

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

LOCAL UNION NO. 1974



13306 STEVENS STREET • OMAHA, NEBRASKA 68137 • TELEPHONE (402) 895-4080 • FAX (402) 895-1828

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Frank P. Possinger	President
Marlene Wilson	Vice-President
Sparky BruningRed	cording Secretary
Mary Ellen Maxwell Fin	nancial Secretary
Donnie Trimble	Treasurer

Union Meetings

Third Friday of Each Month Dayshift — 8:00 p.m. Nightshift — 12:30 a.m.

Executive Board

Marlene Majeski, Chairman Mike Kelly Dan Lubash Charlie Newell Jim W. Perryman

> Newspaper Editor Dennis Fleming



August Meeting August 16, 1991

Attention Attention Attention Attention Attention

At this month's Union Meeting there is a most definite need to have open discussion in the following areas:

- ... Overseas contracts on telecommunciations products we manufacture in Omaha
- ... The Occupation Job Level Plan
- . . . A resolution, submitted by the EM-3 Council, to our International Office
- . . . Employee Involvement Teams and OUR Contract

Discussions and recommendations will also be made in the following areas:

- Changes in the monthly door prize drawings
- 2. Trainee and Trades Training Programs
- 3. Appointments to the Trades Committee

There will also be an update on our insurance program.

Please plan on attending and getting involved.

Thanks, Frank Possinger



Report Of The Vice-President

By Marlene Wilson Vice-President and Grievance Coordinator

Grievance Report

- 88-11 Level II's in Dept. 281 doing Level III work with temporary upgrade. Job should be Level III. Pote/- Job Grades Committee. Submitted to National on 5-15-90. (The National Grievance was held in Washington, D.C. on 7-18-90). Denied at National Level. Arbitration demand submitted. Waiting Arbitrator's decision.
- 90-23 Employee Dept. 581 denied payment of medical coverage. Maxwell/Possinger. Sent to 5th step.
- 91-03 Employees Dept. 593 employees loaned for over 4 weeks without agreement from the Union. Majeski/-Ryder. Settled satisfactory.
- 91-07 Employee Dept. 084 denied upgrade. Majeski/-Pote. Answer pending.
- 91-08 Employee Dept. 551 termination. Lubash/Kempkes.
- 91-09 Employee Dept. 592 Level I assigning work. Majeski/-Newell/Sims.
- 91-10 Employee Dept. 597 application issues. Majeski/-Trimble. Denied.
- 91-11 Employee Dept. 597 termination. Kelly. Denied.
- 91-12 Employee Dept. 581 application issue. Maxwell/-Pabian. Denied.
- 91-13 Employee Dept. 597 application issue. Majeski/-Trimble. Denied.
- 91-14 Employee Dept. 597 application issue. Majeski/-Trimble. Denied.
- 91-15 Employee Dept. 597 application issue. Majeski/-Trimble. Settled Satisfactory.
- 91-16 Employee Dept. 597 application issue. Majeski/-Trimble. Settled Satisfactory.
- 91-17 Employee Dept. 553 application issue. Lubash/-Armbrust. Settled Satisfactory.
- 91-18 Employee Dept. 553 application issue. Lubash/-Armburst. Settled Satisfactory.
- 91-19 Employee Dept. 553 application issue. Lubash/-Armbrust. Settled Satisfactory.
- 91-20 Employee Dept. 595 application issue. Bruning. Settled Satisfactory.
- 91-21 Employee Dept. 592 application issue. Majeski. Settled Satisfactory.
- 91-22 Employee Dept. 581 application issue. Majeski/-Barnes. Settled Satisfactory.

- 91-23 Employee Dept. 582 application issue. Trimble/-Barnes. Settled Satisfactory.
- 91-24 Employee Dept. 595 violation of overtime agreement. Bruning. Sent to 5th step.
- 91-25 Dept. 581 insubordination writeup. Newell. Sent to 5th step.
- 91-26 Dept. 581 insubordination writeup. Newell. Sent to 5th step.
 - Dept. 597 Attendance level removed. Majeski.
 - Dept. 597 Rescheduled vacation day. Majeski.
 - Dept. 582 reposting Level III. Pabian/Sam Martin.

Maternity Leave Lawsuit

By Marlene Wilson, Vice President

A copy of the Settlement Agreement reached in this case went to the attorneys representing Local Unions.

