



AFL-CIO

SYSTEM COUNCIL U-4--IBEW

REPRESENTING LOCAL UNIONS: 359, 622, 627, 641, 759, 820, 1042, 1066, 1191, 1263, 1908

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November 26, 1991

NEGOTIATION UPDATE

TO: All System Council U-4 Presidents

Dear Sirs, Brothers and Sisters:

A very wise man once said "if you forget the past you will live it again."

I suggest we look briefly at the past two negotiations between FPL and IBEW SC U-4. In our 1985 negotiations, the Company adopted an attitude of take it or leave it on their offer, with no room for movement. The majority of the Union membership responded with non-participation in Q.I.P. The Company then sued the IBEW I.O., SC U-4 Negotiation Committee and affiliated Local Unions for breach of a non-existent contract. Later, the Company reluctantly agreed to the assistance of a Federal Mediator to help resolve our differences. A subcommittee was established and an agreement was reached in a matter of days. (A Q.I.P. Agreement was negotiated at a later date)

In our 1988 Negotiations, the Company insisted that the Bargaining Unit was not entitled to the Special Voluntary Retirement Program offered to the non-Bargaining Unit and must bargain and possibly relinquish certain rights to attain this privilege. This attitude delayed and only added complexity to the existing problems. I might add here, that was the first down sizing and/or restructuring, which the Company also mishandled. They later settled the many claims of those who were misled about early retirement. After lengthy negotiations an agreement was reached that included replacing the vast majority of Bargaining Unit employees accepting SVRP, an additional 100 Transmission and Distribution employees, and an assurance the Company would utilize the negotiated changes to both parties benefit. The Company insisted they would provide better and more efficient service while affording the Union opportunities to gain more work and jobs.

The Fact is:

The Company added T & D Special Crews to reduce overtime. Period.

The Company did not meet its commitment to add the 100 T & D employees to the work force.

It was apparent after meeting with L. Kelleher first and then with S. Frank, this issue was of no particular importance to them. The Union once again was forced to utilize the grievance arbitration procedure in an attempt to attain what was agreed to in negotiations. What is even more revealing, is that this occurred shortly after a meeting of FPL Corporate Officers with the Union in which they insisted they would keep their commitments and work toward developing a relationship based on trust and respect.

The Company made no effort to offer the opportunities to the Bargaining unit to gain more work and jobs. Instead, they instituted a hiring freeze. Those responsible in this area of Management said "we did not have the authority to implement this action." They now say "we are now in charge, you can believe us."

Really!!

However, maybe it is just as well they were not in charge at that time, considering what is happening today.

Up to this point the "New Company's" attitude has not changed. They will keep commitments only when in their opinion, it would be beneficial to them.

Before our present negotiations began, the Company was holding meetings with Bargaining Unit employees to explain, in their words, the New Company and its structure. In my opinion, this was the first phase of dealing directly with the Union Membership in an attempt to sell their negotiation package. The Company since then has stepped up their propaganda campaign through the media and in house communications in an all to obvious attempt to discredit the Union Negotiation Committee. This is very close to, if not actually an unfair Fair Labor Practice.

The Company was made aware early on in negotiations they must consider the Union's proposal if we addressed their concerns. The Company adamantly and steadfastly refused.

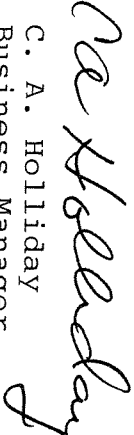
By assuming this stance, the Company knowingly put the Union Negotiation Committee in a situation that left them with little choice. Your Committee refused to recommend this unequitable package to the membership.

It should be no surprise that the Company completely ignored the Union's concerns and proceeded with their roll and layoff of Bargaining Unit employees. These Corporate decisions have mandated the Union's course of action.

The Company was advised on more than one occasion that the Union would use all available means to prevent a layoff or roll while contractors are performing Bargaining Unit work on FPL property. We have asked for relief through the Federal Courts and have a hearing date of December 3rd, 1991, in Broward County.

No one predicts the future with any great accuracy, if they could they would rule all conditions, but anyone can look at the past, what we must do is remember what the wise man said!

Fraternally,


C. A. Holliday
Business Manager

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