe said the messages delivered to the Convention by Sen. Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) and CNN's Lou Dobbs earlier in the week could have been delivered to an



CEPU leader Peter Tighe



Tighe presented President Hill and Secretary-Treasurer Walters with Australian Outback hats and rain cloaks.

Australian audience.

"People start to worry about the issues of morality, stem cell research and abortion; and while they're important and should be discussed, they're not the main agenda," Tighe said. "The main agenda for us is the quality of life for working Australians and their families and I would suggest that's the major issue for you and your families."

He urged the continued association between his union and the IBEW that started five years ago, which has helped his union with their challenges at home.

On behalf of his delegation, he presented President Edwin D. Hill and Secretary-Treasurer John F. Walters with Australian Outback hats and rain cloaks, the kind used by the country's cattlemen.

IEC Report Approved

On Wednesday, Convention delegates approved the International Executive Council Report.

IEC Report Committee Chairman John Chalovich, Pittsburgh Local 5, told delegates the committee carefully reviewed and considered the contents of the report, which covers the period from July 1, 2001, to June 30, 2006.

"We believe the IEC has fulfilled its Constitutional responsibilities with distinction," Chalovich said. The Report Committee noted an amendment to the report regarding the 2003 appointment of an IEC member to fill an unexpired term.

Commending the IEC "on its diligent discharge of its duties," Chalovich said the committee recommended approval of the report and delegates concurred by voice vote.

Report Committee Secretary Joseph Casey, Dover, N.H., Local 490, introduced the other members of the Report Committee.



Committee Chairman Chalovich, left, and Secretary Casey.

District Photos

All photos of the district delegations were shot in digital format. They will be available within two weeks on the IBEW's Web site. Please check www.ibew.org for information at that time.

Panoramic Photo On Sale in Lobby

The panoramic photograph taken on Wednesday afternoon will be on sale Friday morning until shortly after the close of the Convention. The photo is on display and can be purchased at a table just outside the Merchandise Store in the lobby. Framed versions are also available.

AEP's Morris Touts Coal-to-Gas Technology, Cooperation

Michael Morris, president of American Electric Power, saluted the work of IBEW members and promoted the need for new energy generation, based upon coal gasification, in his address to Convention delegates.

Underscoring AEP's improved relationship with IBEW, Morris said, "Without our product, without what you do, the economy of this country can't exist. Without you and us working together, we cannot worship, we cannot educate, we cannot learn, we cannot communicate."

IBEW had pushed Morris' predecessor for a master contract to consolidate 33 separate contracts at AEP. "It made so much sense," said Morris. "[AEP management] has learned one of life's great lessons, and that's to think before you speak." The master contract is in the final

stage of development. Serving 5 million customers over 11 states, from the border of Texas to the border of Canada, AEP is spearheading efforts to develop a 550-mile transmission line from West Virginia to New Jersey that will be built under a project labor agreement. AEP is planning several facilities which would convert domestic coal to gas, producing cleaner, more efficient power.

"We need to build these [clean coal plants] and you need to help make sure



Michael Morris, president and CEO of American Electric Power

that happens in a political sense as well as in a physical sense because you will build those power plants," said Morris, to loud applause.

Members Injured in Illinois Explosion

During September 13 Convention proceedings, delegate Nick Citta, Downers Grove, Ill., Local 15, rose to report that two of his local union brothers had just been injured in an explosion at the Will County Fossil Generating Station in Romeoville, Ill.

William Wells and John Petrusek, both mechanics, are currently hospitalized in critical condition.

Our prayers go out to IBEW members Wells, Petrusek and their families.

We have also learned that a member of Local 47 was killed on the job earlier this week, and we are awaiting further details.

A Stroke of Luck

An announcement from the podium on Wednesday told the tale of woe — a delegate lost an engagement ring. By Thursday, delegate Michelle Laurie, Local 258, Vancouver, British Columbia — who scoured the streets for hours Wednesday — was elated. The engagement ring was found on the sidewalk by a fellow First District brother, Tom Nowland, from Local 37, Fredericton, New Brunswick. Laurie presented Nowland an IBEW watch for his troubles.



Convention Hears Six Appeals

The Grievance and Appeals Committee brought six appeals to a vote of the delegates. Chairwoman Robbi Sparks of Atlanta Local 2127 and Committee Secretary Mike Monahan of Boston Local 103, presented the report to the International Convention.

Under the IBEW Constitution, members and officers who have been disciplined and whose appeals have been denied by the IEC have the right to appeal to the International Convention.

