



ILLUMINATING THE PAST BRIGHTENING THE FUTURE

AN ILLUSTRATED HISTORY

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

Local Union 353 1903 — 2003

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Edward E. Seymour is the owner of *Solidarity Consulting*, a labour relations consulting firm for unions.

He is also a partner with Michael Lyons and Sherril Murray in *Resolutions Unlimited (2000)*, a firm that concentrates on resolving harassment and discrimination issues in the work place.

Ed serves as a nominee on arbitration boards for several unions including the Ontario Public Service Employees Union, the Canadian Union of Public Employees and the Communications Energy and Paper Workers Union.

Born in Port aux Basques, Newfoundland and raised in Sydney, Nova Scotia, Ed moved to Ontario in 1958. His trade union experience dates from 1962 when he became a member of Lodge 1246 of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers.

He received his Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of Waterloo in 1974 after attending classes during the day and working at night.

Ed was the Canadian Education and Publicity Director for the Textile Workers Union of America (now part of U.N.I.T.E.) from 1970 to 1977.

Following that he was the National Representative for the Communications Workers of Canada (now part of the Communications Energy and Paper Workers Union) in 1977 where his primary responsibility was education. He left to establish *Solidarity Consulting* in 1986.

This is Ed's second book, the first – *An Illustrated History of Canadian Labour 1800 – 1974* – was published through the Canadian Labour Congress in 1976.

Ed is married to Cynthia Tenute and currently lives in Hamilton, Ontario. He has five children, Donald (and Denise), David, Deborah, Darren (and Catherine) and Douglas, and is grandfather to Tyler, Emma and Henry.

Dedication



The late Wally Majesky was the main motivator behind the writing of this history book. Wally, long active in the labour movement, thought it was crucially important that the achievement of Local 353 be recognized.

This book is dedicated to the men and women who were, and are today, the members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 353. Most of them are not addressed by name in these pages but they are there just the same. Some of them never took an active day-to-day part in their union and some of them seldom participated in union meetings. Nevertheless, they support their union quietly and without fanfare.

Of course there are others who take a much greater role and many of their names are recorded in these pages. They lead. They inspire others. And, sometimes they frustrate those that are not quite so involved.

All are an integral part of the whole that is Local 353.

Through the last 100 years this organization has advanced the cause of the electrical worker in Toronto so it is now one of the most safety-conscious organizations in Canada. They have supported the advancement of education in both their trade and their union. They have made a tremendous contribution to their community as good community citizens, actively involved in many community organizations. They have earned the respect of the companies that employ

them as well trained and skilled at what they do.

Norm Purdy, a former President of the Electrical Contractors Association of Ontario, referred to one of his prized possessions in a taped interview for the 50th anniversary of the ECAO. A plaque, which hung on his bedroom wall, was presented to him on his retirement as well as an honorary membership in the IBEW. Also in another taped interview another contractor, John MacDonald, referred to the stability in Local Union 353 under the leadership of Bill Farquhar and Bill Hardy. MacDonald described Farquhar and Hardy as fair and objective, and straightforward in their dealings with management. He described them as men of integrity and principle who while philosophically at odds with the contractors, understood that both the contractor and the union had a common purpose to work together for what was in the best interest of both management and labour.

These compliments should not be taken lightly. They are deserved and are a tribute to the men and women of today and yesterday who have managed to achieve gains not only for themselves but for others as well. They have maintained the respect of their employers and these are not insignificant achievements.

Congratulations International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 353!

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



Wally Majesky initially approached me in early 2001, through *Resolutions Unlimited*, to undertake the research and the writing of a history of IBEW Local 353 for its 100th anniversary. Not being fully aware of what resources would be available I agreed and thought I would set about the project in two stages. I would do the research and if there was sufficient material to work with I would agree to write the history.

Unfortunately, the finished product is a work in progress. There are obvious gaps that must be filled another day. Any work of this magnitude is not the province of one individual, but rather the combined effort of many.

Certainly this work would not have been completed without the prodding of the late Wally Majesky who even when he approached me was very ill. Through his last days, his support for the project was unwavering and he expended precious energy in very difficult circumstances to have it accepted.

Len Zawaski was also enthusiastic about the initial project and was the first to direct me to the international office and gained access for me to the *Electrical Workers Journal* and the convention proceedings. While neither collection was complete, I was able to review the convention proceedings and the *Journal* back to 1946.

These resources proved to be most helpful, particularly a wonderful feature in the *Journal* – “*Local Lines*.” I was later able to review those back to 1918.

International Vice President Don Lounds and the entire staff of the

International Office in Toronto were also very helpful. They tolerated my interruptions to their routine while I was accessing resources, and allowed me to photocopy any material I saw as relevant. Thank you to Theresa Daly, Jim Spillane and Mike Nugent in the International Office in Washington in particular for their cooperation and assistance in locating photos and information.

Some of my research into the early years was done in the Hamilton Public Library, and I certainly appreciate that facility's staff who were most anxious to assist.

I would also like to thank F.W. Dietz for providing me with copies of *The Makins*.

The entire Local 353 executive was extremely helpful. This project was just one of the many demands on their time, and everyone tolerated my being a nuisance in my pursuit of information – occasionally at the most inconvenient of times.

I am particularly grateful to my wife, Cynthia Tenute, who read the very first draft and offered numerous insightful suggestions. Her patience, particularly when various deadlines for the work were approaching and I was becoming even more agitated, kept me centered. I am especially grateful and appreciative to my assistant, Shirley Mollon, who suffers stoically through my atrocious penmanship daily, but even more so through what turned out to be well over a thousand pages of hand-written material. She typed the first draft and offered many helpful suggestions. Quite frankly, she was indispensable to the project and without her it would never have been completed.



Interviews take a long time and, unfortunately, I did not interview nearly as many as I would have liked. Those I did, however, offered their own unique perspective on the union. They are: Joe Fashion, Bill Baird, Bob Barker, Ed Nott, Mike Yarkony, Larry Priestman, Bill Smith, George Campbell Jr., Herb Worthington and the late Steve Weslak and Mike Mungy. Many of them not only agreed to be interviewed but also welcomed me into their homes. They all spoke freely of their experiences in Local 353 and no one put restrictions on what I could write.

The Local 353 Executive – Joe Fashion, Business Manager; Robert Gullins, President; John Smith, Vice President; George Smith, Recording Secretary, as well as Dan Drummond, Robert White, Barry Stevens and Stephen Belanger, authorized the project in their capacity as executive board members. They were at all times helpful in their encouragement.

A special thank you must go to Ed Nott. Ed provided his assistant to edit this book only to lose her services for major portions of time through the editing process of this book. To him, I owe a tremendous amount of gratitude for his understanding, patience and cooperation in seeing this project to its conclusion.

The Editorial Board, consisting of Barry Stevens and Katherine Hoy, provided tremendous assistance in editing the book, selecting photographs, and readying it for publication. A special thank you to Stan Balding and Robert Rynyk for their help.

Ms. Hoy read every word with an extremely critical eye and was ruthless in wielding the “editor’s pen.” Her eye for detail sent me scurrying back to my resources time and time again for clarification. All of her efforts are very much appreciated because the book is a far superior product than it would have been without her input.

Towards the end while we were in the editing process, Business Manager Joe Fashion directed me to Bob O’Donnell of the Electrical Contractors’ Association of Toronto. Mr. O’Donnell had a number of tapes of conversations with contractors who had a long history in the industry. These proved to be a prized resource and helped immensely.

Thank you to the O.P.E.I.U. Local 343 – the staff that supports IBEW Local 353. A special thanks to Jennifer Burrows, Cindy Olders, Jacey Gill, Lori Fraser-Bursach and Donna Laidler.

Thanks must also go to Wayne Lawrence and Lee Caprio who worked in the background and picked up the slack to make sure that this project was completed.

Thank you to the entire staff
of
MPH

for making this project a top priority – Renata Bero-Koch in particular. Renata’s professionalism throughout was much appreciated. On behalf of Local 353 a sincere thank you.

I am most certainly aware that many Local 353 members contributed material from which the illustrations in this book were selected. In all, we were given thousands of photographs, only a few of which could be used; however, all of them will serve as an archive for future projects.

On a very personal note I want to thank my team that is supportive of all my projects. They are by seniority Nuns, T, Joe, Jane, Joey and Katie. And, of course, in our thoughts every day, Pa.

All credit for the publication of this book is due to the efforts of all the above-named. For any shortcomings or errors, I accept complete responsibility.

Enjoy *your* history!

FOREWORD



Just for a moment imagine your life without electrical power and how drastically different it would be. Personally, I can't say that I gave much thought to the impact electricity has on our lives before I undertook the responsibility of writing this history of Local 353 in recognition of its 100th anniversary. Since accepting that responsibility in 2001, and as I researched the materials available, I began to look at Toronto in a way very different from how I had viewed it in the past.

I began to look at some of the buildings that IBEW Local 353 members have been responsible for wiring over those 100 years since the union received its charter on February 2, 1903. I looked at them in terms of the number of miles of wire used, the number of electrical outlets. But that's the simple part.

I also began to wonder about the complexities of Skydome, the CN Tower and the many massive office complexes in the downtown core alone.

Even though I regard myself as a labour historian and take pride in my knowledge of trade union history, I was shocked (*no pun intended*) to discover that in the early years and prior to the unionization of the electrical industry, as many as 50 per cent of the electricians employed in the trade died on the job – largely because of inadequate safety measures.

Certainly the role the IBEW in general, and Local 353 in particular, played in the development of proper safe-

ty standards for themselves through the collective bargaining process, and through legislation for both themselves and the general public, has been impressive.

While researching this project I was reminded once again of what I already knew – **that the working men and women of this country still do not have a full appreciation of the major contribution they have made to the society in which they live.**

A great deal of fanfare ushers in each major construction project when it is announced. Puffed up politicians and corporate leaders, many of whom have never done a lick of physical work in their lives, trip over one another to don the hard hat, to turn the first sod, unaware of how ridiculous they look in their suits and ties. Yet those who actually do the job – all the trades, including electrical workers – receive virtually no recognition.

In the city of Toronto, and for practically every major project since 1903, an IBEW Local 353 member did the electrical work in a safe and efficient manner. They often not only install it but maintain it as well. They go about their business every working day not giving too much thought to the importance of their work – the efficient running of this city.

Many of the illustrations in this book were lying around in boxes, hidden and unseen for years. In fact, I was almost two years into the project before I laid eyes on many of them and discovered

they comprise a monument to the work done by the members of this local. They are priceless artifacts of a century of history and I hope that through the publication of this book, they have illuminated the past for you.

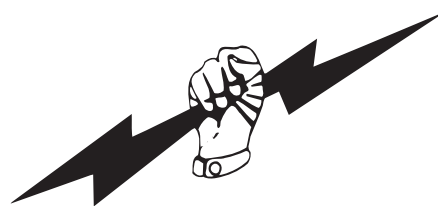
Local 353 is an organization that has contributed much to the goodness that is Toronto. In seeking safety standards for themselves, they gained them for everyone; in seeking pensions for themselves, they gained acceptance for the concept that everyone deserves one; in providing health and welfare benefits for their own, they gained acceptance and helped win them for everyone.

The labour movement, including IBEW Local 353 and its members, are often depicted by the right-wing press and political parties (like the Alliance) as greedy. Yet it isn't labour leaders and members who shower themselves with \$3000 meals and \$60,000 two-week vacations disguised as business trips for themselves and their families at taxpayers' expense.

It has been said that the more things change, the more they remain the same. Approximately 100 years ago, when the dawn of electrical power was in its infancy, politicians and corporate leaders debated who was going to control electricity – the public or the private sector. The politicians and business leaders of that era, with a far greater sense of social responsibility than many today, opted in favour of public ownership. To them it was insane to do otherwise.

Today, politicians and corporate leaders are striving to dismantle and destroy the system that has served us so well.

I hope this short history of Local 353 will at least convince those who are reading a work on labour history for the first time to question the state of things as they are today and demand an end to the trend towards the privatization of those services fundamental to all of us: transportation, Hydro, hospitals, health-care, water supply, education and homes for the elderly.





CHAPTER 1

THE BEGINNING



For any organization to survive long enough to celebrate its 100th anniversary is a remarkable achievement. This is no less true of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union 353. When Local 353 received its charter on February 2, 1903, the Brotherhood had already been in existence in the United States for 12 years and had, in 1899, changed its name from the National Brotherhood of Electrical Workers to the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

This change occurred in response to a request from Canadian electrical workers for unionization within the American organization – a request that was turned down by convention delegates on several previous occasions.

When Local 353 received its charter, the IBEW was still experiencing grave difficulties that threatened its very survival. Few would have predicted that one hundred years later Local 353 would be celebrating its formation.



Stolley's Dance Hall – 1891



The National Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (NBEW) held its first convention in a small room above Stolleys Dance Hall in St. Louis, Missouri from November 21 to 28, 1891. Ten delegates attended representing a total of 286 members. They were **Henry Miller** – elected as the first president; **James T. Kelly** – elected first secretary-treasurer and **William Hedden** – all from St. Louis; **C. J. Sutter** from Duluth, Minnesota; **James Dorsey** from Milwaukee, Wisconsin; **Thomas J. Finnel** from Chicago, Illinois; **E. C. Hartung** from Indianapolis, Indiana; **F. J. Heizleman** from Toledo, Ohio; **Joseph Berlovitz** from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and **Harry Fisher** from Evansville, Indiana.

This small group of pioneers had high expectations for what could be

accomplished following the launch of the organization. Unfortunately, these expectations were not fulfilled. “At such a diminutive showing there naturally existed a feeling almost of despair,” said Henry Miller. “Those who attended the convention will well remember the time they had hiding from the reporters, trying to make it appear that we had a great delegation.” The facade was successful and newspapers reported that nearly one hundred men took part in the proceedings.

The seeds for that convention had been sown a year earlier when electrical workers – including linemen and wiremen from all over the United States – were gathered at an exposition held in St. Louis. They were there to wire the buildings and exhibits and they discussed their working conditions that for all of them



The Original 10 – 1891

were 12-hour days seven days a week earning 15 to 20 cents per hour. Earning \$2.50 per day was seen as an excellent wage for wiremen.

There was no apprenticeship training and safety standards were non-existent. In many locals the death rate for linemen was one for every two hired. For these workers unionization was the answer. They sought assistance from the American Federation of Labor (AFL) who assigned the task to organizer Charles Kassel. As a result, they were chartered as Local 5221 of the AFL. It quickly became apparent, however, that small, isolated locals were not effective bargaining units and could accomplish little on behalf of their members. For this reason the electrical workers were convinced of the need for their own national organization with jurisdiction over the entire industry. Once that decision was made the first convention was convened.

Because the new organization was completely without funds, the St. Louis local offered them a \$100 loan to finance their launch. The founding convention set dues at 10 cents per month and established a death benefit not only for the members but also their spouses.

The same year the national Brotherhood was founded, Pope Leo XIII issued a Papal letter – the *Encyclical Rerum Novarum* – defending the dignity of labour. He advised Catholic workers to form trade unions through which they could advance social reform.

The forward to the first Brotherhood constitution read in part: “In this great age of invention, men are apt to be so dazed by the natural splendor which surrounds them that they forget the wage worker, whose labor has produced it, and as a conse-

quence the men who have placed our country foremost in material and intellectual progress, are today poorer than ever before.”

To rid the trade of large numbers of unskilled electricians the first constitution established an apprenticeship system. A minimum of three years training under the direct supervision of a journeyman was required before an applicant could become eligible for membership. The constitution also established a limit on the ratio of apprentices to journeymen that an employer could employ. The apprentice was also required to pass an examination before being admitted into membership. It was through these measures that the Brotherhood expected to elevate the standards of its members.

Within one month of the founding convention President Henry Miller sought, and was granted, a charter to the AFL. The charter, dated December 7, 1891, granted the new union jurisdiction over every branch of the electrical trade and industry.



Samuel Gompers



In 1891 the average size of an American family was four members, and the average age at death was 31.



Upon signing and presenting the charter, AFL President Samuel Gompers said, “there can be no doubt but what with the general application of electricity for so many purposes and its possibilities yet unknown the...Electrical Workers will exert a vast influence upon the industrial problems of the future.”

The newly formed union commenced its life, but progress was painfully slow. At the second convention in Chicago in 1892 there were 1,600 members in 43 locals and only 24 locals were represented. By 1893 the union had expanded as far west as San Francisco and as far south as New Orleans. They were represented in 63 locals!

At the 1893 convention in Cleveland, Ohio the delegates voted to hold the convention bi-annually. The annual event was a financial burden that the organization couldn't afford. Because of an economic downturn in 1894, the 1895 convention in Washington, DC had only 11 delegates representing eight of the 49 locals still in good standing.

The 1895 convention mirrored the humble beginnings of the founding convention with the exception being the union now carried a heavy debt load. Secretary-Treasurer Kelly reported he was forced to mortgage his household goods to keep the organization afloat. He believed that the major cause for the financial difficulties the union faced was the constant struggle to keep up with death benefit claims. Survival of the organization in those circumstances was impossible and the delegates knew that measures had to be taken to revive the fledgling union. In 1895 the executive board voted to discontinue the exhaustive death benefits. Despite this the locals demanded that the claims be paid.

The death benefits problem resulted from the fact that workplace safety was virtually non-existent. Safety equipment, electrical codes and protective equipment were unknown. If a worker suffered a serious injury or died as a result of a workplace accident, the employer did little to compensate the worker or his family.

Eugene V. Debs – a charter member of the brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and the American Railway Union – addressed the plight of the labour movement in 1894. “Ten thousand times has the labor movement stumbled and bruised itself. We have been enjoined by the Courts; assaulted by thugs; charged by the militia; traduced by the press; frowned upon in public opinion; and deceived by politicians,” said Debs. “But notwithstanding all this and all these, labor is today the most vital and potential power this planet has ever known, and its historical mission is as certain of ultimate realization as is the setting of the sun.”

It wasn't long before Canadian electrical workers, hearing what was transpiring in the United States, sought to be included in the new organization.

At the 1897 convention in Detroit the question of accepting Canadian locals into the Union was raised and put to a referendum vote of the membership. For several years NBEW leaders had encouraged local unions to continue their organizing efforts with like-minded electrical workers in Canada; however, solidarity with Canadians was not forthcoming. The resolution was rejected.

This was not the end of the matter. After the 1897 convention some local unions tested the waters by helping to organize electrical workers in Canada.

The November 1898 *Electrical Worker*, the NBEW's publication, reported that:

“Mr. James Burgess, a member of Local 41, Buffalo, New York, has succeeded in forming a local of electrical workers in Toronto, Canada, and our Brothers across the water are very desirous of having the Brotherhood made international...It would not do to have rival organizations, they would jeopardize each others' chances of success. But for us all to join in one body would be of mutual benefit to all concerned.”

NBEW general secretary H. W. Sherman presented his argument for formal unification at the 1899 Convention in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. “The time has come...when the American eagle and the British lion are friendly, when Old Glory and the Union Jack are flowing side by side, representing the two greatest nations on earth,” said Sherman. “We should extend our hands and say, Come with us, your fights shall be our fights, your defeats ours, and your victories ours.”

He argued that the 1897 rejection of Canadian electrical workers was “...the most serious mistake made at [that] convention because a great many men in our Brotherhood who, in the past, could not see any benefit in an International Organization, today are the most ardent advocates of it. I would like, therefore, to see our organization made, The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.”

IBEW Grand President Thomas Wheeler appointed John H. Maloney as the Vice President with jurisdiction over Canada. H. J. Hurd, from what would

later become Local 114 in Toronto, was elected Vice President at the 1901 convention.

Any misgivings or doubts anyone might have had about Canadian electrical workers' willingness to join an “American Union” would be dismissed in short order. After only a few years, locals from many provinces in Canada joined the newly formed IBEW.

EARLY ORGANIZING SUCCESSSES

Local 93 in Ottawa was the first Canadian local to join the parent organization, but its existence as a Canadian local was short lived. Chartered in December 1899 the local survived as a Canadian local for fewer than three years.

Hamilton's local – Local 105 – continues to exist to this day. Chartered in January 1900 difficulties experienced by the local required its re-organization in September 1914. It was declared defunct in January 1919, but was re-chartered in May 1928.

Local 111 was chartered in Montreal, Quebec in March 1900 but was defunct by December of that year. The local re-surfaced in Denver, Colorado in December 1907.

The first Toronto local to be chartered suffered the same fate. Chartered in April 1900 Local 114 was defunct as a Canadian local by December 1908.





Many of its members would become members of Local 353.

Canadian locals continued to join the IBEW. Local 120 of London, Ontario received its charter in April 1900 and was defunct by July 1906. It was re-chartered in February 1907 and reinstated as per a tentative agreement in November 1914. Local 120 remains active to this day.

Local 166 of Winnipeg, Manitoba was chartered on March 9, 1901, but was defunct as a Canadian local by December 1908.

The charter for Local 174 was issued in St. John, New Brunswick in May 1903 and to Niagara Falls, Ontario in April 1916. Local 174 also became defunct as a Canadian local.

Local 211, Windsor, Ontario received its charter in November 1900 and collapsed by November 1902.

Local 213 in Vancouver, British Columbia underwent several changes. It was issued its charter in November 1902, reinstated under a tentative agreement in April 1914, revoked in August 1919 and reinstated in May 1920. Local 213 continues to be an active local of the IBEW.

Halifax, Nova Scotia was issued its charter in January 1902. Local 224 folded as a Canadian local by December 1902.

Local 230 in Victoria, British Columbia was chartered in February 1902. It was inactive from May 1902 and was reinstated under a tentative agreement in March 1914.

Local 249 in St. Catharines, Ontario was chartered in April 1902 and subsequently became defunct and was re-issued in Ottawa, Ontario in July 1911.

It also waned as a Canadian local but experienced several re-births in U.S. localities.

Finally, Local 353 in Toronto, Ontario was chartered on February 2, 1903. Local 353 – like many other Canadian locals – collapsed in 1908. Local 353 was reinstated under a tentative agreement in September 1914, and, of course, remains very active today.

Of the 14 charters issued to Canadian locals up to the time Local 353 received its charter, only five remain today: Local 120 in London, Ontario; Local 105 in Hamilton, Ontario; Local 213 in Vancouver, British Columbia; Local 230 in Victoria, British Columbia; and, not surprisingly, Local 353 in Toronto, Ontario.

This illustrates the rapidity with which Canadian electrical workers embraced the IBEW, but also reflects the fragile nature of the union. The briefness of the existence of the locals, and the haste with which local numbers changed is the result of a number of factors.

Firstly – while electrical workers readily accepted the union, the price paid often meant immediate dismissal for those who did so. This was especially true during economic downturns. Secondly, many employers refused to negotiate with the union – which still happens in the U.S. today – and many of the members lost heart.

Prior to 1903 the records for each year show that the membership in good standing consisted almost entirely of the new members signed within the year. In some cases more new members were initiated during the year than there were members in good standing by the year's end.

In December 1903 – the year Local 353 was chartered – the total membership of the entire union was 9,222, whereas 18,341 new members were initiated in the previous 12 months.

In that same year the members voted to pay a full-time salary to International President Frank McNulty so he could devote all his efforts to the affairs of the Brotherhood.

While attempting to organize and maintain membership in the United States was difficult at best, it was no less so in Canada. Business was quick to pounce on the existence of U.S unions promoting the unionization of the Canadian work force.

Additionally, the safety of workers in Canada was a source of major concern for unionists. In the 1898 Ontario Factory Inspectors' report, Robert Barber, inspector for the western district of Ontario, made numerous recommendations concerning the prevention of accidents and provided details of the accident rate during the year.

Barber specifically highlighted the actions of the British government concerning the improvement of conditions for workers engaged in dangerous trades and he referenced the management of electrical generating works. The report contained a considerable amount of information on the control of electricity and the precautions to be adopted to guard against accidents. Instructions were provided for the prompt application of artificial respiration as a possible means to revive people who were suffering from electrical shock in particular.

The 1900 report of the Ontario Factory Inspectors recorded 394 accidents of which 22 were fatal. As reported in

the *Globe* newspaper on April 29, 1901:

“Carelessness is a favorite explanation, but if one looks for the cause of the alleged carelessness it will generally be found in the high pressure that creates a demand for speed in modern industry. The workman is admonished by his foreman or employer to take sufficient time to ensure safety, to make everything perfectly secure, and to avoid accidents. At the same time he is admonished by the very conditions under which he works to sacrifice all things, safety included, to speed for he knows that sloth is the unpardonable sin, that if his day's work does not show satisfactory results, he will be forced into the ranks of the unemployed without further inquiry.”

Mr. Robert Glockling, a member of the legislative committee of the Trades and Labour Council of Toronto, spoke to a gathering of young Liberals in June 1899. In a prepared text he outlined labours demands. His speech, covered at some length in the *Globe*, is as relevant today as it was when first presented over one hundred years ago. “Labor demands and insists upon the exercise of the right to organize for self and mutual protection,” said Glockling. “That the life and limbs of the wage-worker shall be regarded as sacred as those of all others of our fellow human beings, that an injury or destruction of either by reason of negligence or maliciousness of another shall not leave him without redress simply because he is a wageworker.”

“The trade union, taking normal conditions as its point of view, regards the workman as the producer of the





wealth of the world,” continued Glockling, “and demands that as long as the wage system may last, shall be sufficient to enable him to support his family in a manner consistent with existing civilization, and all that is required for maintaining and improving physical and mental health and self-respect of human beings.”

He regarded the reduction of hours as one of labours important goals, a proposition he justified by alluding to the remarkable inventions and discoveries that made producing wealth easier than ever before, not the least of which was the improvement of tools and the consequent division of labour.

“The force of electricity so little known a few years ago, is now applied to an enormous extent,” said Glockling. “If, as it has often been said, cheap labor and long hours are necessary to a country’s prosperity, commercially and industrially, China should necessarily be at the height of civilization.”

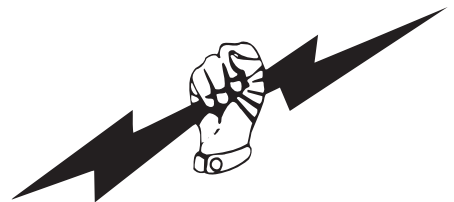
Even before Local 353 was chartered, light and electricity and their enormous potential were the focus of numerous articles in the Toronto newspapers.

The visit of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall to Toronto in 1901 occasioned great fanfare. The *Globe* reported that the provincial parliament building “is being outlined throughout the massive front walls with electric lights, of which 5,000 will be required... At Osgoode Hall and Government House outline decorations for the fronts of the buildings are also being put up, in the former 3,000, and in the latter 600 lights being required.”

J.J. Wright of the Toronto Electric Light Company also stressed that, “the company had notified the public that no further contracts for lights could be made.” Every wireman was busily employed and every firm in the city was experiencing the same difficulty.

Many large private financial and commercial institutions adopted artistic designs to illuminate their buildings for the visit. Among those was the Bank of Commerce building, The Dominion Bank, The Queen’s Hotel, The Robert Simpson Company, Canada Life, Canada Permanent, the Grand Trunk Railway and the Canadian Pacific Rail offices.

Given that the visit was in 1901, it appears that electricians were fully employed. However, a comparison of wages for wiremen in selected cities shows that earnings for an eight-hour day were \$2.50 in Toronto compared with \$4.00 in Chicago, \$2.75 in Duluth, \$3.50 in New York and \$3.00 in Newark.



CHAPTER 2

1903 — 1912, GROWING PAINS



Local 353 was initially chartered as a local for outside wiremen, while Local 114 was established for inside and outside wiremen. Since Local 114 did not survive the Reid-Murphy split, Local 353 eventually became an inside wiremen's local.

The March 1903 *Electrical Worker* recorded that Local 353 met the first and third Monday of each month at the Occident Hall at the corner of Queen and Bathurst streets. The President was D. Mathieson, the Recording Secretary was John S. Fyfe and the Financial Secretary was Chris Walker. The same issue showed that \$37 was received from the Local for initiation fees. And the Grand Treasurers report recorded \$24.63 for organizing expenses from H.J. Hurd for organizing Local 353. A referendum vote conducted by the Local on whether the location for the upcoming convention should be changed was defeated, and Local 353 voted with the majority.

Throughout the years IBEW's Canadian membership, including its Toronto members, have been involved in controversy within the IBEW itself, and within the labour movement generally.

When Local 353 was chartered, the King Edward Hotel was under construction and the hotel opened informally on May 11, 1903.

During construction of the King Eddy, the electrical workers became involved in a jurisdictional dispute with

other labour organizations. At a March 1903 meeting of the Toronto Trades and Labour Council, delegates representing the electrical workers reported that two labourers were working on the new hotel as full-fledged mechanics. The electrical workers' union complained to the contractor responsible for putting in a portion of the electrical appliances and the complaint resulted in the discharge of the two men. Nevertheless, the matter did not end there. The two men were engaged by another contractor and placed on the same job. Representatives of the Building Trades Council met with the contractors in an effort to resolve the problem.

Less than a week later electrical workers went on strike because steamfitters were performing what they considered to be their job. The 1903 strike threatened a full stoppage of all work on the hotel. The 20 electrical workers involved, employees of Bennett & Wright, went on strike because the Canadian General Electric Company had three non-union workers installing conduit on the project. The steamfitters claimed it was work that fell under their jurisdiction and the electrical workers claimed likewise.

The dispute was eventually referred to the executive of the AFL. AFL president Samuel Gompers notified the steamfitters that they should immediately cease laying the conduit – an order that the steamfitters ignored.

In 1903 a room at the King Edward Hotel was \$3.00 U.S. per night.



At a special meeting called by the electrical workers the day following the walkout, it was reported that the dispute had not been resolved because the contractors had refused to remove the steamfitters. The two unions agreed to submit the dispute to a panel composed of the president of each of the unions and a third person to be mutually agreed upon.

Messrs. Bennett and Wright – who had the contract for the installation of fittings for gas, steam and lighting for the hotel – requested the intervention of Robert Glockling who was secretary of the Ontario Labour Bureau.

Bennett and Wright wanted the dispute resolved as quickly as possible. Glockling became involved in efforts to resolve the differences by meeting with H.J. Hurd, Canadian Vice President of the IBEW. Hurd had recently returned

from Washington where he submitted the details of the dispute to the IBEW executive council. Hurd proposed that Glockling submit the question to the AFL executive, scheduled to meet in Toronto in mid-April.

The AFL executive addressed the issue and decided that conduit work was to be performed by IBEW

The request for the intervention of the AFL in a dispute involving two of its affiliates within Canada was a natural proposal for the Canadian leadership to make, and was testimony to the sense of brotherhood that existed between the Canadian and American memberships. However, everyone in the labour movement did not accept this sense of brotherhood. It was most certainly not acceptable to the manufacturers who had to contend with the presence of international unionism.

LOCAL UNION NO. 353.

Toronto, Can., July 2, 1903.

Editor Electrical Worker:

We are what you may call a little green at union work, but our Brother Hurt (sic) is with us now and then, and we are doing all right. We are doing, I would say, good work.

We started about five months ago with about thirty-seven or thirty-nine members, and we are receiving new members nearly every meeting night. Our membership, I think, is about ninety now, and are still coming in.

Just three weeks ago I received three applications from Stradford, so things look all right.

As I am connected with the B. T. Company of Canada, for a good many years, I must say the company is very busy now, and will be for some time to come.

We are having thousands of feet of cable in stock ready for new construction, and as far as I can see, we are very short-handed.

There are number of gangs on trunk line work, and a number of gangs at local work in this city.

We have about two hundred linemen in the city of Toronto, and I hope they will all be in 353 before long. We are getting them slowly.

Members of 114 are also doing well, but we would like to hear a few words from No. 17, Detroit, as I know there are some of our old mates there.

Fraternally yours,

H. W. Link, Press Secretary.

(Local 353 first contribution to "The Electrical Worker")

It should not be forgotten that it was Canadian trade unionists that approached the AFL or its affiliates to organize in Canada. By 1902, the divisions between nationalists and internationalists were apparent when the Trades and Labour Congress convention expelled unions for dual membership resulting in the formation of the all-Canadian National Trades and Labour Congress in September of that year.

The newly formed organization claimed that the AFL and its affiliates had secured the Dominion Trades and Labour Congress for its own use. According to the National Trades and Labour Congress this meant that unions belonging to the American federation had no choice but to submit to direction from international officials. Alternatively, they could form a federation of purely Canadian unions equal to those in the United States, Great Britain or one of any independent nation. The main objections to the AFL organization was that strikes were caused by and carried on by labour officials from the United States to the disadvantage of Canadian enterprise. Interestingly, the arguments put forth by the National Congress were markedly similar to those of the Toronto Employers' Association.

At the Toronto Employers' Association first annual meeting held in Toronto in April 1903, secretary E.W. Day stated, "over 25 branches of business in Toronto were represented, an aggregate of whose employees is greater than all Trade Unions in Toronto."

Day defended the formation of the new organization as being necessary because of the rapid development of organized labour and its attitude towards society generally. He predicted that within two years every town and city would have an employers' association founded

on the principles of justice to all and favouritism to none.

"We have only to look with a calm and unprejudiced eye at the labor horizon," said Day, "we are compelled to enquire, 'Is the great labor union movement slipping from the control of the real leaders and best-thinking men, and whither is the movement drifting?'"

He took exception to a resolution which was debated but not passed at the AFL convention; it read:

"Where, capital being the product of all the toilers of the human race, and as wages can never be regarded as the full equivalent for labor performed, and since it is the mission of the trades union to protect the wage-earner against oppression and to fully secure the toilers' disenfranchisement from every species of injustice; therefore be it resolved that this 22nd annual Convention of the American Federation of Labor advise the working people to organize their economic and political power to secure for labor the full equivalent of its toil and the overthrow of the wage system and the establishment of an industrial co-operative democracy.

He believed the resolution was a trend towards socialism or something worse. "We in Canada have not reached that dreadful state of affairs that prevails in many parts of the United States," said Day, "and surely we all hope we never will." It was alleged that our own labour unions were assuming a dictatorial attitude that if pursued would lead to their very undoing.





The presentation must have left one to wonder if the speaker or his audience were aware of the contradictions in his position. On the one hand he lambasted the AFL for even discussing a resolution that was not adopted. On the other hand he condemned the labour movement for having the nerve even to discuss it. As long as labour was organized and capital was not, the struggle was thought to be an unequal one resulting in unfair settlements – in the best interests of neither labour nor capital.

Management was not the only group to address the presence of international unions. It was also a subject of discussion when the AFL executive paid a fraternal visit to the Toronto Trades and Labour Council.

Paddy Draper, President and Secretary of the Dominion Trades and Labour Congress, declared that Canadian trade unionists believed in international organization as long as Canadian unionists were given proper representation on the executive and had absolute and complete autonomy.

AFL Secretary Frank Morrison said his organization gave all local branches complete liberty of action on local affairs as long as they sought to make conditions better for workers.

Speaking to the accusation that strikes in Canada were caused by the United States, AFL President Samuel Gompers said he would gladly submit the constitutions of every international union to anyone who chose to investigate. He was confident that none of them would find any power in those constitutions to initiate or authorize a strike. That power “rested with the local union,” said Gompers. “And further, no strike can take place without the consent of the gov-

erning bodies, and any strike vote must be preponderatingly in favor before it would be allowed.”

The executive endorsed the following resolution about Canadian trade union interests:

“(1) That the A. F. of L. will make it a qualification of issuing charters to Trades and Labor (sic) Councils in Canada that they will affiliate with the Trades and Labor (sic) Congress, and the central bodies throughout the Dominion now holding A. F. of L. charters will be instructed to take similar action.

“(2) That trade affairs in the central Trades and Labor (sic) Councils in question shall be transacted along the lines of international trades unionism.

“(3) That all local unions in the Dominion of Canada affiliated through international unions or holding charters direct from the American Federation of Labor be notified to become affiliated with the Trades and Labor (sic) Congress of Canada for the purpose of making it a more potent factor to secure the adoption of favorable legislation by the members of the Federal and Provincial Parliaments.”

At that time over two million wageworkers were affiliated with the AFL. Even so, the issue of American dominance of Canadian labour was one that wouldn't go away. In a report to the federal government, representatives of manufacturers and employers asserted that labour men in Canada were virtual slaves, subject to the dictates of tyrannical delegates from the United States.



The manufacturers pressed the government to deal sternly with what they regarded as unlawful interference by means of strikes. They felt such action should be made a criminal offence punishable by fines and imprisonment.

The unrelenting pressure from business and industry was the motivating force behind the Toronto Building Trades Council June 1903 resolution:

“Whereas an attack on organized labor has been made by one of our city representatives, Mr. W. R. Brock, M.P., in the House of Commons, in which, he made the charge that (1) our local unions are controlled and directed by citizens of another country; (2) that trades unions are irresponsible bodies before the law, having “neither souls to be damned nor bodies to be kicked;” (3) we are compared to men who shoot from behind hedges, and disappear when attacked.

“Resolved that we regard this attack as untruthful, insulting and uncalled for. The charge that Canada’s local unions affiliated with international bodies are controlled by aliens is not true to facts...We derive assistance which would be impossible to us were we not members of international societies.”

The Toronto Building Trades Council refuted the claim that outsiders controlled local unions. They claimed they had full control over their own affairs and that international union officers only rendered assistance when requested.

The Loughheed Bill – named after the senator who introduced it – was expanded to include employers and prevented the agent of any organization from counselling a lockout.

The AFL contributed a total of \$500 and \$445 was contributed by international and national unions to assist the efforts of the Trades and Labour Congress to defeat the Loughheed Bill.

The question of national versus international unions became part of an address by British MP Keir Hardie – a socialist and prominent labour leader. “...I see no reason why the influence of the American unions should affect the organization of labor in Canada,” said Hardie. “I don’t see why there should not be one union for the whole of the American continent. The trusts developing on both sides of the boundary line and the interests of the workers both in Canada and the United States have so much in common that whether they are organized in one union or not they are bound to come to some common understanding.”

Then, as now, these types of debates and disagreements within the broader public sphere had influence within the labour movement itself. So it should not be surprising that there would be division within the house of labour around such issues.

In 1905 the building trades severed its connection with the Toronto District Trades and Labour Council. It re-established the old Building Trades Council with twenty-five locals in total.

In March 1908, building trades council locals for both national and international unions gathered. The international unions were in the majority and



they barred the national union representatives from membership and proceeded to organize the Building Trades Council as a purely international body.

Those who supported the nationalists simply went to another room where their own Trades and Labour Council was meeting and decided that they too would make strenuous efforts to form a national building trades council or at least “kill the rival organization.”

IMMIGRATION

Another issue of concern for the trade unionists was immigration and the exploitation of new immigrants as a source of cheap labour. The immigration question is one where the labour movement didn't distinguish itself, but acted in what can only be regarded by today's standards in a completely shameful manner. Employers argued the need for increased immigration because of a supposed shortage of skilled trades. The labour movement disagreed.

When Local 353 was chartered in 1903, the building trades in Toronto were experiencing a boom and there was plenty of work in both residential and business construction. Rosedale was seen as the choice location but the Annex and Parkdale were also popular locations. Construction was also happening to the east of the Don River and to the south where frame buildings were an attraction for those seeking moderately priced homes. This caused anxiety for the construction industry – both architects and contractors alike. In their view the

labouring classes were getting wages that had reached the highest point possible.

Architect A. R. Denison thought the criticism was unjustified. He emphasized his point by comparing other communities building costs and concluded that if identical buildings were constructed in Pittsburgh the cost would be one-third less in Toronto.

At the time in Toronto six-room dwellings were available for rent in working men's quarters for \$22 a month. This compared with \$8 to \$9 in New Brunswick and Quebec, \$25 to \$30 in Brandon, \$45 in Saskatoon and \$40 to \$50 in Prince Rupert. There was great wage disparity between the provinces.

The building boom was the perfect excuse for manufacturers to appeal to the Ontario government to import skilled tradesmen. John Acheson – former president of the metal trades section of the Toronto Trades and Labour Council – refuted their claim. Acheson argued that if employers were not so opposed to unions there would be many applicants for every position available. He cited wages of \$4.40 per day in the United States compared with \$2.50 per day for the same work in Toronto. The issue was that people just weren't hiring union tradesmen.

W. C. Blake of the sheet metal workers echoed the sentiments of Acheson. He said that if all trades were unionized, and if Canadian employers treated labour unions and the men who belonged to them as fairly as they were treated in the United States, there would be no shortage of skilled tradesmen whatsoever.

The controversy led the Building Trades Council to pass the following resolution:

“Whereas a deputation of representatives of Canadian manufacturers have interviewed Premier Ross, representing to him that there is a great scarcity of skilled labor in this Province, and asking the Ontario Government to secure skilled labor from Europe by advertising for and financially assisting the immigration of such persons to this country; and whereas there is no such scarcity of skilled labor, as the deputation stated, but, on the contrary, there is at the present time and has been for some years a constant exodus of the finest kind of skilled mechanics, for the reason that better financial inducements are offered elsewhere, while other wages have advanced and living expenses have advanced out of proportion to the small advance in wages of skilled mechanics; and whereas we are entirely opposed to the system of assisting immigration on account of its having a tendency to flood our country with an undesirable class of people;

Be it resolved by the Building Trades Council, representing Toronto and its suburban districts, that we enter our emphatic protest against the Government entering into a system of financially assisting immigration to Canada, both on the grounds that it is a pernicious system and not in the best interests of the country, and that the state of the labor market does not warrant any such extraordinary efforts, but, on the contrary, if there is a demand, as claimed, it will soon be filled in the natural course of events by a satisfactory class of immigrants.

The labour movement pressed the federal government to increase the head tax on Orientals entering the country from \$100 to \$500, but Orientals were not the only group labour targeted.

Some labour delegates objected to referring to England as a foreign country. The Secretary defended his position by declaring that as far as importing labour was concerned; England was considered a foreign country. Discriminatory practices ran rampant.

One executive report of the Toronto Labour Council included a clause that referred to correspondence from the Hamilton Trades and Labour Council on employers efforts to induce the government to bring all kinds of labourers into the country. The correspondence requested that the Toronto council take action on the matter. The secretary replied and outlined actions they had already taken – namely sending a deputation to the Ontario government and contacting labour organizations in Great Britain informing them of Canadian employers’ efforts to flood the labour market in Canada.

In April 1903 the labour movement met with the Ontario government in an effort to counteract an earlier deputation by the manufacturers. The manufacturers asked the Ontario government to help them by encouraging the federal government to bring 5,000 skilled labourers into Canada to relieve the skilled-labour shortage. Labour contended, yet again, that there were sufficient skilled tradesmen in Ontario to meet its requirements. The labour presentation dismissed the employers brief as an action whose sole purpose was to depress wages. According to the labour delegation many of the manufacturers refused employment to competent workers.