The next step in the process is for plaintiffs to send out notices to eligible class members. The notices will provide an explanation of the Settlement Agreement and inform recipients of the date and time of the "fairness hearing" before the court in Chicago.

This is the appropriate opportunity for class members to object to the Settlement Agreement before it is finally approved by the Court.

Health Care Reimbursement Accounts

Starting in January of 1991, the Company established and made available to active employees a Health Care Reimbursement Account to be used for the payment, with pre-tax dollars, of health care costs for employees and their dependents. Those expenses which could be paid by this Reimbursement Account include expenses for medical, dental and vision services for which you are not paid or reimbursed by the Company or another health care plan, and for which you could deduct those expenses on your federal income tax return.

Under this reimbursement account, eligible employees can elect, prior to the next succeeding calendar year, to exempt up to \$3,000 in wages for any such year from federal income and social security taxes and have such exempted wages transferred to an individual Reimbursement Account for health care expenses.

Employees can then submit claims for reimbursement of such expenses and your eligible claims will be paid up to the total amount of annual contributions even though the funds may not yet have been paid into the account through payroll deduction. Once an employee indicates to the Company, the amount they wish to have exempted from wages each year, the amount is irrevocable for such plan year unless there is a change in the employee's family status. Any unused pre-tax dollars remaining at the end of the year shall be forfeited by the employee and go into a separate account, the bulk of which will be credited to all program participants on a per capita basis, provided that such individuals participated in the Plan during the year of forfeiture.

Union Meeting Notice

The monthly membership meeting will be held Friday, August 16, 1991 at the Union Hall, 13306 Stevens Street. Second Shift Meeting: 12:30 a.m. First and Third Shift Meeting 8:00 p.m. \$100 Drawing.



Benefit News

By Mary Ellen Maxwell

On August 8 Edie Riester and I left for a meeting in Morristown, New Jersey to meet with the Joint Health Care Cost Containment Committee to discuss the many problems we are already experiencing with the new Health Care Network.

We had a list of 19 different problem areas that needed attention. One of the biggest problems is the referral system. It was agreed that when our DOC gives us a referral to a Network Specialist that we will have the freedom to say which off the list we would like to see. The referral papers may be given to us at the time of the visit to the DOC's office. We will not be required to make additional trips back to the DOC's office to pick up the referral. The communication will be between the DOC and the Specialist as to your treatment. The referral process will be corrected and will be as we told you it would be in the meetings. A letter has been sent out to the OB/GYN physicians instructing them in the referral process.

The issue on Chiropractors being accepted as In-Network is still under further discussion. We will let you know as soon

as we get an answer.

Greenwood, Nebraska has been placed into the PPP. If you live in this city and have not received notice of the change from the Network to the PPP, please contact one of us on the committee to help you.

There still haven't been any Psychiatric and Substance Abuse providers added to the Network. You will still continue to have coverage as In-Network as long as you go thru your

DOC or thru Bill Ivins, EAP Counselor.

We had quite a discussion on the problems with the new insurance cards and the quanity of cards that are being received. AT&T and Blue Cross were both aware of these problems and said that they are trying to correct the problem. If you have received additional cards and the DOC is DIFFERENT, please call the Helpline at 1-800-545-3661 to see what DOC they show for you. Some of the people have been having the change of DOC made and they didn't request the change. It can cause problems later for you if this happens.

Some of the DOC's are having you pay for the visit in advance and telling you you will get your money back when the insurance pays. You DO NOT HAVE TO PAY IN ADVANCE. If you have a DOC that requires the advance payment, please let one of us on the Committee know so that we can get it

stopped.

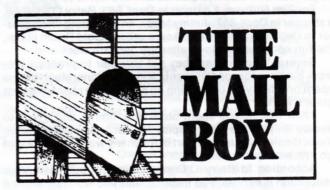
If you are having any problems with the Network System please be sure we are aware of the problem. We can not continue to get these problems corrected if we don't know

what they are.

I am in hopes that as a result of our meeting in New Jersey that the problems will be corrected very soon. We as a committee will continue to work for you to accomplish having the Health Care Network be as good as possible for you.

The Record

Wayne Grudle, Dept. 511, Father-in-law.
Doug Carlson, Dept. 784, Father-in-law.
R. John Anderson, Dept. 511, Father.
Pete Snawerdt, Dept. 551, Father.
Frank Conley, Dept. 595, Mother.
Linda Meyer, Dept. 596, Brother.
Barbara Wischmann, Dept. 596, Brother.
Mel Wilson, Dept. 581, Father.
Frank G. Wisniski, Dept. 511, Mother.
Al Benkis, Dept. 551, Grandmother.
Bob Agee, Dept. 584, Grandmother.
David Martin, Dept. 596, Mother.
Geri Agee, Dept. 596, Mother.
Dorothy Armendariz, Dept. 592, Grandfather.