"Every member of this union should

know that if he or she appeals a case to the International Convention, it will be thoroughly reviewed and fairly decided," Monahan said. "Decisions that are wrong should be reversed, but decisions that are fair and correct should be affirmed."

The report included detailed summaries that described the facts of each case, the violations alleged and the decision made at each level.

The Convention delegates voted to uphold the recommendations contained in the committee's report on all six cases.



Chairwoman Robbi Sparks, right, and Secretary Mike Monahan

Georgetti: Organize, and Get Organized

Ken Georgetti, president of the Canadian Labour Congress, praised the IBEW's rededication to organizing and offered some words of advice in the legislative and political arenas, based on successes by unionists in Canada.

"In Canada, over the last five or six years, our political activism has scored some victories, and I believe it's because we've been acting for a change as a movement," Georgetti said. "We win by organizing, but also by being organized."

Canadian activism is rooted "in three simple ideas," Georgetti said. "People who work for wages are the majority, and they constitute the majority of people who actually vote. Elected politicians must be made to feel that people will vote based on the economic and social security issues of people who work for wages. The skills and know-how that make us so successful at the bargaining table and in organizing campaigns must be knitted into political activism during elections and, more importantly, between election campaigns."

To "brand" worker issues, the CLC has run a worker and public education campaign, called the "Better Choice Campaign," to focus on such issues as



Ken Georgetti
President of the Canadian Labour Congress

health care, the cost of prescription drugs, pensions and bankruptcy laws, child care and training opportunities for working families.

In the targeted districts where the labor movement's information was distributed, "workers looked at the party's position on workers' issues," Georgetti said. "They

thought about workplace issues . . . and more workers voted in large numbers for the party that responded properly to those issues."

Examples of Canadian unionists' legislative successes include a section of the criminal code that holds CEOs and company managers criminally liable when there's negligence in the death or injury of a worker.

"And you know what, if they're found guilty, they go to jail," he said. "You wouldn't believe how quickly the attitude of management in Canada has changed."

Georgetti also cited protections for workers' wages and benefits if a company declares bankruptcy, political finance reform that prohibits rich corporations from bankrolling candidates.

"We didn't achieve those legislative victories by being nice or by begging or because the politicians loved us," he said. "We achieved those victories the way unions have always achieved results—by being organized, by being focused, consistent, steadfast and pressuring governments on behalf of working families. And we did it as a movement . . . as a large, solid, united movement."

Klein Tools Chairman Honors Common Goals

Ever since the very beginning of the Brotherhood, "a pair of Kleins" has been the tool of the trade, said President Hill, as he introduced Klein Tools CEO Mathias Klein III, who told the history of his family's involvement in the electrical trade.

Klein expressed honor and pride to represent the six generations of family members that have been manufacturing hand tools since 1857. "Klein Tools and the IBEW have a long, rich history of friendship and common goals," he said.

While most family-owned tool companies in the United States ceased operation years ago, swallowed up by larger firms or driven under by global competition, Klein has survived, employing 1,000 workers producing quality tools for wiremen and linemen in several U.S. plants. Klein credits the company's survival to his great-grandfather, who left Germany in 1848, looking to merge "Old World craftsmanship with New World opportunity."

Those two qualities served the electrical trade from the beginning.

While Mathias Klein worked as a blacksmith and locksmith in Chicago in the 1850s, a lineman working for the Mississippi Valley Telegraph Co., who was laying lines to Chicago, walked into Klein's shop with a pair of pliers, broken on one side. On the spot, the craftsman fashioned a new piece by hand. The lineman was so pleased with the craftsmanship that two weeks later, he asked if Klein could make another half to match. Klein Tools was born.

In 1891, Mathias Klein and Henry Miller, the founder of the IBEW, met at the Brotherhood's first Convention. "Both the IBEW and Klein have a legacy of leaders who have been courageous, determined, unafraid and bold," said Klein.

"Unlike our competitors," said Klein, "our products are made in America by American workers, just like the IBEW—quality labor building and maintaining



Klein Tools CEO Mathias Klein III

America's infrastructure. In this world of outsourcing to foreign countries to save a few dollars, that is something we can be proud of."

Unanimous Approval for Strengthening PBF (Continued from page 1)

only \$45 million for a shortfall of \$53 million. If this situation were allowed to go unchanged, said Walters, the benefit levels would have to be reduced for those who have paid their monthly assessments.

"If we do the right thing today," said Walters, "there is still reason for optimism. He asked delegates to support a \$2.70 increase over the next five years and a change in the calculation rate from \$3.50 to \$4.50 for all years of service. Walters encouraged locals to sign up more "A" members to build the health of the PBF.