Premier Ross assured the labour delegates that government efforts directed at immigration were for the purpose of bringing in farm labourers and not skilled tradesmen.

At Toronto's Massey Hall, AFL president Samuel Gompers addressed a large gathering including the Mayor of Toronto. He referred directly to the Chinese labour question and declared, "that unless the white and Negro peoples of this continent united to prevent it, the Mongolians would so overrun the country that it might be necessary for the Caucasian races to rise up and drive them back by the sword." According to Gompers it was more humane to keep the Chinese out of Canada and send missionaries to China to work out the social and moral revolution in that country.

Fifty manufacturers and employers protested the enactment of the Anti-Contract Bill to the federal government. They believed that the bill would exclude the entrance of hundreds of workmen paralyzing industrial development.

The manufacturers argued that 20,000 artisans were required in Canada and, according to enquiries received from the Toronto Board of Trade alone, positions could be found for 11,000 immediately.

Prime Minister Sir Wilfrid Laurier and MP's Sir William Mulock, A.G. Blair, Raymond Prefontaine and R.W. Scott received the brief on behalf of the government.

Speaking on behalf of the manufacturers delegation, Toronto manufacturer Edward Gurney stated his opposition on the exclusion of immigrating skilled tradesmen. Blaming foreign agitators for depicting the manufactures as the enemy

of labour, specifically the American trade unions, Gurney argued that the manufacturer was actually a friend of labour.

Gurney stressed that he held no malice towards unions. He claimed they had the same right to exist as the manufacturers association, but when malice came to be the basis of the organization it was a matter of serious concern. He insisted manufacturers were handicapped for the want of labour.

A 200-person delegation from the Toronto District Labour Council believed the manufacturers were inventing statistics about the shortage of skilled labourers. In an effort to ascertain the truth, labour delegates asked Ontario Premier James Whitney to enact labour legislation compelling manufacturers to provide their statistical information to the bureau of labour on request

The labour movement's request for information was made in response to a letter circulated by the Canadian Manufacturers Association. The letter advised its members to suppress this information. Robert Glockling, secretary of the Bureau of Labour, opposed the manufacturers request to publish a letter claiming Ontario was in need of 11,000 skilled workers. Rather than heed the manufacturers request, Glockling said he had proof that far from requiring men the manufacturers were turning them away and employing fewer workers than they claimed.

The *Labour Gazette* reported in 1905 that the only group that showed a net decrease in earnings for that year was unskilled labour. This was largely due to lower rates paid for railway construction in western Canada.



More than 6,000 workers were impacted by a weekly wage decrease averaging \$1.32, while in the construction trades over three thousand employees enjoyed wage increases averaging \$2.11 per week.

Statistics showed that immigration to Canada at the end of the fiscal year 1905 totalled 145,591 – the highest ever to-date. The largest increase was from the British Isles, while immigration from the United States was in decline.

To emphasize his position Glockling referred to a letter from an electrician in Delaware, Ontario. Inquiring about the possibility of obtaining a good job in his trade, the electrician claimed he had recently come to Canada from England in response to the alluring promises made by the Secretary of the Canadian Labour Bureau in England. The Canadian Labour Bureau was actually a private organization but its name gave the impression it was an arm of the Canadian government. Government Order ordered the branch in England closed and removed from the building, but it continued to flourish from other locations.

Whatever the situation there was an abundance of workers in 1908. Something as common as a Canadian snowfall brought temporary relief to many. Newspaper reports indicate the snow gave considerable pleasure not only for “social and playful purposes,” but it also provided much-needed employment. The *Globe* reported on hundreds of workers, a great many of them Englishmen, who said they were only too pleased to get a day or two working at clearing snow from the streets.

During one such snowfall a *Globe* reporter turned out at 5:30 a.m. to accompany a party of nearly a dozen workers

from one of the employment yards on College Street. Over 200 workers had already gathered and the gates were closed because of an over-supply of workers.

The men were hopeful that more snow would fall and provide a few more days work. One man – a Yorkshire carpenter – said that he had shown up on half a dozen occasions previously but was only successful in obtaining work for a total of eight hours. He was enthusiastic though about his prospects figuring they looked good for at least another day’s work.

Another man from the south of England simply said, “Fancy anyone moving 3,000 miles to shovel snow from the sidewalk.” Still, he regarded it as a Godsend having invested a quarter to purchase his own shovel!

The question of farm employment surfaced repeatedly as positions for farm work were advertised. When workers responded to the ads, they were dismayed to learn they were not only required to cover their own fare to the job, but also had to negotiate with an agent upon their arrival. They could not afford the fare so the jobs remained unfilled. It was reported that two brothers walked 20 miles determined to get work somewhere. They stopped in a number of farms but could get nothing. Their offer to work for room and board alone was also turned down and consequently they returned by foot to Toronto.

The Salvation Army also became a target of the labour movement for encouraging people to immigrate to Canada and leaving them ignorant of the hardships they would endure. Labour called attention to the problem of unemployment saying it cried out for a solution. City council was criticized for its feeble efforts to provide employment for



the hundreds of workmen anxious to work in an oversaturated market because of misrepresentations of the Manufacturers Association and the Salvation Army. Many were forced to accept charity to survive. The labour council thought that city council should do more to help the unemployed by putting more money towards the problem.

The dilemma facing immigrants coincided with what was taking place in police court. In 1908, the Crown Attorney stated that one of the reasons “foreigners” were preferred to the English, Irish and Scottish for labour was that they would pay a dollar to the foreman to secure employment.

This was the argument in a case brought against a foreman working for contractors Kelly and Company. The defendant in the case was charged with taking a dollar from several Italians after making promises of steady jobs. The victim claimed that after he paid the foreman a dollar he was given work, but he was discharged after working only half a day.

The defense claimed the payment to the foreman was owed to them. They claimed that the Italians received payment for hours they did not work. Adjourning the case to obtain additional evidence, the Magistrate simply commented, “There is something crooked in it!”

REID-MURPHY SPLIT

In 1908 a split within the IBEW practically destroyed the union and there were extreme implications that lasted over a decade. All Canadian locals left the IBEW at the time with the exception of one. Some did not recover.

At the 1905 convention in Louisville, Kentucky membership was 24,000. Several changes took place at the convention including scheduling conventions every four years instead of every two and the establishment of district councils.

The extremely bitter disputes main players were James J. Reid and J. W. Murphy on the one side, and President of the union Frank J. McNulty and Grand Secretary Peter C. Collins on the other. McNulty and Collins were the lawful officers and recognized as such by the AFL. Collins was well educated and was seen by most as having a sense of superiority and was not particularly well liked because of it.

The dispute stemmed from a number of factors including lingering problems between inside wiremen and outside linemen. Disappointed office seekers, and a former grand treasurer who had been removed from office in 1907 because of irregularities, exacerbated the situation.

Another source of dissatisfaction within the union was an intensive union campaign against a well-financed employer campaign for the *open shop* – where employees have the option to join or to not join the union.



The IBEW campaign drained the union's resources which led to criticism that too much money was spent recruiting weak-kneed workers. The president was also criticized for accepting a salary when money was scarce. The payment of delegates expenses for the 1905 convention and the formation of district councils was also condemned.

Inside workers fought to maintain high initiation fees and the administration of technical examinations to keep job qualifications and skills at a superior level. Inside workers control of the industry required a very skilled workforce and an adequate treasury. On the other hand the outside workers fought hard for low initiation fees and universal travelling cards. They also supported the elimination of qualifying examinations. Both factions arrived at the 1905 convention with well-organized coalitions. Each cast block votes on key resolutions resulting in a deadlocked convention.

The convention voted to extend the time between conventions from two to four years. The convention also voted to move the headquarters from Washington to Springfield, Illinois and to trim the number of vice presidents from seven to three. All of this was seen as the centralization of power into the hands of the executive. McNulty was re-elected as President and Peter Collins replaced Secretary Harry Sherman.

A strike of Bell Telephone workers in Philadelphia in 1906 complicated matters even more. Reid requested that the Brotherhood finance the strike and the International spent \$16,000 on the strike – a huge sum for the day – and practically wiped out the union's defense funds. McNulty asked Reid to approach the working members of the district for

financial support, but Reid refused saying that the members would not approve. McNulty wondered why the strike would be called in the first place if the members didn't support it.

Reid also pressed McNulty for access to the entire membership and the AFL membership to raise the funds required to support the strike. McNulty complied but the AFL chose to approach the president of Bell Telephone hoping to reach a settlement. McNulty supported this approach and in doing so alienated union members who were convinced he was not fighting on the linemen's behalf.

Reid urged McNulty to extend the strike to other locals. He not only refused to do so but also refused to submit the request to either the executive board or a membership referendum.

Reid then severed all ties with McNulty and said McNulty wasn't competent to handle the strike. McNulty rejected this accusation and claimed that it was Reid who was incompetent. It was Reid, after all, who called for a strike that his own members refused to support.

As with many matters of a similar nature, these two trade unionists - each with impressive histories and credentials with the union – were at loggerheads over their respective positions on what trade unionism should be. They also both stuck to their respective positions, unfortunately, to the detriment of the union.

Frank Sullivan was appointed to replace F. J. Sheehan as Treasurer. Sheehan had a serious drinking problem and there were improprieties with respect to union finances. Sullivan further complicated the internal problems because, as an outside worker, he regarded it his duty



to monitor McNulty and Collins and report confidential office matters to Reid.

When private union information became public knowledge it was determined that only Sullivan could be the source. Collins sought and was granted board approval to have him dismissed.

Sullivan began an intensive letter-writing campaign against both McNulty and Collins and was successful in organizing enough opposition to demand a call for a special convention. The demand was dismissed by Collins simply because the wrong constitutional clause permitting such a convention was cited. Collins also refused to call for a referendum vote on the issue. The dissidents then completely bypassed the officers and a convention was called.

McNulty initially supported the special convention. He believed it would lead to a resolution of the differences. Collins adamantly opposed it and sought legal advice to support his position.

Louis Geib - a lineman and a member of Local 39 - filed a lawsuit requesting a court order ordering a special convention. These actions also tied up the district's funds. The special convention was slated for September 15, 1908 in St. Louis.

Sullivan appeared in court on behalf of the Brotherhood to answer Geib's suit without either McNulty or Collins' knowledge. Sullivan stated that the Brotherhood had dismissed Grand Treasurer Sheehan without cause.

Sullivan continued the facade at the convention, claiming that McNulty and the executive board authorized the convention - which wasn't true. James Reid opened the convention and Sullivan

promised delegates would have their expenses paid by the Brotherhood. Only 190 delegates from 176 of the 450 locals attended the convention and before it was adjourned the delegates from 16 of those locals departed.

The delegates in attendance impeached McNulty, Collins and their supporters and elected James Reid as President, James Murphy as Secretary and Frank Sullivan as Treasurer. Interestingly they lowered the salary for both the secretary and the president but increased the treasurer's salary.

The delegates believed they had returned the union to its rightful leaders and in the process freed the organization of corruption. Sullivan made good use of his contacts in the press to control the information flow and to create a favourable public image for the Reid-Murphy group.

Peter Collins hired private detectives to prevent Sullivan from removing records and the property from the international office.

A few weeks after the convention adjourned the *Cleveland Citizen* announced that McNulty had given up the fight and retired. McNulty, far from having retired still had considerable power within the union. He came out swinging and announced he had no intention of stepping aside.

"It has been reported in the daily press through the influence of at least one dear brother, that we are in hiding and that we intended to resign if shown mercy," said McNulty. "To the authors of these statements, we want to state that we are not in hiding, that we do not intend to resign, and that we ask no mercy, but are going to fight the disruptionists and

falsifiers to the finish and feel satisfied that when the truth is known the guilty ones will be shown up in their true light.”

Reid then looked to AFL president Samuel Gompers for support. The AFL convention was scheduled for the following month in Denver and Gompers suggested that both factions seek representation at the convention, which they did.

Gompers appointed a five-person committee whose members were approved by both sides in the dispute. The convention seated McNulty and J. Fey as delegates because they were the delegates selected by the IBEW membership at their 1905 convention. All others were denied delegate status.

The AFL committee recommended that both sides call a special convention for January and withdraw all lawsuits and hold funds in both organizations in trust. The disputants signed an agreement to this effect but each group interpreted it differently. As a result the agreement fell apart.

At its January 1909 executive council meeting the AFL gave both sides 24 hours to drop their lawsuits and comply with the Denver agreement. Unfortunately the Reid-Murphy group refused to co-operate. As a result the AFL recognized the McNulty group as the bona fide organization and enabled McNulty to work inside the AFL in his efforts to re-gain control of the union.



Construction of The Island Filtration Plant – 1909



The endorsement of the McNulty group only served to substantiate the Reid-Murphy contention that the AFL designed an agreement that amounted to the unconditional surrender of their side. If that were so, the question that must be asked is why Reid-Murphy agreed to the terms of the agreement in the first place.

Both sides continued to battle it out to the further detriment of the IBEW and it remained an issue when the AFL met at convention in Toronto in 1909.

Another committee was appointed to resolve the dispute and they recommended that the two groups amalgamate, but no settlement was reached.

The two factions held separate conventions in Rochester, New York in September 1911 and yet another attempt was made to resolve the differences. This attempt also failed.

The Geib suit finally came to trial in March 1912 – almost five years after it was initiated and Judge John Phillips sided with the McNulty faction. The judge ruled that Collins should have submitted the calls for the 1908 convention to a referendum or to the executive. He also ruled that once McNulty determined the petitions were fraudulent he was well within his rights to refuse the request for a convention. The locals could still have appealed the decision, but since no appeals were filed that's where the matter should have ended.

Accordingly, Collins was not derelict in his responsibilities by refusing to issue calls for a referendum and as a result the St. Louis referendum was unauthorized and all actions taken at the 1908 convention were nullified.



Moving day in the slums – 1911



McNulty, ecstatic over the decision, wrote to AFL president Gompers. "I cannot find words to express my feelings when the judge rendered the decision yesterday," said McNulty. "I always informed you that the confidence you had placed in me was not misplaced and that time would bear that out ----. I feel so happy I can scarcely attend to my business." Although it was appealed to the Ohio Supreme Court the decision stood.

It was at this juncture that many of those who supported the Reid-Murphy faction withdrew their support. J. W. Hart from Cleveland Local 38 spoke for many when he said, "We felt at all times during the fight that the St. Louis convention was a valid one and were greatly surprised when we learned of the court decision. We class ourselves as law-abiding citizens and feel that the court (decision) is, and should be recognized as final."

Reid-Murphy continued to command support from the most radical members, particularly those on the Pacific coast of the United States and in parts of Canada. By 1914, however, virtually all those members who had left the union returned to the fold. McNulty's response after the court decision played a major role in winning the old members back. McNulty believed – and correctly so – that many who had opposed him did so because they really believed their position was a correct one. In the true sense of brotherhood he sought to mend the fences and set himself to the task of rebuilding the union.

Following McNulty's lead the Brotherhood decided to accept all locals that paid per capita taxes with no penalties. All members were also eligible for the \$100 death benefit, and those who had five years of good standing in either

organization were exempt from qualifying exams and were not required to pay initiation fees.

At the 1913 convention in Boston Grand President McNulty expressed his feelings in these words:

"I have seen our Brotherhood in victory, as well as in seeming defeat; I cannot say 'in defeat' because I do not concede to anyone that our Brotherhood has met defeat;—. No labor organization, in our opinion, is ever defeated. When it suffers a setback, it incites the members to greater effort in organization, and makes better pilots out of the leaders who profit by their past experiences and guide their organizations over the dangerous shoals upon which they had grounded in the past—.

"We have fought a clean fight and we have won simply because we were right."

Within three months 35 locals returned and within a year there were 37,000 members – an increase of 12,000 over the 1905 total. One wonders what the membership might have been had the dispute not occurred.

Whether anything was learned from the dispute was a question that one Reid-Murphy supporter posed. "When the smoke finally cleared in 1914, a reunited Brotherhood vowed never again to raise the bloody shirt of secession and civil war. The IBEW had truly been up against the real thing and the organization managed to survive. Now we have had a grand lesson – five and one half years in the greatest university could not teach us what our division----should [have taught] us. The question is, has it taught us all the same lesson?"



From where he sat, it seemed obvious that the electrical workers should have learned that solidarity of labour is the first requirement for the advancement of the working class as a whole. Learning lessons comes hard though and the IBEW would experience similar differences again and again.

The relationship between Canadian IBEW members and the international have been quite complicated at times and the Reid-Murphy split was no exception. True, Canadians approached the NBEW to organize in Canada but, as the membership grew and the union became more established, divisions often surfaced among the Canadian membership and between Canada and the U.S. over the question of whether it was better to belong to the international or to go it alone as a national union.

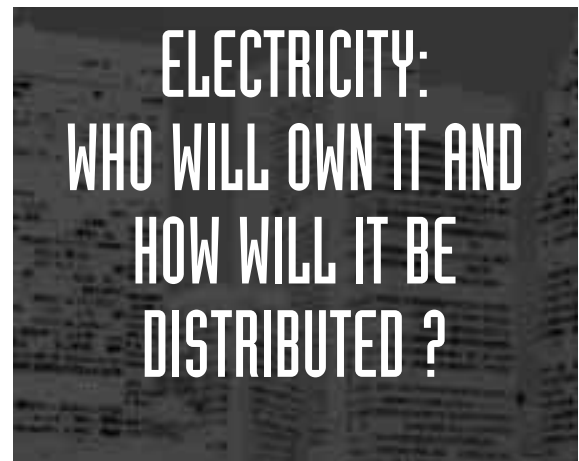
Many in Canada believed they could not get a fair deal as long as they belonged to the international, and it was this sentiment that the Reid-Murphy faction appealed to.

Dissident Canadian members believed the alliance with the Reid-Murphy group would buy them the autonomy they sought but, as with many issues within Canada, regional, political, cultural, ethnic and generational differences make it difficult to achieve a consensus on any issue.

The feelings of many Canadian members were expressed in the April 1917 *Journal*. "The Reid Murphy brotherhood had promoted the kind of national autonomy many Canadian members craved," said John Pegg – Press Secretary for Fort William, Ontario. "We will never be satisfied until we have a constitution that will give us that liberty that we are entitled to. The right to have a

Canadian, who will be chief executive officer of the Dominion, the right to say who will work for us in this country, and the right to vote without interference from the brothers in the (United) states on matters pertaining to Canada. We do not want to dig into your purely national business," he insisted, "and we resent very strongly the attitude you assume on forcing men and conditions down our throats."

When the courts finally resolved the dispute, many Canadian members – including Vice President of the First District, Ernest Ingles – worked tirelessly to rebuild the union's Canadian membership.



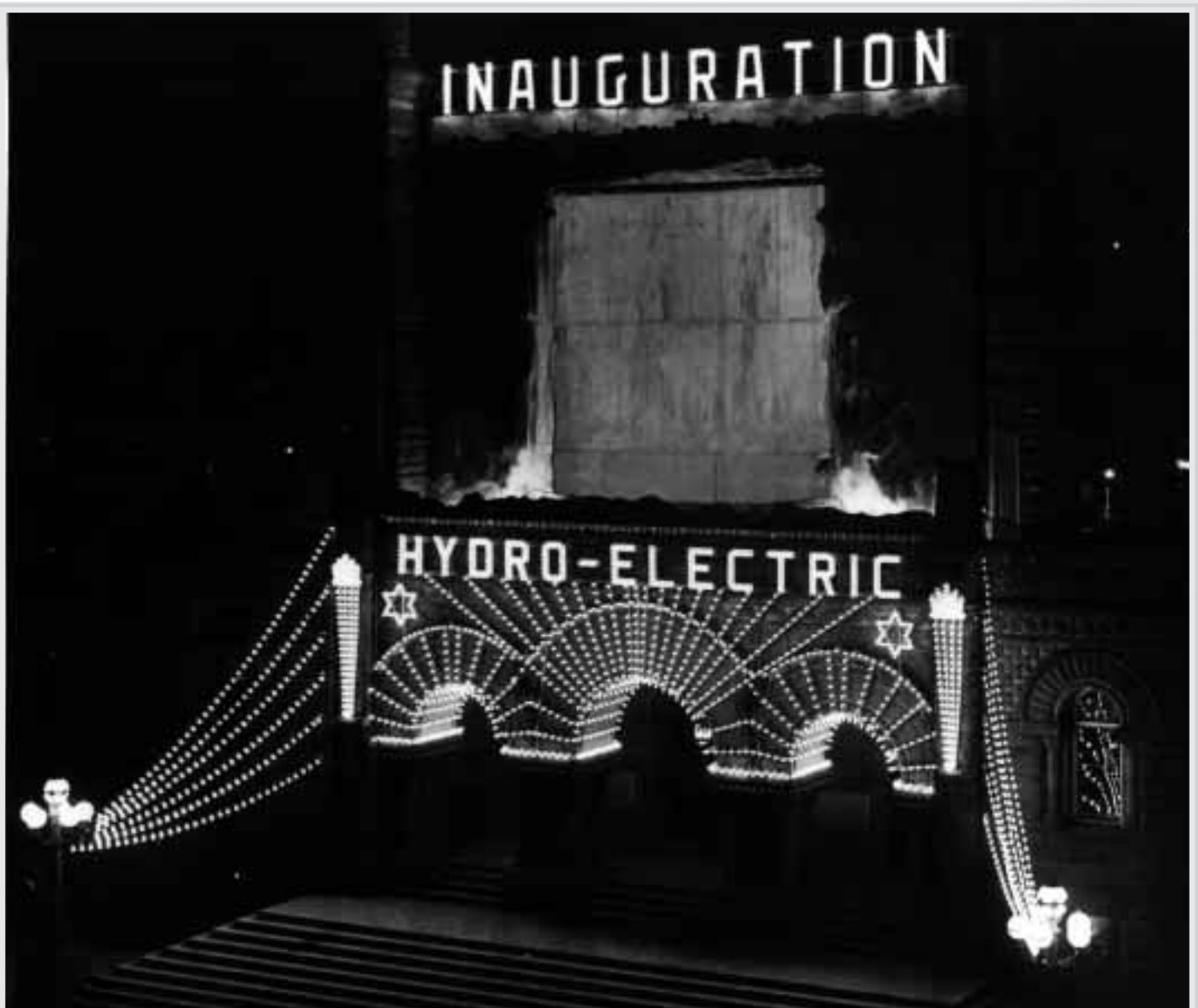
It was predicted early on that water-powered electricity would be the energy source for the future and that Niagara Falls would be the key to making Ontario a major manufacturing centre.

In 1903, a special committee of Toronto City Council was appointed to consider the question of securing authority to produce, convey, buy and sell electricity in the city.

Transmission problems, which had long delayed the adoption of electrical energy, had been solved and the short distance between Niagara Falls and Toronto made it feasible to investigate the development of power through that route. It was estimated that the transmission of power from Niagara Falls would result in an immediate cost saving of \$75,000 annually for the city.

A major subject of debate was whether the supply of electrical energy

would be under private or public control. This is still heavily debated today. It was estimated that Toronto required 33,500 horsepower for industrial use at a cost of \$30 per horsepower per year. The most important consideration of the proposal was that the supply of power should be continuous 24 hours a day, every day. This meant that by expanding the reservoir all the city's water could be pumped at night and the city could have public street lighting for practically nothing.



Inauguration of Hydro-Electric at City Hall – 1911



The possibility of distribution falling into the hands of private monopolistic control was a major concern. The only way to prevent that was to place it under public control. The city of Toronto requested that the legislature enact legislation authorizing the city of Toronto to develop, purchase, transmit, distribute and sell electrical energy.

The Ontario government was congratulated in the *Globe* editorial of April 24, 1903 for its statesmanlike grasp and insight when it came to anticipating the needs and conditions for the provision of electrical power. It said, "New legislation makes provisions for the development and distribution of power by municipalities for their own corporate use and for the use of private consumers."

The AFL in both Canada and the United States supported the concept of public ownership of waterworks, gas works and electric works.

In December 1903 the Electrical Development Company was incorporated for the purpose of developing energy at Niagara Falls, Ontario. The Toronto and Niagara power companies built one of the largest powerhouses in North America.

The building was made of solid granite and was 425 feet in length, 200 feet wide and cost \$400,000.

In 1903 the Ontario legislature determined that municipal waterworks' systems were a losing proposition for the period of 1898 to 1902 when it came to providing electric lighting. The report



Mayor Church, Sir Adam Beck and Driver

stated that approximately \$20 million had been invested and 12 cities, 51 towns and 16 villages constructed their own waterworks. Three cities, 23 towns and eight villages had their own electric light plants.

The Toronto Railway Company and the Toronto Light Company entered into a contract in 1905 with the Electrical Development Company for the supply of Niagara Falls' power at the wholesale price of \$40 per horsepower of electricity annually.

The agreement meant that the Toronto Electric Light Company would practically have total control of the power transmitted to the city except for what was required by the railway.

The *Globe's* 1908 New Year's headline read: "Vote for Power By-law as a first step toward cheaper light and power." The electorate did just that by voting for a power by-law by an overwhelming majority – 14,078 in favour and 4,483 against.

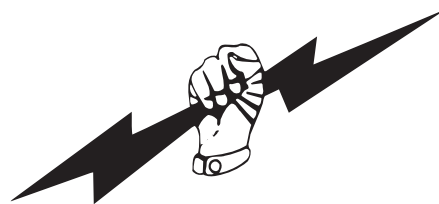
Similar mandates were given in other communities as well. The *Globe* interpreted this to mean that the municipalities had placed their trust in the provincial government and had commissioned it to procure for them the purchase of electrical power at the lowest-possible rates.

The November 19, 1908 edition of the *Globe* announced the turning of the sod for the construction of Ontario's big power line at Exhibition Park – just a few yards from the edge of the lake. There were 300 in attendance and speakers described it as "the dawn of a new industrial era."

Sir Adam Beck introduced J. H. Fryer, the President of the Niagara Power Union. Beck said the occasion was one of great importance and consequences for Ontario. He believed if the development of waterpower were left to the corporations, the general public would suffer in the end. In his view the development of affordable power was a practical undertaking and the occasion that day was a complete vindication on the part of the government and the municipalities.

Almost all the material used in the development of the project would be manufactured in Ontario, or at least in Canada, giving employment to labour at a time when work was becoming scarce.

In May 1908 Toronto city council authorized the Mayor to sign a contract with the Hydro Electrical Power Commission for 10,000 horsepower. The city's share of the cost of the transmission line was approximately \$828,000. The cost of power for the city was estimated at \$3,578,080.



CHAPTER 3

1913 — 1922, THE UNEASY TRUCE

Efforts to stabilize the union and to instill a sense of solidarity proved difficult. Old hatreds died hard and the wounds from past confrontations were slow to heal. Almost as soon as the uneasy peace had been agreed to at the 1913 convention, the question of district councils and the resultant decentralization of power resurfaced.

The supporters of the Reid-Murphy faction attempted to reactivate the same old causes. In an effort to

appease these forces McNulty offered an alternative solution. He suggested vice-presidential districts that he believed would permit locals to work in harmony on a regional basis and preserve the constitutional authority of the international officers at the same time.

These issues served once again to deadlock conventions and render the union impotent because while compromises were often agreed upon they fell apart almost immediately.



Hydro Electric Wagon - 1915



The 1915 convention delegates approved the concept of district councils and placed them on a self-sustaining basis, but when the matter went to a referendum vote the members defeated the concept and the convention decision was rendered invalid. This then led to calls from the membership to eliminate conventions entirely.

John Pegg, a delegate and advocate for decentralization of power from Local 339 in Fort William, Ontario (now part of Thunder Bay) asked: “How long is this Brotherhood going to stand for the antiquated method of voting we use at convention? How long are we going to be slaves of the will of a few well-organized locals?” It was a question that would need to wait another day for resolution.



Great Britain declared war on Germany in 1914. As a member of the British Empire, Canada was automatically involved in the conflict. Canadian Prime Minister Robert Borden and his ruling Conservative party, viewed the war as an opportunity for Canada to win a new respect and total independence from the mother country.

The war would complicate relations within the Canadian labour movement because they did not support the war effort. Delegates attending both the 1915 and 1916 Trades and Labour Congress of Canada conventions passed anti-conscription resolutions. Despite

this, when conscription was first proposed the executive recommended that labour cooperate with national registration – an action vigorously protested by many trade unionists across the country.

To complicate matters further, when the United States entered the war in 1917, AFL president Samuel Gompers deposited \$10,000 of AFL funds in Canadian War Bonds and lectured Canadian unionists on their patriotic duty – an action that earned both praise and condemnation. During both the first and second world wars conscription was a source of great division among Canadians, divisions from which this nation still suffers.

While the war brought new-found prosperity, prices far outstripped wages. Wages increased by 18 per cent compared with an 80 per cent increase in profits.

Employers demanded 13 to 14-hour days to keep pace with the war effort. Trained electricians, including IBEW members, were called upon to train more electricians to support the war effort. Internationally, IBEW membership grew from 23,500 in 1913 to 57,112 in 1917, and to 148,072 in 1919. Despite the increase in membership relationships within the union were anything but harmonious.

There was a call for a general strike against conscription. When conscription was legislated one worker said, “I am a wage slave here, and I have three brothers in France; that’s enough conscription for me.”

Complicating matters further, advertisements in U.S. newspapers were calling for American workers to come to Canada as Canadians were marching off to war. “50,000 workers were needed,”



the advertisements declared. While the province of Quebec has unfairly taken the brunt of criticism for opposing conscription, labour's demonstrations against the war were held throughout the nation.

In the United States Gompers committed the workers of the United States to conscription and, in his view, Canadian workers belonging to international unions were equally committed. This meant that a general strike by all Canadian unionists against the war effort was impossible. Gompers support for conscription meant that the anti-conscription forces within labour in Canada were decimated and led to support for conscription by the Trades and Labour Congress by a vote of 136 to 106.

A second vote that called for the repeal of the conscription law, but falling short of a call for a national strike, passed by a slim margin of 111 to 101. A large majority adopted a motion affirming opposition in principle to conscription.

Part of labour's opposition to conscription in Canada stemmed from the belief that workers were making a greater contribution to the war effort than industry, both on the home front and abroad. If labour were to be conscripted then so too should wealth.

Although the conscription issue drove divisions within labour it also instilled in Canadians a patriotic fervour that would have future consequences for labour.

In 1913 before the outbreak of war, the executive of the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada called upon the Ontario Premier to establish the eight-hour workday. At the time, the 60-hour workweek was set for all women and children from the age of 14. Hours of work for children aged 12 years and older were from 7am and 10pm on a Saturday, the day before a statutory holiday, and during the period from December 14 to December 24 – the busy Christmas season.



Hydro Level Pumping Station - 1913

The *Labour Gazette* for January/February 1966, reflecting on its contents 50 years previously, revealed the following:

“The barbers of St. Thomas, Ont., have succeeded in reducing their working hours,” this journal reported. “A recent civic by-law provides that the working hours for the barber shops of the city shall be as follows: (1) ordinary working day – 5 a.m. to 8 p.m.; (2) Wednesdays – 5 a.m. to 7 p.m.; (3) Saturdays – 5 a.m. to 11 p.m.; (4) on the day immediately preceding a public statutory holiday and on civic holiday – 5 a.m. to 10 p.m. When, however, a holiday falls on a Monday, the working hours shall be from 5 a.m. to 12 noon.”



When IBEW delegates met at convention in 1917, delegate after delegate implored the membership to set aside past differences. Speaking as much for the union as he was for the support of the war effort president McNulty said: “Let us try to lay aside any feelings we

may have; let us sit down and, whatever differences may exist, see if we can’t come to a logical conclusion ----We are going to stand shoulder to shoulder and fight the battles that our respective countries are engaged in for the defense of democracy and the world.”

BROTHER JOHN MCGUIGAN FLASHBACK TO 1917

“Last September I was 45 years good standing in 353.

“My first contract with the union was in Lindsay where a union was started by some members from Buffalo in January 1917. We tried to get 60¢ per hour but after two weeks we were beaten. Seven of the journeymen (I was the only helper on strike) reported for work where they said that I was not required. The journeymen said that if I was not started that they would not start work. The foreman Al Shulty from the U.S.A. congratulated me for having had the guts to stay out and then we all started. The work finished on the 24th, of May 1917 and I went to Toronto and reported to Tommy Crawford at the Labour Temple. He sent me to work at the British Forgings where I met Joe Godden and some weeks later Cecil Shaw started to work.

“Next year I joined the army and six weeks later I was on my way to overseas. It was all a long time ago, we had many ups and downs, other unions in opposition, no work, etc. One thing I have been blessed with is a good memory of all the changes in 353 over the years.”

— Brother John McGuigan

from April 1974 Spectrum



The animosities around the issue of conscription would lead to the assassination of British Columbia Federation of Labour Vice President Albert (Ginger) Goodwin. Goodwin, who was also an organizer for the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers, was called upon by the conscription board in 1917 and classified as Class D and unfit for military service.

During a smeltermen's strike that he led in Trail, British Columbia, he was again called before the board. On this occasion he was placed in Class A and called up for active service even though he suffered from tuberculosis. It was widely believed that the mill managers instigated Goodwin's call-up, however, Goodwin never saw active duty. He was shot in the back by a special constable who was later exonerated in a special inquiry.

WAR ENDS

The best efforts of the IBEW leadership to move the union forward from the divisions of the past failed miserably. A major complicating factor was that every convention decision had to be referred to a referendum vote of the membership. These votes were often divisive and time-consuming for the officers who were defending convention decisions against the dissidents. In turn, the dissidents used the referendum as a convenient vehicle to promote their views and to disrupt the union's business.



Bringing in the crops – Willowdale, ON - 1916

The 1919 IBEW convention was a notable one. Delegates voted to make all convention decisions final, except for those that the convention itself specifically referred to a referendum. By passing this resolution, the union hoped to curtail political maneuvering by dissident factions enabling officers to devote more time to perform the tasks for which they had been elected.

James Noonan replaced McNulty who had served as President since 1903. McNulty experienced a dramatic and event filled tenure, that in retrospect, the IBEW unquestionably owes its very survival to him.

The establishment of a strike fund, which became effective on January 1, 1920, also marked the 1919 convention as an important one. It was financed through an assessment of 14 cents per

member each month and through the appropriation of 50 per cent of the initiation fees.

It was also at the 1919 convention that a plan was formulated to establish the council on labour relations. The plan was first conceived following World War I. The idea was originally suggested by a small group of electrical contractors who had been meeting since 1916 to talk about the electrical contracting industry.

Acting on a suggestion by contractor L. K. Comstock, the group called itself *The Conference Club*. It formulated the idea of getting together with the IBEW to draft a national labour agreement, which would be of mutual benefit to both the contractors and the union. A committee representing both groups met and approved a declaration of principles that created the Industrial Relations



University Avenue Electrical Building – 1919



Council. The council has proved to be a milestone in Brotherhood history and has resulted in the settlement of thousands of disputes without resort to strike action.

In February 1907 Ernest Ingles joined the IBEW and in 1917 was elected to lead the new district of Canada and Newfoundland. At the 1917 Atlantic City convention, all actions were overturned by referendum however, Ingles was appointed as an organizer in 1918. When a proposal for a new vice presidential district was submitted it was approved and in 1919 Ernest Ingles became Canadian Vice President for the IBEW.

In the May 1919 *Journal* IBEW Local 353 Secretary Treasurer G. W. McCollum reported that a number of delegates from IBEW locals met in Toronto. They decided to put the trade

on sound footing and formed the Ontario Provincial Council of Electrical Workers. Ernest Ingles and Canadian IBEW organizer J. Noble – a Local 353 member since 1913 – attended, and officers were elected and a constitution was drafted.

McCollum reported in the June 1919 *Journal* that work in the trade was very unsettled. There were strikes in Ottawa (Local 724), London (Local 120) and Kingston (Local 573). Local 353 managed to escape the turmoil and all the negotiations it had been engaged in were settled.

Local 353 would however face a major crisis in 1920. The bulk of its membership (cited in later reports as being anywhere from 1,000 to 1,260) left the IBEW and opted to join an all-Canadian union called the Canadian Electrical Trade Union – later known as



First Loblaw's Store – 1916

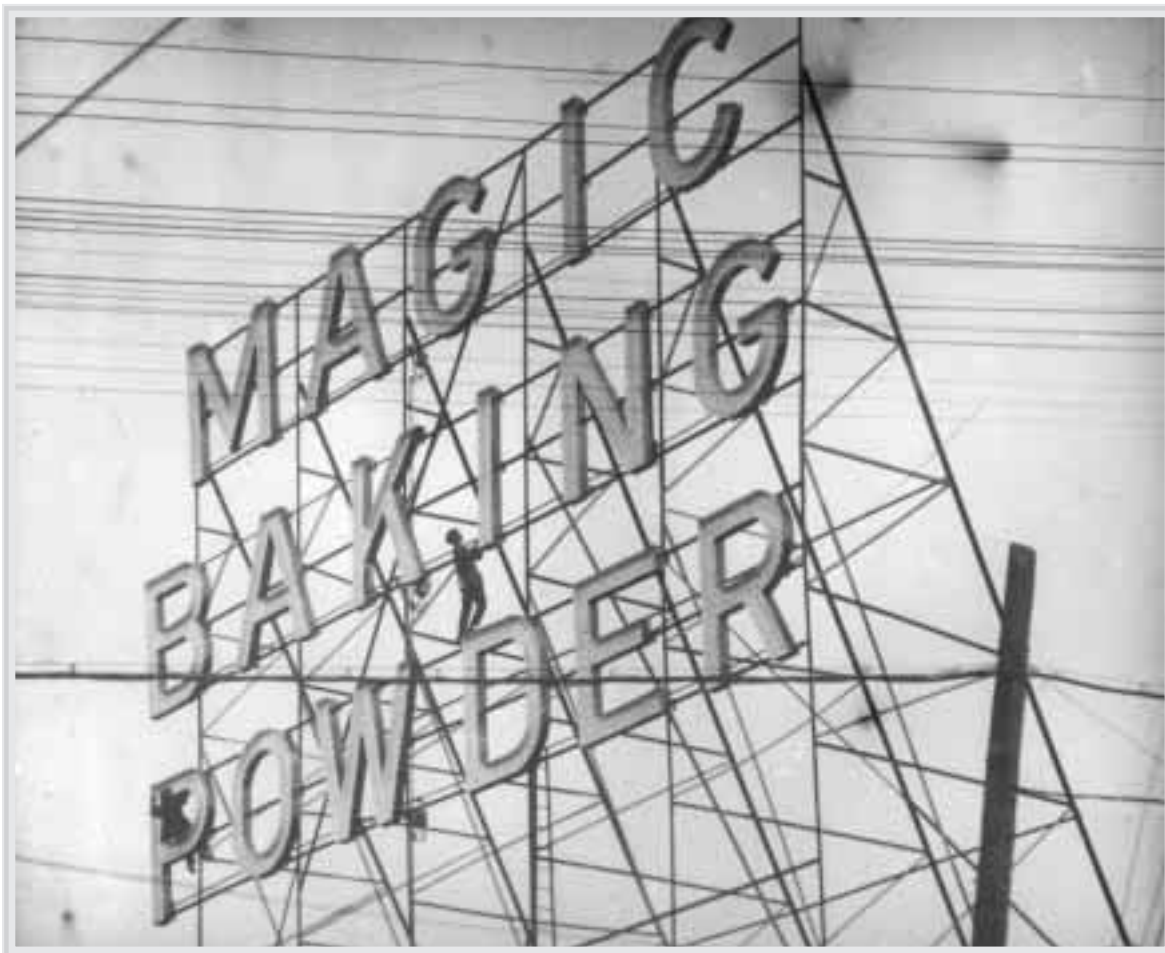
the Canaries. There were several reasons for this move. Some members resented the intrusion into their affairs by Samuel Gompers who promoted conscription during the First World War when the Canadian labour movement opposed it. Others had a burst of Canadian nationalism that had been fostered by the war effort. There was also a tremendous economic downturn post-war and this led to considerable unrest.

In the end all but 30 members left the local. The defection was officer-led and most of the rank-and-file followed. Many of the coup's leaders were outside wiremen who never returned to the local. The break happened in September 1920 and Local 353 had agreements with Bell Canada, Toronto Hydro and other con-

tractors. Wages for wiremen at the time were 87½ cents an hour.

The split was also encouraged by the electrical industry and for good reason. By April of 1921 wages had dropped 7½ cents per hour or \$3.30 per week.

On the international level the IBEW membership also showed a substantial decline and lost 97,000 members between 1920 and 1923. Almost immediately the valiant few who were left in Local 353 – all inside men – set themselves to the task of organizing its membership. As Press Secretary Peter Elsworth would later report, “soon after the split, the local began to realize it was still in existence – the charter still hung on the wall.”



Replacing burnt out lightbulbs – 1920



At times during this period the entire membership of the local was unemployed. Gradually, many who left the local began drifting back and once again the local began to function for the benefit of the membership. The linemen, however, did not return. Many stayed with the Canadian organization and others joined the new linemen's local – IBEW 636 chartered in February 1922. The local is still active today.

The rebuilding would not be easy. Local 353 Press Secretary E. Hensen wrote in the January 1922 *Journal* that the trade in Toronto was just fair, and advised all brothers who were “floating around the Toronto area to float away for the time being.” There was no point looking for jobs in Toronto. He said that

Toronto electricians had a dual organization and that Local 353 was fighting tooth and nail to survive. He implored all brothers to be sure they landed at the right address, which was the “Labor Temple, Church Street, Toronto.” He also asked them to boost the International while in Toronto.

In another report in May of the same year, Hensen said Local 353 was still fighting to keep the international movement going in Toronto. He also said the trade in Toronto was still bad and there was no sign of things picking up. He lauded Vice President Ernest Ingles for assisting the local in settling the agreement when employers attempted to introduce further wage cuts.

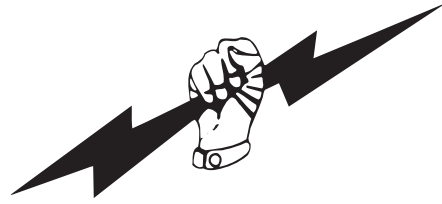


Union Station construction – 1920

Throughout the years many would reflect on the 1920 to 1925 period as a real test for Local 353. Frank Selke in his capacity as Press Secretary, described the period 1920 to 1924 in the 1938 *Journal* as the “lean years when a mere handful of members stuck together.”