Thank You

Thank you for your kindness on the loss of my Mother. Your thoughtfulness will always be remembered. Willa T. Shelton, IBU 596



July Winners

A.M. — Doug Carlson P.M. — Tom Van Dyke

Winners of tickets to Federation of Labor Get-Together

Bill Lorrenze, Jerry Rue, Ernest Wegolowski, Bob Belick

Winner of \$100 Door Prize
Everett Petersen

Local 1974 Members Light up the Skys

Although the 4th of July is past for most of us, for some it continues on several times each year.

What I'm talking about is that excitement we get while watching the sky light up with aerial bursts full of color and

earth shaking noise.

We're talking fireworks and for four I.B.E.W. members, that thrill continues on several times each year. Those members make up one of many small groups across the United States whose job it is to prepare, set up and fire off the large overhead displays that we all have come to enjoy.

For Tim Gillham, a painter in Dept. 583; Barry O'Donnell, a shipper in Dept. 557; Jimmy Mack, an insulating line operator in Dept. 551; and Pat McAcy, a retired Gold Room plater, the fun continues on long after the July 4th week-end.

Several times a year, they get together to produce firework displays for special events and occasions. Much time is spent on site laying out, wiring up and double checking each other's work.

Their free time is spent observing; timing and trying to decide on just the right display for each event. Setting up those displays is just one part of the many weeks of work that

go into each production.

According to Barry O'Donnell, "in this business, your reputation is earned, you mess up and you won't be around long." Much like a surfer spends his career looking for that perfect wave, these individuals spend their careers looking for that perfect performance; one where each blast occurs perfectly on cue and at the right height to give the full effect planned.

When asked how they all got involved, they responded that they've been friends for years and had always enjoyed fireworks. They used to put on personal shows trying to out do each other. Finally, they decided that instead of competing against each other, they would be better off to work together, and the alliance was formed.

They started going to fireworks conventions, picking up tips and secrets of the trade. They discovered that their fellow enthusiasts ranged from Bikers to Lawyers and even

Doctors.

Eventually, they met an electronics engineer who designed

and sold firing devices and they began.

They started helping out on displays and soon found themselves doing more and more of the displays themselves. One of their first major displays in the Omaha Area was spent working with eighteen other technicians for two weeks setting up the Woodmen of the World Anniversary display.



"PYRO FOUR" members (I to r): Pat McAcy, Tim Gillham, Jimmy Mack and Barry O'Donnell.



Although the display lasted only fifteen minutes, it required over two weeks to set up and prepare the performance.

Working through a firm called Harvey Productions that specializes in booking and setting up events, they soon found that not only their free time, but also their vacations were planned around the construction and performance of fireworks events.

When Omaha's Mayor, P.J. Morgan, started working on the concept of a welcome home celebration for area soldiers from Operation Desert Storm, the call went out for firework experts, Tim, Barry, Jimmy and Pat answered the call.



The show itself called "Heroes of the Heartland" was a large production with a \$30,000 aerial display set to finish the performance. A total of 1,780 shells ranging in sizes 3 to 8 inches in diameter were ordered. Firing tubes for each shell were constructed and placed in strategic locations to prevent damange from falling debris or premature exploding shells.

Once all set, the firing system was put in place. Over 50,000 feet of wire was strung from a main control panel to each launching tube.

Wires and equipment were checked and rechecked many times to prevent errors and mistakes.

Finally, on the day of the performance, the shells were placed in the tubes and the wait began. At the appropriate time, Barry O'Donnell puts on a headset connected to a firing cue tape. At each cue, he presses a button on the control panel in front of him and the show is on.

The "Heroes of the Heartland" show lasted a little over 3 1/2 minutes. To those there, it was in one word "LOUD."

Almost, 1,000 shells were the type most people refer to as BOOMERS.

Once the finale is over, there is still much work for the crew to do. As people are still leaving the gates of the Stadium, Barry and his crew set about removing unexploded shells from the tubes and removing structures damaged by the performance. Safety is always the number one concern as they make sure that the area is deemed safe before leaving for the night.