The Law Committee met with fund actuaries before concurring with the resolution, which was introduced by President Hill and Secretary-Treasurer Walters.

The Law Committee Report stated, "Although the increased contributions will not offset the costs of the benefit improvement, the Committee believes the combination of investment earnings and increased IBEW 'A' membership through the organizing efforts will continue to keep the PBF healthy and make up for any shortfalls."

The resolution gives the International Executive Council, as PBF fiduciaries, the discretion to modify future death benefit payments only for "A" members enrolled in the plan after a specified date, if it becomes apparent that the PBF's financial health is jeopardized by a sudden influx of new participants who are older than expected.

Article IX of the IBEW Constitution was reorganized under the resolution to provide for a separate listing of per capita taxes paid to the IBEW's General Fund and payments by "A" members into the PBF.

After the report, several delegates rose in favor. No delegates opposed the change, which was, in accordance with the IBEW Constitution, open to discussion and voting only by "A" members.

J.E. McElligot, Chicago Local 134, said: "As the oldest son of a retired electrician from Local 134, who's now celebrating his ninth month of his 16th year on pension with my mother ... I hope some day to join him in the ranks [of the retired]; and I hope he's still collecting his checks when I get there."

Delegates rejected a proposal to change the Constitution's numbering of

amendments from Roman to Arabic numerals. Submitted by six locals from Montana, Wyoming, Idaho and Colorado, the Law Committee concurred, agreeing that it would eliminate confusion caused by the current numbering system. But the Convention in a voice vote agreed with a delegate who spoke out against it.

"The Constitution has a certain important historicity that I feel like we need to maintain," said Everett, Wash., Local 191 member Joe Peters. "I feel like our membership for decades has been able to utilize the Roman numeral system and still has been able to get through the Constitution and use it properly."

Delegates approved an amendment that affirms long-standing policy on the ineligibility of apprentices to hold local union office. The amendment, **Article XV, Section 14**, would prohibit any apprentice from holding local union office, except a member who was previously eligible if he entered an apprenticeship program to upgrade his skills.

One delegate spoke against giving apprentices the opportunity to hold office, comparing it to promoting a first grader to school principal. "The apprentice needs education and experience and if he thinks he has all that, he's dangerous," said Local 3 delegate Elliott Hecht.

An amendment clarifying the duties of the president of railroad local unions was approved. Delegates agreed with the proposal to change **Article XVII, Section 1 (j)**, which was submitted by Wilmington, Del., Local 2270. The new amendment says the president "shall cooperate with the business manager of the L.U., if the L.U. has one, and shall not work in conflict with him. Where the L.U. has no business manager, the duties normally performed by the business manager shall be performed by the president, who is then both president/business manager (except where the Local Union is affiliated with a Railroad System Council or has a General Chairman)."

Three delegates spoke in favor of the amendment, all agreeing that such a clarification of duties is necessary.

Delegates approved with little discussion an amendment concerning the appeals of members who have been found

guilty of misconduct, offenses or penalties in violation of **Article XXV, Section 12** by the local union trial board. The committee statement said the current language had led to a misunderstanding by some members that any complaint may be appealed.

Interpretations of the IBEW Constitution for more than 50 years have concluded that only issues arising from local union trial board actions may be appealed. Issues such as a member's rights under a collective bargaining agreement or questions arising out of a member's employment status with a local union cannot be appealed under this section. Members may still file complaints with their International Vice President.

An amendment to **Article XXVI, Section 7** concerning railroad electrical workers seeks to clearly and strongly emphasize the railroad jurisdiction of the IBEW. The proposed change, which was approved by the delegates, names wiremen, technicians, fixture men, armature winders, meter men, electrical inspectors, switchboard operators, generator, motor and substation attendants, electric crane operators, cable splicers, signal men and signal maintainers, power, telephone linemen and repairmen, ground men, electrical rail grinders, rail bonders, electrical bridge operators, battery men, radio and telecommunications workers, inside and outside electrical maintenance workers, and all other electrical workers employed by railroad companies.

The jurisdiction of railroad workers, according to the amendment, would include all electrical and communications work on the property and right-of-ways owned and operated by the railroad companies.

One delegate said the amendment would help facilitate a strong working relationship with the IBEW railroad branch and locals in the inside and outside branches.

Final Issue

This is your final issue of *Convention Highlights*. Information on the actions of the Convention's final session will be featured in the Convention Coverage section of www.ibew.org.