Writing in the *Journal* many years later Cecil Shaw said that he regarded the formation of the Canadian Electrical Trade Union as the start of the national trade union movement in Toronto. He cited Brother Ernest Ingles and Brother John Noble for their valiant efforts to prevent the catastrophe and said the building trades council of the time treated it as a joke. The council went so far as to call a special meeting and allowed Brother Ingles to debate the merits of the international union movement against the national movement with the leader of the secessionist movement. Shaw applauded Ingles for refusing to do so and said that the rest of the international union movement washed their hands of the affair and seemed content with the situation thus created. However, the same menace was creeping into practically every trade and going outside the building trades.

It has often been said that leadership is born out of adversity. There is no doubt that many of those who would become strong leaders within Local 353 went through their baptism by fire during the 1920 to 1924 period. Not only would members like Cecil Shaw, Frank Selke, Jack Nutland, Jack Noble, Peter Elsworth and others from the ranks of the “mere 25 to 35” who remained to fight another day come out of this troubled time as unquestionably great leaders within the local; they had been tested under fire and prevailed.



Listening to the radio – 1920's

CHAPTER 4

1923 — 1932, REBUILDING THE LOCAL



The first IBEW convention to be held outside the United States was held in Montreal, Quebec in 1923. The 17th IBEW convention had 334 delegates representing 214 locals of the 63,000 union members. The convention strengthened the sense of brotherhood and co-operation between Canadian and American members and, no doubt, contributed to the IBEW's rebuilding efforts in Canada.

Alzee Bastien of Montreal Local 568 was convention chairman and welcomed all the delegates to the city. He recited the city of Montreal motto: "Concordia Salus Harmony of Welfare is on our lips with the heartiest wish for a good time while you are sheltered under its distinctive freedom."

"We are meeting to shape a policy for the coming years. Let us prove worthy of the trust. Let us so guide our actions that posterity will be thankful that we lived," said Canadian Vice President Ernest Ingles. "And when we have shaped our policy, let us endeavour to carry it out to the best of our ability. Let us go down the line fighting every inch of the way. It is a fight. Life is a fight."

In 1925, the city of Toronto had a population of 600,000, and the *Journal* reported wage rates for electricians at 85 cents per hour. At the time, Local 353

was a mixed local – the linemen were in Local 636. Press Secretary Peter Elsworth stressed that there were always a few Local 353 members unemployed, but that local contractors would hire a stranger in preference to local members.

Elsworth also reported that a member who desired to work in the United States would get his travel card at a cost of 10 cents, but he had to pay his dues of \$2.65 to \$2.75 one month in advance. He also had to apply to the American Consul for permission to enter the United States and had to pay \$10 for a passport. Additionally, he had to pay \$2.00 for a doctor's certificate to prove his good health, and supply two passport photographs – another \$2.00, and two copies of his birth certificate – 75 cents each. On top of that there was a head tax of \$8.00, bringing the cost to enter the United States to \$26.25. None of this included his rail fare for the journey.

By 1925 Elsworth reported that the membership of the Local stood at approximately 30 per cent – 300 to 400 members compared with the 1,000 to 1,260 at the time of the split in 1920.

The Canadian Trades Union membership was approximately the same as Local 353 and had dues of \$1.50 to \$1.75 payable each month. Because all

wiremen were licenced into three grades, they formed what was known as the Licenced Journeymen's Association (LJA) that was attempting to negotiate an agreement with the contractors. The LJA dues were \$2.00 for six months with a \$2.00 initiation fee. In comparison, Local 353 members paid \$2.65 per month, of which \$1.90 was per capita to the International office. Each member also paid 25 cents of his dues to the sick benefit, which left only 50 cents to run the local.

Elsworth regarded these dues as too high to compete successfully against the LJA for members. Potential members for the local worked for the Toronto Hydro Electric System, Bell Telephone and the Toronto Transport Commission.

Other sources for membership were employed at the University building, the Provincial Hydro System and Public Works Department of the Provincial Government and the City Works

Department. In addition to these potential sources, many factories employed electricians and a conservative estimate of membership potential was around 1,500. Elsworth claimed that to mount a successful organizing campaign for these people would require a reduction in the dues to \$1.00 per month.

Potential contracts to supply work included a \$5 million steam engine plant to be built in Toronto, the construction of new hydro stations and the expansion of old ones. The estimated value of all this was calculated in the millions of dollars.

In response to Elsworth's submission the *Journal's* editor noted that in 1923 the International office agreed to place a special representative in the field to assist Local 353 for a three-month period. The local turned down the offer because it believed that the scarce resources of the International could be put to better use when the potential was uncertain.



Women apply at CNE for jobs as waitresses at \$1.25 per day – 1920's



Toronto electrical workers were forced to work for low wages – the lowest in the building trades. While there was ample work it was not performed by IBEW members. “We have a Local union of men here who have stuck with us, paying their dues and assessments when they have work,” said Elsworth, “and when out of work two and three months at a time each winter, paying their dues just the same. These men are union men and will remain union men.”

Elsworth claimed that since 1920 the local, along with Vice President Ernest Ingles and organizer John Noble, had made every effort to keep the IBEW going in Toronto. An organizing drive was conducted and, while progress was slow, there were encouraging signs pointing to success.

The Local 353 organizing committee presented a prepared text to the LJA that was reproduced in the September 1925 issue of the *Journal*.

“Is it your pleasure by the formation of your association to repeat this experiment by forming another dual organization? Our interests are in common; we all want an increased rate of wages. Do you know that the greatest and most effective method that is possible just now would be to combine your association with No. 353?

A number of our ex-brothers have worked very hard to build up your association and we need your membership in our Local Union. There can be only one electrical workers’ union in Toronto. Why not let us unite and make it the International?

There are 19 International unions in the Toronto Building Trades Council. Local No. 353 is one of them. We are

affiliated with the Trades and Labor Council (sic). We are affiliated with the Trades and Labor (sic) Congress of Canada and the American Federation of Labor.

The moral effect of your association combining with us would mean the making of an electrical workers’ union in Toronto that would be in a position to command respect for its members.

I would just like to say this much more. You men have spent a great deal of time and done a lot of hard work to build up your association. Are you going to use the results for the benefit of all concerned? Or is there to be another war among the electrical workers in Toronto, which without a doubt will mean a further reduction in our wages? I thank you.”

The two committees agreed to meet again. Local 353 knew that considerable organizational effort would be saved if these Toronto wiremen were to join the local. As part of its reorganizing efforts Local 353 ran an advertisement for one week – at a cost of \$18 – urging the 600 electricians to attend the meeting.

In addition to the IBEW, representatives of the LJA and the Canadian Electrical Trade Union (CETU) attended the meeting in September 1925. The CETU offered the LJA a charter for Toronto wiremen at a cost of \$2.00 for each member. Only fifty men attended the meeting.

From Local 353’s perspective, it appeared that those who were representing the LJA were playing one group against the other by determining whether Local 353 or the CETU favoured a licence for wiremen.

IBEW Canadian Vice President Ernest Ingles and Local 353 Press Secretary Peter Elsworth attended the meeting. Elsworth was asked to speak but deferred to Ingles who received a very attentive reception and responded to questions regarding the IBEW.

The question of licences for wiremen was a contentious issue with all the organizations. The provincial licence board sent letters to all organizations and requested delegations of two men from each group to send recommendations on the licencing issue on September 30, 1925.

Local 353 delegates met with the LJA delegates and the CETU prior to appearing before the Licence Board. Local 353 viewed the possible merger with the LJA as a way to increase its membership and its strength. However, the IBEW's high dues were seen as a stumbling block to a merger.

Local 353 regarded the division between the two groups as a detriment to both. The wage rate for wiremen in Toronto in 1925 was 80 cents per hour compared with \$1.00 per hour for plumbers and they believed that as long as electricians were divided it would take another five years to reach \$1.00 per hour.

"Value is only given as value is paid for. Of course, there are always certain persons who will go into a store and expect to buy a suit of clothes for \$12.50 (with two pairs of pants) and actually kid themselves that the suit will give them the prosperous-looking electrician appearance that a \$40 suit would," Elsworth said in the December 1925 *Journal*. "It is easy to recognize them."

The local attended the meeting with the licensing board and there were changes in the licensing fee for 1926 from \$4.00 a year to \$2.00 a year, with an additional \$1.00 to the Licence Department for a total fee of \$3.00 annually.

By March 1926 the local reported that the organizing campaign sponsored by the Trades and Labour Council and the Toronto Building Trades Council was in full swing. During the membership campaign 20 international representatives were in Toronto for the period of January to March of 1926. The city directory was divided and the names of tradesmen were transferred to index cards and sorted for each trade. Literature was then mailed to the different tradesmen and open meetings were held to recruit new members.



W. H. BROWN

Business Manager 1926 - 1930

W. H. Brown served as Business Manager of Local 353 from 1926 to 1930.

He is credited with having done a lot of good work for both Local 353 and the IBEW in Canada. Both Brown and Frank Selke were nominated for the Business Manager's position in 1930 and Brown declined, and Selke was elected by acclamation for the position.



It was estimated that building projects in the city – valued at \$70 million in 1926 – were either underway or in the planning stage. The peak electrical load for the population of 600,000 was approximately 200,000 horsepower.

The May 1926 *Journal* reported that the organizing campaign was effective and the local was beginning to take in new members. It was also reported that a committee from the LJA attended an IBEW Local 353 meeting in March and a Local 353 committee was appointed to interview them while their meeting was in progress.

President Jack Nutland, Vice President J. Curran, Financial Secretary Peter Elsworth, Executive Board Member Fred Todd and International Vice President Ernest Ingles served on the committee for Local 353. President O. Occomore, Secretary George Shepherd, and Executive Board Members H. Weale and J. Dotson represented the LJA.

The LJA and Local 353 met in March 1926. This meeting was the culmination of a six-month effort of the two organizations, and after two hours of discussion Local 353 agreed to present the resolutions to their members for support. The resolutions meant that Local 353 would cease its opposition to Toronto licensing by-law 156 – concerning an electrician's license – until such time as the united local decided differently. Local 353 also agreed that the initiation fee would remain at \$5.00 until March 30 – subsequently extended to April 30.

Representatives from the LJA agreed that if the resolutions were endorsed they would do everything in their power to influence their members to join with Local 353. A letter from Local 353 confirmed the resolutions were

accepted, and at a Local 353 open meeting on March 19, 1926 a number of membership applications were received from members of the LJA

An agreement was also reached between the Toronto Building Trades Council and Lawrence Soloman on the construction of the new baseball stadium confirming that only international unionized labour would be employed.

Other construction projects in the works included an office complex on the northeast corner of Bay and Albert streets, a 12-storey building on the southeast corner of Bay and Adelaide streets and an 8-storey warehouse at the harbour front. The Uptown Theatre was running a night shift in order to complete the project by Labour Day.

At the same time, negotiations for a new agreement were underway. Local 353 refused to sign an agreement that automatically extended the terms of the CETU agreement. The contractors wanted IBEW Local 353 delegates to sit on the same conference board as the CETU. If agreed to, this would give the CETU direct say on the conditions of work for Local 353. This was not acceptable to the local. The local felt the CETU was nothing more than a company union that had a depressing effect on the wages of electricians. They believed that serving with the CETU on any committee would mean any vote on contentious issues would automatically be two-to-one against the IBEW.

It was reported that construction employees at Toronto Hydro Electric System – through the efforts of the CETU – reached a wage settlement in the spring. The rate for a third rate man was increased from 64 cents to 69 cents per hour, and 70 cents men received 74 cents.

The 81 cents per hour men were placed on salary with holidays, but no overtime.

The negotiations were at a standstill and a final offer was submitted to the contractors providing for 80 cents per hour from September 1926 to April 1927 and increasing to \$1.00 per hour on May 1st, 1927.

Local 353 urged its members to cease work on September 1 and report to the Labor Temple from 9 – 10am. If enough contractors had signed the proposed agreement they would return to work; if not, the local would officially be on strike.

The contractors did not immediately sign the agreement and the local was on strike for two days before an agreement was signed. Although the agreement didn't achieve all that was desired, there were improvements nonetheless. Pay rates remained at 80 cents per hour until December 31, 1926. Salary was increased to 90 cents per hour for 1927, \$1.00 per hour for 1928, and \$1.10 per hour in 1929. A journeyman's helper received no increase. The agreement also provided for railway fare and board for 10-hour day jobs out-of-town with the exception of jobs under the jurisdiction of the Building Trades Council.



Mungy talks about how he got in to the trade. As Mungy tells it, one day he was lying on the bed and Swailes rushed in and said, "Mike, please let me lie down, I am tired as hell. So I got off the bed and I said to him, "What do you do?" He said, "I am an electrician's helper." I said, "How did you get so tired doing that?" He said, "I have been threading pipe." He told me all about it, and I said, "I am interested in that."

Swailes was working at Canada Electric and he told Mungy to go there at 8am the next day to request a job. In those days all the helpers would go to the store, which had a storage room downstairs and the office upstairs. Mungy did as he was instructed and asked if they needed any help, only to be told they didn't. He repeated this process every second day.

One evening, a sign – **Help Wanted** – was placed in the window. Swailes saw the sign and "he was running all over looking for me. He finally found me and said: "There is a sign in the window for a Helper, get down there in the morning."

"I slept in, I got up, rushed in – I only lived a couple of blocks away. I walked in and there was a big lineup. So, as I waited, I notice Harry Chapman (Chappie), the owner, look out the window, and he spotted me. He told everyone in line that he didn't need anyone. So when I was getting near the front of the line I figured he didn't need any help, so I turned around to walk out. He said: 'What do you want?' I said, 'I am here for the same job,' and he said, 'Okay, you got it,' and asked if I could start now, and I said 'Yes.' I asked how much he paid and he said 25 cents per hour. I said '\$10 a week,' and he said, 'No, \$11, because we work four hours on Saturday.'"



Mungy was hired on a Thursday and Chappie told him to hang around. Left to his own devices, Mungy did just that, but occasionally Chappie would stick his head in the door and Mungy would grab a broom to start sweeping the floor. The scenario repeated itself a number of times and on Friday Chappie finally asked him when he thought he would be finished sweeping the floor, and Mungy replied, "You didn't tell me what to do, I am just trying to keep busy."

On Saturday morning, his third day on the job, Mungy was assigned to Stan Pernell. The first job was on Dixon Road. Pernell had a large tool box, and Mungy, who was 16 years old at the time, had to carry the tool box on the street car to the job site.

On his first job, they went to the cellar and Pernell said he was going into the other room and would push a fish wire through, and when it came out, Mungy was to pull it. There were two wires hanging down on Mungy's side of the wall, and when he reached up to grab the fish wire he received a shock causing him to yell out. That was Mungy's start.

As Mungy sees it in those days there was a union but they were not organized. He said that one man might be getting 90 cents, another 80 cents. It was Mungy's job to go to the office each morning to pick up any needed materials and on one occasion when he was sent to the office to get materials, Chappie looked at him with a big smile on his face and told him, 'Never mind the list, come with me.' They went to a job and Mungy threaded the pipe while Chappie was doing the slab. Mungy could not recall the exact location of the job, but did remember that when he left the work site that day there was a car parked across the street. "Stan Pernell was there, he motioned for to come over, and when I complied, he said, 'hide behind the car, get down.'" Somebody said, 'What the hell are you doing here, we are on strike.' I said, 'I didn't know,' and Stan said, 'I didn't tell him.' So he said, 'Are you going to be in in the morning?' and I said, 'Not if you are on strike.'

When Mungy returned to the shop that evening Chappie told him he would meet him on the job site in the morning. Mungy said okay but did not show up for work the next day, and neither of them ever spoke of it again.

He recalls Comstock, Canada Electric, Roxborough Electric and Bennett and Wright, a small company which did not do any contracting. Mungy also recalls that when he first joined, he was advised to attend all the union meetings, which he did. He was told that, 'If you don't attend union meetings, your union brothers could be walking up Yonge Street, and you could be walking down and you won't know him.' "So," Mungy says, "I went to the meetings at the Labor Temple on Church Street, just below Shuter." He recalls being required to write an exam and one of the questions was, 'What colour is your hair?' He asked another apprentice, 'What colour is my hair?' and received the reply, "Auburn" which he then put down as the answer.



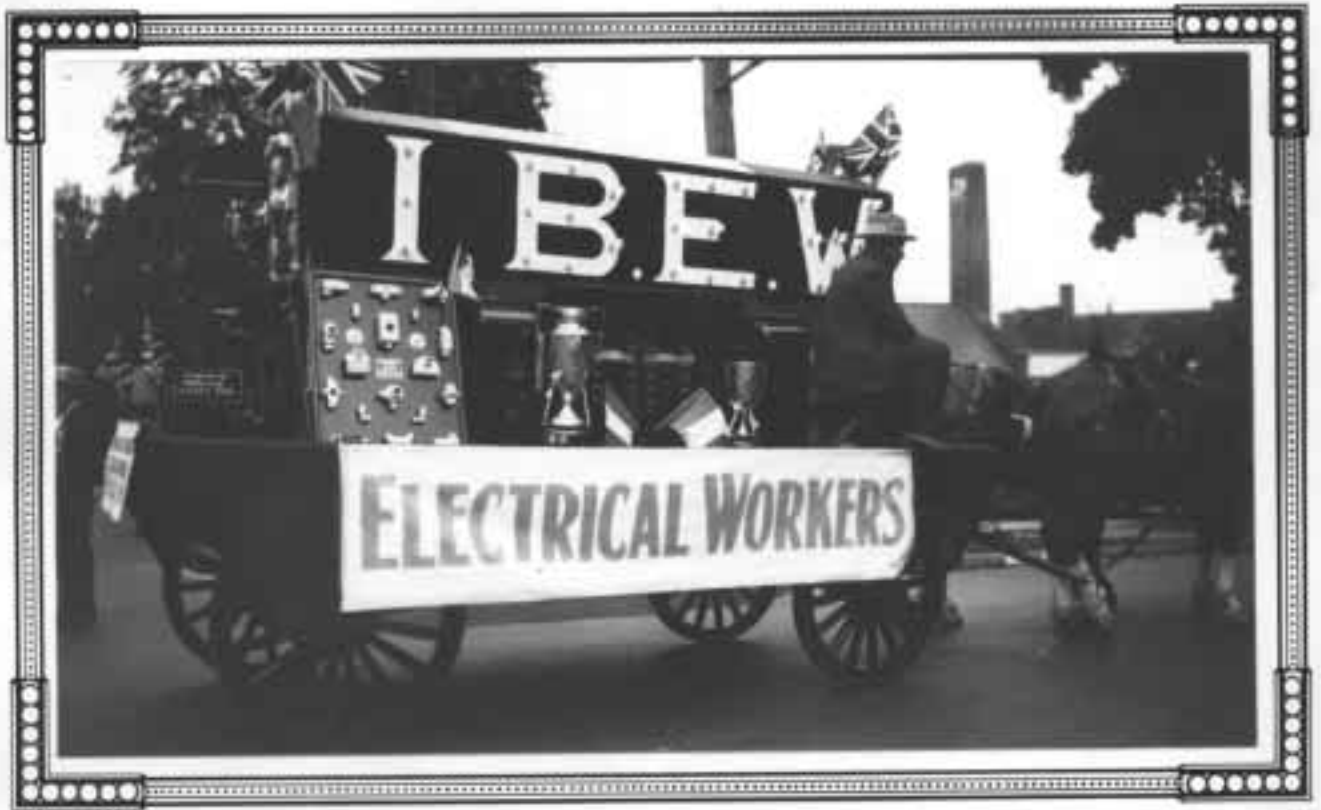
When interviewed in 2001 Mungy remembered his early days as an electrician with great fondness. Over 90, he had a sharp mind and a wonderful sense of humor. On his career as an electrician he said, “I enjoyed every minute of it, I was fortunate, I worked with the best mechanics in my day.” He recalled Bill Jennings, Bob Law, Sam Genise, Tom Gracie, and his first boss – Harry Chapman with a sense of pride.

From 1925 on the union worked on improving apprenticeship training, promoting the licensing of contractors, improving electrical ordinances and codes, and attaining the five-day work-week. The union sought to prevent and reduce accidents on the job and actively promoted the education of its members in

the skills of the trade. Education programs expanded and the National Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee (NJATC) for the electrical industry was created.

The dawn of 1927 would see a number of Local 353 members out of work. At the time, 35 of Local 353’s approximately 350 members were out of work, but things looked hopeful for the spring with a number of construction projects in the offing.

The dues were increased to \$3.25 a month and members were encouraged to pay three months in advance. To put the dues in perspective, referring to the recent wage increase Peter Elsworth asked, “Do you know what 10 cents an hour amounts to? \$4.40 a week.” Citing



Labour Day Parade float – 1928



the average employment for an electrician as 40 weeks a year, it meant that each electrician received a \$176 per year increase and the dues were only \$39 annually. Comparatively, he explained the hydro workers had rates of only 68 to 74 cents per hour versus Local 353's 90 cents per hour. He urged members not to break faith with the international.

The Queen's Hotel opposite Union Station was torn down to make way for a new Canadian Pacific Railway Hotel – The Royal York. By June 1928, however, work was not as plentiful as had been anticipated. Several of the big jobs that were reported in the news failed to mate-

rialize. Another project – the 30-storey Toronto Towers, slated for construction between King and Adelaide, was postponed indefinitely.

Adding to the shortage of work, construction on the Royal York, the Woolworth Building and the Star Building had slowed due to a steelworkers strike and the new Hydro sub-station at Leaside was a 100 per cent CETU job.

The power on the new Gatineau power line from the Gatineau River to Toronto was scheduled to be on-line by September 1928. Started in 1925, the project planned three hydroelectric power stations that were expected to produce 526,000 horsepower. By September 1928 only 436,000 horsepower was completed.

In 1928 another organizing effort was announced. Approximately 50 men – mostly non-members – attended a special meeting in August of that year. This organizing effort differed from earlier ones because they considered it unwise to suspend initiation fees. Very few locals had previously experienced any organizing success because of low initiation fees.

Even though the old agreement was not due to expire until May 31, 1929, in December 1928 negotiations for a new agreement were initiated. The negotiating committee was seeking an increase of 15 cents per hour effective June 1, 1929. Additionally, the committee demanded a five-day workweek – meaning no work on Saturday – and double time for all overtime. The five-day workweek was a demand on the agenda of all 19 unions in the Building Trades Council.



L-R: Herb Price, Wilf Oldfield, Cecil Shaw and Norm Brownlaw with Casa Loma in background - 1927

The Ontario Association of Electrical Contractors and Dealers

TORONTO DISTRICT



Fifth issue

June 1st, 1929

WORKING RULES

1. Adopted by the Toronto District of The Ontario Association of Electrical Contractors and Dealers, for the guidance of its members, June 1, 1929, in force to May 31, 1932, and agreed to by Toronto Local 353, I.B.E.W., June 1st, 1929. These rules are to be posted in the shops of the members.

2. Eight hours shall constitute one day's work, to be worked from 8 a.m. to 12 noon, and from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., except Saturday, when the hours shall be from 8 a.m. to 12 noon.

All men shall be on the job ready to commence work at the regular hours for starting work, which shall be between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m.

All work over eight hours shall be paid for at the rate of time and one-half until 10 p.m., when double time rates shall prevail, and double time rates shall continue until relieved from duty.

All overtime work performed on Saturdays after 12 noon, Sundays and holidays, shall be paid for at double time rate.

No overtime shall be paid unless previously authorized by the employer. Night men shall be paid nine hours for eight hours' work, this arrangement to apply only when two or more shifts per day are used on the same job. Overtime of all shifts to be based on the regular hourly rates.

3. The holidays shall be: New Year's Day, Good Friday, Victoria Day, Dominion Day, Civic Holiday, Labour Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas.

4. All car fare other than to reach the job or shop within the City Limits and return to the employee's residence shall be paid by the employer. On all work outside the City Limits the employees shall take the car going to or returning from work which arrives at the City Limits at or near 8 a.m. or 5 p.m. as the car schedule will permit.

5. Employers in case of work outside of Toronto shall pay the travelling expenses and all expenses for room and board, and the employee in such cases shall conform to the ten-hour day, except in cases where the local Building Trades Agreements govern, when those hours will be conformed to before the overtime rates apply.

6. That no mechanic shall be employed unless in possession of a Journeyman Electrician's City License.

No member of the Association to request members of Local Union 353 to use private cars or motor cycles for the transportation of material to or from jobs.

7. There shall be a Conference Board consisting of two members of the Toronto District, of the Ontario Association of Electrical Contractors and Dealers, and two members of Local Union 353, I.B. of E.W. The Board shall meet at least once per month or at the call of the Chairman. All complaints by employers or employees covering labour conditions must be submitted to the Board in writing. Rules and Regulations to govern the Board's transactions shall be made by the members thereof.

8. The help shall be divided into three classes: Journeymen Class "A" and "B", and Apprentices.

Apprentices shall be subdivided into four classes described as: First, Second, Third and Fourth Year, according to the time served. The first half year of the apprentice's time shall be probationary. At the end of this probationary period he shall be entitled to membership in Local Union 353, I.B.E.W., for a nominal fee. Upon being successful as outlined above he shall be entitled to the following rates of pay:

To May 31st, 1932:

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Second half of the first year..... | 20c per hour | Third year | 55c per hour |
| Second year | 40c per hour | Fourth year | 70c per hour |

One apprentice under three years to be permitted to every two journeymen in a shop.

A fourth year apprentice shall be permitted to work as a journeyman, if in possession of a City License. Not more than one fourth year apprentice to every four journeymen in the one shop to be permitted to work under the above conditions.

It is agreed that for the first twelve months period of these Working Rules no new apprentices shall be taken on, and that those now in the trade shall be classified and given their proper standing by a joint board of examiners, composed of members of the Association and Local 353, and that efforts be made to provide continuity of employment for apprentices.

9. The standard rate of Journeymen's wages shall be:

| | Class "A" | Class "B" |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------|
| June 1, 1929, to May 31, 1930..... | Per hour \$1.15 | \$1.00 |
| June 1, 1930, to May 31, 1931..... | Per hour 1.25 | 1.15 |
| June 1, 1931, to May 31, 1932..... | One class, per hour 1.35 | |

Foremen shall be paid 12 1/2 cents per hour above the rate paid to journeymen.

Class "B" men shall do only K. & T. Work, Romex, fixtures and services up to and including 100 amps. at 250 volts.

All other services and metering equipment to be installed by Class "A" men.

10. No member of Local Union 353, I.B.E.W., shall work for any employer for a lower rate of wages than herein provided.

No members of Local Union 353 shall work for other employers or on their own account while in the employ of a member of the Association.

11. The members of this Association shall be provided with Brotherhood Workmen in preference to all other employees, and the members of the Association will give preference in employment to members of the Brotherhood.

12. Local Union 353 is a part of the I.B. of E.W., and it is therefore understood that any alleged violation or annulment of the Working Rules of this or any other Local Union of the I.B.E.W. shall be considered by the Conference Board. If the Board fails to make a settlement, the dispute shall be referred to the International Office and the Association. Failing a settlement by these bodies it shall be considered sufficient cause for the cancellation of these Working Rules forthwith.

13. It is agreed that in the best interests of the trade that these Working Rules will be carried out in a proper spirit and with all possible co-operation by all parties.

14. Six months before the expiration of these Working Rules the parties hereto will appoint representatives to negotiate new Working Rules.

Approved by the Head Office of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.



Local 353 began 1929 with a feeling of optimism. The local had no idea that before the year was out the greatest economic disaster in North America would transpire. The October 1929 stock market crash was the beginning of the Great Depression. The February

1929 *Journal* reported in Local Lines that the electrical trade in Toronto was booming and that “all members are contentedly employed.” A three-year agreement had been signed that brought the wage rate to \$1.35 an hour in the third year, and “the boys were knocking down \$1.10 an hour, with lots of overtime,” said Frank Selke.

Business Agents Cecil Shaw and Bill Brown were credited with adding several clauses to the new agreement that called “for conditions dear to the heart of every Union worker.”

The Daily Star Building, one of the finest buildings in Canada, was almost complete. Brother Fred Todd served as foreman on the job and Edward Forsey was the job steward. It was a 100 per cent union job and a “credit to the efficiency and skill of the members employed in its construction,” continued Selke.

Local Press Secretary Frank Selke couldn’t help but tweak the noses of his union brothers in the United States. He alluded to their problems under the 18th Amendment (Prohibition) by sharing the details of a social sponsored by IBEW Local 105 in Hamilton that Local 353 members attended. Selke wrote: “...suffice it to say that the working parts of the boys were ‘well oiled’ and everyone joined in with enough whoopee to make it a memorable evening for all who attended.” Local 353 returned the favour by inviting Local 105 to its social in Toronto in February, and expressed a tongue-in-cheek regret that the “parched brothers south of the border” could not be on hand to enjoy the evening’s fun.

By May 1929 Local 353 still believed it was doing very well. It had recently initiated 40 new members – a



Toronto Star Building

majority of whom had transferred from the registered apprentices and helpers branch of the local. Only 20 local members of approximately 400 were without work and business was expected to increase sufficiently to have jobs for them within the month. Some members were working on the construction of a new hotel in Niagara Falls, and Local 353 saw it as a “lucky break for the boys” that would otherwise be unemployed.

A new Eaton’s department store was under construction, but a problem presented itself. The plasterers and lathers were being pressured by the contractors to relinquish the five-day week in exchange for more money for working half days on Saturday. This greatly concerned Local 353 because it was due to adopt the five-day week in 1930 in accordance with the terms of its collective agreement.

In September 1929 the International convention was held in Miami, Florida. It was not known that because of the Depression this would be the last International convention until 1941. Elected to attend for Local Union 353 were Jack Nutland, Ed Forsey, Jack Price and Cecil Shaw.

H. H. Broach, who had been appointed International Vice President in 1919, was elected International President in 1929 and it was Broach’s wish to amend the constitution. He wanted to clarify some sections, strengthen others and provide for discipline to ensure that business was conducted in an orderly fashion and, in the process, secure respect for authority.

To oversee the revisions, an 11-person committee – with no two members from the same local – was established by a membership referendum vote

of 39,581 to 5,405. Local 353’s Cecil Shaw was appointed on the committee and, after a week in Washington, returned with the proposed revisions.

Local 353 Business Manager Frank Selke accepted the proposed changes to the constitution. Selke felt that after a week of intensive study, if Shaw thought the changes were in the membership’s best interests, everyone should get behind him.



The Royal York Hotel - 1935



July 1929 Journal

SOME FACTS, BY F. J. SELKE, L.U.

No. 353

The Royal York Hotel, which has just been opened in Toronto, Canada, is owned and operated by the Canadian Pacific Railway. The building is situated on the site of the old Queens Hotel, just opposite the new Union Station, consequently though a new building it will be backed up by the traditions of the famous old hotel which in years gone by was the scene of some of the most vital gatherings pertaining to the welfare of Toronto and Canada as a whole.

The Royal York is the largest and finest hotel in the British Empire, and in the writer's humble opinion has few equals anywhere on earth. Situated in Toronto, known all over Canada as the centre of social and business activity, the new hotel will house thousands of visitors from the United States and all the world from now on, adding comfort to the stranger within our midst and ever standing out as a splendid structure which was built entirely by organized labor.

Space does not permit me to give all the details of this magnificent structure, so I will give our readers the high lights of the electrical installation.

First and foremost, of course, comes the fact that the job was handled from beginning to end by members of Local No. 353, and not one iota of electrical work in this building was done by any but loyal members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

Five tons of copper buss bar were used in the erection of the switchboard. One hundred and fifty miles of rigid conduit of various sizes were installed in the job. Three thousand four hundred outlets are situated in the structure, thirteen hundred of these being fixtures also installed by Class "A" men of our local. One hundred and fifty thousand feet of telephone wire and six thousand feet of signal cable were used in the room to room connections and so on.

The Canadian Comstock Company were the electrical contractors on the job and their tender called for the following details of installation:

| | |
|---|--|
| <i>Complete lighting wiring</i> | <i>Complete power wiring</i> |
| <i>Fire alarm system</i> | <i>Maids call system</i> |
| <i>Maids indicating system</i> | <i>Watchman's clock system</i> |
| <i>Miscellaneous bell signal system</i> | <i>Radio and public address system</i> |
| <i>Electric fixtures</i> | <i>Telephone wiring</i> |
| <i>Main switchboard</i> | <i>Stage switchboard and dimmers</i> |
| <i>Electric clocks</i> | <i>Flood lighting of building</i> |

Brother Ted Shortt was job steward on this job, which employed an average of seventy members for a period of one year. To the everlasting glory of Brother Shortt, I am pointing out once again that every bit of the above work was done by our boys, at the regular rate of Class A wages and this should convince every one of the wonderful power of organization as depicted in the IBEW.



In the June 1929 *Journal Selke* referred to three or four years previously when the “boys were working for just whatever they could get and all the cushy jobs were in the hands of cheap men. All of this the result of an earlier split when the boys were fooled by the tantalizing bait of company unions and self-governed organizations.” Selke stressed that “the only thing to do is to stick by your local, fight for it, and good conditions are bound to come.”

A major debate erupted in the local in 1929 over a dues increase to \$5.00 a month. The debate was described by Selke as a “humdinger” but with few exceptions it was well executed by both sides. The increase would be used, in part, to provide an additional \$1,000-worth of insurance for each member.

An alternative clause was included that eliminated the insurance by making the dues \$4.00 for journeymen and \$2.75

for helpers and apprentices. There was virtually no disagreement over the rate for the apprentices and helpers increase.

The disagreement centred mainly on the insurance proposal. Even in those days Canadian workers were far ahead of American workers in social legislation. Canada already benefited from mothers allowances, workers compensation (enacted in Ontario in 1915), and old age pensions (enacted in 1927).

According to Selke this was all fine but nothing could take the place of a membership card in the IBEW. All one had to do, he said, was to ask any of the members of the local who stuck by their guns from 1922 to 1926. This was when the Brotherhood split into three or four factions – all of them feeling they were right. Selke believed they were now paying dearly for their “folly” with a lean pay envelope and Selke thought that conditions had improved wonderfully since the re-organization of the local.

Frank Selke Jr.

Business Manager July 1930 – July 1932

Frank Selke Jr. first joined the IBEW in Berlin (now Kitchener) Ontario in 1911. Selke served in World War I and he joined Local 353 on November 12, 1925. In 1928 he left the trade and served as the publicity director for Maple Leaf Gardens. He also served as the unpaid Business Manager of the local. He resigned that unpaid job in 1932.

He became Acting General Manager of the Maple Leaf Gardens and Hockey Club, but he resigned from that position in 1947 to become the General Manager of the Montreal Forum and the Montreal Canadiens Hockey Club. His transfer from the Toronto Maple Leaf organization to the Montreal Canadiens organization resulted largely from his inability to appease Conn Smyth, the team's owner, who regarded Selke as a threat. While managing the Montreal Canadiens, Selke led the team to Stanley Cup championships in 1953, 1956, 1957, 1958, 1959 and 1960.

Nevertheless, Selke maintained his membership in Local 353 and when he was presented his 50-year membership pin in 1975 he said that he regarded his union card as one of his proudest possessions.

While serving as Business Manager and Press Secretary, Selke announced that the local had a monthly paper called “The Makins,” a name it was given because that was what it was intended to be – “the makins of a good Union Man.” As Press Secretary, Selke's writings for Local Lines are a lasting legacy for the local.

In recognition of his contribution to hockey, the N.H.L. created the Frank Selke trophy. This trophy is presented annually to the NHL player considered to be the leagues best defensive forward. It is in many aspects a fitting tribute for a trade unionist who believed in moving forward in the promotion of workers rights, while at the same time defending against the forces that would deny these same workers their rightful place in society.

Frank Selke Jr. died on July 3, 1985.



FRANK SELKE



By September 1929, all Canadians, including Local 353 members, were feeling uneasy about the poor wheat crop in western Canada. Factories and commercial enterprises were starting to cut their staff of electrical workers to a minimum. The construction of the Eaton building came to a standstill, and the Hinde and Dauch paper box factory reduced its electrical work force from 38 to two journeymen and two apprentices. About 30 members were unemployed and much of the work in apartment housing and theatre construction went to the hands of unfair contractors.

The Robert Simpson building was close to completion and was a source of pride for Local 353. It was there that the

local ousted the cheap fixture men leaving local members to complete the electrical work. This building was completed in 13 months and the local saw it as its first complete victory since the split of the early 1920's.

From 1927 to 1929 a large percentage of apprentices took an active role in the local. One of those was Bill Farquhar who joined Local 353 in 1927 at the age of 17 and was employed by Canadian Comstock Company. He survived the Depression by working at the Canadian National Exhibition during the summer and Maple Leaf Gardens in the winter. He would eventually become business manager of Local 353.



View of Tip Top Tailors (under construction) from Fort York - 1930

By 1930 64 journeymen in the local were without work. The local was lavish in its praise of those employers who continued to employ unionized labour including Tip Top. The Tip Top building on Fleet Street, a \$1 million project, was a 100 per cent union job with about 12 IBEW Local 353 members on the job.

Frank Selke appreciated the support of people like David Dunkleman, the owner of Tip Top Tailors. Dunkleman, a Toronto native, started Tip Top Tailors in 1911. He invested \$1,500 in savings in a small clothing store on Adelaide Street and by 1930 had expanded to 45 stores across Canada. In a tribute to Dunkleman Selke wrote, "...this is the one and only large clothing firm in Toronto, which has always dealt fairly with the officers of the Building Trades movement in Toronto. That is why we are taking time out to say a good word to help those who have always been prepared to help us."

By mid-1930 employment reports were bleak for Toronto and up to 40 members were out of work over the winter and into May of 1931. Selke stressed that the membership be "particularly anxious to preserve the morale of the Brotherhood."

"All the good things we have ever received, boys, have come to us through the efforts of the local union," Selke continued, "so don't let any individual, with an axe to grind or personal ends to meet, convince you that there are other and better ways of improving your economic position than through your local union."

Selke, who had a great sense of humour even in difficult times, also jokingly announced that members had formed an orchestra and a male quartet of "members who threaten to entertain the rest of us during the off-season."

In July 1930 Bill Brown returned as Business Manager – a position he held for four years, and he was replaced by Frank Selke.



The Robert Simpson Building



Mike Mungy recalls Selke, whose shoes were so well shined that it impressed him, would sit beside him at union meetings. Mungy felt that Selke liked him because he was “always polite.”

Mike Mungy remembers going to Ottawa in 1930 because there was no work in Toronto. The National Pacific Building was under construction in Ottawa and Bob Law and Tommy Graham were both working there. Chappie told Mungy he would have to lay him off but wondered whether Bob Law would give him a job. Mungy agreed he probably would because he worked with Law in 1928 at Point au Pic, Murray Bay on the St. Lawrence.

While he was there, fellow apprentice helpers Tom Graham, Polly Doyle and Wally Fenton all received their apprenticeship papers together with a beautifully designed diploma. Having received his apprenticeship as well, Mungy enquired where his diploma was. The bookkeeper had not put his name down and said he would not get one because his name was not on his list, and also because he was in Ottawa.

Today, Mungy still sees humour in the fact that he did not receive a diploma, but was the only one of the Ottawa apprentices' helpers to remain in the trade.

Mungy prided himself on being regarded as a good worker, and, when interviewed at his residence in Toronto he recalled a number of incidents, that took place during his working days.

He remembers a job on the Lakeshore in Toronto installing transformers. Admitting to making a mistake on one connection – he inadvertently twisted the wires – Mungy said: “Every time they pulled the switch the transformer blew.”

Even Bob Law could not find the problem and finally, after about a week, Mungy thought about it and he checked it once again. “It was so simple, I could have kicked my own ass.”

On yet another occasion he had to install a 110 generator, which he had never seen before. The generator was sitting on the floor and Harry Chapman came in. Mungy told him he could not figure out the connection on the generator. Chapman looked at him and said, “That’s what I’m paying you \$1.25 an hour for,” and walked out the door. “He was a good man, I figured it out,” said Mungy.

Times were tough. IBEW retiree Bob Barker recalls working for Toronto Hydro as a delivery boy in 1930 for \$35 a month. He later transferred to the Hydro Garage but, because of “politics,” he was turfed out when his boss decided he liked someone else better. He subse-

quently worked in Sudbury, Ontario operating power houses.

Over 50 per cent of the local would eventually be out of work during the Depression, and the same was true for the entire union. Remarkably, the membership would only drop to 50,000

members from 64,000. International representatives wages were reduced by 50 per cent and some were cut to half time with no expenses or salary while others were laid off. From a high of 121,742 members in 1919, membership in the International had plummeted to 60,421 by the end of 1930.

In Toronto, Frank Selke stated bluntly, “Work is dead, absolutely the worst we have had for many years, and it doesn’t look any too promising for the coming months.”

While the situation was bleak there were glimmers of hope. Canadian Comstock was doing the electrical work for the Canadian Commerce building – a 100 per cent union job. The Canada Life building was another unionized project which certainly didn’t fill the full need, but it relieved the pressure.

In October 1930 a packed assembly hall voted to give the local executive and business agents more power in their efforts to reclaim residential work. The executive looked for solutions to the helpers’ problem – no work for the apprentices. About a dozen handpicked apprentices who had displayed extraordinary ability were given the examination. Others would have to wait a long time because “quality and not quantity was the order of the day.”

The local was in a continuous search for solutions to the acute unemployment problem and with the Eaton’s project wrapping up, an additional 85 men would soon be out of work. One solution was a shorter workweek.

By 1930 a group of employees at Toronto Hydro were beginning to speak openly about some system of collective representation and, at the same time,

IBEW began another of several attempts to organize these workers. Despite deep wage cuts at Hydro in 1932 and 1933 all efforts to organize them into Local 353 would fail.



1931-Dec-21-0111

DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR

CONTRACT OF APPRENTICESHIP

This Contract, made in triplicate the 5th day of August 1931.

Between Bellarus Electric (hereinafter called the Employer)

of the First Part, and Marvin Frank Green a minor of the age of 17

years, having been born on the 21st day of June 1914 (hereinafter called the Apprentice)

of the Second Part, and Mr. Harry Green (Parent) (Guardian) of the Third Part.

Witnesseth: 1. That the party of the Second Part, does of his own free will and with the consent of the Third Party to these presents agree;

(a) To serve as an Apprentice to the said Employer in the trade or occupation of Electric Wiring & Installation for a period of 4 years, commencing on the 29th day of November 1931

(b) To be subject to and obey the regulations as made by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, to serve honestly and faithfully the Employer, and to accept and use to the best of his ability the facilities provided for technical instruction.