At morning's light, they're back again, removing and storing equipment for the next display.

To this special crew of employees and retirees of the Omaha Works, I would like to say "Thanks."

Your efforts and professionalism have given each of us and our families nights to remember for many years.

ECONOMY

Unionized workers profit from decided advantage

By John R. Oravec

The value of a union card continues to pay off in dollars and cents as well as benefits — especially for blue-collar workers.

Union workers hold a wide advantage in total compensation over non-union employees, ranging from \$5.20 to \$8.71 more an hour, according to data compiled in March by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and released in June.

Taking into account all workers in private industry, the union scale is 35 percent higher, the BLS figures show. For blue-collar workers, the union edge is 70 percent.

On the average, union workers earned \$19.77 an hour in pay and benefits, compared with \$14.57 for non-union workers. That is an advantage of \$5.20 an hour, or \$208 on a 40-hour week and \$10,816 for a year.

For blue-collar workers, the union advantage works out to \$8.72 an hour, BLS reported. Total compensation for union workers was \$21.12 an hour while non-union workers received \$12.40. Computed for a 40-hour week, union membership is worth an additional \$349. For the year, that translates into an \$18,138 advantage over the non-union blue-collar worker.

"In an economic sense, that makes union dues the best investment a worker can make," AFL-CIO economist John Zalusky said. "It's not only an investment in the context of a return for the hours worked, but it also provides a better level of health care for the worker and his family."

Zalusky noted that the union advantage would be even bigger if high-paid executives, including CEOs, weren't included in the non-union figures.

A union member receives almost twice as much in family benefits as the non-union counterpart, Zalusky pointed out. Overall, employee compensation in private industry averaged \$15.40 an hour in March. Wages and salaries constituted 72.3 percent of the total compensation, or \$11.13 an hour. Benefits made up the remaining 27.7 percent of the total, or \$4.27.

Among occupational categories, BLS said employers' average compensation costs were higher for white-collar workers at \$18.15 an hour than for blue-collar workers at \$15.15 and service workers at \$7.82.

Except for some managerial, professional and administrative jobs, union workers fared far better on the pay scales. They were also better-paid in most industry categories.

In straight wages and salaries, union workers earned an average of \$13.02 an hour, compared with \$10.78 an hour for non-union employees. In goodsproducing industries, union pay was \$13.85 an hour, compared with \$12.29 for non-union. In service-producing industries, the union rate was \$12.41, compared with \$10.32 for non-union.

A big edge for union workers is in benefits, which accounted for 34 percent of total compensation and just 26 percent for non-union workers.

For all union workers, the benefits package averaged \$6.75 an hour: \$1.43 for paid leave; 69 cents for supplemental pay; \$1.78 for insurance; 87 cents for retirement and savings; \$1.93 for legally required benefits, including social security, workers' compensation and unemployment insurance; and 5 cents for other benefits.

Non-union employers paid out an average of just \$3.79 an hour in benefits — a little more than half of what union employers provided. Their benefits package included 98 cents for paid leave; 29 cents for supplemental pay;

86 cents for insurance; 36 cents for retirement and savings; \$1.30 for legally required benefits; 1 cent or less for other benefits.

BLS found that overall employer compensation costs rose 2.9 percent from March 1990, even though the bureau's employment cost index (ECI) showed a 4.4-percent rise over the same period.

The two surveys represent different ways of calculating changes in employer costs, BLS said, but noted that the gap between the two measures is larger than ever.

The quarterly ECI data are used to show changes in compensation rates without the influence of employment shifts, BLS said. The smaller 2.9-percent increase suggests movement toward lower-paying jobs because of the recession. But the downturn also could cut another way, resulting from less-senior and lower-paid employees being laid off first.

Overall compensation costs varied by region, ranging from \$17.56 in the Northeast to \$13.68 in the South. There also were wide variations in total compensation among occupations, ranging from \$25.30 an hour in aircraft manufacturing to \$7.66 an hour for service workers in nonmanufacturing industries.

In other economic reports:

- The Treasury Department reported that the federal government ran up a record deficit of \$53.35 billion in May, widening the deficit for the first eight months of fiscal year 1991 to \$175 billion, up sharply from the \$151.5 billion for same period a year-ago. Revenues in May totaled \$63.6 billion, including payments of \$5.8 billion from allies to help pay for the Persian Gulf war, and were about \$6 billion below
- Durable goods orders rose 3.8 percent in May, following a 3.6-percent gain in April. Despite the back-to-back advances, the Commerce Department reported that new factory orders for the "big ticket" items were still running 6.1 percent below May 1990.
- Bankruptcy filings jumped by 26 percent in first quarter to 230,723, the American Bankruptcy Institute reported. The institute expects bankruptcies to increase in coming months and the number is likely to be 30 percent above last year.