Delegate Action on Resolutions Begins *(Continued from page 1)*

versal, high-speed broadband connections, which will require a tremendous work force of trained IBEW members. The resolution calls for access to high-speed Internet service for all homes, schools and businesses. Delegates approved the committee's recommendation of concurrence.

Resolution No. 5 in its original form urged the 37th IBEW Convention to go on record in support of the "Buy American" campaign. To make the resolution all-inclusive, the committee offered a substitute resolution [Buy American & Canadian] proposing that the Convention go on record for the continued support of the campaign and work hard to educate the membership on the importance of supporting American and Canadian union-made products. Delegates approved the substitute resolution.

Resolution No. 6 pertains to the reimbursement for health care benefits for Canadian international officers and staff. The committee agrees with the concept that all officers and representatives should be treated with equality and fairness. However, the committee found this resolution confusing as to what particular issue(s) the submitting local unions were attempting to address. In researching this matter, the committee found that all officers and representatives, regardless of whether they are from Canada or the United States, receive the same level of benefits and are treated with equality and fairness. Therefore, the committee recommended nonconcurrence and the delegates agreed.

Resolution No. 8 relates to the IBEW Construction Jobs Board and proposes that Convention delegates go on record as recommitting support for the Jobs Board. It calls for all local unions with construction jurisdiction to post and update the Jobs Board on the first and third Monday of each month to include the number of referral applicants on the out-of-work lists for each classification of members, and post all current and upcoming job information. Delegates approved the committee's recommendation of concurrence.

Resolution No. 9 puts the Convention on record in support of the IBEW's time-

tested standard exclusive referral system and discourages call by name except under circumstances deemed acceptable by the International President and/or negotiated by his office with National NECA. The committee notes that call by name is contrary to the principles of the IBEW and is detrimental to the membership and the entire Brotherhood. The committee recommended concurrence. Delegates approved the resolution.

Resolution No. 10 relates to construction local union recall and proposes that the Convention go on record in support of the International President in negotiating with National NECA "optional verbatim language" relative to recall language and the elimination of furloughs. The committee agrees that it is in the best interest of the membership, as well as contractors, to have standardization of Category 1 Recall Language and discourages local union negotiation of recall language until such time as the IBEW and NECA come to a formal agreement addressing this issue. Delegates rejected the committee's recommendation of concurrence.

Resolution Nos. 11 and 34 pertain to construction local unions' "right to reject" and were combined by the committee. These resolutions address abuses that have occurred under the current Category 1 Language, which gives a contractor the right to reject without a reason or justification. The committee states that a contractor should provide justification for rejection anytime the contractor refuses employment to an IBEW member, especially if the member has never worked for that contractor. The committee encourages and supports President Hill in his efforts to negotiate revised Category 1 Language that eliminates this injustice. The committee supported concurrence, and delegates agreed.

Resolution Nos. 12 and 13, which pertain to support of the Davis-Bacon Act, were combined by the committee. The combined resolutions support the IBEW's continued fight to oppose repeal of the Davis-Bacon Act or any state or local level prevailing-wage statutes. The committee urged the continued fight for

the Davis-Bacon Act, even in the face of a national disaster such as Hurricane Katrina, and recommended concurrence with the combined and amended resolutions. Delegates agreed.

Resolution Nos. 14 and 15 address the importance of diversity and full inclusion within the IBEW. The committee combined the resolutions and proposed a substitute resolution that covers the essence of both. The substitute resolution calls for the IBEW's reaffirmation of its commitment to full participation, inclusion and equality for all members through goal setting, education and outreach programs. It calls for the IBEW to devise a strategic diversity plan to achieve full participation for all members at every level of the IBEW; and to achieve greater visibility for African-Americans, Latinos, Asian-Pacific Americans, native Americans, women and other underrepresented groups. Delegates approved the committee's recommendation of concurrence with the substitute resolution.

Resolution No. 16 puts the convention on record in support of the Girl Guides of Canada and the Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. The resolution was approved.

Resolution No. 17 pertains to the IBEW Hour Power Web site and puts the Convention on record urging members to ensure the continued success of *IBEWhourpower.com* by participating on the Web site. It urges all locals to add *IBEWhourpower.com* as a link to their Web site, and to order Hour Power materials for display at the union hall and distribution on the jobsite. The committee noted that the recently introduced Hour Power Web site has made outstanding progress in improving communications among construction branch members and recommended expanding it to all IBEW branches. Delegates approved the committee's recommendation of concurrence.

Resolution No. 18 supports an increase in the minimum wage and calls for the IBEW to continue its work at the state and local levels to enact new minimum wage and living wage measures, and to continue working for legislation to raise the federal minimum wage. The resolution was adopted.