2. That the Employer does by these presents agree;

(a) To accept the Apprentice for the period stated, and to teach the Apprentice, or cause to be taught efficiently the trade or occupation specified.

(b) To pay to the said Apprentice wages at the following rates:

| | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| For the first year not less than..... | <u>30% of the Journeyman's Rate</u> |
| For the second year not less than..... | <u>40% of the Journeyman's Rate</u> |
| For the third year not less than..... | <u>50% of the Journeyman's Rate</u> |
| For the fourth year not less than..... | <u>70% of the Journeyman's Rate</u> |
| For the fifth or any subsequent year..... | |

(c) To be subject to and carry out the regulations made by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council governing the employment and training of the Apprentice.

In Witness Whereof the contracting parties hereto have hereunder set their hands the day and year aforesaid.

As Witnesses:

F. L. L. L. Harry Green
Employer
Marvin F. Green
Parent or Guardian
Apprentice

Registered at the office of the Director of Apprenticeship this 30th day of September 1931

No 35320 John J. L. L.
Director of Apprenticeship

Contract of Apprenticeship



The 1931 International convention was scheduled for Toronto but economic circumstances forced the union to cancel not just that convention, but all others until 1941. Selke felt it was better to cancel the convention than to do a poor job.

To complicate matters for Local 353, the wage increase scheduled for 1931 was postponed to 1932 by both the union and the contractors consent. With half of the membership unemployed all the building trades agreed to take a 25 cents per hour decrease in 1932 reducing the pay rate to \$1.00 per hour for Local 353 members. This did not reduce unemployment in the trades and efforts by the contractors to reduce wages even further were rebuffed. Wages remained at \$1.00 per hour until 1940. The Local membership sank to 250 members and at least half were out of work either living off relief or doing odd jobs.

In February 1931, 75 per cent of the membership was out of work and no new projects were scheduled. With the help of the contractors, however, work was being done on a shift basis. All good contractors limited work to 40 hours per week and if any overtime work was done, that employee was finished when he reached 40 hours. The purpose of this strategy was to spread the work around. Under the direction of Mr. Rathgeb the Canadian Comstock Company empowered its foremen to co-operate with the union in any reasonable relief measure.

Local 353 members Harry Wilson and A.B. Ocomore each picked a crew of key men to serve as the backbone of his staff, and the rest worked in shifts.

The idea was a popular one. Instead of one man working for three weeks while two others were laid off, all three worked a week each. This provided

a measure of relief for everyone and everyone was paid, content and no one was totally destitute.

Local 353 President Jack Nutland appointed a special education committee to arrange lectures on subjects of interest to the building trades. He wanted the members to improve the skills they already had and the programs also kept the members occupied while they were unemployed. The lectures covered various topics like general starting equipment, photo-electric cells and technological employment and they were well attended. The education committee consisted of Brothers Smith, Ove and Pollock.

Following conferences with International Vice President Michael J. Boyle of Chicago Local 134, the Local began to plan a form of unemployment relief similar to the Chicago model. Brothers Joe Godden, William Brown and Ted Curtis formed that committee.

Despite the local's best efforts to ease the difficulties resulting from the lack of work, frustrations still surfaced from time to time. A sense of hopelessness and despair could not help but creep into the psyche of even the most stalwart of men.

Frank Selke reported on these frustrations in his April 1931 contribution to the *Journal*. "They tell me the boys here had a real hot meeting while I was away," said Selke. "Veiled threats and what not floated through the air for several hours, with the result that everyone unloaded a lot of cantankerous matter off their chests, then finally decided we were all good fellows and surely the local is none the worse as a result of this more thorough understanding of ideals."

“The thing I can’t get out of my system,” Selke wrote, “is that we should be doing the knob and tube work that is largely done rat. Contractors here won’t touch it but sooner or later there will be a day of awakening and my only hope is that it will not be too late.”

The report of the unemployment relief committee was presented along with legal advice and adopted by the membership following several hours of “intelligent discussion.” Members in financial difficulty could receive loans of moderate amounts and while 200 men were entirely without employment, only ten men applied for assistance at the first meeting.

With increasing frustration levels, troubles arose at the Photo Engravers plant. It was 100 per cent unionized but one of the company officials, who claimed to have carried a union card all his life, saw no good reason to hire unionized electricians. Two Local 353 members who worked on the job were fined \$500 by the local. “Don’t do it boys; your card in the Brotherhood is your meal-ticket for life, and protection for your loved ones after that,” Selke cautioned the members. “Why trade it for a few weeks’ work on a job that is breaking down conditions it has taken so many years to build?”

There were some encouraging moments though. Following many weeks of discussion with the board at the Canadian National Exhibition, an agreement was reached to hire only union men.

Reading through Selke’s contributions to the *Journal* during this time, a sense of compassion for the Brotherhood shines through. At times, when even he seemed to become a bit depressed with

events, his optimism still carried the day. Even during this period of doom and gloom Selke’s view was still that there was much to be thankful for, and his somewhat humorous June 1931 contribution to the *Journal* reflects that sense of humour.



Bay Street from Queen Street



L. U. NO. 353, TORONTO, ONT.

Editor:

Time to get the letter in the JOURNAL for the month of June. Really there is little to write about. We have decided that depression talk is out of order and since there is not much construction going on in this district, I am going to dig up and expose a little of the silver lining back of the gloom clouds now overhanging the building industry.

In my opinion, no matter how tough things are, there is always something a member has to be thankful for. I am going to enumerate a few of the points I have in mind:

Something To Be Thankful For

Jack Nutland: *That Percy Eversfield does not always report for meetings in the mental condition he displayed at the special unemployment relief meeting.*

Pete Elsworth: *That the constitution automatically adjourns all meetings at 11 p.m., eliminating a lot of domestic complications.*

Joe Godden: *That his Dodge car was sturdy enough to stand that crash without annihilating Joe.*

Jimmie Curran: *That the kind of a man who doesn't fit in is almost a thing of the past in this Local.*

Jimmie McKenzie: *That he lives in North Toronto, where the climate and neighbours are most congenial.*

Cecil M. Shaw: *That it is quite impossible to load him up with any more assessments.*

Bill Brown: *That he is not business manager with 175 men out of work.*

R. C. Smith: *That Brother Shaw accepted his apology.*

Ted Curtis: *That the cut-throat electric company never materialized.*

Doug Morris: *That our apprentices are of such high calibre that the examining board's work is a cinch.*

Roy McLeod: *That the helper question has temporarily been settled. There's no-one working just now.*

Bert Maunders: *That there are still a reasonable number of motions to second.*

Ernie Ingles: *That he still owns a typewriter in working order.*

John Noble: *That Kitchener is so conveniently located to Toronto.*

Al Donaldson: *That you don't have to believe everything you hear.*

Harry Wilson: *That he will be able to ease the load of many of the unemployed boys when the exhibition job opens. It will be short but sweet.*

Billy Rhea: *That we have not foisted any more bun feeds on his sensitive temperament (sic).*

Bill Gerard: *That things, although bad, cannot possibly be much worse.*

Johnny Dolson: *That Boomer Davis is coming to town to check and double check.*

Frank J. Selke: *That 95 per cent of the members have shown remarkable union labor spirit throughout the past winter of hardships.*

That the warm weather is bound to increase building activity a little.

That Mike Boyle has the time and patience to help F. J. S. solve some of Toronto's problems out of his vast experience at Chicago.

That the members of Local 353 are always ready to support a worthy cause in the interests of the Brotherhood and above all that when the boys read this article the writer will be able to duck from cover until the storm blows over.

Good luck and good-bye

FRANK J. SELKE

The Campbell Soup job was nearing completion and the Canadian National Exhibition would provide a few weeks work. One interesting project was Maple Leaf Gardens, scheduled for construction on College Street about half a mile from the Labor Temple where Local 353 held its meetings and had its office.

Selke was involved with the Toronto Maple Leafs hockey team for a number of years and would eventually leave that organization to work with the Montreal Canadiens.

Conn Smythe purchased the Toronto St. Patricks hockey team in 1926 for \$160,000 and changed the name of the team to the Toronto Maple Leafs. Eaton's sold Smythe the land on which the Gardens would be built for \$350,000 but took back a mortgage for \$300,000

and bought \$25,000 worth of shares of Gardens stock. Smythe needed only \$25,000 for the land.

One wonders if Selke had any influence on the construction of the Gardens. Toronto Maple Leaf owner Conn Smythe made a deal to use only unionized labour for the project as long as they would take 20 per cent of their pay in Gardens' stock. The Maple Leafs went on to win the Stanley Cup in 1932.

In place of the convention that was cancelled in 1931 (meant to be held in Toronto), an informal provincial conference of IBEW locals was held in Toronto in September 1931 to discuss the welfare of the Brotherhood. Crying towels, it was stated, would not be permitted at any of the sessions!



TTC laying track with Maple Leaf Gardens construction in background – circa 1930



By January 1932 Selke reported that the members here were showing remarkable fortitude and trade union spirit. Two hundred were out of work and 200 were working less than half time – but the local only lost a few members. “If we can weather the storm until the new jobs open,” Selke wrote “Local 353 will have emblazoned itself in such a manner that it will live a long time in Toronto’s Civic history.”

In June 1932 an election for local officers was held and a full attendance of the membership was urged. Jack Nutland didn’t run and Ed Forsey was elected as the new president.

Nutland and the executive he headed received glowing accolades from Selke who credited this executive with having the foresight to build up the reserves of the local from 1927 to 1929. This enabled the local to carry and keep its unemployed members in good standing during the previous two years. The gavel Nutland used to preside over meetings he chaired was presented to him by the local – suitably engraved as a memento to his service to Local 353.

Cecil Shaw, the Financial Secretary and Assistant Business Manager, became both Business Manager and Financial Secretary. Tommy Redburn became Vice President.



CECIL SHAW

Cecil Shaw

Business Manager 1932 – 1949

As Local 353 celebrates its 100th anniversary in 2003, Cecil Shaw will have been dead for approximately 50 years. Yet there are those even today who speak of him fondly. Employers, governments and trade union representatives alike respected him. During his time with Local 353, he was called upon to serve as a member of many labour organisations and conciliation boards.

Shaw was initiated into Local 353 at the age of 17 on June 7, 1917 and in 1921 was elected President of the local and become Financial Secretary in 1926. He became full-time Financial Secretary and Assistant Services Manager for the local in 1928.

In 1929, he was appointed to sit on the Law Committee by Local 353 President Noonan prior to the 1929 convention in Miami, and in 1930 he was asked to sit on the constitution committee by International President Broach. This committee was charged with rewriting the constitution. He sat on the law committee at both the 1941 and 1946 conventions.

He was the first person to serve in the dual capacity of Business Manager and

Financial Secretary when the offices of were combined in 1932. He was able to take the local from a deficit position prior to the Depression and create a surplus – regarded as one of the chief reasons the local survived the Depression and maintained a wage level higher than any other trade.

With over half of Local 353’s membership unemployed through major parts of the Depression, Shaw – along with his committee – was instrumental in keeping the local alive.

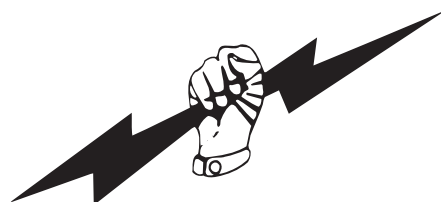
During the war years, Shaw represented Labour on the Regional War Labour Board – a post he was appointed to by the Governor General of Canada.

International President Tracy appointed Shaw to the International staff and he was responsible for organizing Local 1603 in St. Catharines, Ontario. This local had jurisdiction over all conversion work in the province when it went from 25 cycles to 60 cycles. At that time, he was granted a leave of absence from the local but because of the demands of the new job Shaw resigned as local Business Manager and Financial Secretary. He believed this would be in the best interest of both the International and Local 353.

On his death in February 1953, the March edition of Labour Gazette acknowledged Cecil Shaw as an authority on apprenticeship training.

By November 1932 Selke admitted that things were on the rocks. He retained his optimism that they could pull the local through unless everything “goes to smash and we can start over with a fig leaf and go pick some apples.”

Selke credited Shaw with an idea that helped many members through some tough times. Shaw wrote to all members who were working and asked them to voluntarily assume the per capita tax of one or more of the unemployed members. The response to the request was gratifying as many members quietly, and without fanfare, selected boys “now in bad luck” and paid their per capita. No publicity was attached to the contribution. The entire maintenance staff at the provincial parliament buildings contributed as well as the University of Toronto staff. It was but one of many acts that fostered the sense of brotherhood in the Local throughout the Depression.



CHAPTER 5

1933 — 1942 HARD TIMES CONTINUE

When President H. H. Broach stepped down in 1933 because of illness, Frank Selke applauded his efforts:

“Without taking anything away from his successor, whom we do not know, we in Toronto think the Brotherhood will miss Mr. Broach. He was without a doubt a victim of circumstances. No man on earth could guide a group of men through as trying a time as the past four years without encountering a great deal of adverse criticism, and only a man with a cast iron constitution could put up with it.”

As these words were written in 1933, unknown to the IBEW membership – throughout Canada and the United States – a great deal more hardship lay ahead.

Frank Selke criticized municipal, provincial and federal politicians and the corporate community for having cold feet when it came to addressing the many problems facing both the city of Toronto and the nation. As far as Selke was concerned, all that was required of these leaders was to provide plenty of work at good wages for the eight-hour per day boys and the rest would look after itself. With steady work the working man would have the resources to embark on a

spending spree that would not only improve his morale, but would improve the economy as well.

Mike Mungy recalls being laid off from the Western Hospital Pavilion in 1933. When out for a walk Mungy noticed a house being renovated on Bathurst Street near Dundas. He went in, spoke to the landlady, introduced himself as a qualified electrician and offered her a price on the electrical work. Mungy got the job but had no money to purchase materials or equipment.

He went to Canada Electric and informed them he was going into contract work and explained his dilemma. Mungy was sponsored for up to \$500 worth of credit and was officially in business. He may have solved his employment problems, but there were many within the local who were less fortunate.

The International urged all locals to help themselves by developing job opportunities in the residential market and to co-operate with contractors to get residential work underway even if it meant reducing wage rates and dropping demands for extras like travel-time payments.

While it still paid pension benefits, maintained its research facilities and continued to publish the *Journal* the International did cut back a number of its





expenses. The 1931, 1933, 1935, 1937 and 1939 conventions were cancelled and the revenues committed to these conventions were instead transferred to the general fund. This enabled the International to meet its financial obligations without incurring massive debt.

Local 353 searched for ways to keep its members employed and to ease the financial burden for both the local and its members. To promote union labour and educate the public on the skills of its membership, the local rented a display booth at the 1933 Canadian National Exhibition and had its entire staff attend to explain what the local was all about.

While the outlook was bleak, there did appear to be work on the horizon. There was the projected construction of Women's College Hospital (\$600,000), St. John the Divine Convalescent Hospital (\$300,000), an addition to Western Hospital (\$750,000) and a number of other projects. Selke brought these and other projects to the attention of the membership. He also announced the addition to the Ontario Government Mental Hospital at Mimico would be 100 per cent union because if the other jobs did not materialize, "We expect to be star patients before very long."

Jack Nutland was appointed by Business Manager Cecil Shaw to chair an investigative committee to look into rumours about pay rates in various shops. As part of his investigation Nutland interviewed 125 men from 12 different shops. He discovered a few minor infractions, cautioned members on the nature of the infractions and discouraged them from continuing the practice.

The Local constantly battled against those who sought to use the Depression as an excuse to lower wages. Business Manager Cecil Shaw was particularly critical of the Toronto Transportation Commission (TTC) for trying to force its employees to take an eight per cent wage reduction. If the employees disagreed the TTC threatened to take the matter to an arbitration board to request a 15 per cent reduction.

Another publicly owned company that came under criticism from Local 353 was Toronto Hydro Electric. It installed electric water heaters in the homes of residential consumers and permitted the consumer to pay off the heater through a small amount added to his monthly electric bill over a period of years.

The company promised to pay union rates but instead hired two non-union sub-contractors. One contractor performed all the work himself with the help of a labourer, while the other sublet the work to another sub-contractor for \$2.00 per heater. The man doing the work in the latter situation was required to have a car to transport materials, tools and ladders to the job sites at his own expense. If there was a defect in the work performed he was responsible for fixing the fault at his own expense.

When confronted by Local 353 about this way of doing business, one of the Hydro officials said that if the heaters cost any more to install then the practice would be discontinued.

Local 353 also enquired about one Hydro engineer who was closely connected with the contracts. The Local asked why he did not enforce the contract only to be told that, "Under the fair wage clause in their contract they had done exceedingly well, but it was not up to



them to see the terms were honoured.” In other words, the terms of an agreement were of no consequence when it came to the protection of the workers.

It was Toronto’s centennial anniversary in 1934 and the city appointed a special committee to oversee projects for the year. The committee came under criticism from Shaw, “...as the champions of all talk and no action.” By mid-year the committee, which had been allocated \$100,000 for its work, had accomplished nothing more than erecting a sign over the City Hall entrance and sub-letting the contract for souvenir programs to a non-union printing firm. Local 353 had hoped to gain some work for its members through this committee, however that wasn’t to be.

The contractors and sub-contractors were requesting legislation similar to the National Recovery Act in the United States. IBEW wanted something similar in Canada to try and get the economy moving. Following a number of meetings, the committee made up of labour and government representatives submitted a report to the government. No action was taken on the report and government action was more appearance than substance, most likely because an election was pending.

Cecil Shaw lamented that 99 per cent of the trouble, trials and tribulations experienced could be laid directly at the door of the members. Referring to the time he had just entered the trade, he said that when a new man came on the job he was welcomed and when he began to get along in years he was given the easiest jobs – like putting in switches, hooking up panels and installing switchboards.

Shaw saw a change during the building boom from 1926 to 1929, when men who were 40 to 50 years and older were being ridiculed as too old to work. The few who were fortunate enough to become job foremen were pushing the young 20 to 25 year olds in as assistants and superintendents and training them to push the job and giving them no introduction to trade union education.

Now the trainee had taken the job from the teacher and had learned his lesson so well “that he thinks the teacher is too old even to work on the job.” This change of attitude, and lack of respect, took fewer than 10 years.

Appealing to his members to stop for a moment Shaw asked them to take stock of themselves, consider the other fellow, and think of the old-timer and the money and time he spent improving working conditions. He implored the younger members to give the old-timers a hand, to act for them and to ensure that they got a fair break. Shaw went on to speculate that when work picked up 100 new apprentices would be advanced to journeyman status. He reprinted a poem written by one of the Local’s senior members, Brother A. G. Hiscock, and dedicated it to the unemployed electrician.

*We go out in the morning and roam
around all day,*

*Looking for a little job to help us
on our way.*

*But alas! we meet with no success,
get turned down left and right,*

*And return home to our lodging
house in an awful plight.*

*Our landlord wants his room rent,
or else we cannot stay,*

*We also have our grub to buy, for
which we cannot pay*

*We are absolutely at a loss to know
the next best thing to do,*

*And sit and think, and think, and
think, feeling very blue.*

*If we don't get work very soon to
help us get our living,*

*Something serious will happen, of
that there's no misgiving.*

*We are all getting so demoralized,
demented and darn lazy,*

*The asylums will not be big enough
because we are all going crazy.*

Believing that the principles of trade unionism were being neglected Shaw did everything in his power to promote the union's philosophy to the membership. This contribution to the September 1934 *Journal* reflects his feelings.

Editor:

What is wrong with the trade union movement in Toronto, Canada? At a recent meeting of our local union considerable time was taken up regarding classes for teaching apprentices the fine points of the electrical trade. This is an excellent idea but I think the big thing today is to teach all trade unionists the first principles of trade unionism, or in other words, just plain help one another.

I hope this thing called the depression has not affected the trade union movement in other cities to the same extent that it has in this one. I am also glad that it was my privilege to be in the trade union movement in this city when it was worthy of the name, when

there were men who would fight for conditions regardless of the cost; men who considered the troubles of one organization the troubles of all; but evidently the majority of these men have passed on and in their places has come a type of man whose trade union education has been sadly neglected.

Much of Shaw's outrage was directed towards other trade unions. The Labor Temple - where IBEW Local 353 and other unions were located - was next door to the Elliott Hotel that was under construction. This job was the subject of his criticism because it was being built with non-union labour. Following several days of discussion Shaw managed to convince them to hire a few union men from some of the trades. Despite his intervention he was perplexed that the superintendent, a non-union man, had wired the tap room and wanted to hire a Local 353 member to hang a few fixtures. That way the job could be called fair but Shaw refused to go along with this.

IBEW Local 353 notified the labour council that the local considered the job unfair, but the council filed the letter and took no action. The management of the same hotel later decided to create an illuminated outside garden situated between the Labor Temple and the hotel. Again, the contract was given to a non-union firm. The firm was permitted to tie the wires to the Labor Temple and that annoyed Shaw since it added insult to injury.

At the same time Shaw witnessed several union business agents, stewards, members and even international officers of some unions, drinking in the hotel garden.





By the end of 1934 – more than five years into the Depression and despite the hardships – few Local 353 members had dropped their union cards.

Efforts to find work for the membership took up a considerable amount of Cecil Shaw's time. He interviewed owners of bakeries and dairies in the city and enquired who did their electrical work. He compiled extensive lists and discovered who was loyal to the trade union movement and made the information available to the members. His hope was that it would encourage them to buy goods only from those firms who were loyal to labour.

One thing the information revealed was that there were 12 large bakeries with branches spread throughout the city. In addition to these, there were 200 smaller ones, 11 large and 70 small dairies in the city. Shaw discovered that Local 353 members received steady work from only two bakeries while several others had non-union electricians in their employ.

The statistics for the dairies was even worse than that of the bakeries. Not one unionized electrician was employed. Drivers for these firms embarked on an organizing campaign to unionize 100 per cent and Local 353 encouraged its membership to buy only from those drivers who had a union card.

Some of these firms did become 100 per cent union right down to the electricians – simply because of the fact that union members began asking to see the dairy and bakery drivers' union card.

Another campaign that drew the attention of the labour movement and Local 353's support was a campaign sponsored by hotel owners. In May 1935

hotel owners sought the support of the union in their attempt to change existing legislation to permit the sale of beer by the glass. The legislation was promoted so "the working man could have a beer" without buying a full case.

The campaign was intensive and all delegations to the government requested that the legislation permit the sale of beer by the glass. It was not only the hotel owners who courted labour's support but the breweries jumped on the bandwagon as well. In order to sell beer by the glass a number of hotels would require renovation and perhaps include the installation of new beverage rooms. Local 353 fully supported the campaign because the potential for jobs for its members was great.

Indeed, there was a lot of work. In approximately six months, 125 hotels were built or remodelled, costing as much as \$25,000 for each establishment. To facilitate the sale of beer by the glass it was reported that the breweries had to install up-to-date equipment and enlarge plants at a cost of two million dollars.

When all was said and done Local 353 had received the benefit from just one hotel that had employed two of the union's members. That work came from a hotel manager who happened to be a personal friend of business manager Cecil Shaw. Union efforts to reason with the Brewery and Hotelmen's Association management regarding their unfair attitude accomplished nothing except empty promises and the run-around.

Soft drink manufacturing plant Consolidated Breweries, a subsidy of Kuntz and O'Keefe Breweries, had agreed to hire union. They, like many others, reneged and went "rat."



The local received a constant stream of circulars from the Brewery Workers Union about the “Fair Breweries,” but Local 353’s leadership wondered if it ever occurred to the brewery worker to ask the person who did the electrical work around their plant to show his union card, or to encourage management to hire union labour.

Shaw asked his members not to offer their support to certain firms – the breweries, the bakeries and the dairies – until they received support in return. It was through demanding such loyalty that the member would get work for a brother and, perhaps in the process, obtain work for himself. One could say that Shaw’s advice is as sound today as it was then.

To counter the breweries refusal to hire unionized electricians, Local 353 sponsored an advertising campaign to “Hire Union.” They distributed leaflets and pamphlets only to find them later mutilated beyond recognition. It was discouraging that a member of the Brewery Workers’ Union was responsible for much of the damage.

To display the hypocrisy of the Brewery Workers’ Union, a sign that had the logo of one of the breweries that advertised “Union-Made beer,” which included a facsimile of the Brewery Workers’ label, was painted by a non-union painter!

While Local 353 was suffering immensely and many of its members were unemployed, the leadership was not insular in its outlook towards others. One Local 353 contribution in the February 1935 Local Lines publicized the injustices uncovered by a Miss Hutchinson, B.A., who had investigated several Toronto industries employing female labour.

Hutchinson was a member of the National Council of the Y.W.C.A. and a special lecturer at the University of Toronto. The *Journal* published her findings that included circumventing the minimum wage provisions for women and girls. One incident was discovered where two girls received their pay in one pay packet. The purpose was to disclose only one girl on the payroll giving the appearance of honoring the minimum wage provision without actually doing so.

There were also infractions discovered in which 10 per cent of the employees’ wages were dedicated to health and insurance premiums and it was believed the employer also contributed a further five per cent. Employees were uncertain that this was done especially since many received no payment when sick. It was thought that the real purpose of the fund was to discourage the workers from participating in a strike. Strike action meant that the employee forfeited her portion of the fund.

Another violation included the payment of overtime only before 7:30am and after 6:30pm. Many worked 10 hours a day six days a week before being eligible for any overtime payment. Others worked until 9pm and were not given any time off for supper. Situations were discovered where it was impossible for a woman or girl to earn more than five cents an hour.

One young 17-year-old boy was hired out to a plumbing/tinsmithing contractor for \$5.00 a week! He worked from 8am to 9pm every day and after that he was ‘lent’ to his employer’s brother’s garage where he worked until 1 or 2am. He received no additional compensation.



While the leadership of Local 353 was sometimes critical of the membership – and no doubt the criticism was reciprocated – there were occasions when both were lavish in their praise of the other.

Press Secretary Fred Ainsworth wrote the following in the April 1935 *Journal*:

“The members of this organization have during the past six years stood up remarkably well, and have met the most discouraging conditions (where pressure was being brought to bear on them to break down conditions and rates) with a courageous attitude which is deserving of the highest praise. Time and again when the carrying out of a working rule has meant the sacrificing of his job with no other job in sight, the member has faced that sacrifice with never a murmur of complaint. Members upon getting a week’s work after six months or more idleness pay \$5 or \$1 a working day into this organization to help carry along less fortunate. There are quite a number engaged in other lines of work and scattered over the country and into the far north, still managing to keep up their standing in this organization. Our members are making costly efforts and sacrifices to hold to ideals and keep up conditions.”

In general, local leadership believed the organized worker was doing far more than his share towards the stabilization of the construction industry than were the manufacturers, the distributors, or the contractors. The manufacturers, distributors, and the contractors failed to form responsible associations to facilitate

the negotiation of trade agreements that would be mutually beneficial to all areas of the economy.

The 1935 Industrial Standards Act was one piece of legislation the local applauded. Local 353’s Business Manager Cecil Shaw, President Jack Nutland, members R. Gardiner and Fred Ainsworth, and International Vice President Ernest Ingles set up a committee to work on a new agreement under the new Act.

The 1935 Industrial Standards Act was designed to eliminate unfair competition and Louis Fine was appointed the Industrial Standards Commissioner. He worked in conjunction with the Deputy Minister of Labour James Marsh. Also involved was a Mr. Crawford, Chairman of the Minimum Wage Board and responsible for administering the Act.

The agreement had four parts that were to have the weight of the law behind them. They were to apply to anyone in the trade, unionized and non-union, and they covered the hours of work, both per day and per week, the hourly rate, the overtime rate and the zone in which those rates were to apply.

Following several conferences with a number of contractors Local 353 applied and succeeded in coming under the Act. Commissioner Fine placed an advertisement in the Toronto papers inviting anyone connected with the electrical trade or construction industry to a meeting at the Legislature.

The meeting was well attended and equally well represented by the union and the electrical industry. An agreement was reached providing for an eight-hour day to be worked from 8am to 5 pm, Monday to Friday, a 40-hour week at



\$1.00 per hour and double time for all overtime. Saturday and Sunday work was to be performed only in emergency situations and was to be paid at straight time rates. These conditions applied only to the city of Toronto and for a 10-mile radius beyond the city limits.

A board was appointed to meet, receive, and investigate complaints. The board consisted of three contractors – C. Rathgeb of Canadian Comstock Company, G. G. Richardson of Richardson and Cross, and P. A. Cheevers of Art Electric Construction Company and two journeymen represented the union – Business Manager Cecil Shaw and President Jack Nutland.

The legislation was unique. Although Local 353 hammered it out it applied equally to union and non-union firms.

Cecil Shaw and Jack Nutland were primarily responsible for the negotiation of the agreement. Shaw wondered

if the non-union man would come forward to join the union as an expression of appreciation for the work done in getting the government to accept the schedule. He was equally concerned about whether his own IBEW members would abandon the union now that they could get the same rate in any shop – union or non-union.

To discourage the members from leaving the union Shaw reminded them that the fight was not just to improve the agreement today but, in order to retain it and its improvements, the process would have to be repeated annually.

Shaw recognized that while some of the non-union contractors accepted the new legislation willingly, others did not. Those who did not were already making noise, which was expected to develop into a considerable holler by the time the agreement came up for renewal. The Manufacturers Association was expected to oppose the legislation as well.

Part of this ground-breaking legislation was reproduced in the August 1935 *Journal*,

Schedule "A"

- 1. The rate of pay for journeymen electricians shall be one dollar (\$1) per hour.*
- 2. Eight hours shall constitute a maximum working day or shift; 40-hour week. No work Saturdays, Sundays or holidays, except as hereinafter noted. Hours to be between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. where one shift only is used.*
- 3. Shifts to work at any time of the day or night between 1 a.m. Monday and midnight Friday of the same week. Eight hours' pay for seven hours' work where two or three shifts are worked. This to become operative only where overtime shifts equal at least 66 2/3 per cent of the shift.*
- 4. When work cannot be done during the day, such work may be done as a night shift of not more than eight hours, at straight time.*



5. *No employee will be permitted to work on more than one shift in 24 hours, unless overtime rates are paid.*
6. *Employees who may be required for emergencies on Saturdays, shall be permitted to work, being paid straight time for the morning and double time for Saturday afternoon and evening.*
7. *All work done on Sundays, New Year's Day, Good Friday, Victoria Day, Dominion Day, Civic Holiday, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day shall be paid at the rate of double time.*
8. *Overtime rate exclusive of all the above shall be paid at the rate of double time.*
9. *Apprentices shall be governed by the Ontario Apprenticeship Act.*
10. *One apprentice shall be permitted to every three journeymen in a shop.*
11. *All work contracted for and accepted prior to June 24, 1935, of which due notice has been given to the board on or before July 25, 1935, may be completed at a rate to be approved by the board.*
12. *The above schedule shall apply to all electricians engaged in the trade but shall not include those working on the assembling, testing, inspecting, rebuilding and repairing of any electrical motors or household appliances when done in licenced electrical repair shops.*

The legislation had an immediate impact on the industry. Everyone got the benefit of the union negotiations because all electricians received the wage increase. Fair contractors were getting some of the smaller contracts and they were also getting a reasonable amount of the industrial work at \$1 per hour, whereas only 40 cents per hour was paid prior to the agreement. Smaller non-union firms became more acquainted with Local 353 and found that qualified men supplied by the local were considerably superior in their skill level than those they had selected randomly on the open market.

Despite these early successes the union remained vigilant. Many contractors who specialized in industrial work were used to paying 50 to 60 cents per

hour, with nothing extra for overtime, and they were seeking ways to avoid the new rate.

Of equal concern to the union were the trust companies, large department stores and public institutions whose managers were very unhappy with the change and were not silent in their displeasure. Anticipating a well-organized opposition to the new law the union continuously reminded its membership that whenever labour made gains, there were always corporate lawyers who would organize a major opposition in defence of their vested interests.

True to the union's expectations there was strong opposition from a number

of the contractors when the agreement came up for renewal the following year. Local 353 was prepared to take strike action to defend its position – the first for the union in 10 years.

There were some flaws in the Industrial Standards Act and the union sought amendments to strengthen it, particularly related to enforcement of the Act.

The union advised its journeymen to request the services of another journeyman on any job where assistance was needed. Even if it was for one or two days that small amount of work would ease the plight of the unemployed member. The Continental Can job in New Toronto was near completion in mid-

1936 and employed a larger number of Local 353 members than any job for some length of time. These men would now be without work.

The new schedule was negotiated in 1936 and the word “journeyman” was changed to “any person not a recognized apprentice.” This change came about because of a case brought before the courts where the matter in dispute was the status of an employee.

George Campbell Jr., an IBEW retiree and a 57-year member of Local 353, recalls that his father – also an IBEW member who was 65 years in the Local – only worked for two weeks in the summers of both 1935 and 1936.



Continental CAN Crew – 1936

Top row: Eugene Curtiss, Jack Genise, P. Elsworth, Sam Genise, Sid Osborne, Red Sanders;

Second row: Gordon Webb, Grant Sinclair, Lew Moon, Jack Duncan, Ron McLeod, Bob Robertson;

Third row: George Murray, Charlie Taylor, Robert Law, Ed Forsey, Bill Jennion, Jack Lichlighter



He worked two weeks when the Canadian National Exhibition was on and two weeks in the winter when the Royal Winter Fair was held at Exhibition grounds. George Campbell Jr.'s son, Peter, is also an IBEW Local 353 member with over 26 years' service – three generations of one family with a total of 148 years of membership in the local.

During the mid-30's, there was an increase in trade union membership in Ontario. In spite of perilous times, the increase in membership was a reflection of the broadening basis for union membership. Not only did the traditional craft unions accept a greater variety of workers in the craft it represented, but a new group of industrial workers, who were previously largely unorganized, began to join unions for the first time. Notable among these were men and women employed in the auto, steel and textile industries. Workers in the railway shop trades and some of the machine trades began to represent a major portion of the Trades and Labour Congress in Canada and the AFL in the United States.

Prior to 1935 there was only one type of IBEW member, later known as "A" members. In 1935 a "B" membership was introduced by a referendum of the members. This permitted unorganized workers in utilities and manufacturing plants to join the IBEW. Dues for an "A" member were \$2 per month. Dues were 50 cents per month, and a lower initiation fee of \$1.50 and a lower per capita of 50 cents per member was charged for "B" members. "B" members weren't eligible to participate in the death and pension benefits' program and they did not have voting rights equal to those of other members at conventions or in referendums.

Craft unions extended their membership beyond the strictly skilled worker to the semi-skilled and unskilled worker. The manner in which these workers were to be accommodated in the craft unions became a contentious issue in the AFL. After a series of disputes the Committee of Industrial Organizations was formed within the AFL.

The Committee of Industrial Organizations organized workers in the mass-production industries including the six leading industrial unions in the AFL. In addition to Auto and Steel they were the United Mine Workers of America, the International Ladies Garment Workers, the Oil Field Gas Well and Refinery Workers and the United Textile Workers.

Officers of the United Hatters and Millinery Workers and the International Typographical Union were also active on the committee but did not join.

Just one year after the committee was formed, divisions between the two groups were so great that all six unions were expelled from the AFL for fostering dual unionism. A new organization was formed by these six unions called the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO).

In Canada, the Trades and Labour Congress attempted to avoid a division within its ranks. It was successful in doing so until 1938 when it felt it could no longer ignore the dual character of unionism fostered by these organizations and such unions were expelled. This resulted in a loss of over 20,000 affiliated members. The total paid-up membership in the TLC in Canada in 1936 was 112,972.

Throughout 1936 and 1937 Local 353 members were employed in many Ontario cities. Press Secretary Peter Elsworth was working in Windsor on the

Ford job. The Globe and Mail building was reported to be the one large job in Toronto. Shortly after Christmas 1937 12 Local 353 men were sent to Red Rock in Northern Ontario to a job that was expected to last six months. Unfortunately the Red Rock firm went into receivership and the Local 353 men returned home with no work.

The Globe and Mail project was nearing completion. Bill Jennion supervised the electrical work on the presses and George Gyatt supervised the remainder of electrical work on the job. The union reported that during part of the summer of 1937 all Local 353 members were employed. The union hoped that the same would be true for 1938.

In early 1938 progress on a new agreement was slow. Many conferences were held under the Industrial Standards Act the previous year and the local was becoming disenchanted with the lack of progress and threatened to return to their former negotiating method.

In February 1938 a conference of the electrical repair and construction industry was held in Toronto. Representatives from the Manufacturers Association, the Toronto Board of the Electrical Contractors Association, and closed shop contractors attended.

A government representative chaired the proceedings with an assistant present and the Manufacturers Association presented a five-page brief requesting that



Local 353 Members at the Chrysler Plant in Windsor – 1937

(1) Harry Wilson, (3) Jack Patterson, (6) Bill Aldersley, (8) Herb Ransome, (12) George Duff, (15) Mart Taylor, (16) Slim Gullins, (18) Jack (Joe) Ross, (21) Syd Archbold, (22) Eddie Barnes, (23) Roy McLeod



their employees who performed electrical work be excluded from the code. Many of the manufacturers represented by this organization were inspected the previous year and found to be in violation of the code. Subsequently, many of these jobs were turned over to contractors.

The Manufacturers Association demanded to know who had requested the conference only to be informed that it was the IBEW. The employers were asked if any of them wished to consummate an agreement with the IBEW. A number of representatives said they wished to have an agreement – including Ed Longfellow who represented a group of closed shop contractors.

A committee was struck, with representatives for employees and employers, to discuss several matters including a wage increase from \$1.00 to \$1.18 per hour. An agreement was reached and although there was no wage increase, all unions and companies in the electrical

trade – including the manufacturers – would continue to be covered by the Industrial Standards Act. This meant that along with everyone else they had to pay \$1.00 per hour to electricians.

The following morning, however, an announcement was made that there would be special consideration given to the manufacturers. This was not a part of the original agreement. The committee refused to discuss the matter further and the conference was adjourned to the following month where again little progress was made.

Ed Longfellow of General Electric, Mac Greenland of Ontario Electric, Mr. Rathgeb of Canadian Comstock and Cecil Shaw of Local 353 set up a committee to try and hammer out an agreement.

It was expected that 1938 would be as good for Local 353 members as the summer of 1937. This was not to be. Employment was reported to be close to an all-time low.



CNE Grandstand Crew – 1938

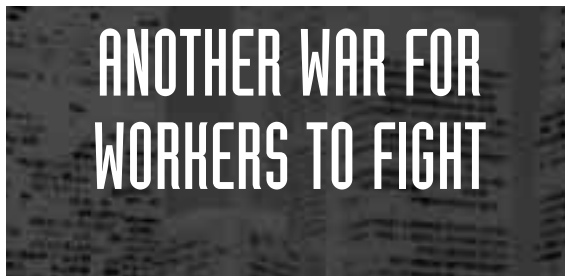
*left to right, standing: Business Manager C. M. Shaw; foreman, J. Wiggins; A. Laird; J. C. Patterson
seated: President Jack Nutland ; A. McCreight and Jack Ross*



The April 1938 *Journal* reported the construction of an airplane factory at Malton Airport. Local 353 executive board ruled that members who worked on this job would have their transportation paid for by the contractor from the city limits to the site.

The August 1939 *Journal* said that AleX Hay – the longest card-carrying member of Local 353 (initiated in 1900 in Local 114) – was working in Rochester, New York. Other Local 353 members were scattered throughout Ontario in St. Thomas, Ottawa, Oshawa, Raglan, South Porcupine, Perth, Whitby, Peterborough, Kirkland Lake and Kincardine.

It was to the credit of Local 353 officers that wages were maintained at \$1.00 per hour throughout the Depression. This had not been easy. At the beginning of World War II, IBEW Local 353 members were the highest paid construction workers in the city.



On September 3, 1939 England declared war on Germany. Although Canada was loyal to England it also wanted to exercise its independence and, partly for that reason, Canada did not enter the war until September 10. By the end of that year the cost of living was soaring.

Local 353 members served their country both in the theatre of action and at home. One hundred and four mem-

bers joined all areas of the armed forces and with the exception of Harry Hardy all returned home. Several of those who enlisted received commendations for their efforts.

The first Local 353 member to enlist was Charley Porter, who also served in the First World War at age 16. An article in the October 1940 IBEW *Journal* said that Porter was somewhere in England, and described him as a “hustler on the job, digging in for all he was worth, tearing around like nobody’s business.”

Frank Johnson was another member who enlisted and the *Journal* reported that it appeared the government was going to take advantage of his training by appointing him as an instructor for the Militia that was in the process of recruitment.

John Delvin was a Naval Reserve Officer in the Canadian Navy and left immediately after war was declared on September 10, 1939.

Sid Archbold was the first Local 353 member to be accepted for service in the Canadian Air Force.

The September 1942 *Journal* reported that Local 353 had 60 members serving with the armed forces, many of whom dropped into Local 353 offices when home on leave.

“Men with the proper degree of skill were disappearing --- and no new blood was being infused into industry. Technical schools employed instructors with no practical experience,” Ernest Ingles reflected later. “The trade unions, the only bastion of skill in the industrial society at the time, rose to the challenge. Unions --- scurried around and looked up their old members, who had been dropped on the industry’s scrap heap.



Only with organized labor's participation was Canada able to meet its wartime production demands and to build training schools, military camps and all types of factories in record time."

During the war, many issues of the *Journal* (though *Local Lines*) reported on its members who were serving. The May 1944 *Journal* reported on "Harry Hardy, Flight Sergeant in the R.C.A.F., and a good member...who joined the Local on April 25, 1929 at the age of 16 years."

Hardy was reported to have joined the Air Force on March 9, 1942, and had gone overseas in May 1943. He was killed when his Halifax bomber crashed in Wales after a bombing raid over Germany on February 29, 1944. His brother Bill Hardy was also a long-time member and Business Manager of Local 353 and he also served in the RCAF.

Ken McKye, an electrical artificer in the RCNVR and a member of Local 353 since 1941, was awarded the British Empire Medal for saving lives at sea. He joined the Local at age 23 and served as an apprentice with Standard Electric and Roxborough Electric. He joined the navy in May 1943 having served for a short period as a journeyman.

The wording in his citation read as follows:

"This rating displayed untiring efforts and prompt action in risking his own life in effecting the rescue of survivors of H.M.C.S. Clayoquot. His personal disregard of his own life in going over the side to assist survivors on board was undoubtedly instrumental in saving the lives of men immersed in very cold water."

"Congratulations Ken! We're proud of you and may our organization, to which you belong, always remain worthy of your confidence and support and the confidence and support of all our service members," wrote Press Secretary Jack Nutland.