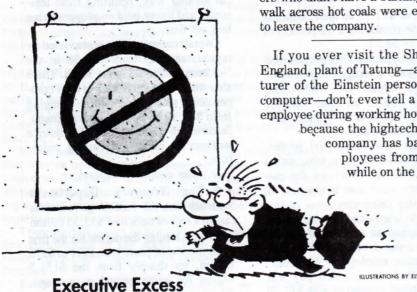
An Eye Opener . . .

The '80s Business Hall of Shame

Yikes, what a decade! During the '80s, the incomes of the wealthiest 1 percent of Americans rose 75 percent while the real wages of workers declined. The number of billionaires quintupled. The airline industry was deregulated, and ticket prices shot up. Ivan Boesky preached "greed is good," and for him, it was: Found guilty of insider trading, Boesky surrendered only a portion of \$2 billion reaped from stock scams. He kept the rest.

Yes, business pulled a few fast ones on us during the Decade of Greed. Here are some nominations we came across for the '80s Business Hall of

Shame.



American Motors Corp. could have learned something from the Japanese automakers who trimmed their top executives' pay when profits declined as the result of the strengthening ven in 1985. Even though American Motors piled up \$125.3 million in losses that year, it substantially boosted the salaries of its three top executives by at least 23 percent.

Nelson Bunker Hunt and his brothers Lamar and W. Herbert accumulated some 200 million ounces of silver in a daring scheme that drove silver prices from \$11 per ounce in 1979 to \$50 per ounce in January 1980. But then the market collapsed and with it went nearly \$3 billion of the Hunt family fortune. Mused Nelson Bunker Hunt, "A billion dollars isn't what it used to be."

Worker Treatment

Public Service Electric & Gas Co. of Newark, N.J., acted like Big Brother in 1981-82 by monitoring more than just customer calls to its service representatives. When the employees hung up the phone, company listening devices kept right on recording all their other in-office conversations.

Record Bar, Inc., a retailer of records and tapes, called on fire and brimstone to motivate its employees. The company persuaded hundreds of workers to bare their soles and tread barefoot across six-foot-long beds of glowing-red coals during a seminar in 1985. Workers who didn't have a burning desire to walk across hot coals were encouraged

If you ever visit the Shropshire, England, plant of Tatung-a manufacturer of the Einstein personal microcomputer-don't ever tell a joke to an employee during working hours. That's because the hightech computer

company has banned employees from laughing while on the job.

AT&T disputed a study in 1986 which revealed that the giant multibilliondollar corporation had paid no income

tax. AT&T cited a special provision of the tax code which states that a growing company may defer paying taxes until later years. Thus, a firm that continues to grow may defer paying taxes forever. AT&T contended that it's a

growing firm, so deferred taxes should be counted as taxes actually paid.

What was the classic inside deal of 1986? Kohlberg, Kravis, Robert & Co.'s \$45-million payment for advising itself. The firm, which has specialized in arranging leveraged buyouts, was a majority partner in the \$6.4-billion purcháse of Beatrice Companies. To help raise the money, KKR set up BCI Holdings Corp., which in turn agreed to pay KKR that whopping advisory fee.

Following in the footsteps of Ebenezer Scrooge, the New York outplacement firm of Bushnell, Cruise & Associates sent out press releases during the holiday season in 1984 claiming that the best time to fire someone is at Christmas and Hanukkah. The company said that executives shouldn't let themselves be overcome by "wellintentioned sympathy." Good will toward employees? Bah humbug!

In 1985, a Coca-Cola bottler in Oxford, Ala., suspended an employee for three days-for drinking Pepsi at Burger King during working hours. But a Pepsi bottler in Birmingham took care of the suspended Coke employee-by sending him a check to cover his lost wages.

Just days before Christmas 1987, more than 100 workers of the Okonite Co. in New Brunswick, N.J., were suspended-for wearing Santa Claus caps on the job. To management at the electrical cable plant, it was not the season to be jolly, claiming that holiday hats were "not appropriate for a business environment." Only after the employees chucked their gay apparel were they allowed to return to work.