Another Local 353 member decorated for gallantry was Squadron Leader Tommy Campbell. Tommy was a navigator in the RCAF for 3½ years and made 51 flights over Germany. He received the Distinguished Flying Cross. On being asked for details on the award by Press Secretary Jack Nutland, Campbell clammed up and said he didn't know, "...unless it was for always navigating his crate and squadron back to the same country he started out from."



IBEW Local 353 members serving in World War II

Jimmy Shaw, son of Business Manager Cecil Shaw, was also reticent about his wartime experiences.

There are numerous others who served overseas but would become Local Union 353 members only when the hostilities ended. Their contributions are equally significant, however, the follow-

ing represents the entire list of World War II veterans who enlisted while they were Local 353 members. At the end of the war this welcome home was in the September 1945 *Journal*. "To our Local 353 members discharged from the armed forces and back in the Trade, I would say welcome. You've fought for democracy over there, now help us out here."



I.B.E.W. LOCAL 353 WORLD WAR II - HONOUR ROLL

| | | | | |
|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Ainsworth, C.J. | Cramp, A.J. | Honey, D.J. | Matthews, A.G. | Rock, S. |
| Ainsworth, J. | Crich, C.F. | Hoyle, E. | Matson, R.W. | Ross, J.H. |
| Ainsworth, K.D. | Cross, S.H. | Hurst, J. | McAllister, N. | Russell, H. |
| Alderdice, H. | Cunningham, J.E. | Hutchings, G. | McCausland, T.E. | Sanders, F. |
| Aldersley, W. | Curtis, E. | Imray, A. | Michie, G. | Scudamore, A.G. |
| Alexander, C. | Darke, R. | Jamieson, G. | McGraw, V.J. | Shaw, J.A.R. |
| Allen, C. | Delvin, J. | Johnson, F. | McKye, K. | Smith, R. |
| Archbold, S. | Doyle, P. | Jones, E.W. | Miller, W.B. | Spafford, H.V. |
| Bedford, H.G. | Duncan, G. | Jones, S.D. | Nixon, R. | Sparks, A.W. |
| Blundell, J. | Duncan, J.W. | Jordan, G.E. | Noble, W.G. | Spraggs, E.J. |
| Brown, D.M. | Fenske, G. | Kee, D. | Park, W.J. | Swallow, H. |
| Brown, R.H. | Findlay, W. | Knapton, L.G. | Paterson, M. | Taylor, L. |
| Browning, A. | Gallagher, R. | Knight, F.J. | Phillips, F. | Webber, W.S. |
| Bullock, W.R. | Gazley, R. | Kostynyk, M. | Philp, R.T.L. | Weslak, S. |
| Bunton, E. | Hamilton, R. | LaHay, F.J. | Porter, C.S. | Wildbur, J.T. |
| Burns, W. | Hardy, H. | Lennox, H.V. | Putnam, H. | Williams, E. |
| Campbell, T. | Hardy, W.G. | LePaule, J. | Putsey, A.E., Jr. | Wilson, F. |
| Carson, D.J. | Harrop, P.E. | Lumb, K. | Quan, C. | Woodall, D.W. |
| Clark, G. | Harvey, C.I. | Lummiss, F. | Reeves, W. | Woolford, E. |
| Comer, M. | Hill, A.E. | MacDonald, R.M. | Reynolds, J.A. | Znidarec, S. |
| Craik, D.R. | Holloway, F. | Marcus, I. | Riggs, W.G. | |

All Local members were back at work and many electricians who had not worked for years and had drifted away from the local were called into service. Men, good electricians all of them, were suddenly regarded as not too old to work after all. If they couldn't work at the trade they were pressed into service as instructors for a new generation of electrical workers.

In 1940 a 10-cent per hour increase was negotiated, the first increase since the early years of the Depression. In the meantime, many contractors had come to realize how valuable the union was to them and they finally understood that Local 353 had men specially trained for their work. Local 353 was administered by an extremely competent executive and an efficient Business Manager –



Cecil Shaw – who maintained strict discipline in office ready to serve the trade at all hours of the day.

Local 353 fully supported the war effort and recognized that a disciplined and organized work force could do much to support the war effort.

With every member employed and more still needed, the local leadership announced a decision that they knew

would not be universally popular among the membership. However, for the good of the Commonwealth and with the expectation that time would prove them right, the executive announced its co-operation in the war effort. Minister of Munitions and Supply C. D. Howe sent the union a letter asking for their co-operation in the war effort and they had agreed it was necessary to do so. Local 353 sent the following letter, reproduced here in its entirety, to the contractors:

Dear Sirs:

On receipt of a letter from Honourable C. D. Howe, minister of munitions and supply, stating it would be most desirable if electricians would voluntarily work a 48-hour week on a straight time basis, the membership of this local union decided to comply with this request and to temporarily suspend the provisions of our now existing agreement which limits the hours of work, and will work eight hours per day, six days per week at straight time, when necessary, during the present crisis; these to be between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday (holidays not included). It being distinctly understood our agreement, as at present constituted, shall remain unchanged and the suspended provisions shall immediately, at the end of this crisis, automatically become effective.

This is an emergency measure and we trust we may have your continued co-operation in maintaining the 40-hour week, wherever possible.

With best wishes, I am

*Yours very truly,
Business Manager*

And so the 48-hour week was introduced during war times.

Jack Nutland, Cecil Shaw and Joe Dent attended the 50th anniversary convention in St. Louis, Missouri in 1941. Nutland was bothered that only the American flag was flown and they felt like outsiders within their own organization. While admitting that he was, perhaps, a bit fussy, he expressed pride for the international affiliation and called attention to

the presence of both flags being prominent on the IBEW button he wore.

At the time of this convention Canada had been at war for two years. The United States was not yet involved and didn't join until December 1941. In Nutland's January 1942 contribution to *Local Lines*, he took the Canadian media to task for treating the adult population like little children by keeping them in the dark about setbacks suffered by the

Allies. At the same time he chided them for taking the advantage of freedom of the press. Nutland felt that the Canadian press had done more to upset the morale of their readers than any other agency.

“Maybe the reason for all this sugar-coated tripe is that we, who are asked to supply the men, fight the battles, and pay the bills, are not capable of taking bad news with the good,” said Nutland. “I am inclined to think, howev-



Hydro Power Addition Crew – 1940 Top row: George Jordan, Bill Gallup, Bob Robertson, Harrold McKee, George Gyatt, Second row: Bill Cabe, Steve Cross, Red Swales, Bill Knight, Al Gullins, Ernie Woolford.



Anaconda Brass Foundry Crew – 1941 Standing from left to right: Don Findlay, Bus (Frank) Wilson, Steve Weslak; Seated from left to right: Tommy McDonough, Bill Hamilton and Harold Smith



er, that the official news as issued by our War Departments, is not colorful enough to build up larger circulations and dividends.”

“The let down that usually follows these artificial build-ups will someday react unfavorably towards these gentlemen of the press,” he continued. “We

all like to think we are fighting for democracy and free speech but free speech is not the right to shout fire in a crowded theatre”

Nutland’s comments in the February 1942 edition of the *Journal* leaves no doubt that he spoke to the overwhelming majority of Local 353 members.

L.U. NO. 353, TORONTO, ONT.

Editor:

Never before in history has the working man had a better opportunity, than now offers itself, to present his logic and ideals to the free and civilized world. The utmost effort must be put into our plans and actions to defeat the forces of oppression and regimentation that seek to destroy what has been gained by us in the way of social legislation in the past few years.

*Yes, this is labor’s war in more ways than one. When the high pressure brokers, the dollar-a-year pip-squeaks and flag-waving profiteers have failed, and they have, miserably, those in authority turn to labor for support. Let us give it to them, wholeheartedly and loyally so that when the victory is won we can say **that was our war, this is our peace, these are the things we want.***



Canadian Arsenal Crew – 1941

Standing: George Gyatt, Steve Cross, George Milne, Unknown, Dalton Kee, Unknown, Tom McDonough

Seated: Unknown, Frank Guttridge, Unknown, Jim McGee, Fred Davis, Jimmy Shaw, Bill Findlay, Steve Weslak



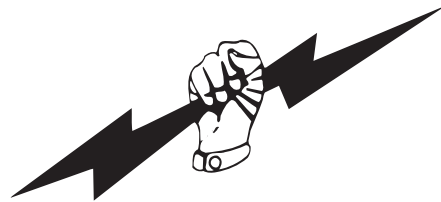
Local 353 had no time for the armchair critics who criticized the early setbacks suffered during the war. The local felt they owed it to the public to fully support the war effort in order to end the war in the shortest possible time. While recognizing that there were some abuses to our democratic form of government, it was necessary first “to save the chassis. We can put on the trimmings later, if we can stay on the job.”

As the war progressed, and in the interests of utilizing human resources to their maximum, the federal government enacted a new piece of legislation. With a few special exceptions the 1942 legislation prevented anyone from accepting a job anywhere without the approval of the Selective Service. The purpose was to place people in jobs that were helpful to the war effort. The local was still critical of the government at the time; however, it supported these measures as necessary.

Nutland was critical of government bureaucracy and aimed his fire at the Apprenticeship Board for the Province of Ontario headquartered at Queens Park. “If one is lucky enough to have a plan of the hallways,” Nutland wrote, “plus a lot of time and influence he can reach the chairman of this energetic board by passing through only four outer offices. Once there he will be informed that the board indentured one apprentice last month to his father, who does odd jobs of electrical work at night.”

“If the government is serious in its efforts to crush our enemies,” Nutland continued, “a gold mine of manpower was concealed in the various committees, commissions, boards, offices and civil service of all governments. Enough men to equip all our factories on a three-shift basis.”

Like many other members, Mike Mungy felt the brunt of the war effort first hand. Still in the contracting business he was unable to purchase the materials he needed to work. He met his old employer, Harry Chapman, on the street and asked if he had any jobs open. Chapman said he had and Mungy returned to work and gave the material he had on hand to another contractor.





LABOUR DAY

In an article in *Canadian Labour* in September 1961, Clifford Scotton wrote, “The Canadian Labour Movement can justly claim the title of Originator of Labour Day. Peter J. McGuire, one of the founders of the American Federation of Labor, has traditionally been known as the ‘Father of Labour Day.’ Historical evidence indicates, however, that McGuire obtained his idea...from Canadian trade unionists.”

The Toronto Trades Assembly organized the first North American workingman’s demonstration of any significance on April 15, 1872. Close to 10,000 Torontonians turned out to see the parade and listen to speakers calling for the abolition of a law that defined trade unionists as “criminal conspiracies in restraint of trade.”

The purpose of the parade was to demand the release of 24 imprisoned leaders of the Typographical Union. The members were on strike against the Globe in support of the nine-hour day. Even though the law of criminal conspiracy in restraint of trade had been repealed by Parliament in the United Kingdom in 1871, it was still a crime to be a member of a union in Canada.

Another parade was also held in Ottawa in September 1872 where members of seven different unions marched to the home of Prime Minister Sir John A. Macdonald and brought him to City

Hall by a torch lit carriage. Macdonald knew of workers discontent with the laws declaring unions illegal, and he promised to remove such “barbarous laws” from the statute books and did so in an act of parliament in 1872.

The tradition of the parade established by the Toronto Trades Assembly continued through the 1870’s and 1880’s, but it was not until 1882 that the Toronto Trades and Labour Council decided to organize an annual demonstration and picnic. The Council sent an invitation to Peter J. McGuire from New York, the Founder and General Secretary of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters.

At a meeting of the New York Central Labor Union in the same year, McGuire proposed that a day be set aside for an annual demonstration and September 1882 marked the first Labor Day in New York City. It is apparent that the custom was developed in Canada and was the inspiration for McGuire’s suggestion.

Pressure mounted for a national holiday in Canada to commemorate labour. Over the objections of many in his own party, the government of Sir John Thomson enacted the legislation in 1884.

“The strong bond of fraternity existing among trades unionists was shown by the magnitude of the Labour Day demonstration in Toronto...This national holiday...is now firmly established and is growing in popularity,” said an article in the September 8, 1903 edition of the *Globe*. “... The setting apart of a public holiday ... helped many classes of workers to feel and manifest a



pride in their work, and in that there is a saving grace that may lead to true nobility and dignity.”

Over 2,000 participated in the 1903 Labour Day parade and thousands of supporters lined the streets. The floats symbolised many of the various trades including the electrical workers’ float that carried a couple of small telephone poles with wires connecting, and a telephone on each pole.

By 1927 Local 353’s float was equipped with electrical devices and a radio with a working loud-speaker system that won first prize. The float entered in the 1928 parade had fifty-six ten-watt, thirty-volt lamps that “illuminated the IBEW sign, with power generated by a 750-watt Delco light gasoline engine set.” Local 353 had 150 participants in the 1928 Parade

Labour Day attendance at the 1930 Canadian National Exhibition was described as “---the greatest annual event in the world.” Over 500,000 lined the route and “--we know of no better way to emphasize the power of labour than this.” Local 353’s entry had 350 in uniform dress but the Brewery workers beat IBEW for the best-dressed award.

By the 1933 Labour Day parade, the local was suffering the effects of the depression and many of its members were out of work. “After all, it’s a cinch to wave the banner high when the dough is rolling in – it takes real courage and unionism to do so after three years of what most of our boys have gone through,” said Frank Selke in urging Local 353 members to make a good showing at the parade. The local

promised to pay admission fees to the C.N.E. and “a good dinner” for those members who were unemployed. The local also arranged to have a booth in the electrical building for the entire duration of the Fair.

“To some of our lads a three-mile walk is tough enough under any conditions, but figure such a walk in shoes that have been worn to tissue paper thickness in an endless plodding search for work and you have a pretty fair idea of the handicap under which some of the boys strutted their stuff,” Selke recalled from the 1933 parade.

For several reasons, no doubt partly because of the Depression and World War II, the Local did not participate in the Labour Day parade from 1938 until 1970 when they took first prize for the best uniforms.

At the 1972 parade, 235 members marched, and won the top three prizes – Best Overall, Best in Class (construction trades), and Best Vehicle. In 1973, the 200 participants from the local won second prize for Best Marching Group.

Local 353 parade numbers tapered off in the later 1970’s, when only 100 marched in 1976 but by 1989, the local was up to 300 marchers – including retirees, members and guests – and they won the award for best uniform.

More recently, there has been renewed interest by Local members in the Labour Day parade. Retirees and active members continued the tradition set by Local 353 members so many years ago and there were 750 participants at the 2003 Labour Day parade.



CHAPTER 6

1943 — 1952 WINNING THE WAR AND THE DAWN OF A NEW ERA

At the end of the war 711,000 workers belonged to unions in Canada and by 1951 this number increased to 1,092,000.

In many manufacturing plants in Ontario there was a maintenance classification – a concession granted in earlier negotiations to permit the use of skilled mechanics to ensure electrical equipment was maintained in top running order. These mechanics earned a lower rate of pay than electricians did. They gradually moved from simply maintaining equipment to installing it, which diminished the chances for contractors to secure that type of work. Local 353 felt the solution to the problem was to abolish the maintenance classification completely and gradually increase the wage to eliminate the difference between the two rates.

In 1943 the Ontario Liberals were voted out of office and the Conservatives won the election with 38 seats. The Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) formed the opposition with 34 seats – 10 of those were occupied by trade unionists. The CCF's success was a considerable upset and represented a clear rejection of the former government under

the leadership of Mitch Hepburn – a major thorn in the side of labour.

On the national stage the labour movement expressed dissatisfaction with the federal Liberals who praised labours war effort but completely ignored labour when appointing committees and boards.

Press Secretary Jack Nutland stressed that labour should turn its attention to scrutinising the suggestions made by the Manufacturers Association. He pointed to a piece of legislation – Order-in-Council P.C. No. 9384 – that he viewed as a grave threat to labour. Under its terms, “you can’t strike, you can’t get a raise, you can’t change your working conditions unless you appeal to a National Board you can’t get representation on,” said Nutland. He felt this legislation foretold difficulties labour would face in its efforts to maintain hard-won gains when the war ended.

The contractors informed the local “they would have to pull up their socks,” and they believed that because of the shortage of labour “the boys were resting on their oars.” This was a position that Nutland did not entirely disagree with.





He did, however, put it in context arguing that there was no comparison between the efficiency of the worker now with the worker from 1930 to 1939. Just to keep his job during the 1930's employees were expected to "travel like greased lightning during working hours, try and chisel a few extras on his noon hour, and lay out, and order the material at night." Nutland saw nothing wrong with a man wanting to "pause and take five." Having experienced a couple of years of full employment the bloom had returned to the worker's cheeks, he had lost that hungry, haggard look and his chest had once again started to fill out.

Nutland thought that many contractors resented the improved physical appearance and financial improvement of their former "speed balls." He felt the contractors were working on how to get back to the position where they forced their employees to do double the work their competitors were capable of.

Nutland advised these contractors to cheer up, that everyone was in the same boat and suggested that they trim their own sails. With the good times, the contractors social standing had expanded along with their girth, but had also dulled their brains. Nutland advised them not to depend on speed alone to compete with the non-union rival, but to use their heads too.

The local had another reason to criticize the Manufacturers Association. At its 1944 convention in Toronto, the association passed a resolution calling on the government to reduce or repeal the excess profits tax and the corporation tax. These were actions that Local 353 noted were taken in a flag-draped hall to boisterous cheers of "God Save the King."

Government-appointed boards and commissions continued to receive criticism from Local 353. While recognizing the necessity to ration people and material for the war effort, the local thought many of the restrictions were passed simply to justify the board's existence with no thought given to their need. There was no consistency in the regulations. Local officials wondered how it was "that, in one month you could not get pants with cuffs, the next month you could purchase a coat which dropped to the ankles, and in the following month you could buy no pants at all!" In Quebec one could drown his sorrows with 80 ounces of liquor a month but in Ontario one had to be satisfied with 13 ounces with which to "cure a toothache!"

The Ontario government introduced legislation titled the Limitation of Hours and Holidays-with-Pay. The federal government stepped in to request that certain industries crucial to the war effort be exempted. A board of the Builders' Exchange advised its membership to ignore the legislation because they were going to contest it, but the legislation stood.

The press also came under fire from Local 353 for attempting to divide the men serving overseas. They exaggerated the number of strikes and the pay raises workers were receiving at home. The Local urged its members with relatives serving overseas to send them a copy of the *Journal* that contained "truthful evidence, not vicious propaganda, of our desire to maintain or improve our conditions and his at home. Help him to be prepared so when the yellow section of the press screech and squeal to him of how the men on the homefront are letting him down and taking advantage of the soldiers' absence from the labour market to hi-jack the poor manufacturer into

abnormal wages and ridiculous conditions, he will recognize it for the slimy trick it is.

“You members overseas, by virtue of your past experience in union organizations, know of the fight you used to have to keep public opinion on your side during negotiations for better wages for the job you too seldom got. The bogeyman of communism was used then. The veneer of patriotism is used now.

“You will be told of a shipyard strike in Canada; you will not be told that the operators of the yard refused to obey the National War Labor (sic) Board ruling. You will be told of coal miners striking for better conditions underground; you will not be told of over 50 men trapped in a burning mine because of violations of these conditions.”

In 1944 some relief came in the form of an Order-in-Council (PC 1003) that gave unions status in law. The federal government used its wartime powers to decree that employees would have the right to choose a union and to authorize it to speak on their behalf. Employers were required to bargain in good faith and the provinces were mandated to enact their own legislation. Ontario did so in the form of the Labour Relations Board Act.

The Ontario legislation required that the union had to be financially independent from management. Several company unions – including those at Bell Canada and Ontario Hydro, parts of which had developed from the breakaway by workers from Local 353 in 1920 – were not recognized as unions under the new legislation.

In its 50th anniversary history, the Powerworkers Union that represented Ontario Hydro admitted they weren't

financially independent from management, “though they had been freely elected by their fellow workers, all the costs of their relationship with management were paid by the commission. This was not a union, and everybody knew it, especially the IBEW, which stepped up its organizing efforts among Hydro workers.”

Because the basic features of a union structure were already in place at Hydro the employee representatives felt they could easily solve this dependency problem and gain status under the new law. They needed only to divorce themselves from the commission, draw up a constitution and get the employees to vote for it. Hopefully – for the last time – it would put an end to IBEW raiding. The general committee of employees quickly crafted a constitution and submitted it to a vote.

The employees voted 1,783 to 542 in favour of forming the Employees' Association of the Hydro-Electric Power Commission of Ontario. On June 10, 1944 in Toronto, the Employees' Association (EA) was officially launched at a meeting of the representatives. However, legal recognition as a union eluded them for nearly two more years.

In November 1944 the IBEW asked the Labour Relations Board for certification as the legitimate representative of Hydro workers. The Hydro Employees' Association legal counsel in this “do or die” case was Fred Gardiner. Gardiner was a prominent labour lawyer and later went on to become the first chairman of metropolitan Toronto.

IBEW's organizing efforts failed to get certification this time and several other occasions in the ensuing years.



In its own history book, the powerworkers stressed that “the best evidence that the EA was genuinely representative of Hydro Electric workers came in 1945, when the association submitted 1,500 employee-signed cards to management authorizing the Commission to deduct the EA’s dues from their pay cheques: 25 cents a month for those earning less than \$120 a month, and 50 cents a month for those earning more.”

This is hardly illustrative of support because management then – and since – often support an in-house company union over a more militant, progressive union. The progressive union – like the IBEW – is generally more widely accepted within the industry it represents.

The Labour Relations Board rejected both the IBEW and the Employees’ Association because of what the Employees’ Association termed a technical legal issue. Both sides requested the right to appeal to the National War Labour Board and the IBEW won its right to appeal, but withdrew its appeal leaving the Employees’ Association as the legally-recognized bargaining agent. The Employees’ Association was subsequently legally certified in February 1946.

Similar to feelings today, most citizens favoured public ownership of public utilities. However, some – including Local 353 members – thought that those placed in charge of running the utilities appeared to be working from the inside to place them in disfavour and limit future holdings by the tax-paying public.

Local 353 was particularly critical of the government-appointed Ontario Hydro-Electric Power Commission. The commission administered Ontario’s power needs at cost. It was disheartening to learn that included in the “cost” was the

price of supporting a company union – one which opposed the right of the IBEW to obtain the certification necessary to represent the poorly paid Hydro workers.

In the May 1945 *Journal*, Jack Nutland commented, “the Local had its hands full battling this public body, which is paid by the public, operated for the public, but, in my opinion, governed by anything but public men.”

The issue of provincial licences arose at IBEW Ontario provincial council meetings. The council sought information from each local on how many men were affected by the licensing issue, if their locality had a local licence law, the fees paid and the enforcement of the law, if any.



When the war in Europe was won and the war against Japan was winding down, Local 353 began to focus its attention on peacetime. It was concerned that during the war maintenance costs for many manufacturers had been borne by the government as part of the war effort. Large additions to plants were scheduled as soon as the availability of labour and materials permitted and the local wanted to ensure that these manufacturers did not return to their pre-war practice of having alterations completed by maintenance staffs at pay rates 50 per cent lower than construction rates.

IBEW’s goal for the post-war era was to organize all electrical workers. Its position was that maintenance men could do no more than maintain electrical sys-



tems and equipment and the installation of equipment be completed by construction electricians.

By 1946 Local 353 had approximately 700 members. The Local was concerned about the qualifications of many of the men who were attracted to the trade during the war years believing many of these men were not as highly qualified as they had been in the past.

The union held the employer accountable. During the war years the employers sent many men to join the union – men who everyone knew would not be able to hold up their end in normal circumstances.

The order of the day during the Depression was “quality over quantity,” but during the war years it was “quantity over quality.” The employer was able to tolerate this lack of skill because of government subsidies to industry during those years. The contractor was able to make a 10 or 20 per cent profit on the efforts of the poorest tradesman. Sloppiness was the result of a desire to get the man on the job – any man – to win the war. At war’s end the employer was again demanding excellence, and the local pressed for a set of regulations to govern the qualifications of those entering the trade.

Because of travel restrictions imposed during of the war the International’s 1946 convention was the first to be held since 1941. Once again dissension threatened to create major divisions within the union. In August 1946, IBEW President Edward J. Brown discharged 24 international representatives and organizers for political activity. Dismayed by the dismissals, the delegates passed the following resolution:

“That it is the wish and request of this Convention that all the

International Representatives and Organizers who were suddenly dismissed in late August 1946, and any who resigned in protest over such dismissals be restored to their positions immediately without loss of pay or rights and that they be retained in their positions until the incoming International President assumes office, unless good cause is shown otherwise. If this is not done, then the incoming International President is hereby requested, upon assuming office, to proceed to carry out this desire of the Convention and to see that these men are paid retroactively for all pay lost.”

At the 1946 convention D. W. Tracy, who had served as International President from 1933 to 1940 when he resigned of his own accord, once again sought the presidency. He defeated incumbent Edward J. Brown by a narrow margin. Many in the union were dissatisfied with Brown’s leadership.

A Canadian member complained that in 1942, “Trade school graduates were flooding the market for electricians yet the ‘old timers’ still refused to organize them. “If we have any faith left in the IBEW as being an organization that is of any use for much else than making some paid jobs for our officers,” he continued, “let these new men be contacted and brought in — as soon as possible.”

A number of International Vice Presidents had grown weary of Brown and considered Tracy the ideal candidate to replace him. Tracy had the experience of serving as President during one of the most difficult times for the union.

Tracy was not without his own detractors, the most notable of whom was Harry Van Arsdale, President of New

York City's Local 3 – the largest IBEW local of the day. In all, 1,800 delegates attended the 1946 convention, and when the votes were in, Tracy won a roll-call vote 80,928 to 77,428. Once elected, Tracy surrounded himself with Vice Presidents he regarded as loyal to him.

One victim of the Vice Presidential elections was International Vice President Ernest Ingles. Ingles was Vice President for Canada for over 30 years and was the Canadian delegates choice. Local 353 Business Manager Cecil Shaw seconded his nomination but Tracy supporters sponsored a different candidate – John Raymond from Windsor – and Raymond defeated Ingles. A Tracy supporter won every contested election –including the Ingles-Raymond election.

Interestingly, the 1946 convention proceedings did not record the roll call vote results. These results, normally recorded in the *Journal of Electrical Workers and Operators*, would have identified the support for each presidential candidate for all to see.

Tracy acted quickly to heal the wounds caused by the election. He called a meeting of the International Vice Presidents and International Executive Council members to discuss restructuring the Brotherhood. Tracy submitted a plan to create 12 vice presidential districts – two more than already existed. Canada formed one complete district. The new arrangement also allowed for eight executive council districts but retained the same number of representatives.



IBEW logo on office window at Maple Leaf Gardens – 1946



They took immediate steps to modernize the business systems within the union emphasizing improved communications between local, regional and international offices.

Regular regional progress meetings were instituted for all vice presidential districts. A new public relations department was established and research facilities were improved – actions considered essential to counter anti-union criticism. Tracy also investigated the firings of the international representatives and organizers and found them to be not only loyal to the IBEW, but many also continued to co-operate with the officers and vice presidents as if they were still on the payroll. Tracy subsequently rehired the representatives and organizers.

These changes were largely responsible for a 30 per cent increase in membership from 1946 to 1949. Canada's membership in 1947 was 8,157 in 79 locals.

As the nation distanced itself from the war and construction materials became available, housing prices soared over pre-war levels. Thousands in Toronto wanted to purchase a new home and homes were priced between \$10,000 and \$14,000 - \$4,000 to \$5,000 more than the same house cost prior to the war. The contractors were blamed for much of the increased cost. Many contractors who used to be satisfied with \$300 profit per house were now unhappy with an estimated \$3,000 profit.

Increased building costs were also blamed on labour. On examination, however, it seems that wages for an electrician had increased only 50 cents per hour while the time it took to wire a home remained the same as before the war, approximately 16 hours, the equivalent of \$8.00 per week. On the other hand, the

price charged by the contractors for the electrical installation was from \$70 to \$170 for each home. The other trades experienced similar base costs, with the same contractor mark-up added on top.

Electricians received a 10-cent per hour increase in June 1947 with an additional two per cent for holiday pay – equivalent to a two-week paid vacation. The union also negotiated a clause providing for one apprentice for every three journeymen to fully comply with the Apprenticeship Act.

The paid vacation was a source of tremendous pride to Press Secretary Bill Farquhar and the local. It was a new benefit within the electrical industry. It was actually discussed at the 1946 convention and while there was an appreciation of the proposed paid vacation concept, the executive committee had some difficulty grasping how it would operate within the construction trades. The irregularity and non-continuous nature of the work made the vacation-with-pay idea difficult for some to understand.

There were concerns that it would receive heavy opposition from the contractors. Local 353 delegate Cecil Shaw proudly informed the delegates of the provisions that the IBEW had negotiated in Canada – particularly by Local 353 in Toronto. Once again, Local 353 and other Canadian locals were leading the way in benefits and social legislation for the entire union.

As the 1940's were coming to a close, the building boom continued. There were enough building materials to keep everyone employed, however, the local worried when Ontario Premier George Drew went to England to entice 7,000 immigrants to Ontario. It seemed to Local 353 that most of them were electricians. Many of the new arrivals found



work with contractors under Local 353's jurisdiction. To its credit, the local accepted them willingly and felt that most did a good job and held their own. It appeared that many of these workers had received excellent training and just required a little time to become accustomed to Canadian terminology and Canadian working style. Nevertheless, there was the rare individual who resisted unionization.

Newspaper reports quoted one young individual boasting that he was not going to pay any initiation fee to any union to go to work. The local took such problems in stride and commented that “---he must have thought that he was a blue blood and had privileges not accorded to the natives and other inferior forms of life!”

Retiree Bob Barker had joined Local 353 in 1945 and served both as a steward and foreman during his career. He recalls in his day little attention was paid to safety. Compared with today's conditions, you wore whatever shoes you wanted, and the washroom was any corner you could find. If all you had were slippers...that's what you wore to work!

His first rate was \$1.25 an hour and he recalls there was always someone waiting for your job. He remembers dragging live wires across metal lath and climbing ladders to drill with a star drill to put in tampion to hold the fixtures. He had to solder and dope wires himself. “They were across-the-board men who did everything, including pulling cables,” Barker said of the electricians in his day.

Retiree Bill Smith joined the Local in 1949 and his first job was at Victory Mills and from there he went to Ontario Electric. As a journeyman he started at \$1.45 an hour. He remembers the 1951 strike and his rate increasing to \$2.15 an hour. Smith was one of those electricians

who immigrated from the United Kingdom. He had an Electrical Trade Union card when he arrived here. He was sent to Local 353 and was given a temporary card by Cecil Shaw and was sent to City Hall to get his licence. Once he received it he was permitted to join the union. He was given a Green Card membership that meant he received the same wages, but would be first to be laid off.

The level of training people received in Canada impressed Herb Worthington – also from the United Kingdom. Worthington had a family emergency that required him to return home to the UK for a year and was struck by how little had changed there since he had left. In his view, the trade had not advanced at all.

Steve Weslak also remembers those early days. He explained that there were not many contractors in the city doing big jobs, so if you were blacklisted nobody would have anything to do with you. In 1947 he got in wrong with his boss Eddie Longfellow when he quit Canada Electric. Longfellow announced to anyone who would listen that “that Polish bastard will never work for us again!”

In 1948 there were rumours that the \$7 million Bank of Nova Scotia building would be delayed, and even more disheartening was that the construction of the Yonge Street subway – a TTC project estimated to cost \$53 million and scheduled to start in 1948 – would also be delayed.

The Ontario Hydro Frequency Conversion project to change from the 25-cycle system to 60 cycles and estimated at \$191 million was in the works. It was awarded to Canadian Comstock Company, an IBEW Local 353 contractor, and guaranteed electricians work for an



estimated 10 years. The work involved both residential and industrial enterprise. The changes were to be made at no cost to domestic consumers – meaning refrigerator motors, starter motors and oil burners, would all be re-wired free of charge. The industrial work was completed at only a fraction of the cost of installation or changeover.

In 1949 Local 353 Business Manager Cecil Shaw was asked by the international to head up the Frequency Conversion Project and was granted a leave of absence by the local to perform the task. Bill Farquhar was Acting Business Manager in his absence.

Bill Smith also participated in the Frequency Conversion Project as team leader. Smith recalls that it was a huge project to organize that generated a lot of work for a number of years. All ballasts and fluorescent fixtures had to be changed. At the same time Local 353 members constructed the steam plant at Ashbridges Bay.

Steve Weslak was also involved in a supervisory capacity. He had to take inventory of all the equipment to be changed, including clocks, record players and anything that had a motor. Weslak had a six-man crew that did residential services from Toronto to Sutton and from Toronto to Pickering. Every house had to be surveyed. It was a big job. The crew worked out of field trailers and it was done in sections – so many streets surveyed each day. The biggest problem they faced “was the guy who had a shop in his basement, and converted it himself,” said Weslak.

During the late 1940’s the union was concerned with members who broke the rules and worked extra hours at night and on weekends. Assessments were levied against such members. There was no objection from the local for the individuals who wanted to go into business for themselves as long as they declared their intention to do so. Local officers were left to wonder, however, how mem-



BILL FARQUHAR
1949 – 1969

Bill Farquhar

Business Manager September 1949 – June 1969

Bill Farquhar joined Local 353 as an apprentice in 1927. He was elected President of the local in 1944 and was appointed to the position of Assistant to Financial Secretary / Business Manager Cecil Shaw in 1945.

In 1949 he became Acting Financial Secretary / Business Manager until he was elected Financial Secretary / Business Manager in 1950. He held both offices until they were split in 1969.

Farquhar served on numerous committees and councils. He served as Secretary of the Toronto Building Trades Council, and spent 12 years on the Provincial Advisory Committee for the electrical trade. He was also the labour representative on the Board of Governors at Humber College for nine years.

Bill Hardy listed Farquhar’s qualifications as, “ideal. He was a man of integrity, compassion and had a great sense of humour. He took a keen analytical approach to resolving problems and could clearly debate or explain an issue.”

He was also a delegate to the Toronto and District Trades and Labour Council for many years.



bers expected the local to do business with contractors, convincing them to sign collective agreements and agreeing to pay top dollar for Local 353 members, only to have these same members actively competing against them – often for less money.

In 1948, the Builders' Exchange (representing contractors) hired a University of Toronto economist. On his advice the employers offered electricians the equivalent of 50 per cent more than 1939 wages plus 15 per cent compensation for any cost-of-living increase over the next 12 months. In the local's view, this was keeping living standards at the 1939 level. The local felt it was not a good starting point for comparison because it was a Depression year.

Other building trades were in a situation far worse than Local 353's. Bricklayers were offered an increase of only five cents per hour. Plasterers were offered nothing and subsequently went on strike on April 1, 1948. The lathers were not offered anything either and they too went on strike on April 21.

Many within the building trades called for a general strike, but that did not happen. A number of the trades did not display sufficient interest in attending a special meeting called to discuss the strike issue and they preferred to go it alone rather than join in any co-operative action.

In the final analysis, the situation was reversed. The trades that initially were willing to co-operate reached satisfactory settlements with the contractors. Those who went on their own didn't reach an agreement and were now asking for support from the rest of the building trades. Needless to say the request was considered unreasonable.

There was some co-operation among the trades in that all refused to work on any project where non-union tradesmen were asked to work in place of striking or locked out unionized workers.

There was a lull in the job market for electricians during the summer of 1948. It was attributed to the large influx of electricians who had immigrated to Toronto. An addition of 200 to 300 tradesmen to any locality was bound to increase the numbers of unemployed tradesmen in any community, at least for the short term.

The new Unemployment Insurance fund relieved some of the pressure. At the time there was a \$400 million surplus in the fund. A person had to be unemployed for a minimum of nine days and contributed to the fund for 180 days in order to be eligible to collect. The benefits for those paying top premiums were \$12.24 per week for a single person and \$14.40 per week for someone with one or more dependants. It was considered far superior to the relief system that was in place throughout the Depression. Payments were made in cash instead of coupons and this was considered less demeaning.

Those who are now retired can vividly recall having to join long lines to collect the "pogey." It could still be a somewhat demoralizing experience – especially when one had to endure a stuffed-shirted bureaucrat's superior gaze when he handed you your money, never stopping to think that if it were not for the unemployment insurance he, too, might be unemployed.

In 1948 in downtown Toronto, a major slum clearance project in "Regent Park" was initiated. The objective was to provide low-rent accommodation for 1,000 families and rental payments were



based on the tenant's ability to pay. The housing it replaced was dilapidated and an eyesore. As units were completed families would be transferred from their residences. In turn their old homes were torn down to make room for even more new units. The project covered 42 acres and consisted of 32 acres of buildings and 10 acres of parkland. The bulk of the cost was borne by the city and half the cost of purchasing and clearing the land was borne by the federal government. The provincial government agreed to contribute \$1,000 per unit to a maximum of 56 units.

The project was developed by the Toronto Housing Authority (THA) – a committee appointed by city council. Representing labour on the THA was

Jack Woolsey, President of the Building and Construction Trades Council. The contract was completely union.

This was not the only project underway. Others included the \$8 million Lever Brothers project, Sunnyside Hospital worth \$12 million, and \$4 million for the new Bank of Montreal building. The Yonge Street subway still had not started nor had a \$7 million Civic Centre that was delayed until building materials were more plentiful.

Even with all this work in progress or due to start, there was still an unemployment list as a result of the large influx of immigrants. There were also 200 apprentices who had recently completed their training and were now journeymen electricians. Newcomers were asked to



Bank of Montreal Crew - 1948

From left to right: Bob Sproule, (hidden behind) Unknown, Lorne Short, Steve Weslak, Frank Taylor, Joe Hellas

stay away because electricians were arriving on the scene faster than they could be absorbed into the work force.

Bill Farquhar used the term immigrants often in his submissions to *Local Lines* and received some criticism for it because people thought it was a disparaging remark. In January 1949 he defended his use of the word saying there was no intention on his part to make immigrants feel resentful, “especially since my own parents had immigrated to Canada 40 years previously.” The majority of people who had taught him the finer aspects of the electrician’s trade were also immigrants.

Farquhar stressed that his comments were simply designed to call attention to the “thoughtless manner in which the country’s immigration policy was enforced.” An over-abundance of immigrants arriving in Toronto, for whom there was no work, made jobs scarcer for all. Many had already returned home – disillusioned, broke and unhappy and carrying with them a poor opinion of Canada.

In the March 1949 *Journal* 65 men were reported to be on the out-of-work list. Local 353 believed the solution to the problem was the shorter workweek. The local was dismayed that at its recent convention the Canadian Construction Association (CCO) contin-



Canada Wire Crew – 1952

Left to right: Local 353 - Bill Ruddell, Larry Chalmers, Roger Gibily, Bob Jewett; Local 213 - Ray D'Maisonneuve; Local 586 - Heinz Janssen, Jack Knox, Maurice Pulsford, Martin Semple, Adolph Winsel, Emil Borghy, George Murray; Local 120 - Chris. Tristam, Jack Pritchard, Marcel Marcoux; Local 586 - Bill Nesbitt, Bob McCoy, Bernard Branchaud; Local 568 - Jack McLaughlin, Frank Sanders, Josef Nawrot, S. Fitzsimmons



ued to articulate the need for more skilled tradesmen to immigrate and guaranteed them at least 18 months' work. To Local 353 this was regarded as another tactic to swamp the trades and create a cheap labour market.

In 1949 the Electrical Contractors Association of Ontario (ECAO) was being organized and it replaced the Ontario Electrical Contractors Association, which had been inactive for a number of years.

One of the ECAO's goals was to seek the introduction of legislation to create a provincial licence for each of the trades – a move that was long overdue in Local 353's opinion. If passed the law would repeal the existing legislation that gave municipalities authority to licence electricians. Electrical contractors paid as much as \$200 and journeymen wiremen paid \$1.00 plus a \$4.00 examination fee. Each municipality had its own rules and regulations and it was a nuisance to the journeymen as a licence and examination were required in each community. Many electricians had two, three and even more licences.

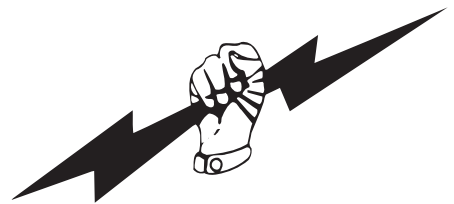
By mid-1949, construction in Toronto came to a standstill because the Toronto Builders' Exchange refused to recognize or negotiate with Local 506 of the Hod Carriers. The Hod Carriers claimed to represent the labourers employed by the Exchange. The local's charter dated back over 60 years, and at one time as many as 5,000 members were represented. The local initiated a rebuilding campaign, succeeding in convincing new members to join the union.

The employers refused to negotiate and demanded proof that the union had a majority of the employees. Instead, the union sought certification under the Labour Relations Act of

Ontario. The employers retaliated by hiring a lawyer who advised them not to recognize the union or, for that matter, the Building Trades Council. The Minister of Labour became directly involved, resulting in a joint application for certification. This ended a month-long strike that had tied up the entire construction industry.

For Local 353, the strike confirmed what it already knew – the Building Trades Council, a union of unions operating in solidarity, could achieve considerable gains to the benefit of all affiliated members.

Following six months of negotiations in 1951 Local 353 took strike action. The strike lasted for five weeks and was the first since the two-day work stoppage in 1926. The agreement awarded a 30-cent per hour increase and tied future increases to the cost of living – which added an additional five cents per hour to the hourly rate. By mid-1952, Local 353 members enjoyed a 15-cent per hour advantage over most of the trades in Toronto. By the end of this agreement wages were at \$2.15 per hour.



CHAPTER 7

1953 — 1962 PROSPERITY AND UNITY



By 1953 there were 1,352,000 union members in Canada and by 1960 it increased to 1,459,000. The IBEW ranked seventh in Canadian membership in 1956 and enjoyed considerable local autonomy compared with other international unions in the construction trades. Canada's IBEW membership was 27,500 in December 1956, an increase of 3,000 over the previous year.

Local 353 also saw substantial growth in membership. Convention proceedings show that the membership (upon which delegate representation is based) was 692 in 1946, 964 in 1948, 1,003 in 1950 (the first time the local passed the 1,000 plateau since the split in 1920,) 1,348 in 1954, 1,584 in 1958 and 1,858 in 1962.

This extraordinary growth resulted from a number of factors, not the least of which was a commitment by the International to place more organizers in the field. By 1954 there were 18 organizers employed in the First District. Although important, organizing was not the sole contributing factor to membership growth.

In addition there was the ongoing commitment to education and training and the signing of non-raiding pacts within the AFL and the CIO in the United States, and between the TLC and the

CCL in Canada. These agreements ended almost 20 years of constant feuding and contributed significantly to union growth in both countries.

The pacts were possible in part



New cable installed – 1952



because both the President of the AFL – William Green – and the President of the CIO – Philip Murray – had died within a few months of one another. Unlike their predecessors their replacements, the AFL’s George Meany and the CIO’s Walter Reuther, believed it was vital to put an end to the animosities between the two groups and focus instead on using their resources to combat corporate power.

The two men set themselves to this task and in 1954 agreed to the No-Raiding Pact. The pact had to be approved by the membership. In 1955 the two organisations merged to form the AFL-CIO.

The merger was hailed as, “the greatest piece of news that could be brought to our people...The merger ended the civil war in the ‘House of Labour.’” The IBEW took some credit for this historic achievement because International President Dan Tracy served on the committee that investigated the feasibility of merging. In its report, the committee unanimously recommended unity between the two groups.

Shortly after the AFL-CIO pact had been reached, International President Tracy resigned and was replaced by Canadian-born J. Scott Milne. Milne would drop in at Local Union 353 meetings and was very popular with the Canadian membership. He was committed to the Canadian locals.

In the October 1955 *Electrical Workers Journal* Bill Farquhar wrote:

Approves Merger of Labor Organisations

L. U. 353, TORONTO, ONT. – The action taken by the leaders of the A.F. of L. and the CIO the past year to unite as one organization is

long overdue and will be approved by the ranks of organized labor in general. To most of us, it has never been clear just why there have been two organizations, and actually, there cannot be a very good reason to justify a situation where two organisations of working men have been spending time, money and energy in fighting and arguing with each other when this effort could be put to much better used in the age-long battle to improve the worker’s standard of living.

This merger of the two groups has also influenced the leaders of two Canadian Labor organizations to take steps to merge for the common good. These are the Trades and Labour Congress and the Canadian Congress of Labour. The former is composed of labor organisations affiliated with the A.F. of L. and the latter is made up of labor unions affiliated with the CIO. Both have been duplicating each others’ work for the past 25 years or so since a group of members broke away from the TLC and set up the dual organization of the CCL. It is expected that both groups will have approved the merger at their respective conventions this year so that the new organization will convene early in 1956.

Indeed, a similar agreement was close to completion when Farquhar penned those comments. In late 1953, both the Trades and Labour Congress (TLC) and the Canadian Congress of Labour (CCL) formed committees to investigate the possibilities for closer relations and possible merger. The TLC committee comprised President Percy Bengough – Ontario, Vice President

William Genoves – Quebec, Vice President Claude Jodoin and General Secretary Treasurer Gordon Cushing.

Their appointment was the follow up to a resolution passed at the TLC August convention to “work for closer relations and eventual organic unity with the National Central bodies of organized labour in Canada.”

In December 1953, the TLC Committee wrote to the CCL’s Secretary-Treasurer, Donald MacDonald, expressing a willingness to discuss the possibility of merger. Upon receipt of the letter, the CCL appointed its own Committee consisting of A.R. Mosher (CBRE) – President, Donald MacDonald – Secretary-Treasurer, George Burt – Vice President (Auto) and C. H. Millard – Vice President (Steel).

The TLC’s mandate was to “explore the further steps that should be taken to bring about closer relations between the National Central bodies of organized labour in Canada,” while the CCL mandate was to explore the possibilities of labour unity.

The two committees met almost immediately convening a meeting in January 1954 and an additional two meetings the following month.

The joint committees agreed to a three-stage programme:

- (1) Joint action on matters where both Congresses had similar policies, i.e. unemployment; housing; national health; and unemployment insurance.
- (2) To consider a non-raiding pact.
- (3) Long-range objective to organic unity.

The Non-Raiding Agreement was approved by the respective conventions in 1954. By 1955, a draft agreement outlining the general principles that a merger of the two organisations might be based on was introduced at the TLC’s May convention. In October the draft agreement went before the CCL’s delegates at their convention. The agreement received the approval of both conventions.

The Non-Raiding Pact initially applied only to the directly chartered locals – 372 in the TLC and approximately 200 in the CCL. Endorsement by each international affiliate of both organizations was required before the agreement applied to it.

The International Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners and the International Conference of Teamsters did not sign the agreement. The Carpenters first needed approval from their international office, and the Teamsters did not sign because “their Constitution required them to organize within their jurisdiction, and they intended to do just that.”

In addition to that, the International Association of Machinists and the United Auto Workers had already signed a pact in which they mutually agreed not to raid one another’s membership.

The IBEW International Vice Presidents met in February 1955. They discussed their organizing efforts, which it determined “must be done as economically as possible, with due consideration for the Non-Raiding Agreement of which we are a part.”

In 1955 over 700 delegates attending the 70th annual TLC convention in Windsor, Ontario and voted unanimously to merge with the CLC. CCL President





Aaron Mosher addressed the convention the following day. The CCL endorsed a similar resolution at its convention held in Montreal in September.

The combined membership of the two groups was over one million and the IBEW *Journal* editorial in May 1956 welcomed the merger:

Canadian Merger

It was a source of pleasure and pride to American unionists to mark the merger of the counterparts of the AFL and CIO in Canada last month. In one of Canada's largest conventions, 1600 delegates voted to combine forces of the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada and the Canadian Congress of Labour into a new body - the Canadian Labour Congress.

"We are proud to salute our friends across the border on this decisive step. We are pleased at the part played by our own Canadian members of the IBEW in the action.

On the day of the merger, *The Toronto Daily Star*, one of Canada's largest newspapers, lauded the union and stated editorially that, "This nation owes a great deal of its present material well-being to its strong and vigorous labor movement."

The editorial went on to specify that unions deserve the credit for the fact that an hour's Canadian labour today earns nearly two-and-one-half times as much goods as an hour of labour did in 1913. The editorial continued: "Organized labor can also take credit for the fact that the 40-hour week and annual paid vacations are the rule, not only for union members, but

for the majority of employes (sic) still unorganized."

"This is indeed commendable reporting of truth. We hope in the days and months ahead, under a still stronger labor movement, that many more gains will be chalked up to Canadian progress and reported by the *Toronto Star*."

The CLC set a precedent for labour in North America by electing Huguette Plamondon of Montreal as Vice President. Plamondon was a member of the Canadian Food and Allied Workers. She was the first woman to be elected to such a high trade-union office in Canada.

In March 1957 the Ontario Provincial Federation of Labour, TLC, the Ontario Federation of Labour and the CCL held their merger convention and elected Cleve Kidd – former Secretary-Treasurer of the CCL – as its President. Over 700 delegates attended the convention and 432 of them were from former CCL locals, and 287 from former TLC locals. The new organization represented approximately 500,000 union members.

For the most part, the merger of the TLC and CCL into the CLC ended raiding between the two groups. However, all would not be smooth sailing. Flare-ups of dissent and discontent would occur from time to time.

While it was an important milestone for labour in Canada, the merger was not the only thing going on in the labour movement. The day-to-day activities for each union continued.

Former IBEW Local 353 Business Manager Cecil Shaw died in February 1953. His death marked the end of an era. He was a leader of immense promi-

nence in the labour movement and few, if any, had as great an impact on the local as he did. Even today many speak glowingly of his contributions to the local and to the advancement of labour in this country.

During the 1950's Toronto's growing pains remained unrelieved. There were 13 municipalities within the Toronto area that Local 353 represented and Bill Farquhar thought they should be amalgamated into one government body. A provincial government-appointed board was charged with the responsibility of studying that very possibility. It not only failed to reach a consensus but also aggra-

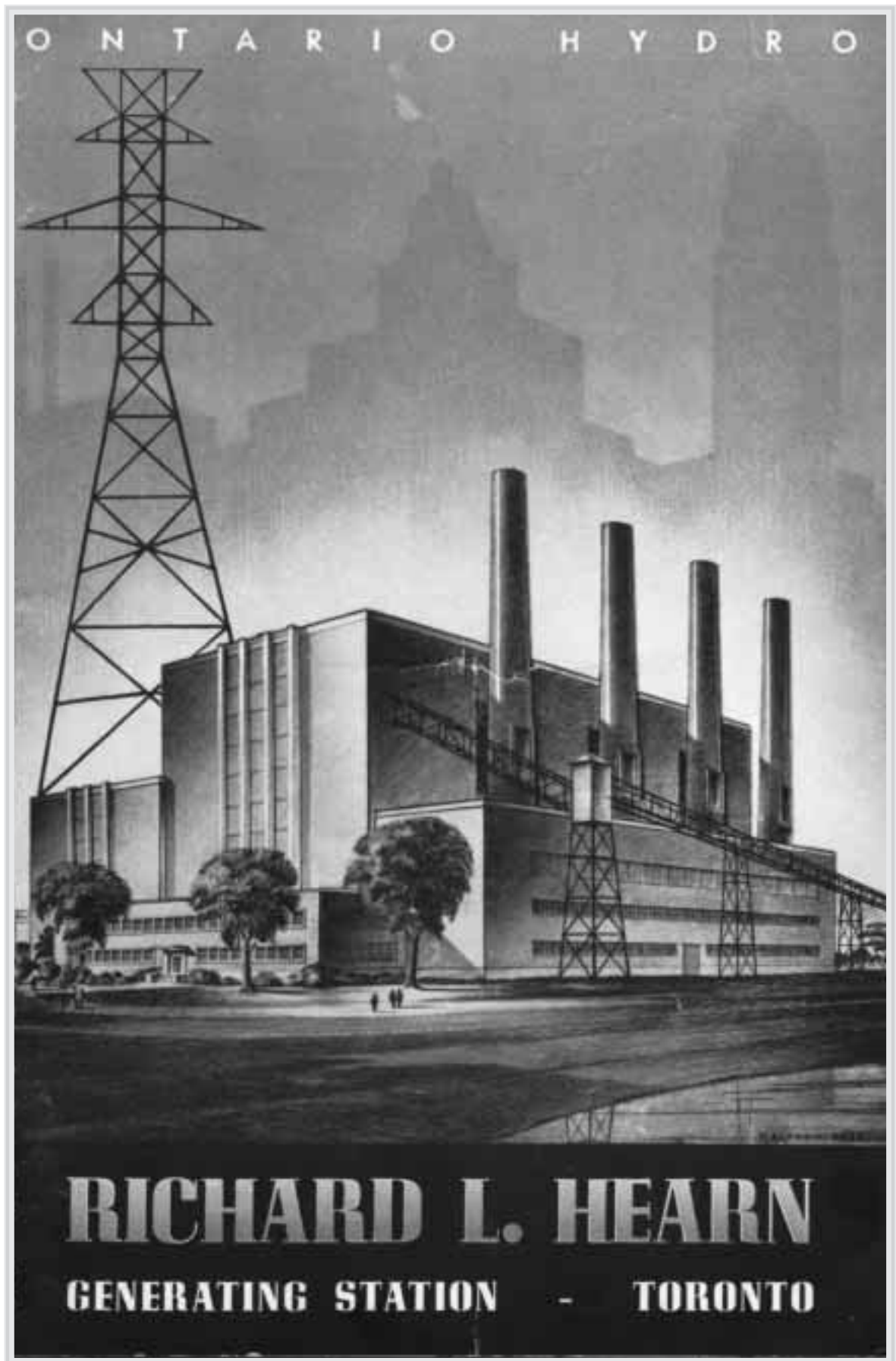
vated the entire situation by creating an entirely new municipality adding to the original 13. All of this led Farquhar to observe "the reasoning of the political mind is sometimes a marvel to contemplate."

It was expected there would not be enough jobs for everyone. Some of the jobs that were in progress during the 1950 to 1953 period were beginning to taper off like the Richard L.Hearn Steam Plant, A. V. Roe in Malton, Lucas Rotex in Scarborough and the RCA installation in Downsview. The Ford plant in Oakville still employed approximately 400 IBEW Local 353 members.



Signal gang at Davisville Subway Station – 1953

1. Unknown; 2. Ken Tomlinson; 3. Bill Barber; 4. Jim Leebody; 5. John Simpson; 6. Bill Pihel; 7. George Dunbar; 8. Unknown; 9. George Corlett; 10. Connie Robins; 11. Herb Price; 12. Art Eardley; 13. Roy McCreight; 14. Harold Morris



Hearn Generating Station



A view of part of the head table showing the 50th Anniversary sign. Head table guests shown in this photograph are—from left to right: Controller Ford Brand; Mrs. Cockburn; I.E.C. Member Keith Cockburn; Local 353 President Jack Price; Local 353 Business Manager Bill Farquhar; Mrs. Farquhar.



Keith Cockburn,
International
Executive Council
Member



Bill Farquhar,
Business Manager,
Financial Secretary



Harry Weale,
Standard Electric



Ford Brand, City of
Toronto Council
Member



Jack Price,
Local Union 353
President



Brothers McWilliams and McCarrol, of L. U. 353, piping in the head table guests at the Local's 50th Anniversary Banquet.

In 1953 Local 353 celebrated its 50th Anniversary with a large dinner-dance. Over 2,000 people attended in the Automotive Building at the CNE grounds. In addition to the members and their guests, officers of IBEW locals from all over Canada, officers of the other building trades unions in the district, electrical contractors, and city and provincial government representatives attended.

Among the 25 head-table guests were two charter members of Local 114 – the first IBEW local in Toronto. They were Fred Marson, who resigned from the local early in the century to establish a partnership and form the electrical contracting business of Harris and Marson, and Bill Davis, who was retired and enjoying his IBEW pension.



Local 353's Bill Farquhar reported the establishment of a new foreman's rate and plans for a new agreement. The local sought a 17 cent per hour increase with all statutory holidays paid and a comprehensive health plan.

At the time there were over 24,000 Canadian members – an increase from 8,147 members in 1947. The manufacturing sector and the radio and television industries were seen as potential areas for membership growth.

Canada was in the midst of an industrial boom in mid-1954 with the construction of a \$500 million aluminum plant in British Columbia, oil well development in the prairies and the iron mines in Labrador. The St. Lawrence Seaway was in the planning stages and was expected to bring even greater industrial expansion to Canada.

At the international level, President D. W. Tracy resigned in 1954 and was replaced by Canadian-born J. Scott Milne. Milne served for approximately one year and passed away suddenly on July 20, 1955. Gordon Freeman filled the vacancy created by Milne's sudden death.

Local 353 Business Manager
Bill Farquhar wrote of Milne:

"In Canada, to most of us, Scott Milne was the I.B.E.W. Prior to his becoming International Secretary, contact between Canadian local union officers and International officers was rather remote, and outside of an occasional visit by the International Vice President, attendance at a local union meeting by one of the top-ranking officers was an unheard of

event. Our role in the Brotherhood was in the nature of country cousins, and, in fact, the relationship was even more distant, as we never really had the feeling that we were part of the I.B.E.W. family.

"Scott Milne changed all that as far as Canada was concerned and we feel that our standing is now recognized more as a District of the Brotherhood, and not so much as a foreign country...

"He was a remarkable man and, if his influence was felt as much in the other districts of the Brotherhood as it was felt in District One, he will long be remembered and spoken of as one of our greatest I.B.E.W. Presidents."

The 1954 IBEW convention in Chicago was not only the largest IBEW convention in its history, but it was the largest labour convention ever held anywhere. There were 3,130 registered delegates representing 1,675 locals and 625,000 members – an increase from the total membership of 450,000 in 1950 .

By referendum vote in the preceding four years the members had approved a \$1.00 assessment be sent to the pension fund. The "B" type membership category was also eliminated by referendum vote. Bill Farquhar served on the grievance and appeals committee at the convention.

The size of the 1954 convention meant that the union had to find a way to make its conventions smaller simply because few cities in the United States or Canada could accommodate an event of that size. Hosting a convention every two years was far too expensive for the international and local unions alike. After considerable debate it was decided

by convention delegates that conventions would be held every four years instead.

It was at the 1954 convention that Local 105 from Hamilton introduced a resolution that would be re-introduced repeatedly over the ensuing years by many Canadian locals, including IBEW Local 353. It called upon the International to insert a provision in the constitution and by-laws for a Canadian district convention. The proposal suggested that the Canadian convention would have the authority to rule on matters pertaining to its district, with the exception of pensions and death benefits.

The committee recommended non-concurrence stating emphatically that, “the Brotherhood was an International Union with one authority.” To move forwards the committee stated that the union could not have “competing district committees or organizations within any district.” The same issue would be raised at the 1958 and 1962 conventions and met with the same result.

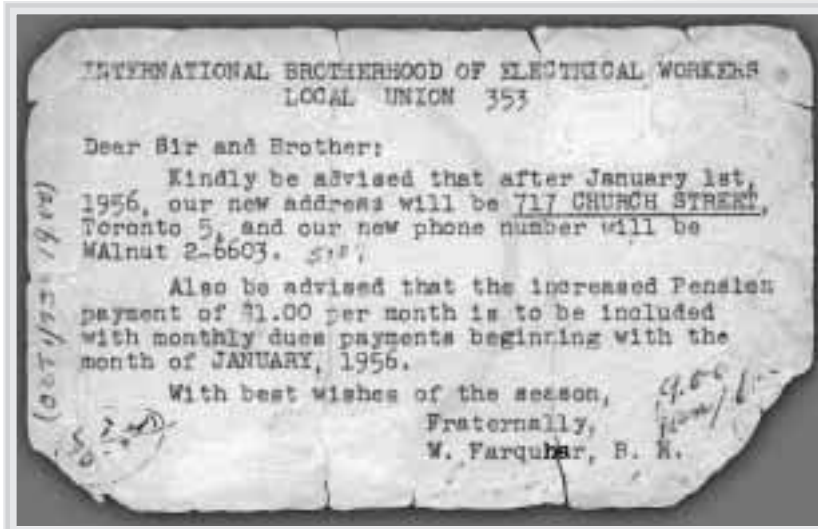
The 1958 convention also raised the question of an additional Vice President for Canada. The International Executive Council explained that the number of members in each district determined the justification for an additional Vice President. Since the number of members in western Canada compared with those in eastern Canada was the same in 1954 as it was in 1947 and 1952, there was no justification for another Vice President. The request might be considered in future if there was a significant increase in the membership.

Between 1954 and 1958 electricians in North America experienced a 20 per cent wage increase and received improvements in many benefits includ-

ing paid vacations, sick leave and additional holidays. These benefits were starting to become the rule rather than the exception.

If Canadian IBEW locals were frustrated by the lack of autonomy, they were equally frustrated by their role within the recently formed Canadian Labour Congress (CLC).

In April 1956, all the Canadian IBEW locals held a progress meeting. Of concern to the delegates was the encroachment of industrial unions into the IBEW’s jurisdiction.



Change of address to Church Street notice – 1956



Much of the discussion at the progress meeting was centred on the IBEW's affiliation with the CLC. Several delegates expressed concern with the actions of some CLC affiliates and they had, in fact, started to wonder if affiliation with the CLC was an asset or a liability.

This issue would re-surface often at progress meetings through the years. At the 1959 meeting a lengthy discussion took place over the wisdom of remaining part of the CLC. The general consensus was that the IBEW was not receiving either the CLC's co-operation or the service that it had anticipated when the CCL-TLC merger was achieved.

Local 353's Bill Farquhar thought that IBEW could fight the problem better from within the CLC than it could from the outside and he believed the solution was for the IBEW local to take a more active role in the CLC, the federations and the labour councils.

In 1959 Local 353 appealed to the executive council to define the jurisdiction of Local 1788. The council re-affirmed that the International President approved Local 1788's by-laws on July 30, 1953 and the local's jurisdiction was already defined within the by-laws:

"Local 1788 shall have jurisdiction over all outside and inside electrical work as defined in Article XXVIII, Secs. 4 and 5 of the Constitution when performed by the employees of the Hydro Electric Power Commission of Ontario – Article 1, Sec. 1."

Both President Freeman and International Vice President Raymond, representing District One, Canada, stated that no change should be made – a deci-

sion that Local 353 disagreed with. The executive council concurred with Freeman and Raymond's decision characterizing Local 353's position unrealistic and unreasonable.

An increase of 22 cents per hour was negotiated starting May 1, 1960. Any part of the increase could be paid into a health and welfare and pension plan of the local's choosing. A questionnaire was sent to the local membership to find out what plan they would prefer and on January 30, 1961 approximately 900 members attended a meeting and discussed the proposal. For 12 cents per hour, a plan was submitted and it provided:

- \$1,000 life insurance
- \$1,000 accidental death or dismemberment
- 1st day accident
- 8th day of sickness
- 13 weeks sick pay at \$50 per week
- Surgical coverage to \$350
- Anaesthetic coverage to \$40
- Medical coverage for:
 - 1st day of accident
 - 2nd call sickness
 - \$5.00 home
 - \$4.00 office
 - \$3.00 hospital

The plan also covered 10 calls to a chiropractor, one specialist call for illness, \$25 per year x-ray and laboratory charges, ambulance service and \$30 per disability. With the exception of the \$50 per week sick pay, the plan also covered dependants.

Perhaps recognizing the dissatisfaction of the IBEW and other construction trades unions, the CLC devoted its

entire June 1960 issue of Canadian Labour to the construction trades. One article pointed out that 600,000 Canadians were employed in the industry with even more employed in the manufacturing, transportation and merchandising of construction materials and equipment.

While construction programmes varied from year to year, on average 30 per cent was residential and 30 per cent was building construction – i.e. schools, warehouses, hospitals, churches and factories. The remaining 40 per cent of construction was devoted to dams, roads, power development, refineries, wharves, waterworks and other engineering projects. Roughly 75 per cent of the total value of construction was done by contractors or builders.

Winter construction was a new practice at the time and was regarded as an important development within the industry. Winter construction con-

tributed to a substantial reduction in winter unemployment in the trade.

The approach to construction was undergoing remarkable changes with the increased use of steel, concrete and synthetic materials. Greater comfort and convenience were also possible for the consumer with the increase in the number of elevator installations, escalators, heating and air-conditioning systems and better sanitation.

As the 1950's wound to a close and the dawn of the '60s was on the horizon, the IBEW continued to look for new sources of membership. At a district progress meeting held in April 1960 in Montreal, President Freeman addressed the organizing issue. He pointed to the non-union workforce engaged in residential construction – particularly house wiring. The accumulation of these smaller projects could ensure electrical workers year-round employment and in his view



*Toronto Board of Education motor shop – circa-60's
Percy Harop, Fred Lawrence, Percy Hallet*



failure to organize residential workers could prove harmful to the membership.

In the same year, 20 building trades unions – including the IBEW – launched a campaign to organize 20,000 Toronto building trades workers employed in housing and apartment building projects. Many unions established special locals and reduced initiation fees to encourage workers to join. The Toronto and District Labour Council and the Ontario Federation of Labour endorsed the campaign that involved literature distribution, visiting job site visits, house-to-house canvassing and mass meetings.

In 1961, 20 per cent of Local 353 members were unemployed for several months with only a short period of full employment during the summer. The lack of work resulted from the sheetmetal workers' strike, which slowed all construction.

At the 1962 convention a number of Canadian locals – Local 353 included – called for change in the procedures to elect the International Vice Presidents and International Executive Council members. The resolution proposed that each district name its choice and that one ballot be used to verify the district's choice. The district choice for both positions would be decided solely by a majority of those convention delegates who were representing the locals within the district. If a choice could not be made then the convention would decide by a roll call per capita vote.

In recommending non-concurrence for the proposal, the committee said it was neither fairer nor more reasonable than the procedure already in place. The delegates accepted the committee's recommendation of non-concurrence.



*Union Reps. among first to receive certificates of qualification
D. C. McNeill, Deputy Dir., Industrial Training Branch, Ont. Depart. of Labour; W. Farquhar, Bus. Manager and W. G. Hardy, Assistant Bus. Manager, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 353 receiving their Certificates of Qualification in the recently certified Electrical Trade from Ontario's Minister of Labour, H. L. Rowntree, Q.C.*



President Gordon Freeman, Local 353 President Jack Price and Secretary Joseph Keenan at Local 353 Get Together – 1962

FOUNDING OF NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY

On the political front plenty was happening. Not only would these events have an impact on labour but the labour movement was directly involved.

The 1958 federal election saw the labour-friendly Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) reduced from 25 to eight seats in the House of Commons in the John Diefenbaker-led Progressive Conservative landslide victory at the polls.

Many within the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) believed that leftist politics within the country were in danger of dying unless they stepped in to assist. Following the 1958 election representatives of both the CCF and the CLC began to work towards the creation of a new party.

The IBEW took a neutral stand on the formation of the new party and actually walked out of the CLC convention when the resolution was discussed. The IBEW also didn't take part in any of the many meetings, conferences, seminars or rallies that led to the organizational foundation for the formation of the new party.

The founding convention of the New Party was held from July 31 to August 4, 1961. The CCF sent 700 delegates, 613 attended from labour unions (mostly industrial CIO unions) and an additional 318 from "New Party Clubs," which had been organized to attract new liberally minded people to the party. The convention changed the name from "The New Party" to the "New Democratic Party." The constitution of the party provided for affiliated union membership and unions representing 200,000 members did just that by paying five cents per member per month to the party coffers.



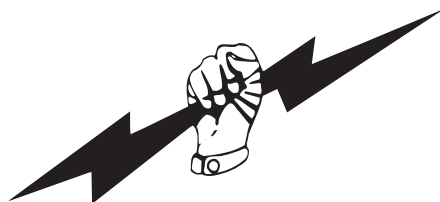
The building trades, including the IBEW, chose not to affiliate with the party but remained with the CLC. The building trades were following in the Samuel Gompers tradition of “Reward your Friends, Punish your Enemies” philosophy of political action where the CIO unions followed the Eugene V. Debs approach and advocated that labour should have its own political party to advance its interests, similar to the Labour Party in England.

As discussions on the formation of the New Party were taking place the IBEW clarified its political action policy by passing a constitutional amendment permitting the organization of political activity within every local. George Home, CLC Political Education Director, wrote, “The IBEW’s President Freeman has rebuked the Canadian leadership for its negative attitude towards the New Party.” Nevertheless International Vice President for Canada, John Raymond, called a meeting of the IBEW delegates attending the CLC convention to discuss the resolution. The IBEW delegates voted overwhelmingly to go on record as being opposed to sending any portion of IBEW per capita to the CLC for use in support of any political party and that the union should adopt a position of political neutrality. For its part, Local 353’s Bill Farquhar saw political action by labour as a contentious issue as far back as 1955 during the TLC-CCL merger discussions when he wrote in the *Journal*:

“The most contentious point that will be discussed by the delegates to this new organization will be the attitude that will be adopted towards political process. The TLC has held to the policy of defeating our enemies and rewarding our friends, whereas the CCL has adopted the Socialist CCF as their political arm.

“Of the two policies the former holds the most promise, as following this line of thought, if working people were fully informed and given guidance, they could elect the party that would give the worker the most consideration. Going on record as embracing any one political party tends to make bad friends with other parties. It would seem therefore that what we need, before declaring ourselves on one side or the other, is an educational program to teach workmen the power of their vote, and also how to distinguish between friend and foe in the political arena.”

Certainly in the intervening years between writing the above and the 1960 CLC convention nothing changed from the local’s perspective. On one occasion, the local went so far as to disaffiliate from the Ontario Federation of Labour because of its policy on political action. This issue would frustrate trade unionists from many unions for many years.



CHAPTER 8

A PERIOD OF GROWTH AND CHANGE - 1963 — 1972



This period was one in which Local 353 experienced tremendous growth. It was also a time of great change for the country. For the first time, Canadians would have a publicly funded National Medicare Programme, a Canada Pension Plan and the nation would also celebrate a new flag and its Centennial anniversary.

On the down side the Prices and Income Commission would be established, the War Measures Act would be imposed and the issue of Canadian autonomy within international unions would be the focus of considerable debate.

AUTONOMY FOR CANADIANS WITHIN INTERNATIONAL UNIONS

At its 1966 convention IBEW Local 353 delegates represented 2,860 members up from 1,858 in 1962 and in 1970 this had increased to 3,601 members. IBEW's total Canadian membership

in 1964 was 40,000, and the CLC had a membership of 1,588,000 and 1,107,000 of those belonged to international unions. IBEW's Canadian membership had reached 56,026 by 1972.

At the same time as the IBEW celebrated its Diamond Jubilee in 1966, the CLC celebrated its tenth anniversary with a membership of 1,254,000. These members were in 93 international unions. The CLC also had 166 directly chartered locals, 10 provincial federations of labour and 114 labour councils. By 1970 total IBEW membership had reached 950,000, a 100,000-member increase over 1966.

In 1964 IBEW International Vice President William (Bill) Ladyman was appointed and subsequently elected as a Vice President of the CLC. His appointment was not only a reflection of the high regard he was held in Canadian labour circles, but was also representative of the increased influence the IBEW enjoyed on the national labour scene.

Preceding Ladyman's appointment to the CLC, the AFL-CIO held its convention in November 1963 and approved recommendations to empower the CLC to resolve internal disputes between international unions affiliated with both the CLC and the AFL-CIO. This was conditional on the CLC's adoption of a



dispute-solving mechanism similar to that of the AFL-CIO. The CLC had long sought autonomy in this area and viewed the AFL-CIO's previous reluctance to recognize the CLC as the final arbiter in dispute resolution as an affront to its jurisdictional power.

Certainly the AFL-CIO's failure to recognize CLC's autonomy up to this point was the major focus for criticism from those fighting for Canadian-controlled unions.

The expulsion of the Seafarers' International Union (SIU) and other maritime unions by the CLC was of major concern to AFL-CIO President George Meany. He did not directly address the issue of government interference in union business at the AFL-CIO convention, but he did at the Maritime Trades Department convention. Meany said he was "...opposed to Government-controlled trade unions here in the United States, in Africa, in Germany under Hitler, in Russia under Stalin and in the Dominion of Canada."

CLC Executive Vice President Joe Morris attended the AFL-CIO convention as a fraternal delegate and defended the expulsion:

"...the leadership the Canadian labour movement has given in this matter has been based firmly upon our intention of preserving the right to determine our own affairs.

"Canadian trade unionists have never been isolationists --- More than 70 per cent of the membership of the Canadian Labour Congress is made up of members of international trade unions. . . .

"We have taken the position of defending and promoting international unionism because we believe it is a correct position in a continent with the complementary economies and institutions found in North America. We have, too, within the Canadian Labour Congress, as you have also within the AFL-CIO, purely national unions where that type of organization is felt to be appropriate.

"...You should be aware that during the last few years there has been the understandable development of national feeling in Canada and a growing desire for greater national self-determination within the family of free nations. The dispute relating to the maritime union situation has focussed (sic) sharp attention on these sentiments of nationalism and self-determination. The position taken by the Canadian labour movement in this matter has received almost unanimous editorial and public support.

"...In each of our nations, from time to time, legislation is enacted which has some bearing on the institutions of the other...When such matters are before our legislative bodies, we make representations to the authorities involved... Our representations are based on the wishes and best interests of our members.

"The Canadian labour movement reserves the right to determine democratically what those wishes are and where the best interests of its members lie. We are happy to seek advice and counsel of fraternal organisations, but whatever decision is finally taken, that decision must be ours.

“...Above all, we believe that we must retain our right to make decisions concerning our own national affairs. To do less would be to surrender our sovereignty. We must retain the power to make decisions – right or wrong – which affect us and the welfare and progress of those whom we represent.”

The IBEW defended the CLC’s reluctant support for the government-imposed trusteeship on the maritime unions in the February 1964 *Canadian Labour Notes*. The IBEW believed that the CLC’s role in the Great Lakes Affair was misunderstood and maligned by parts of the United States trade union movement and threatened a serious strain on the traditional bonds linking Canadian and U.S. labour.

Following a convention directive in 1966, the CLC established a Commission on Constitution and Structure to conduct an extensive study of the Canadian labour movement. IBEW’s International Vice President Bill Ladyman was appointed to serve on the commission to look at questions of structure, mergers between unions, affiliation and unity.

For First District (Canada) the question of having only one representative on the executive board was raised through a resolution submitted by Local 894 in Oshawa, Ontario and endorsed by 12 other locals in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Ontario, Manitoba and Alberta.

Like similar resolutions in the past, a recommendation of non-concurrence was made from the Law



Ira Hertfelder - receiving his 50-yr membership honorarium – 1967
Left to right: Norm McAllister, Don Putsey, Frank Bentley, Ira Hertfelder, Al Wollenhaupt, Jack Pritchard (President), Sam Genise, Bev Taylor



Committee. It failed to see how the Brotherhood would benefit from an enlarged council and it also felt that a convincing argument had not been presented to support the change.

The seriousness of the proposal and its level of support at that time must be questioned because only one delegate spoke against the non-concurrence recommendation. The controversy surrounding this question was well reported in the press and union publications.

At the December 1967 AFL-CIO convention Bill Ladyman talked about international unions in Canada. He stressed that while 70 per cent of Canadian trade unions belonged to international unions, they were under attack from what he termed “subversive left-wing elements” representing foreign powers from purely nationalistic groups and from national and multi-national industry.

A resolution was passed at the 1970 CLC convention in Edmonton that promoted greater autonomy for Canadian members belonging to international unions. Again, it was the subject of resolutions submitted by Canadian locals at the 1970 IBEW convention. A resolution was submitted by Local 213 in Vancouver and Local 568 in Montreal and endorsed by Local 894 in Oshawa. The resolution called for the election of Canadian officers by Canadians only. Those officers were to include a Canadian President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and five executive council members who would enjoy all the powers international officers enjoyed throughout the Brotherhood.

The Law Committee recommended non-concurrence once again. It said that the IBEW was a single organization with jurisdiction in Canada and the

United States and any constitutional change establishing separate functions based on geographical location was dualism. They believed this would result in the weakening of the union’s unity and strength. The recommendation of non-concurrence was accepted.

“I am a Canadian. All my union members are Canadians. We are very, very proud of the fact that we are. But, because we are Canadians, we do not expect, nor desire to have special privileges,” said Toronto Local 1590 delegate Fisher.

“It is true that, at the Canadian Labour Congress there were minimum requirements set up for the Canadian segments of international unions. I suggest to this group here today that we have surpassed those minimum requirements.”

In defence of the resolution, a British Columbia Local 213 delegate said, “the issues being raised here by Local 213 are not false issues. The question, once again of Canadian sovereignty is being raised all across Canada --- I would like to see this IBEW show the lead and be ahead of the developments and not be pushed.”

CLC Vice President Joseph Morris spoke as a fraternal delegate. He spoke of the unique institution of international unions but said he was not surprised by the wave of Canadian nationalism and its accompanying attack on international unions. “Management and their friends would naturally like to see the union movement in Canada sectionalized and broken down into the smallest possible units,” said Morris. “Our trade union movement belongs to its members and they – and they alone – have the right to decide what type of organization they want. Any interference with that right is

an interference with the freedom of association which is fundamental to democracy itself.”

There were other resolutions submitted at the 1970 convention on the question of Canadian autonomy. The election of Canadian officers, the appointment of business managers by the local executive and the involvement of local officers before the International Vice President or the International officers rendering any decision in a member's trial were all put forward. All of the proposals received non-concurrence recommendations that were upheld by the convention delegates.

Acting on a convention mandate, a committee was appointed to address the Canadian sovereignty issue. The commit-

tee was made up of International Executive Committee Member James Mulloney – Second District, Harry Bexley – Fourth District and George Patterson – Eighth District (the Canadian representative). The committee travelled throughout Canada in an effort to assess how the Canadian membership wanted the problem handled. Few locals sent members to meet with the committee and only a few submitted written submissions either expressing complaints or satisfaction.

The committee took the lack of response to mean that the majority of Canadian locals endorsed IBEW practices. This led the committee to recommend updating constitutional language to clarify that the IBEW had already granted Canadians the right to elect their own officers, respected the membership's



Convention Delegates – 1970

*Left to right, back row: Tom Hart, Ken Rose, Morley Hughes, Gord McKay, Dennis Youngberg.
Front row: Joe Fashion, Don Cordery, Bill Johnson, Steve Weslak, Willi Jackes.*



national identity and recognized that Canada and the United States were separate nations operating under different political structures. For many, these cosmetic changes weren't enough and the issue would resurface.

The reasons for the Canadian IBEW memberships non-involvement in the process varied. Some believed they were dealing with a stacked deck, others were quite satisfied with the status quo, while still others felt that no matter what the committee recommended action would not be taken.

At its 1972 convention the CLC released the results of a survey it conducted on international unions. The study's conclusions were most interesting. Reported in the June 1972 edition of *Canadian Labour*, the CLC's publication, in an article titled *Autonomy of International Unions*:

- The vast majority of international unions affiliated with the CLC were independent of their parent bodies in the United States in determining policies affecting the Canadian membership;
- A total of 66 of the 88 international unions affiliated with the Congress participated in the survey and the total membership of those unions was 1,000,900;
- The 22 unions that did not participate represented 108,000 members;
- Fifty-six of the 66 unions stated that policies concerning Canadian matters were determined by Canadian officers and/or members;
- For 63 unions – Canadian officers, the Canadian executive committee, the Canadian regional director, local unions, or some combination thereof had sole authority to negotiate agreements;
- In 33 unions the local or the Canadian region covered the cost of negotiating agreements and for most others the costs were shared between the locals and the International;
- For the majority, a strike vote was a purely Canadian decision conducted by secret ballot of the members at a local meeting, or by referendum. In 27 international unions, approval to take strike action was required from the International;
- Thirty-six unions consulted members through annual Canadian conferences and an additional 21 had biennial conferences;
- In 36 unions, officers were elected solely by Canadian members; in others, Canadians were elected at large at Convention or by referendum;
- Fifty-nine unions replied that Canadian officers had the authority to speak for the International in Canada. One union gave a qualified positive response, while three unions responded negatively and three declined to answer;
- The majority of international unions provided technical services for their Canadian membership in the form of research (46), legal (43), welfare (31), and public relations (33), while 50 unions provided space in their international publication for Canadian news;
- Forty-one unions sponsored education courses either on their own or in co-operation with the CLC; and,

- Thirty-eight international unions provided service in a second language including French (most prominent), Italian, Greek, Portuguese, Yiddish and Spanish.

The report concluded by stating that, "...there is a close co-relation between the size of membership and the degree of self-government. International unions which have a large membership in Canada were more likely to provide, by constitution or by practice, for the election of Canadian officers by Canadians,

to provide for Canadian policy conferences, and to authorize Canadian officials to speak for the union in Canada."

Following a full discussion at a progress meeting on Canadian affairs between Canadian members and members of the IBEW international executive committee, the Canadian IBEW members said that, "Autonomy from the brothers in the United States was the farthest thing from the minds of Canadians or First District members."



MEDICARE BECOMES A REALITY IN CANADA

If Canadians were to be asked what defines them as a nation distinct from the United States, Medicare is invariably near the top of the list.

One might ask what the introduction of Medicare has to do with the labour movement or, for that matter, the IBEW. The answer is plenty.

From the earliest beginnings of most unions, the IBEW included, trade unionists thought beyond the immediate advantages of increased wages and better working conditions. Being part of the labour movement includes protecting not only the member, but also the member's family. Increased wages were not very beneficial if a worker was injured or ill and could not work.

The inability to pay a medical bill generally meant that many workers either did not receive any medical attention

or delayed seeking it. In pressing for extended health care benefits and including these benefits in collective agreements, unions were instrumental in gaining acceptance for these programs. Unions pushed for publicly funded programs and they helped to extend these benefits that they enjoyed to the general populace.

Before 1962 the Saskatchewan Co-operative Commonwealth Federation government, under T.C. Douglas, implemented a public health insurance plan for hospitals. Also under his leadership, the first publicly funded Medicare plan in North America was enacted but had yet to become law. That eventually happened on July 1, 1962 under Premier M. J. Coldwell – after Tommy Douglas moved to the national stage to become the first leader of the New Democratic Party.

Over 90 per cent of the province's doctors went on a three-week strike after the introduction of Medicare in Saskatchewan. In fact many actually left the province. The medical establishment's scare tactics were effective enough to defeat the



government in the election following Medicare's implementation. Private insurance companies and doctors waged a vicious smear campaign.

As early as 1964, a commission led by Emmett Hall recommended a national publicly funded medicare plan. The commission stated that, "As a nation, we must now take the necessary legislative, organizational and financial decisions to make all the fruits of the health sciences available to all our residents without hindrance of any kind." The labour movement fully supported the Hall Commission's recommendations.

The CLC urged the government to ensure that full health services be introduced by July 1, 1967 – appropriately on the 100th anniversary of Canada's nationhood.

Medicare was not fully implemented nationally until 1971 and in early 1969 the electrical workers *Journal* predicted that Canadians "...might get universal Medicare by April." Donald MacDonald, CLC President, was warning the federal government against delaying Medicare's implementation, and stressed that further delay "would be one of the greatest sell-outs...ever imposed on the Canadian people."

Adequate health care has been the subject of often-heated debate

between the labour movement and governments in Canada. The labour movement has not only been protective of the legislation in place, but has always sought to improve it.

In an effort to enhance the current plan, the Ontario Federation of Labour formulated and endorsed a comprehensive policy on healthcare at its 1971 convention. Local 353 delegate Wally Majesky, in speaking to the policy statement, criticized the Ontario Medical Association for allowing only 260 to 280 to enter the medical profession annually. He argued that despite having built a \$40 million complex, the purported purpose of which was to train more doctors, the profession had not trained a single additional doctor beyond its former limitations. Majesky was especially critical that medical specialists, earning from \$150,000 to \$175,000 a year, could not train more doctors.

The Liberal minority government, led by Lester B. Pearson and under a great deal of pressure from the T. C. Douglas-led NDP, passed the National Medical Insurance Act (Medicare) in 1966. The legislation went into effect in 1968. By 1971 all Canadian provinces were full participants in the Medicare plan. The program provides all Canadians, regardless of circumstance, with basic hospital and medical care.

1967 — CANADA'S CENTENNIAL YEAR



Gearing up for the centennial year and for centennial year itself, there were numerous activities celebrating the 100th anniversary of the nation's birth. Never before or since has the nation celebrated its nationalism so enthusiastically.

A couple of years before the nation-wide celebration Canada had experienced a flutter of Canadian pride when its new flag was unveiled in February 1965. The red maple leaf on a white background, flanked on the far right and left by a red border, replaced the old Red Ensign.

The adoption of the new flag symbolizing the country's nationhood was not without animosity. John Diefenbaker, former Prime Minister and leader of the Progressive Conservatives, raged against the new flag in the House of Commons for more than 10 months. The tirade became known simply as the "flag debate." A vociferous defender of the British Empire, Diefenbaker campaigned vigorously to keep the Red Ensign and said that the nation would never stand to have it replaced. Diefenbaker was a populist, but he seemed out of touch with the realities of the day.