Great Business Decisions

When Republic Steel Corp. held a dedication ceremony in 1983 for its new \$100-million plant in Cleveland, the company used a "Buy America" theme. What wasn't mentioned was that the plant was built from a German design with Japanese modifications and that much of the equipment was purchased in Sweden and West Germany. Altogether, Republic admitted, only 35 percent of the plant's equipment was American-made.

Commonwealth Edison Co. gained a killer image in 1986 when it tried to rid 300,000 starlings from roosting at its power plant in Kincaid, Ill. ComEd set up pesticide-loaded perches to poison the starlings on contact. Not only were 270,000 starlings killed but so were untold numbers of hawks, owls, cats, and dogs that ate the dead, poisoned birds. Outraged wildlife lovers began calling the power company ComDead.



at the nicest place in town

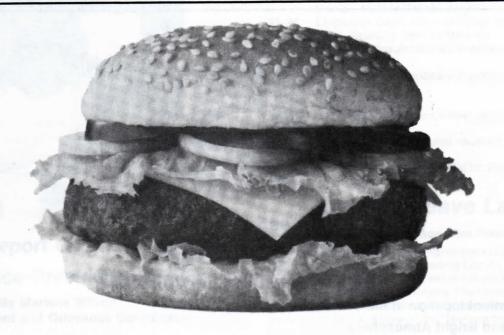
AK-SAR-BEN

August 29 through September 2

- *Convenient location in the center of the city
- *Light and Bright Atmosphere
- *Acres of well-lit FREE parking
- *Non-Stop FREE Entertainment Entertainment Tent Live Regional Bands. Music will run continuously.
- *Concerts by "The Byrds" and "Head East"
- *FREE CIRCUS Royal Australian Circus Which will have a high wire act, trapeze act, dare devil motorcycle act on highwire, thirteen Bengal Tigers, Elephants, Canine Act, Clowns, plus much more. This will run daily and will be FREE to the public.
- *Petting Zoo Hedrick's Petting Zoo offers a wide range of exotic animals. There will be over sixty-five exotic animals such as Llama, Zebra, Ostrich, Emu, Donkeys, Camels, Pygmy Goats, etc. This will run daily and will be FREE to the public.
- *Kiddie Kingdom Puppet Acts, Juggler Acts, and Childrens Museum etc. Dancers and Cloggers will run daily and is FREE to the public.
- *Gigantic Fireworks Display Saturday, August 31 and Sunday, September 1.
- *Nebraska's Largest Carnival
- *Daily Give-Aways Bikes, Skateboards, Games, Radios & TV
- *Arts & Crafts Booths Inside Open Everyday
- *Business & Industrial Displays Booths Inside Open Everyday
- *AFL-CIO Labor Booths Open Everyday
- *Military Displays Outside
- *International Food Garden Inside Authentic German Food, Barbecue Food, Funnel Cakes, Chinese Food, Mexican Food, Italian Food, etc.
- *Regional Dart Tournament
- *Bike Race
- *Education Day Friday, August 30th
- *Labor Day Parade Monday in Downtown Omaha

Five Days of Entertainment

Thursday	4 p.m 1:00 a.m.	Sunday	
Saturday	1 a.111 1.00 a.111.		



Mmmm. Looks Good.

(But what's in it?)

We call it the "Free Trade Special". Some folks' mouths water when they see it. But the *ingredients* could be something else. Based on past experience:

The Mexican beef could come to you without border inspection.

And documentation shows that could mean an increase in contaminants like metal, glass, feces and infection.

The Mexican produce could be full of DDT residues — up to 50 times more than the U.S government considers safe. That's right. Your lettuce and tomato could be laced with chemicals you haven't even thought about for 20 years!

Big Business says go for it!

They want to rush things along on a "Fast Track" of approval. Because the sooner America bites, the sooner they get to Mexico and open new plants!

And that's good for America, right?

Well, no. Because there's so much poverty in Mexico that Chrysler, IBM, Ford, Kodak, Kimberly-Clark, GM and other big American companies are able to pay workers there just \$1 an hour — without decent benefits, health safeguards or effective environmental regulations.

So American jobs go south of the border.

Hey, don't despair. The Big Guys promise those lost jobs will be offset by the enormous new market for American goods that those \$1/hour wages will create.

Don't buy it? We don't either. That's why it's time to tell Congress and the President:

STOP THE FAST TRACK TO MEXICO.



International Union, UAW