Following the Second World War, millions of people entered Canada from other parts of the world and began to change the country's very character. Canada was changing. It was no longer a country of just English, Scottish and Irish.

By 1967 the new flag had gained wide acceptance and was a source of pride. There was not a single Canadian village, town or city which escaped the opportunity to celebrate in 1967 – each with a special program or project to commemorate the occasion.

A Confederation Train with 15 specially built cars depicting Canada's development from the earliest inhabitants to the present day, criss-crossed the nation and visited 63 Canadian centres. In addition to the train, a caravan with 76-foot trailers also carrying Canada's story stopped in more than 700 communities. This was how Canada's story was told to its 20 million citizens – three million of whom had been born in other countries.

The IBEW was very much a part of these celebrations. More and more articles on Canada appeared in the *Journal* including the April 1968 article highlighting the city of Toronto and its importance to the province and the country. "There is," the article noted, "no equivalent concentration of economic strength and markets in relation to a whole nation anywhere else in North America."

The article revealed many interesting facts, including the fact that 40 cents of every dollar in Canada was spent in the general Toronto area; 30 per cent of Canada's retail market was within a 100-mile radius of Toronto city hall; and, a full 35 per cent of the nation's income taxes were paid by citizens living within the Toronto area.

There were eight IBEW locals in Toronto and the International's Canadian headquarters was located in Toronto. IBEW membership in the city was 6,000, the largest number of whom were in Local 353 under Business Manager Bill



Farquhar. “Wherever you look in Toronto, you see the work of members of L.U. 353,” continued the article.

The article also brought to light the diversity of the First District. The working language was primarily English, but publications were printed in 29 different languages, and 17 full-time representatives were needed to service the Canadian membership.

“You can eat your way around the world in the city’s restaurants from Hungarian goulash to Italian pizza to Chinese chicken chow mein.” The article also highlighted what it termed Toronto’s “after dark life,” described as sophisticated with superb cuisine, bright lights and the hottest jazz this side of New Orleans. “For a city once so stodgy that its residents turned to Buffalo, New York (100 miles distant) for their weekend fun, the metropolis is now considered a swinging place complete with coffee house Bohemianism in a ‘village’ known as Yorkville.”

The article credited the influx of Europeans after World War II for transforming the city. Among the new arrivals were 250,000 Italians, 100,000 Germans, 50,000 French-speaking Canadians, and tens of thousands of eastern and northern Europeans. Together they made Toronto

one of the most cosmopolitan cities in North America – a fact that is still true today.

The Centennial was a tremendous source of pride to the country. In a speech to the December 1967 AFL-CIO Convention, International Vice President William Ladyman captured for his audience what Centennial Year meant to the country.

“This year – 1967 – we have been celebrating our hundredth anniversary of Canadian Confederation, and we have welcomed the opportunity of playing host to so many visitors from the rest of the world. I was not surprised to hear recently that of all visitors from other countries the greatest number came from the United States.

“Our Centennial year 1967, automatically triggered a great deal of soul-searching among Canadians about our past, our present, and our future. Our new flag has been proudly waving all over the world, and many otherwise rational, sober people have suddenly discovered, with much excitement, that they are Canadians, and that there is something called ‘The Canadian Fact.’”

WAR MEASURES ACT IMPOSED

The imposition of the War Measures Act on October 14, 1970 was, in retrospect, one of the darkest days in Canadian history.

On that day, Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau spoke on nationwide television to inform Canadians that he had imposed the War Measures Act. The government could take away whatever they wanted. Civil liberty was at risk.

Beginning in the early 1960s, there had been a number of terrorist activities within the province of Québec

that involved planting bombs in a number of government buildings and mailboxes. These acts resulted in several deaths, but in October 1970 they had reached a new level when the Front de Libération du Québec (FLQ) kidnapped British Trade Commissioner James Cross. The kidnapping of Québec Labour Minister, Pierre Laporte followed and he was murdered the day after the War Measures' Act was imposed while he attempted to escape.

Over 5,000 people were arrested but few were convicted. The Ontario Federation of Labour condemned the government's action along

with labour throughout the country. All but four of the 19 NDP members voted against its imposition. With the exception of the labour movement and the NDP, most were in favour of Trudeau's action. To his credit, the leader of the Progressive Conservative party, Robert Stanfield, had initially supported the imposition of the War Measures' Act. He later recanted and said that he regretted having done so. He expressed his admiration for Tommy Douglas and the other members of the NDP for the position they took and as time passed, others recognized the integrity of the position of labour and the NDP.



RUNNING THE LOCAL

Many events shaped the nation during this period in one way or another, and they not only impacted the general population, but also on the IBEW – including Local 353.

In the midst of all of these events there were still members needing work, contracts requiring negotiation, and the day-to-day administration of the local that required the attention of the officers and staff.

Organizing remained high on the union's agenda and it initiated a major campaign for the employees of Bell Canada. IBEW placed 10 organizers on the project but the campaign fell short of the 45 per cent sign-up requirement necessary for a vote.

There were three separate bargaining units at Bell. The technicians unit and the clerical unit were both represented by the Canadian Telephone Employees' Association (CTEA) or, as it was dubbed, the 'Can't-Tell-Employees-Anything Union.' The third unit – the Operators and Dining Services – was represented by the Telephone Employees' Association (TEA) later renamed the Communications Union of Canada. Both the CTEA and the TEA were in-house unions with no membership outside Bell.

IBEW failed to organize the technicians unit. Several factors were involved – not the least of which was the IBEW was an international union and the IBEW organizers came on like “gang-busters.” Both the Technicians or Craft and Services Unit and the Operators Unit would eventually join the Communications Workers of Canada. The clerical unit remains with the CTEA to this day.



By 1964 the journeyman's rate in Toronto was \$3.64 an hour. A good factory job by comparison earned \$1.68 per hour. By 1966 the membership was approximately 3,000, working for over 200 contractors. Wages increased to \$4.25 an hour in 1966 with an additional four per cent for vacation and holiday pay. The local also negotiated a medical plan adding considerable value to the total compensation package.

The concept of multi-employer bargaining was a topic of general conversation in the construction trade. In 1964 International Vice President Bill Ladyman addressed the annual meeting of the Canadian Construction Association and expressed qualified support for the notion.

In doing so, however, he saw little advantage in multi-union bargaining – especially in the skilled trades. Ladyman felt that wage differentials between the trades would be reduced for the benefit of the less highly paid craftsman. “The I.B.E.W. already had agreements with a number of employers represented by Employer Associations and more than one union,” noted Ladyman, “but the contractors were specific electrical contractors and the Union also represented only one craft.”

Ladyman acknowledged that craft unions in Canada were favourably inclined to agree with the multiple employer bargaining concept. “I have no doubt that in the years to come, some workable arrangement will be devised”, said Ladyman. “If it is good for the industry it will be done, but it is not going to be accomplished overnight, and it must be done on the basis of Canadian conditions.”

Efficiencies within the construction industry were having a profound effect on employment. The electrical

workers *Journal* reported in July 1964 that, “Two years ago it took 15 men nine weeks to build a house; it now takes only five men. It used to cost \$5,000 to put one man to work. Today it costs \$250,000. The picture becomes fantastic as technology advances and we find one machine costing \$1 million to be operated by one man.”

Safety remained an issue. In 1964 there were 1,280 industrial fatalities in Canada. Of those, 410 were in Ontario and 66 were in construction.

The Canadian Contractors Association (CCA) was predicting widespread shortages of skilled trades in Canada. By 1965 the value of construction projects was expected to exceed \$9 billion for the first time and represented a 12 per cent gain over 1964.

By mid-1965, the ministry of immigration announced a recruitment drive in Europe for 150,000 skilled workers. CLC President Claude Jodoin criticized this project and pointed to the 265,000 unemployed Canadians and the many young people that were about to enter the workforce for the first time. He argued that they should be given the opportunity and this could only be accomplished through adequate training programmes.

The wonders of electric heating for homes were extensively promoted. The electrical trades' publication *Electrical Business* boasted in 1965 that the province of Ontario had accomplished in five years what it took the United States 15 years to accomplish. By 1965, electrical heating was installed in 21 per cent of all new residential construction.

In Toronto, the Alexandria Park Development in the Dundas and Spadina



district paid below fair wage scale. The development was a project of the Ontario Housing Corporation. By January 1965 the Ontario government passed an order-in-council that directed all government contracts to adhere to “the rate of wages generally accepted as correct for the various classes of competent workmen.”

It was also in 1965 that the IBEW and the Electrical Contractors Association of Ontario (ECAO) strove towards the standardization of its collective agreement language as the desirable prelude to province-wide bargaining.

In September 1968, Ivan C. Rand (who in 1945, as part of the settlement of the Ford Motor Company strike, proposed what later became known as the Rand Formula) released his report on industrial disputes. This report, along with a number of others throughout the country, raised concern in the trade unions. The report led to Labour Act amendments in Ontario.

It was apparent that the trade union movement was being attacked from several quarters, an attack which became very evident when the construction unions reached settlements in 1969. The government was trying to implement new laws and the contractors were pressuring the trades.

Local 353 rejected an Electrical Contractors’ Association of Toronto (ECAT) proposal on April 30 and ceased work the following day in the first strike by the local since 1951. All trades were either on strike or locked out by May 2. The ECAT stressed that the lockout would continue until all trades settled.

The strike/lockout ended on June 9, 1969 with the offer of a 70 cent per hour increase effective that day, an addi-

tional one per cent vacation pay, and five cents an hour for welfare benefits. The agreement provided for a further increase of 80 cents per hour on May 1, 1970 for an hourly rate of \$6.40. The total vacation and holiday package amounted to eight per cent of wages, 15 cents of that was placed in the welfare plan. The foreman’s rate was 10 per cent higher than the journeyman’s rate and all overtime was paid at double time.

As reported in the *Electrical Workers Journal* in August 1969, the *Financial Times* – that was not regarded as pro-labour – condemned the increases. In a period of voluntary wage and price controls they described the settlement as, “an awful example of union greed; they represent a triumph of greed in its most stark and piratical form, greed fostered by jealousy and rivalry between union leaders trying to outdo each other. This is a deplorable settlement. Its ramifications are incalculable and all bad.”



*Change of Officers for Local 353 - 1969
Bill Hardy, newly-appointed Business Manager, on the left, shakes hands with
Financial Secretary Bill Farquhar, who used to hold down both offices and
Vice President Bill Ladyman, center.*



The September-October 1970 issue of *Labour Review*, the OFL's official publication, placed the construction trades' increases in perspective.

"Even with impressive gains of the past — the average wage in the 'Building' trades was still only \$160 a week, or \$8,500 a year. This meant that the average construction workers could still not qualify for an NHA (National Housing Authority) Mortgage."

The article addressed several facts — including a 6.5 per cent jobless rate, compared with 21.9 per cent in the construction trades (national figures from the Dominion Bureau of Statistics.)

In 1969 Bill Hardy replaced Bill Farquhar as Business Manager but Farquhar continued as Financial Secretary in Local 353. In his capacity as Press Secretary, Farquhar wrote that electricians and sheet metal workers were the two most organized locals in the residential field. He emphasized that both unions had to do what they could to bring the other trades to the same level of unionism. He noted that sometimes this support "might take the form of stopping work on a building to convince the builder (that) he would only get his project completed if union labour performed all the work."



BILL HARDY

Bill Hardy

Business Manager

June 1969 — June 1975 & July 1977 — November 1983

Bill Hardy joined the union in 1937. He served in the Royal Canadian Air Force as a wireless air gunner in Europe during the Second World War. Hardy worked in the trade when he returned from overseas before accepting the Assistant Business Manager position. He served as Assistant Business Manager of Local 353 for 20 years and then for 12 years as Business Manager. When he retired in 1983 he was a 46-year member and at the 100th anniversary of the union was a continuous member for 66 years.

"A better choice for Business Manager could not have been made," said Bill Farquhar on Hardy's appointment to Business Manager. "He has brains, guts, experience, dedication to the welfare of our members and the respect and support of all the members."

An avid sportsman, he participated in football, baseball, hockey, canoeing, weight lifting, skating and golfing.

When Hardy announced his retirement in October 1983 he was credited with influencing many changes in provincial legislation

including the abolition of multiple licences in Metro Toronto. He was instrumental in negotiating trust funds for vacation pay and established a schedule for electricians under the Industrial Standards Act. He successfully negotiated many improvements for Local 353 electricians since 1950, when the hourly rate was \$1.85 an hour with four per cent vacation pay.

He served as the Secretary-Treasurer of the Toronto Building Trades Council for many years and was influential in changing the by-laws to permit the election of a full-time Business Manager.

He was a charter member of the Provincial Building Trades Council of Ontario, and served as Secretary Treasurer of the IBEW Ontario Provincial Council.

He also served as a member of the Local and Provincial Advisory Board to the Director of Apprenticeship at various points throughout his career. He helped establish Local 353's Joint Apprenticeship Council and took a leading role in organizing the apartment house and residential sector of the industry. He was also a member of the Advisory Committee appointed by the Minister of Labour to administer the schedule that sets minimum wages and governs the hours of work.

He served as a Trustee for the welfare plan, the Joint Apprenticeship Council, and the Cecil M. Shaw Building.



During this period Toronto was experiencing tremendous growth with 55,000 newcomers arriving in the city annually. The influx increased the need for residential housing and commercial and corporate construction was also expanding.

The banking industry was expanding in the downtown core. Toronto Dominion Bank completed a 46 and 54-storey complex. The Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce also had a new 54-storey complex under construction. Other projects included freeway construction and a 4¹/₂-mile subway extension.

All of this activity resulted in an increase in membership and placed a strain on the Local 353 facilities. Local 353 employed six full-time officers and an equivalent number of clerical staff and it was in need of a new home.

The Industrial Standards Act of Ontario allowed an industry like the electrical industry to apply for a schedule to establish minimum hourly rates and maximum hours of work in a given area. The Toronto zone covered an area within a 20-mile radius of Toronto city hall and was handled by a board consisting of labour and management representatives. IBEW Local 353 nominated Labour's participants while the Electrical Contractors' Association nominated their representatives. Each would be appointed by the department of labour.

While there was a decrease in construction during the early months of 1970, mostly because of severe weather conditions, there was a great deal of work in the planning stages. It was reported that the membership had doubled in the previous five years.

The amendments to the Ontario Labour Relations Act in 1970 were the result of the Rand proposals and, while a cause for some concern, were not nearly as severe as had been anticipated.

The amended legislation permitted:

- employers in the construction trades to unite for collective bargaining purposes;
- a ten-fold increase in fines - \$1,000 for individuals and \$10,000 for unions and employers for any violations;
- the setting up of a commission to investigate industrial disputes with a particular emphasis on those involving the public interest;
- recourse to action for damages to the injured party in a strike or lockout;



*Life Saving Award – 1969
President Jack Pritchard, right, presents an IBEW Life-Saving Award to Brother Ted McBride, who saved a man from drowning when the victim's car broke through the ice on the Credit River.*



- each party to give notice of a wish to bargain three months before an agreement's expiration date; and,
- reduction of the requirement for a certification vote from 45 to 35 per cent of the membership.

Nevertheless, there were protests by labour. In October 1970 15,000 construction workers demonstrated at the Ontario Legislature.

At its September 1970 general meeting, Local 353 voted unanimously to affiliate with the OFL and sent nine delegates to the OFL convention held that November.

In June 1971 Local 353 Press Secretary Bob Grant reported that Local 353's negotiating committee had met with the construction trades council on three occasions. Little progress was made and

subsequently they applied for conciliation. The negotiating committee of Bill Hardy (assisted by Bill Jackes), President Tom Hart, executive board member Gord MacKay, and Brothers Mike Mungy and Norm McAllister did eventually negotiate an agreement.

The agreement increased wages 80 cents per hour effective May 1, 1971; 80 cents per hour May 1, 1972, and 27 cents effective November 1, 1972. By the end of the contract term the journeyman wage was \$8.07 and vacation pay was nine per cent of weekly pay. On the downside, ten tools were dropped from the tool list.

The settlement was narrowly ratified 1,184 to 1,125 – a result attributed to inadequate eating facilities, inadequate toilet facilities on job sites and no reduction in the 37½-hour workweek.



Terminal Two Crew – 1972

Members of Local 353, Toronto, Ont., are seen at Terminal II, Toronto International Airport.

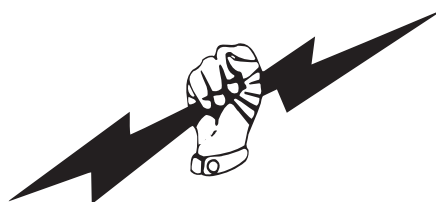
An OFL report released in April 1972 showed that 20 per cent of Toronto's construction forces were unemployed. The Beckett Report on Metro Toronto construction trades showed total building permits placed by housing and commercial developments rose 21 per cent in 1971 to \$1.1 billion and it was expected that growth would continue at 10 per cent annually to \$1.6 billion.

By 1972, construction had indeed slowed. Only four major projects were underway – the Commerce Court, the Four Seasons Hotel, the Airport Terminal Building and the Holiday Inn. A 10-week strike among the rodmen aggravated the problem for Local 353.

In the 1972 Local 353 elections President Tom Hart managed to keep the presidency by only one vote. He defeated Donald J. Cordery and Robert G. Jamieson. The actual totals were Hart – 604 votes, Cordery – 284 votes, and Jamieson – 319 votes. Combined totals for Cordery and Jamieson totalled 603 meaning that Hart avoided a run-off vote by one vote! There was a run-off for the Vice Presidency between John White and Ron Carroll, with Carroll emerging as the eventual winner.

Bill Hardy and Bill Farquhar won the Business Manager and Financial Secretary positions respectively by substantial margins. Secretary Walter Wray Senior and Treasurer Herb Ransome both won by acclamation. There were also two newcomers on the executive board. Members Steve Knott and Joe Fashion won office for the first time. Norm McAllister, Dennis Youngberg and Bill Johnson retained their seats on the executive board.

The election results indicated that a storm was brewing and for whatever reason there was dissatisfaction in the ranks. We shall see that the times would indeed be stormy.



CHAPTER 9

1973 — 1982

CLC — BUILDING TRADES SPLIT and LOCAL 353 TRUSTEESHIP

The period covered in this chapter was one of the most turbulent in the Local's history. The events include, but are not limited to, the CLC-Building Trades split, the removal of of Local 353 Executive Members from office – including a business manager, and a strike

where the democratic wishes of the membership were ignored.

These events and others are in some respects separate events but in others are intertwined. A central figure in most, if not all of them was Ken Rose – the International Vice President.



KEN ROSE

KEN ROSE

International Vice President 1973 — 1987

Ken Rose joined the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers on June 11, 1946 as a member of Local 1095. Rose was appointed as an International Representative in 1955 and he became Assistant to the International Vice President in the First District office in 1957 – a position he held until 1973.

Rose transferred his membership to Local 353 in 1970 and was appointed International Vice President in November 1973 on the retirement of

William Ladyman. He was subsequently elected as International Vice President in 1974, 1978, 1982 and 1986. He retired in 1987.

He served on numerous committees and commissions, both union and government appointed dealing with the electrical and construction industry. He was a Vice President of the Canadian Labour Congress. He led the IBEW and most of the construction trades out of the Canadian Labour Congress and he was instrumental in the formation of the Canadian Federation of Labour (which held its founding convention in March 1982). He served as an IBEW representative on the Executive Council of the CFL.

CLC BUILDING TRADES DISPUTE



At the CLC's 1974 convention, the CLC's chairman of the Commission on Constitution and Structure outlined the contents of a resolution passed by the 1970 convention. The resolution called for minimum standards of self-government including:

1. Election of Canadian officers by Canadians;
2. Policies to deal with national affairs to be determined by the elected Canadian officers and/or members; and
3. Canadian elected representatives to have authority to speak for the union in Canada.

The lengthy report outlined the actions taken by the CLC to enforce the resolution. This included circulating a questionnaire requesting all international unions to respond. A follow-up letter was directed to those unions that didn't comply with the first request. For those unions that did not comply with either request, a procedure was recommended including:

- A. A letter should be sent to a non-complying affiliate setting out the policy and list of standards asking them if they are willing to comply, and if so, what length of time is needed, because of constitutional and other requirements, for the union to submit such amendments to a Convention.

- B. Whether or not full compliance could be achieved within a reasonable time or whether it would be done in stages over an agreed period.
- C. If, after full discussion between the Congress and the affiliate concerned, no effective steps are taken to comply with the request of the Congress to institute the standards as adopted by the Convention, the Executive Council by a two-thirds decision may authorize the President to suspend the certificate of affiliation to the Congress. This action would be subject to the regular appeal procedure in the Constitution.
- D. If acting under "C" above, the Congress Executive Council suspends an affiliate and that suspension is upheld by the following Convention, the Congress should take whatever steps are necessary to maintain the membership of the suspended affiliate in good standing with the Congress.

The commission recommended a code of union citizenship be implemented that would be equally applicable to all congress affiliates regardless of whether they were regional, national or international.

IBEW International Vice President Ken Rose spoke on the CLC motion. To ensure that there is no misinterpretation of his remarks, they are reproduced in their entirety from the CLC proceedings:

"One of those vice-presidents who is proud to say that he has to go back to his Canadian membership for re-election. I am concerned, because our organization has been one that has helped to build this Canadian Labour Congress. We have consistently supported the policies of this organization.



“When the standards were passed, we were happy to say that the majority of those standards were already part of the IBEW Constitution. Because we do not believe in dictation from the top; we believe it must come from the membership up. But I’m wondering what direction this Canadian Labour Congress is going.

“In 1970 we were told that if we passed the proposition of the Canadian standards that that should be the end of the problem – go back and talk to your internationals, talk to your memberships, and establish those standards in your organization.

“We did that. We raised no question on the floor of the 1970 Convention, even though there was the threat of the interference with the constitutional authority of our membership to do the things that they wanted to, which may be in contravention to the CLC. We went along with the 1970 provision. I can live with what you put in that document, but I cannot live with compulsion. I say that you are hypocritical, if you come here and say: “The Executive Council has the right, if you don’t do what we tell you, to compel you to get out of this Congress.”

“We listened to our Canadian membership, Mr. Chairman. We have just finished a thirty-page report on the relationship of the IBEW in regard to the American and the Canadian section. That report is being sent to our local unions. It will be discussed and, I suggest very sincerely, it will be passed at the 1974 Convention of

the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers in Kansas City.

“Fifty delegates from local unions from across this country represent the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. Those are the people I’m going to take direction from; those are the people I’m going to listen to.

“I just wonder what direction we’re taking. If this is the first step towards compulsion, then all of you that are here in the reform groups are those that say we must do something about international unions; please take a look in your own back yards. If this is the first step, if you say that organizations should be controlled by the executive, my friends you may find out one day that the rights that you cherish so gladly today and cherish so strongly today may be eroded away from you too.”

These remarks proved to be the opening round in a dispute that would divide the Canadian labour movement for almost 25 years.

With Rose against the new rules the IBEW now had the distinction of having one of its Vice Presidents, Bill Ladyman, serve on the committee that formulated the report, and his replacement, Ken Rose, who led the charge against it. Local 353 delegates Ray Tyrrell and Don Francis were among the 2,491 delegates who overwhelmingly endorsed the report.

Local 353 Press Secretary Steve Knott estimated that when he referenced the Canadian identity issue at the 1974 CLC convention, there were approximately 140 Canadian IBEW locals.

He urged IBEW Canadian locals to make more frequent submissions to *Local Lines* so that both Canadian and American members would be more informed about what was happening in Canada.

The June 1974 Local 353 newsletter reported on a recent Central Progress Meeting where International Vice President Rose delivered a strong warning to those “fractionalists” active on the Canadian labour scene. He said that the IBEW will “not sit idle while some large national unions and other malcontents work at dividing the Canadian labour movement.” Rose argued that the IBEW derived few benefits from the CLC and only IBEW members would decide if their constitution would stand or be altered.

Bogdan Kipling, Washington Bureau Chief for the *Financial Times of Canada News Service*, was one of many in the media that had interest in the dispute. Like many others, Kipling believed that solidarity between trade unionists in Canada and the United States, if it ever existed at all, was wearing awfully thin.

Kipling believed Canadian unions should start operating on their own. While Canadian members of international unions probably received more in financial terms than they paid in dues, they were strong enough to ensure their own financial foundation. His main argument for separation was that the economic interests of both countries were diverging.

An issue that created problems for Canadian unionists was the Burke-Hartke Bill in the United States. If it passed it would impose permanent import quotas on goods from Canada. The legislation would cost the Canadian economy billions of dollars and thousands of lost jobs. The Burke-Hartke Bill was drafted

at the AFL-CIO headquarters in Washington, and the AFL-CIO executive council passed the following resolution:

“Congress should deny the granting of preferential entry (duty free or special tariff status) either partially or wholly from any country that subsidizes exports, grants tax subsidies to foreign investors, or requires production or investment within its country.”

Canada was guilty on all counts – with tax breaks to the auto industry, fish processing and numerous other industries.

The report on Canadian autonomy issues, sanctioned by the IBEW’s convention in 1970 was presented to the 30th convention held in 1974. It recommended:

- Under the heading of Vice Presidents – changing First District to First District Canada;
- Under the heading of International Executive Council – changing Eighth District to Eighth District Canada;
- Under the heading objects – change to organize all workers in the electrical industry in the United States and Canada;
- Under Article 1, Section 2– change the section to read IBEW, with jurisdiction for all electrical workers in the United States and Canada;
- Under Article 1, Section 2, this organization, in the merging together of all electrical workers in the United States and Canada recognize the sovereignty of each of our great nations and the advancement of industry compatible



with the laws of each country and the objects of this constitution; and,

- Permitting the election of two delegates from the convention to the CLC instead of one.

The Law Committee recommended concurrence and it was accepted, but not before several delegates including Local 353's Wally Majesky spoke out against it. Majesky led the debate and expressed disappointment that the reports recommendations did not reflect what Canadians expected. Majesky believed that, "A real in-depth study of the whole question of Canadian autonomy," was needed. Instead they received, nothing more than "cosmetic changes and some areas of semantics." Majesky said that the report didn't come close to dealing with the question of Canadian autonomy.

Ken Rose, International Vice President First District, spoke against Majesky and favoured the committee's recommendation. Terming the 30-page report as complete and exhaustive he expressed pride in being Canadian. "The Canadian Labour Congress and its delegates decided ---they should have the power to tell the members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers in Canada how their Constitution is going to read," said Rose. "And – pardon me Mr. Chairman – they can go to hell."

Local 353 delegate Ray Tyrrell criticized Rose for saying that the CLC could go to hell. He was equally critical of the IBEW *Journal* and the few Canadian articles that appeared in it as "not true Canadian content."

Only a few of the Canadian elite went to progress meetings, and they failed to tell the international representa-

tives all that they should know. Tyrrell noted that, "we have to have a Canadian convention like this so we can talk rank and file and can tell our representatives what we think."

International President Pillard responded to Tyrrell saying that anything presented in the *Journal* about Canada came from Canada through the office of the International Vice President.

He continued at some length: "...I want to assure you that the complete operation in Canada, or Canadian affairs, is handled through the office of the Vice Presidents in the IEC, and only Canadian delegates elect Canadian officers, and only Canadian brothers or sisters are selected to be international representatives.

"It is very true that, in some cases for final permission, the Vice President of Canada has to come through my office, just exactly like every other Vice President of all the other districts..."

IBEW member Bryce MacKasey, a former federal labour minister who was Post Master General of Canada, spoke to convention delegates. MacKasey spoke about the Canadian autonomy issue and argued that Canada's pro-Canadian attitude should not be interpreted as anti-American. Nor should they (IBEW) back legislation that takes jobs away from Canada and returns them to the United States.

He cited the IBEW as one of the more progressive unions. "You let the International Vice President of Canada be elected by Canadians," said MacKasey. "You grant your members as much autonomy as humanly possible; you do not interfere with the operations of the IBEW in Canada."





He reminded the delegates that Canadians were their best friend and the two economies were so intertwined, “that we share your depressions, your recessions, your prosperity. In many cases there are ex-Canadians in the hall. In other cases, there are ex-Americans in the balcony. And that’s the way it should be,” continued MacKasey. “There’s enough hatred and strife in the world to keep mankind busy for 50 years. As long as I have any influence in the Canadian Government, the Government will never interfere with the internal operations of an international union in trying its best to make certain that the Canadians get the degree of autonomy they are entitled to as Canadians.”

For Canadians the report was not the only contentious issue before the convention as a number of Canadian locals submitted several resolutions. One resolution from Sudbury Local 1687 and endorsed by Vancouver Local 213 noted that the International President had the power to determine policies. The resolution did not question his right to do so but requested that these “policies” be spelled out in the constitution. The Law Committee recommended non-concurrence because, “...The International President needed to retain the present latitude because of changing conditions and laws affecting the industry.” The committee’s recommendation was upheld.

Another resolution submitted by Hamilton Local 105 requested that the International President’s “policies” be subject to appeal. This, too, received a recommendation of non-concurrence because the committee felt the International President needed the power to discharge his duties effectively.

Yet another Local 105 resolution, endorsed by Local 213, wanted the Canadian section of the union be granted the right of self-government within the IBEW, and the first convention of the Canadian section be arranged and held in 1976 for the purpose of adopting an all-Canadian Constitution, the election of Canadian officers and the power to deal with all business which came before the convention.

Another was submitted by Sudbury Local 1687 resolving to divide Canada into two districts – one east and one west of the Ontario-Manitoba border.

These two resolutions were combined and the Law Committee referred to a resolution passed at the 1970 convention providing for the establishment of a special study committee on Canadian affairs, and recommended non-concurrence. They argued many of the desires of the Canadian brothers would be realized.

Ken Rose said he attempted to establish an All Canada Progress Meeting where he intended to discuss all the issues brought up at the convention like unemployment insurance and labour laws and he distanced himself from any desire to establish a separate organization. Certainly those pushing for further Canadian autonomy wanted considerably more than the discussion Rose was promoting.

Another resolution was introduced by Sudbury Local 1687 and endorsed by Vancouver Local 213. It wanted to endorse strike action through secret ballot in compliance with federal, provincial and state law, but without the president’s permission. This resolution also received a non-concurrence recommendation. The committee believed that the president



must have the power to protect the union against hasty, ill-advised, illegal strikes.

A resolution from Local 105 on the Burke-Hartke Bill centred on the AFL-CIO's support for the Bill, and asked IBEW to oppose it. Even though the Bill died at the committee stage before the convention it received a recommendation of non-concurrence. This proved to be controversial.

Some delegates were opposed to Canadians asking for the Bill's defeat. One delegate described James Burke, co-author of the Bill, as having a 100 per cent pro-labour record in his 26 years as a legislator for the state of Massachusetts. Another described both Burke and Hartke as two of the greatest senators the United States ever had.

By the fall of 1974 all but three building trades' unions were withholding per capita from the CLC and paid only a token portion to protest the enforcement of the CLC's autonomy rules. CLC President Joe Morris and several CLC officers even arranged to go to Washington to meet with AFL-CIO officers in an effort to resolve the matter.

The IBEW had 56,000 Canadian members and normally paid CLC per capita for 40,000, but now restricted its per capita payment to 8,300 members. The Sheet Metal Workers' Toronto Business Agent, Jack Donnelly, opposed such action. "There are lots of things wrong with the CLC," said Donnelly, "but I dispute the right of people in a foreign country to tell me what organization to belong to."

Press Secretary Bill Farquhar reported that Ken Rose addressed a Local 353 meeting of 1,200 members where he was criticized by a small group for what

seemed like a hostile action by the CLC. Rose explained his position at the meeting and those who attended moved a motion of confidence in Rose that was carried almost unanimously.

At the first All Canada Progress Meeting held June 11 – 13, 1975, over 70 per cent of Canadian IBEW locals were represented. Rose announced that the IBEW was once again paying its full per capita to the CLC even though the problems were not resolved and he insisted his actions were not the result "of any pressure he received from IBEW locals in Canada." He said that the unions position would be re-evaluated after the 1976 CLC convention.

At the CLC convention in Quebec City, Rose was a member of the Commission on Constitution and Structure. An interim report was prepared and submitted to the executive council that proposed the commission be authorized to proceed with the detailed drafting of amendments to the constitution to be presented to the 1976 convention on the basis of the following principles:

Clarify the Constitutional language to reflect that the Congress is an organization of affiliated unions and not of their locals;

That the Constitution language be clarified to give full expression to the autonomy of the affiliates of the Congress;

Establish a new formula for convention representation on the basis of one delegate for each 1,000 members of an affiliate or major portion thereof;

That each affiliate be entitled to three delegates for the first 10,000 members or major portion thereof;

That official representation from federations, labour councils, and officers of the Congress remain unchanged;

That the directly chartered locals of the Congress be treated collectively as a single affiliate for the purposes of representation at Convention;

That affiliates be responsible for the selection of delegates and the submission of resolutions; and,

That the amendments oblige the affiliates to select the delegates in a fair and democratic manner while respecting their autonomy.

Ken Rose was elected Vice President at the 1976 CLC convention. W. J. Jackes, W. Johnson and Wally Majesky were Local 353 delegates.

The Canadian autonomy issue was raised at the second IBEW All Canada Progress Meeting held in Halifax, Nova Scotia in May 1977. "Let me assure you, your International is prepared to assist you in that endeavour within the confines of our IBEW Constitution. However, let me also add, your International will not defend any proposition, which will only serve to divide our membership in Canada from our membership in the United States," International President Pillard commented on the IBEW's future in Canada. "Remember, we are one Brotherhood; it has been our strength in the past and it will remain so in the future."

International Vice President Rose stated that he had been elected as a Vice President of the CLC at the 1976 CLC convention, and had attended all executive meetings since then with the exception of one. He emphasized that he made

it clear the IBEW's position on staying in the CLC was to try again to introduce a more acceptable voting procedure.

The CLC voting procedure, which had not changed from its inaugural convention, was one delegate one vote. Delegates were elected to attend by their locals. Every local was entitled to a delegate and, depending on the size of the membership in each local, additional delegates were allowed. What changed was the increased presence of public sector unions like the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC), the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) and the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU). They created a shift in the balance of power and the shift impacted industrial-based unions that represented the Auto, Steel, and Textile workers and the building trades' unions.

While the public sector workers received the brunt of the criticism, the criticism was unfounded. IBEW and other construction trades agreed to the delegate representation when both the CCL and the TLC signed the merger agreement in the mid 1950s, and it became the basis for the CLC.

IBEW locals sent a total of 80 delegates to the 1978 CLC convention. They held a caucus on the Sunday afternoon before the convention's official opening on Monday morning and the issue of delegate representation was raised. One of the goals was to revamp the voting procedure.

At the convention itself, a modified voting scheme was placed before the delegates. Because constitutional amendments require a two-thirds majority for a vote to succeed, this vote lost 1,399 to 723 – 15 short of the requirement.





Dennis McDermott, former United Auto Workers' Canadian Director, was the convention's unanimous choice to replace Joe Morris as CLC President.

At the 1978 IBEW International convention, Canadian autonomy issues cropped up again. The result was the same, yet Canadian demands were escalating. Hamilton Local 105 submitted a resolution to amend the constitution to provide All Canada Progress Meetings with the authority to deal with resolutions that were strictly Canadian in their content. It also called to create a delegate structure similar or identical to the structure for IBEW conventions. Yet again the recommendation was for non-concurrence.

Two weeks prior to the 1980 CLC convention in Winnipeg, Ken Rose resigned as CLC Vice President. In the IBEW September 1980 *Journal* Ken Rose explained he resigned "because of recent decisions and/or indecision on matters pertinent to the well-being and advancement of the trade union movement in Canada by the CLC, he could not in good conscience, continue to support that central labour body." Many wondered why Rose did not finish his term and just not run again.

In response to Rose's resignation, CLC President Dennis McDermott charged that Rose resigned because of the CLC's inaction when electrical workers left the international union in Quebec 10 years earlier.

Following Rose's resignation, the building trades once again threatened to leave the CLC. In a July 12, 1980 *Financial Post* article, author James Bagnall described Rose as, "a business unionist par excellence. He runs his union with an iron hand and runs it like

a corporation: whatever policies are established by the international union must be implemented across the country; (and) if Provincial locals don't like it, they can get the hell out (over the past decade two have, then later returned to the fold. The Quebec group, of course, is still out.)"

In the same article Bagnall wrote, "McDermott is Rose stood on his head. He is a social democrat, a hot-tempered civil rights activist, and an opponent of straight business unionism, preferring to see unions act as a social movement for the underprivileged as well as for their own members."

Because the 12,000 IBEW members in Quebec had become one of the central issues in the dispute, a few words on Quebec are appropriate. The CLC's failure to act against the Quebec Federation of Labour (QFL) even though the constitution was violated had more to do with the political situation of the day than any anti-building trades' movement.

With Rene Levesque as its leader the Parti Quebecois (PQ) was elected in 1976 to govern Quebec. The PQ advocated Quebec separation from Canada and a referendum on separation transpired in 1980. A full 60 per cent of the electorate voted to remain within Canada, but 40 per cent opted to leave. The level of support for separation shocked many English-speaking Canadians and any idea that Canada could break apart as a nation was difficult to accept.

Before, during and after the referendum many accommodations were made to appease Quebec. For the Canadian trade union movement to be viewed as opposing the wishes of the Quebec membership of all unions was unacceptable.



Accommodation has always been part of the Canadian way; we feel it's better than civil war. It is no accident that we have the Canada Pension Plan, and a separately-funded Quebec Pension Plan. Rose, for all his pronouncements about his "Canadianism," should have recognized that. Indeed, he probably did, but ignored it preferring instead to impress his American colleagues with his loyalty to the IBEW to the detriment of his Canadian membership.

As the CLC building trades' split loomed Wally Majesky, who was the President of the Toronto Labour Council at the time said, "The row between the CLC and the leaders of international building trades unions could cause a lot of problems and possibly weaken bargaining if not resolved."

Along with Dave Johnson, Business Manager of the 50,000-member Metro Toronto Central Ontario Building and Construction Trades Council, Majesky distributed a joint statement accusing the officers of international unions of denying members their rights. The statement claimed that the decision to withhold dues was made by the business agents and officers.

In an attempt to resolve the dispute, and believing that the Canadian officers of international unions were not being honest with their American counterparts, McDermott arranged a meeting with AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland and the presidents of building trades unions, the IBEW included. McDermott emphasized that his meetings in the U.S. did not mean he was "going cap in hand to Washington to be subjected to systematic blackmail."

As reported in the January 20, 1981 Local 353 Newsletter Ken Rose

attended the December 1980 meeting and talked about the CLC building trades' dispute:

Brother Rose pointed out that the problems were serious matters that building trades unions within the C.L.C. had lived with for a number of years now, hoping and working toward some form of accommodation that would permit us to stay in the C.L.C. with the assurance that our work jurisdictions would be recognized and protected; that the voting structure at Conventions would be amended to reflect fair representation for all; and that the C.L.C. would insist that federations and councils that were affiliated to the Congress abide by the Constitution of the Congress. This would mean that the Quebec Federation of Labour would have to cease harbouring, and therefore divest itself of rump organisations such as the International Provincial Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, a breakaway group from the I.B.E.W. in Quebec.

In a March 11, 1981 letter to the *Toronto Star*, Wally Majesky wrote:

"The withdrawal of the building-trades-unions from the CLC, will only mean that the Canadian members of these unions will have no voice in the legitimate Canadian trade union movement. They will be disenfranchised and will not have the right to elect delegates to the CLC, provincial federations of labor nor to local labor councils.

"We can expect to see a lengthy period of labor turmoil, such as



raiding --- a further disintegration of labor strength and an ultimate weakening of our overall strength.”
(Majesky would be proved correct on all counts.)

“---I would strongly suggest that, if the building trades really want to be part of the Canadian mosaic, they stop this fraternal bickering and immediately announce their intention to stay with the Congress, pay back the dues that are owing and start working toward a goal of abiding by the CLC’s Constitutional standards of self-government and towards strengthening the Canadian trade union movement.”

In a press release dated March 11, 1981, the CLC announced that it was the unanimous decision of the 32 trade union leaders that effective April 30 they would suspend 12 international building trades unions from both the CLC and its federations for non-payment of per capita fees.



Wally Majesky - Local 353 Member and Metro Toronto Labour Council President

“It has become increasingly clear that the goal of the leadership of the international building trades unions is not consultation and compromise within the House of Labour, but rather ultimatums and confrontation to force their members out of their legitimate place in the CLC,” said the CLC in a summary of the issues leading to the suspension.

The summary further cited the 1980 CLC convention where the amended formula would have been approved had the building trades not instructed their members to boycott the convention.

The summary also addressed a position paper presented to the CLC in November 1980 by Ken Rose on behalf of the building trades Canadian executive. He complained that “this is not a Congress of affiliates, it is a Congress of local unions, Congress conventions do not reflect the views of the affiliates but rather the views of individual members of those bodies ---. We want a strong Congress, we want a strong and representative Executive Council and one which is responsive to the affiliates as a whole, rather than the present arrangements, which only...responds to the wishes of the special interest groups.”

The CLC claimed that the position paper presented by Ken Rose on January 16, 1981 was “the only written document on the Constitution received from the leader of the international building trades unions. For them to now suggest this is not their position on the Constitution is, to say the least, most peculiar!” The CLC summary addressed what it perceived as major contradictions in the building trades position over the many months of the debate.

In essence it accused the building trades of wanting a top-down-administered congress rather than what already existed, a congress in which the rank and file member had a greater say.

Business Manager Bill Hardy wrote in the March 27, 1981 Local 353 *Newsletter*:

“C.L.C. – BUILDING TRADES DISPUTE

“The marriage that took place in Toronto at a convention in April, 1956, joining the Canadian Congress of Labour and the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada, was a good bet to end up in divorce from the start, the wonder is that it didn’t come apart before now. It was an effort by the two organizations to meld into one big happy family of labour through the C.L.C., but it only managed to become big and unhappy. The differences that originally existed remained and even expanded as the Congress became more and more dominated by the public service unions.

“The one big complaint that hits us closest to home is the continuing move by the industrial unions to insist on doing new construction work, expansion and renovation and maintenance in plants where the said industrial unions represent the work force. This represents millions and millions of dollars worth of work that the building trades unions claim as their historical right but that is being taken away from them, apparently with the blessing of the C.L.C.

“Although International Vice President Rose received the full support, for his position on this matter, from the I.B.E.W. local unions across the country at Progress meetings last year, it is his intention to hold a one day meeting on April 8, 1981 of representatives from all IBEW local unions in Canada to review and discuss the situation in its entirety ---.”

On April 30, 1981, Ken Rose attended a Local 105 meeting in Hamilton with a reported 150 members in attendance. The May 1 *Globe and Mail* report of the meeting revealed a majority of those present opposed Rose’s decision to leave the CLC. One member was quoted as having told Rose, “this union is my union, not Washington’s. It belongs to us. You people don’t understand that.”

The motion calling upon the International to pay the per capita owing and to select a sub-committee empowered to resolve the differences was successful with 84 in favour and 12 against. Rose rejected the sentiments embodied in the motion saying that the Hamilton vote did not reflect the wishes of 70,000 IBEW Canadian members. Perhaps not, but members who attended the Local 105 meeting represented the only local that had the opportunity to vote. One member likened Rose’s actions to “...fighting a fire with a can of gasoline.”

Rose warned that any IBEW local that affiliated with the CLC would be placed in trusteeship...so much for the will of the IBEW Canadian membership.





ROSE LEADS IBEW AND BUILDING TRADES INTO THE CFL

On May 1, 1981 Rose announced that the 12 suspended unions would form a new organization called the Canadian Federation of Labour (CFL). The CFL would represent the building trades and any other unions that wanted to join. The 27,000-member Ontario District Council of the Labourers' Union announced it would remain with the CLC.

On June 1, 1981, Local 353 reproduced a statement by James A. McCambly, Executive Secretary for the building trades unions. It read in part:

"...The Canadian Executive Board for the Building Trades Unions today announced the creation of a new central labour body in Canada.

"...The Canadian Federation of Labour plans to hold a founding Convention in October 1981. Representatives of unions from all across Canada wishing to be affiliated to the CFL will attend this convention.

"...The effort of the Canadian Federation of Labour will be directed towards unity within the labour movement and will endeavour to co-operate with all other labour organizations for the common good."

The September 1981 Local 353 newsletter reprinted a letter from International Vice President Ken Rose announcing, "... the recent attempts that have been made by the Canadian Executive Board for the Building Trades Unions and the Canadian Labour Congress to settle their dispute have resulted in failure and the necessity to create another national house of labour, as an umbrella for the building trades unions and other unions that might be interested, is now upon us."

Canadian trade unionists belonging to international unions recognize the CLC as their national central labour body. Ken Rose had no problem choosing between his union and his country; he chose his union.

Canadian trade unionists don't want to choose between the two, nor should they be required to. IBEW was entitled to 80 delegates and 78 attended the founding convention of the CFL on March 31, 1982. Local 353 President Bill Baird represented the local and Ken Rose served as convention chair and in his opening remarks said:

"This meeting is an historic occasion for the trade union movement in Canada. Our decisions can forge a new role for Canadian workers and their unions in resolving the economic and social problems our great nation faces. And we are ready to begin that task.

"We are sincere when we say to our Brothers and Sisters in the CLC that we believe our paths will both reach the same goal: the goal of a better life for workers. We just want to reach that goal more quickly.

“Our decision today to form the Canadian Federation of Labour does not mean that those who were instrumental in the merger of the Trades and Labour Congress and the Canadian Congress of Labour failed. Their goals of 1955 were simply expressed: First, amalgamation; second, understanding; and third, consolidation and growth.

“The success achieved on the first and third goals – amalgamation, and consolidation and growth – created a movement with the potential of fulfilling its commitment to the workers of Canada.

“The mistake that was made, however, was in not making the second goal – understanding – the first goal. We were together, but we were not.

“What was to have been a vehicle of co-operation and understanding, what was to have been a mighty force to express and expound upon the needs and aspirations of organized labour has now become a conglomerate jungle of independent unions, of associations, and an alarming array of directly chartered groups.

“I cannot stress too strongly, it was not a challenge we sought! The challenge would not have occurred if the CLC had carried out its responsibility to protect the integrity and the autonomy of its affiliated unions. If the rights of our unions and the rights of our collective membership in the Province of Quebec had been protected, we would not be here today.

The Canadian Federation we establish will be the mirror image of

the workers it represents --- independent, progressive and free. We bind ourselves to no party, to no ‘ism, to no ideology.”

Barry Fraser, a delegate representing Hamilton Local 105, saw most of his local’s resolutions removed from the convention book after they were defeated in an Electrical Workers Caucus. The Labourers, Ironworkers and the Carpenters unions never became part of the CFL membership.

BILL HARDY DEFEATED

The 1975 elections for Local 353 were a stunning upset. Only 499 of approximately 4,200 members bothered to vote and Bill Johnson defeated Tom Hart, who had served two terms as President. The real shock was Bill Hardy’s defeat as Business Manager. Hardy had been Assistant Business Manager for 20 years and Business Manager for six. Warren Chapman – a newcomer with virtually no experience – defeated him.

Hardy’s defeat shocked everyone – even those who opposed him. Since 1930 when Business Manager W.H. Brown resigned, the Business Manager’s position passed smoothly from one to another – first from Brown to Frank Selke, from Selke to Cecil Shaw, from Shaw to Bill Farquhar and from Farquhar to Bill Hardy. That is not to say that these men did not receive electoral opposition. They did, but none were ever seriously challenged before Hardy’s defeat.





Warren Chapman was charged with not conducting the affairs of the local in a proper manner. Bill Baird, former Local 353 President, said Chapman had his own way of doing things. Both Chapman and Johnson were part of the same cell and it apparently had the support of the small group within the Local. To Baird, Johnson was a good guy who got caught up in the politics once he got into power, but was not a dishonest person.

In the spring of 1977 Chapman was removed from office by International Vice President Ken Rose and on July 1 of

the same year, Bill Hardy was appointed to replace him – again by Rose.

This action did not sit well with the Local 353 membership. Their displeasure was not against Bill Hardy per se, because no one questioned his leadership abilities nor his dedication to the membership.

Their displeasure stemmed primarily from Rose's interference with the democratic process. There were no improprieties in the election and so far as they were concerned, the election results should stand.

Warren Chapman

Business Manager 1975 – 1977

Warren Chapman was elected Business Manager of Local 353 in June 1975 in a stunning upset - by a margin of 273 to 218 – over Bill Hardy. Prior to winning the election Chapman had not held an executive position within the Local, having run unsuccessfully for the Executive Board in 1972.

Upon assuming office Chapman acknowledged Hardy's outstanding contribution to the Local and described Hardy as having served the membership faithfully and as having always done what he regarded as best for the Local. He attributed his own victory to changing times and the membership's wish for a new order, as well as membership dissatisfaction with the Local's officers.

He revised the out-of-work list procedure, which he saw as discriminatory against Local members working out of town.

Introduced under his guidance, the new procedure placed the newly unemployed member at the bottom of the list. The member would move up the list in proper order until his name reached the top and members working out of town remained on the out-of-work list.

When a member reached the top of the list he was given the option to take available work in town and had three days to make a decision. Refusing the available work would move him to the bottom of the list and the process was repeated.

Chapman, and recently elected Business Manager Barry Fraser in Local 105, Hamilton, worked towards a new accord, creating a co-operative alliance between the two locals.

Chapman was removed from office in 1977 at the request of International Vice President Ken Rose.

ANTI INFLATION BOARD — Wage and Price Controls Become Law

While Canada would not experience compulsory wage and price controls until 1975, the prelude to these controls came through the formation of the Prices and Incomes Commission under John Young.

The commission's mandate was to disclose the facts around wage and price increases. It analysed the causes of these increases and informed both the government and the public how price stability could best be achieved. A government white paper – *Policies for Price Stability* – emphasized that collective bargaining would remain free.

Regardless of the stated reason for its formation, the labour movement felt it was just another attack on the trade union movement. This was just another government attempt to stifle wage increases.

“No-one has yet established that wage increases are inflationary in an independent way,” said CLC President Donald MacDonald. “Wages are only one form of income that influences inflation; others, of course, are executive salaries, professional fees, dividends, interest and rents.”

On Thanksgiving Day October 14, 1975, Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau announced the introduction of wage and price controls. In the 1974 elec-

tion campaign Trudeau criticized Conservative leader Robert Stanfield for campaigning in favour of wage controls, and here in 1975 Trudeau himself was putting a similar wage and price control program into effect.

Wage and price controls were widely condemned by the CLC for their unequal treatment of major components of the economy. Wages were being strictly watched and held to prescribed guidelines, yet controls on food and energy were indefinite. The CLC assessed 25 cents per member to create a \$500,000 fund to fight the controls.

As an alternative to the controls the CLC offered a 10-point program to fight inflation. The program included:

1. A major program of subsidized low-rental housing for low-income families.
2. Effective rent controls covering not only existing house structures but also new rental accommodations to curb gouging of tenants.
3. An active program to curb land speculation and to establish land banks.
4. Subsidized mortgage rates for lower income families to enable them to purchase homes.
5. Regulation of oil and gas prices, which have seriously fuelled inflation.
6. A negative income tax, or some form of tax credits, to protect those who have little or no bargaining power and who fall into lower income brackets.
7. An increase in old age pensions.
8. A definite guarantee that any tax concessions made to corporations will be used for investment purposes to create



jobs and not end up in higher payments of dividends.

9. Full employment policies to abolish the high rate of joblessness in this country.
10. A stable monetary policy in line with potential economic growth and the total eradication of wasteful government expenditures which benefit only a privileged group at the expense of the ordinary taxpayers.

In labours opinion the imposition of Wage and Price Controls was the economic equivalent of the War Measures Act.

At a western regional meeting Ken Rose dismissed the Anti-Inflation Board (AIB) as ill conceived, both in its approach and application.

The July 1976 *Journal* published the results of a Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) news poll that showed support for the anti-inflation program was constantly declining. Sixty-five per cent of those surveyed believed it to be unfair. However, in a 7 to 2 ruling the Supreme Court of Canada (with Justices Jean Beetz and Louis Phillipe de Grandpré dissenting) ruled the AIB as necessary and decided it was constitutional.

A Gallup poll revealed that 85 per cent of those surveyed believed prices would increase more quickly than family income.

On October 14, 1976, the anniversary date of the imposition of the controls, one million Canadian workers from more than 100 communities across Canada – including over half the CLC affiliates – took part in a National Day of Protest and walked off the job.

In an article in Local 353's newsletter, *The Spectrum*, Ray Tyrrell defended the local's support of the protest. "Brothers, it's about inequities, unjust burdens, hypocrisy and down-right dishonesty by the government of this country," said Tyrrell in response to members questions about the purpose of the protest.

The article said the AIB put specific controls in place, setting limits on wage and salary increases, but there was no absolute control on prices or profits. To hammer home his point Tyrrell cited Bell Telephone's rate increases in the previous seven years. Bells 1975 profits were 18.9 per cent higher than in 1974, and 30 per cent higher up to that point in 1976. All of this was government-approved.

Real estate profits were up 42 per cent for the period August 1975 to August 1976, and Trans Canada Pipe Lines profits were 45.4 per cent higher in 1975 than in 1974, with another 33 per cent increase for the first months in 1976.

At its September 9, 1976 meeting, under the leadership of Bill Johnson the local gave its overwhelming support to the upcoming National Day of Protest on October 14, 1976. The entire Local 353 full-time staff donated a full day's pay to the Toronto Building Trades Council to help offset the cost of the protest.

There was a downside to all of this and again, Ken Rose was at the centre of the controversy. At the 1978 IBEW convention, two years after the protest, Terry Fraser from Hamilton Local 105 revealed that Ken Rose had sent letters to local unions recommending that they not participate in the Day of Protest. Rose denied the charges. "I said they should make their decision based upon their circumstances," said Rose. "And I want



that delegate to know that thousands and thousands of IBEW members and IBEW local unions participated in the day of protest.”

That is perhaps so, but given Fraser’s revelations IBEW’s participation level didn’t appear to have much to do with Rose’s leadership on the issue.

Be that as it may, IBEW locals did participate. Dian Cohen, a Montreal economist had this to say about the protest’s impact: “A million Canadian workers gave up at least \$40 million in wages ... to protest the federal government’s wage and price control programme ... This is the first time any labour organization in North America rallied its members in a coast-to-coast political demonstration against a government’s political decision.”

In retaliation against the protesters some employees were dismissed for taking part. Most, if not all of these dismissals were overturned through the grievance and arbitration process.

In a statement to industry and labour leaders on July 29, 1977, the government announced it believed the best method for de-control would be to release firms from control as they came to the end of the fiscal year that the program started. The dates suggested for de-control were October 14, 1977, January 2, 1978 and October 14, 1978. The CLC dismissed the government’s conditions and stressed they must be lifted immediately and unconditionally.



In 1977 the economy was in a slump. While actual construction expenditures were higher than the previous year, it was estimated that it had more to do with inflation than actual starts.

Nevertheless, Local 353 went on strike June 27, 1977. The main issue was a demand for a four-day 30-hour week with a corresponding decrease in pay. The rationale for the shorter workweek was to create more work for those who were unemployed – sharing the work. One would have assumed that the demand for the 30-hour week would have been embraced, but that was not the case.

In a *Toronto Star* article by Rosemary Spears – “*Electricians Try to Rescue Jobs, but Others Lose*” – Karl Mallette, Director of the Metro Toronto Apartment Builders Association asked, “How can we allow one union to wreak this much economic havoc?” Hardy felt that if Mallette was one of the approximately 600 electricians on the unions’ out-of-work list, he might have felt the strike was well worth the cost.

The union’s proposal was that members work a four-day week on a rotating basis until the economy showed significant signs of improvement at which time they would return to the 37.5-hour workweek.



John Stefanini of Labourers Union Local 183 termed the strike a tragedy, and while he appreciated the intent of Local 353 he felt the best way to tackle high unemployment was through the promotion of more building projects in the area. Local 353 also came under criticism from the Toronto Transit Commission for holding up the installation of signals. Clive Ballentine, Business Manager of the Building Trades Council, termed the strike “a legal strike for a just cause.” He stressed that it could not be regarded as selfishness when 2,500 men “are willing to take home less pay to help 600 get jobs.”

After six weeks on strike the local voted on a “final offer” in August 1977. The negotiating committee urged its members to reject the offer – mainly because the 30-hour proposal was not part of the new package. The contractors did agree to a reduction to a 36-hour workweek, but this was not considered sufficient to solve the unemployment problem within the local. It is important to note that the first vote authorizing strike action passed by a 70-vote margin. The second vote held six and a half weeks into the strike rejected the latest employer offer by 1120 to 809.

Local 353’s Bill Johnson said, “Local 353 members are skilled workmen who wanted to work,” and did not want charity or unemployment insurance. Despite the solidarity of Local 353 members, they were ordered back to work by

the International office – specifically Ken Rose.

International Vice President Ken Rose insisted that work would resume on the Spadina subway the following Tuesday – which just happened to be the day after Labour Day. Rose claimed that it was only after an “agonizing appraisal that he ordered the members back to work.” Rose termed the strike unjustified and said that it created an “unwarranted hardship” and that he did what he thought was best for the membership. Ontario Labour Minister Bette Stephenson, who normally criticized labour bosses for their abuse of power, expressed her delight for the union decision and was present at Rose’s press conference.

Many Local 353 members stated publicly that they would refuse to follow Rose’s directive and vowed to hold meetings over the weekend. Local 353 member Ray MacKissick deemed the directive – the second occasion within a year – as one where the democratic wishes of the local had been taken away by the International. “The first was when the international stepped in to appoint Hardy as Business Manager when the Local had previously voted him out of office,” said MacKissick.

Dissident Local 353 members placed an ad in the September 15, 1977 edition of the *Toronto Star* that criticized the International office.

ELECTRICIANS!

The International has flatly refused to allow the membership of Local 353 a democratic ratification meeting with free discussion and a secret ballot.

The membership was forced back to work while on a legal strike, which we believe may be contrary to the Ontario Labour Relations Act.

The Executive Board of the Local demanded the right to hold a scheduled meeting on September 11th, but the International decided to delay the issue by having a mail-in ballot on September 30th. We all know what can happen with mailed ballots.

The membership have been told to ratify a fuzzy incomplete agreement. The Percentages in the so called work sharing program will be sent to Arbitration. A procedure which will take months to settle.

So, a totally selfless strike which was conducted by the membership in a democratic manner with unprecedented union solidarity has gone down the drain. You voted against a similar work-sharing program before. There are still too many loopholes.

WHY SHOULD THE INTERNATIONAL OFFICE DICATATE TO LOCAL MEMBERS?

VOTE NO AGAIN



Local 353 members did in fact return to work on September 6, 1977 without a vote. Those opposed to Rose's directive hired a lawyer to represent them. When the vote was finally held in early October 1977 the contract was accepted by a narrow 13-vote margin. The agreement provided for a reduction in the hours from 675 to 550 in any 18-week period.

Toronto Star staff writer Robert Nielsen applauded Local 353 members and believed "their cause received too little credit. They made a self-sacrificing – and in the end – partly successful attempt to combat unemployment in their trade," said Nielsen. "It's so rare when any group proposes to solve an economic problem at their own expense, instead of other peoples, that the electricians union

– the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 353 – deserves the 1977 unselfish award."

"Will the electricians example be followed? Work sharing could put Canada's unemployed people back to work," continued Nielsen. "A half-day – 10 per cent of the workweek – should be enough to take care of 8 per cent unemployment.

"What it would demand of us, in short, is about half as much generosity toward the unemployed as the Toronto electricians have shown."

Ed Nott, reflecting on the strike 25 years later, believes that a great opportunity was missed. He recalls that he, who at the time was not in a position



that was considered a high-union level position, received numerous calls from politicians, contractors and business people all exerting pressure to cease pushing for a reduced workweek.

This strike is a perfect example of both the best and the worst of trade unionism. We see the unselfish effort of the membership to seek a solution to a problem impacting 600 of their brothers. At the same time, we see the heavy-handedness of a union leader who would rather bow down to the wishes of the self-serving politician and contractor to curry favour.

It was – at one and the same time – one of the local's finest hours and its darkest day.

JOE FASHION SUSPENDED FROM OFFICE

Wage and price controls, inter-union disruption, trusteeship – Local 353 members must have wondered if they lived under a huge black cloud. The suspension of Joe Fashion from his position of Chairman of the Executive Board certainly didn't help alleviate this perception.



JOE FASHION

Joe Fashion

Business Manager 1987 – Present

Joe Fashion first joined the IBEW in 1957 and has served as Business Manager of Local 353 continuously since defeating Robert Rynk in a run-off election in 1987.

Fashion attended his first convention in 1966 in St. Louis. Fashion ran for Business Manager against Farquhar in 1968 and against Hardy in 1970 and lost. Fashion was elected to the Executive Board for the first time in June 1972 and was re-elected in 1975 where he served as the Executive Board Chairman until International Vice President Ken Rose removed Fashion from office in 1977. Fashion appealed the ruling right up to the International Convention in 1982 when he was completely exonerated.

Fashion has led the Local through some perilous times. His achievements are many and include successfully leading the Local through the devastating economic downturn in the early 1990's. As a result, the Local emerged even stronger and more vibrant than before.

A no-nonsense Business Manager, Fashion orchestrated the reclamation of work

(that was going non-union) through an intensive Stabilization and Market Recovery Program and an on-going organizing program. These efforts have resulted in a Local with a membership of more than 7,000.

The investment of a \$49 million Market Recovery Fund over seven years was estimated to result in 3,488 full-time jobs, 5.6 million person-hours of work and \$218 million in wages and benefits paid directly to Local 353 members.

Under Fashion's leadership, the low-rise residential sector is 80-85 per cent unionized within Local 353. Prior to the 1997 agreement this sector was completely non-union. The high-rise residential sector is 90-95 per cent unionized and both sectors enjoy virtually full employment.

A major organizing victory was the certification of 230 electricians at TROM Electric in 2002 – the largest electrical contractor ever organized by Local 353. The organizing successes can be directly attributed to Fashion's hiring of additional organizers.

New initiatives in labour education, health and safety, and political action are also achievements resulting from Fashion's leadership.

Gary Majesky was hired in 1998 primarily to assist Local 353's members who are injured on the job. A Workplace Safety and

Insurance Board specialist, Majesky has an impressive 90 per cent success rate in appeals.

The Technical Education department, under the guidance of Ed Nott, has increased the number of trade-related courses to 34 programs with six new courses added recently. In the fall of 2000, the Local introduced a Labour Studies course designed to identify and encourage members to become more active in union affairs.

The Political Action Committee became directly involved in the 1999 provincial election, the 2000 federal election and the 1997 and 2000 municipal elections. With two full-time organizers and over 60 Local 353 volunteers, the Local was instrumental in electing 75 per cent of the candidates it endorsed.

In addition to serving as Business Manager/Financial Secretary of Local 353, Fashion has served in many other capacities. He served as President of the IBEW Construction Council of Ontario; Trustee of the Health and Welfare Plan; Trustee of the Pension Fund; Executive Board Member of the Provincial Building Trades Council; Delegate to IBEW conventions – including the 2001 convention in San Francisco where he was appointed to the Law Committee; member of the I.B.E.W. – E.C.A.T. Joint Conference Board; Administrator for the Local's Market Recovery Fund; and, Vice President of the Ontario Federation of Labour. Most recently, Fashion was appointed to the IBEW International Executive Council Eighth District in 2003.

Fashion sees his greatest achievements as acquiring the building at 1377 Lawrence Ave. E. and establishing the classrooms and education programs. His success and emphasis on organizing is also an important part of his mandate, as well as the Market Recovery

Program that started out at 50 cents per hour and is now at \$1.25 per hour.

Another of Fashion's preeminent triumphs is the 'Joint Proposal,' initiated in 1992. The purpose of the Joint Proposal is to renew a collective bargaining process that allows both the Union and Electrical Contractors to negotiate the Principal Agreement without a work stoppage. This process of negotiating early has worked effectively in the previous four out of five rounds of bargaining. Prior to the inception of the Joint Proposal, the unionized electrical industry was involved in work stoppages some lasting as long as two months.

Both parties agreed that the effect on union marketshare was negative and felt that it was in the best interest of the union electrical industry to conclude negotiations as early as possible without a work stoppage. They realized they must work together jointly to expand the unionized sector of the construction and service/maintenance industry.

The Joint Electrical Promotion Plan (JEPP) promotes through radio and advertisement, an image of teamwork and cooperation between the IBEW and ECAO. Also, as a result of the 'Joint Proposal', the IBEW CCO has developed a strong and successful organizing program across Ontario.

Fashion believes the Joint Apprenticeship Council has to be re-evaluated; it must become a better delivery agent for apprentices to become better trained and more involved in the industry. Fashion also sees an opportunity for further organizing and he believes that offering continuing education training throughout the city is critical to the continued success of the Local.



The charges against Fashion arose out of the 1977 strike where he was accused of "fraudulently receiving or misappropriating ...monies from a local union of I.B.E.W" He was accorded a "full and fair" hearing, where International Vice President Rose found him guilty. Rose removed Fashion from office and barred him from participating in the affairs of the local for seven years. Additionally, he was ordered to repay \$406.69 to Local 353.

On appeal to International President Pillard, Fashion's suspension was reduced to four years. A further appeal to the International executive council simply upheld Pillard's ruling. Another appeal was submitted to the International convention in 1982, and the appeals committee upheld the previous decisions and recommended the appeal be denied.



When the appeal went to the 3,500 delegates on the floor of the Convention, and as is customary in these matters, Fashion was permitted five minutes to explain his side of the story. When the five minutes was up one could request an additional five minutes that may be granted or denied by the delegates. Fashion requested and received the extra time.

In his defense, Fashion contended that the trial was about a bookkeeping error he committed. He explained that one month after he became Chairman of the Local 353 executive board, the local of 4,000 members went on strike. "All hell broke loose," Fashion said, and he found himself performing three full-time jobs – his regular job for his employer, his involvement with strike patrol and coordinating the efforts of strike volunteers. In addition, the union charged 96 members with 318 incidents during the strike and all cases had to be heard. This necessitated long trial board meetings and both Fashion and the Recording Secretary made certain there were no mistakes.

With all of this going on, he booked time off his normal job and had lost time paid by the local. Surprisingly, the foreman changed Fashions records without his knowledge.

Because of all this activity, Fashion claimed he lost track of where he was concerning hours paid by the local, and hours paid by the employer. He also claimed that he was still owed money by the local union for his lost time. He wasn't overly concerned about it though. He figured when the strike and the associated activity ceased, he would have plenty of time to balance the books.

Fashion admitted that he said he had a fair hearing because he believed he

had presented enough evidence at his trial board hearing to prove himself not guilty. He thought it was enough.

To complicate matters further, Fashion asked for a postponement of his trial board hearing because he and his wife had booked a charter flight for a vacation. To cancel his trip meant losing the prepaid fare. The business representative granted the postponement, but was subsequently overturned by Rose who insisted that he appear before the trial board as scheduled. As a result of the postponement denial, Fashion appeared as scheduled but he was not as prepared as he might otherwise have been.

Rose dismissed all of Fashion's justifications and claimed, "...Fashion never phoned me, never came near me, never wrote me a letter."

Business Representative Ron Raw – the Local 353 delegate who filed the charges against Fashion – was given recognition at the microphone but offered nothing constructive to the debate. He simply stated that Rose had covered any points that he might have made.

Robert Gullins, also from Local 353, defended Fashion. Gullins was involved with Fashion in most of the trial proceedings, during the strike and in other activities. "I've seen the figures that he has. I don't believe he's guilty," said Gullins. "As a character reference, I don't think he would do this intentionally to the Local Union..."

Fashion was questioned on why he did not contact Rose to talk over these issues. Fashion explained that the local was under trusteeship and when he returned there were many hard feelings between him and Rose. "...How would I ever make a decision on my own from

then on? I would always have this thing hanging over me that he had done me a favour,” stressed Fashion. “I decided I’d wait my four years and come in front of this body and have a fair trial.”

Quick on his feet any time he was criticized, especially at an International convention.. “A statement was made here that’s not true. There has never been any animosity on my part towards Brother Fashion,” said Rose. “If he felt that way himself, then I’m sorry about it, but it was on his part and not on mine, and he has no substance to that statement.”

One delegate rose on a point of order and asked, “Do you feel that it’s fair to me and every other delegate in this hall to be hit with a case that a man waited four years to be heard and you give him a 10-minute speaking period to present his case when he had a tribune of maybe seven or eight men that have stacked the decks against him? I don’t know this man, but I don’t think we’ve given him a fair trial.”

In the end, Fashion won his appeal and was reinstated, an accomplishment about which one I BEW member said, “that in itself is quite a miracle!”

Others, however, were not quite so charitable. Bill Baird, who attended the convention, said he believed Fashion won on a technicality and that technicality was that everyone was tired and wanted to go home. The convention had been in session all day and Fashion’s appeal was heard at night. Perhaps it’s due to the passage of time, but Baird’s version does not fit with the facts.

If the delegates were so tired, why did they grant permission for the additional five minutes and why did so many

non-Canadian delegates ask questions to prolong the debate for over an hour?

Ed Nott, Local 353 Technical Education Director, also attended the convention and recalls Fashion being escorted in to the hall by two seargeant-at-arms. They remained at his side – standing – during Fashions entire defense. Nott believes that the convention delegates found this treatment excessive.

Fashion was exonerated as a result of the full participation of his brothers and sisters from both the United States and Canada. His victory should not be tainted through innuendo.

Fashion, speaking about these events in an interview in July 2003, stated that despite having been exonerated he did not return to his position on the executive board. While he had only been removed from the executive board position, but had maintained his membership throughout and still continued to pay dues, he was not permitted to run for office or to attend union meetings.

When Fashion returned to Toronto after the convention, he admits to still being disenchanted with the union. He didn’t attend meetings for some time, but gradually, over time, he did go to meetings and became involved again.

It seems that the most convincing proof for belief in Fashion’s innocence is that in 2002 he won a substantial mandate from the local to continue his term as Business Manager – a full 20 years after his exoneration by the convention delegates.

Ed Nott, in reflecting on the events believes that Fashion’s trouble had absolutely nothing to do with misappropriation of funds, but rather more to do with an article he wrote in the Spectrum.





Nott recalls that in his capacity of editor of the newsletter, when he accepted the article for publication he was apprehensive about printing it. And in some respects regrets to this day that he did. The regret stems not from any inaccuracies, but stems from the problems its publication unleashed. The article, "Have You Been Wondering What Has Happened In Your Local Lately," published on the front page of the October 1977 issue of *The Spectrum* questioned the rationale for removing Warren Chapman from office.

In the article Fashion merely cited all the events surrounding the imposition of the trusteeship. Nott thinks that the imposition of the trusteeship and the removal of Fashion from office drained the resources of the Local. He also believes it soured many potential leaders from becoming actively involved in the local, and set the local back to such an extent that it took many years to recover. He himself never ran for elected office. Fortunately for the union, Nott has remained active. His contribution as Technical Director of the Technical Education department has insured that Local 353 members continue to be leaders in their field.

LOCAL 353 PLACED IN TRUSTEESHIP

In May 1978 Local 353 was placed in Trusteeship. Trials were held and those who were targeted were extremely distraught. They believed they had done nothing wrong and in fact, had not done

so, and were the victims of trumped-up charges by the International – Ken Rose in particular. Rose assigned Don Lounds, the current International Vice President, to serve as trial chairperson.

As difficult as it might be to believe, part of the problem that led to the imposition of the 1978 trusteeship centred in part on Financial Secretary Steve Weslak. Weslak refused to grant funds to the local to have a Christmas party because the local was going broke. He outlined his concerns about the local's financial status in writing to the Business Manager with a copy to Ken Rose but his assessment was not accepted and plans for a party went ahead.

Baird said that the local had dances and various sports activities. However, there was no entertainment fund so any costs exceeding receipts for these activities were paid from the general funds. These expenditures were always approved by the membership but not by the International Vice President – they were normally rubber-stamped.

In Baird's estimation, to maintain stability the International office always had the trump card. It approved all of these things in the past and now, all of a sudden it was not appropriate. This was the way the International could control a group it thought had got out of hand.

The local was placed under trusteeship and, according to Baird, the entire executive was thrown out. Baird said he was perceived to be all right and was asked to head up a financial committee to look into the local's affairs and to make recommendations. As he recalls it, the recommendation was to establish a sports and entertainment fund for the purpose of funding Christmas parties, hockey tournaments and other such activities.



The committee returned a recommendation to increase the dues by \$6.00 per month, which was subsequently amended to \$3.00 and accepted at that level.

The finance committee assessed the local's situation as in need of a dues increase so obviously the local had insufficient funds to administer its business. Given that there appears to have been no impropriety, the imposition of the trusteeship seems to have been an overreaction on Rose's part.

The trusteeship did not sit well with the membership. General meetings were suspended and there was no Local 353 representation at conventions.

As the trusteeship neared its anniversary, Local 353 executive board member Robert Rynyk revealed in a submission to the Ontario Labour Relations Board (OLRB) that, at a May 8, 1979 meeting, it was asked if the International office intended to apply for an extension of the trusteeship over Local 353 and if so, when. Bill Hardy and the appointed trustee and International representative W. Moore attended the meeting.

As they understood it the response was that the IBEW would apply for an extension but they didn't know when. The extension was requested and the OLRB scheduled a meeting for June 19, 1979. That announcement precipitated a flurry of activity from Local 353 members, who opposed the trusteeship.

Local 353 member Jim Lambie sent a letter to the OLRB and asked that the trusteeship be lifted. Lambie accused the trustees of failing to provide leadership by not keeping the members informed, and asked for a postponement of the hearing. A hand-written submission signed by 16 Local 353 members demanded that the request for the trustee-

ship extension be rejected. They, too, accused the Trustees of not keeping them informed. To prove their point they referred to a mail-in-vote for a pension plan proposal – the results of which were not released. The group accused the Trustees of placing people, who had been voted out of office democratically, in charge of the local.

Another hand-written letter dated May 17, 1979 and signed by 16 members, rejected the granting of consent to extend the trusteeship. This submission referred to correspondence received approximately six months previously from the "Trustee, Mr. Rose, stating that they resolved the problem that caused the Trusteeship, which was --- the elegal (sic) spending of funds, and yet the new Board, under Tom Hart...wants to put the members' money into the Federal Election campaign without the members' vote."

Maurice Green from the law firm of Golden Levinson filed a list of objections to the trusteeship on behalf of a number of members. Chris G. Paliare from Cameron Brewin and Scott filed for Local 353 member Ed Nott.

Nott's submission stated that sacred rights were disregarded when the trusteeship was imposed and that a fair hearing was not held in May 1978. Nott claimed that Ken Rose was the complainant, the investigator, and the adjudicator at the trusteeship hearing.

Vice President R. G. Tyrrell also sent a letter to the board. The letter was received May 31, 1979. It stated that as a Local Vice President he was not informed of the hearing until 5pm on May 23. He was a member of the suspended board, but was reinstated and re-appointed to the new board and should have been notified earlier.



Tyrrell said that at the original activities of the suspended board by International Vice President Rose, he “entered a statement disagreeing with the original trusteeship. I have, however, co-operated with the International Vice President...”

Local 353 members sent a number of letters objecting to the trusteeship. Several of them complained about the dictatorial powers of the International vice president and the disenfranchisement of IBEW Local 353 members.

This overwhelming show of solidarity against the trusteeship had an impact.

In a letter dated June 15, 1979 from Registrar D. K. Aynsley, he stated, “this will serve to confirm my telegram of today’s date, that the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers has advised the Board that it is withdrawing its request for an extension of the Trusteeship over Local 353. Accordingly, the Hearing in the matter, scheduled for Tuesday, June 19, 1979, has been cancelled.”

So ended a disturbing chapter in Local 353’s history. The trusteeship may have been lifted, but today, 25 years later, resentment over its imposition lingers in what many still regard as an abuse of authority by Ken Rose.

May 1974 edition of the *Journal's* Local Lines

A lofty addition to Toronto’s skyline, the CN communications and observation tower, will rise more than a third of a mile above the ground to become the tallest self-supporting structure in the world---

Certain to become a world-famous landmark, the tower will exceed 1,800 feet in height. It will provide greatly improved communications facilities and, at the same time, provide public observation decks and a revolving dining room between the 1,100 and 1,200-foot levels. Potential visibility from this height will be 75 miles, extending beyond Niagara Falls to the northern shores of Lake Erie and east nearly a quarter of the distance to Montreal.

Visualize a dart standing on end, its point reaching skyward. This is what the CN tower will look like. It will be supported by a Y-shaped base, each side 100 feet at ground level, narrowing gracefully to meet the central hexagonal core of the tower far above.

Four elevators in glass-faced shafts will take sightseers to the observation decks; it will be a one-minute ascent to a thrilling vista. The decks, one indoors, one outdoors, will be in the “sky pod.” This is a circular, seven-storey structure ranging from 100 to 140 feet in diameter between the 1,100 and 1,200-foot levels. The sky pod will also contain a dining room and lounge, broadcasting and transmission equipment, and CN telecommunications microwave facilities.

To prepare for construction of the tower, workmen first excavated through 30 feet of earth into some 25 feet of rock. This took them well below the level of Lake Ontario, and a system of relief wells was installed to prevent water seepage during excavation.



After the tower's foundation was completed, a special slip-form was set up and the placing of concrete commenced. As the slip-form moved up under hydraulic pressure, supported by a ring of climbing jacks, it left a continuous extrusion of hardened concrete, reinforced by steel bars and post-tensioned steel.

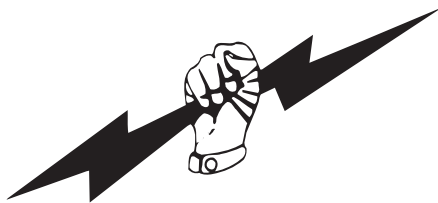
This has been a 'round-the-clock, five-days-a-week operation, resulting in the tower growing at a rate of nearly 20 feet a day.' On September 26, 1973 it became the tallest structure in Toronto at 785 feet.

To build the tower it is expected that 106,000 tons of concrete will be used, along with 5,000 tons of reinforcing steel, 700 tons of structural steel, and 80 miles of tensioning wire. The tower itself will weigh 130,000 tons.

CN tower will have the stability to withstand the effects of high winds, snow, ice, lightning, and earth tremors. Experts in Canada, Switzerland, and the United States played roles in its design.

Some facts: elevator capacity – 1,300 persons per hour each way; dining room capacity – 400 persons; observation area capacity – 600 persons; main observation level – 1,126 feet; upper observation level – 1,500 feet; dining room level – 1,140 feet; total floor space, sky pod – 70,000 square feet; total floor space, base – 25,000 square feet; volume of concrete – 106,000 tons; total weight of tower – 130,000 tons.

Major electrical contractor on the job is A. D. Ross Electric Company, and electrical foreman is Mike Bolan. Other members are Terry Quale-Steward, Doug Wray, John MacAulay, Paul Crough and Alonzo Cardozo.



CHAPTER 10

1983 — 1992 REVERSALS OF FORTUNE — Recession and High Unemployment

Old dangers persisted and new challenges emerged in the early years of the 1980's. Unemployment rose to levels not experienced since before World War II with construction workers taking the heaviest losses

Local 353 saw a decline in its membership from 4,242 members in 1978 to 4,152 in 1986. By 1991 the membership had rebounded to 5,836 – its

highest ever membership to date.

There was work being estimated and four new hospitals were in the planning stage – Markham, Scarborough Grace, Baywood and Credit Valley. The Toronto Convention Centre, which would host the 1986 IBEW convention, was about to be built along with the Scarborough Light Transit System.

After 46 years as a Local 353 member Bill Hardy retired in 1983. He was credited with achieving much for the Local 353 membership since 1950 when the wage rate was \$1.85 per hour and vacation pay was at four per cent.

Robert Rynyk was appointed as his replacement, and would subsequently be elected to the post on his own merits in 1984. Bill Baird was re-elected as President in 1984, John Smith as Vice President, Walter Wray as Financial Secretary and Steve Knott as Secretary.



*Brother Hardy Retires After 46 Years in IBEW – 1983
Local 353, Toronto, Ont., officers at Brother Hardy's retirement are, front row, left to right, former Financial Secretary, Steve Weslak; retiring Business Manager, Bill Hardy; and Ron Raw; second row, Bob Rynyk, Business Manager; Ernie Swift; Bill Baird; Ron Carroll; Steve Knott; and Morley Hughes.*

Robert Rynyk

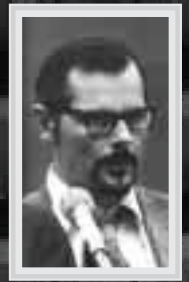
Business Manager 1983 - 1987

Robert Rynyk was appointed Business Manager in 1983 on Bill Hardy's retirement. Prior to his appointment as Business Manager, Rynyk ran unsuccessfully for the Executive Board 1972 but was successful in 1975 and retained that position until the Trusteeship was imposed.

In May 1979, when the Local was seeking to have the Trusteeship lifted, Rynyk was the only elected member of the Executive Board. He served as the Local's Welfare Trustee, the Local's Building Trustee and as a member of the IBEW Construction Council of Ontario.

He was also a delegate to the Labour Council of Metropolitan Toronto and served as an elected representative of the Labour Education Committee.

Rynyk was defeated in the 1987 Local elections by Joe Fashion in a run-off vote.



ROBERT
RYNYK

Prior the 33rd convention J.J. Barry was appointed to replace Charles Pillard as International President. At the 33rd convention, held in Toronto for the first time in 1986, Barry was elected by acclamation to International President.

At the 33rd convention, held in Toronto for the first time in 1986, J. J. Barry was elected by acclamation to replace Charles Pillard as International President. Barry firmly believed that increased political action would help solve many of the IBEW's problems. In his view, the only way to reverse the trends of outsourcing jobs to the third world and right-to-work states was through political action directed at forcing politicians to enact legislation more favourable to unions.

WELCOME TO TORONTO

At the 32nd convention, Toronto delegates distributed little red hearts bearing the city's name to promote Toronto as a suitable location for the convention.

Obviously the campaign was successful and the 33rd convention was planned for 1986 Toronto.

As the convention date drew closer, enthusiasm escalated. President Pillard commented at the All Canada First District Progress meeting in June 1985 that, "There is a great deal of anticipation and enthusiasm by IBEW members in the United States regarding that Convention and their visit to your great country in September 1986."

In January 1986, Local 353's convention hospitality committee sponsored a contest with the co-operation of George Brown College's graphic arts department. The students were asked to submit designs for a local union logo and the winning logo would be used for lapel pins, crests, jackets, hats, sweaters and T-shirts for sale to the membership. Proceeds would be used for a hospitality evening sponsored by Toronto locals.

The convention got off to an impressive, ceremonial start, "---with a parade of flags of the provinces. The flags were arranged in the order in which the provinces entered Canada - Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick (the provinces which entered Confederation on



July 1st, 1867) Manitoba, British Columbia, Prince Edward Island, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Newfoundland, Yukon and North West Territories. Following this, the Canadian flag was presented, and then the U.S. flag. The National Anthems of both countries were sung, with Rolland Thivierge doing the honours with the Canadian anthem, and Ben Parrish singing the American anthem.”

Also a part of the social festivities was First District Theme Night, which acquainted the delegates with the various life styles in different parts of the country.

For Canadian IBEW members the 33rd convention would see many of the old resolutions about Canadian autonomy issues debated, only to have them end up with similar results as those reached in the past.

A resolution requested that articles like the Editorial, Safety Tips, Research and Education and The Canadian Labour Scene be printed in French as well as English. It won a sympathetic response from the committee and it drafted a sub-

stitute resolution and was endorsed by the delegates, “that the International President and the First District Vice President investigate the use of French translation where possible.”

Regrettably, a resolution that requested a section entitled Canadian Scenes be printed monthly did not fare as well. It received a recommendation of non-concurrence and cited the logistical difficulties involved in setting rigid procedures for dissemination of Canada-wide information.

Local 353 submitted a resolution requesting that accurate minutes of All Canada Progress Meetings be made available for all locals upon request. Similarly, another Local 353 resolution requested the right not only to debate but also to decide policy on Canadian issues.

There were also a number of resolutions opting for a change in the International Executive Council structure including one that called for a position on the council for women. Another



33rd Convention in Toronto for First Time – 1986



called for substantive changes, which would provide for one member from Canada, two members from the U.S. manufacturing sector, two members from the U.S. utility sector, two members from the U.S. construction sector, one member from the U.S. telephone sector one member from all U.S. locals not considered manufacturing, utilities or construction.

These resolutions were combined and received a recommendation of non-concurrence because the resolution was considered a dramatic change from the system that existed and worked well for many decades.

The committee noted that under the current system, “any member – male or female, regardless of race, color, creed or national origin...can be elected. The present system treats all members equally. All were treated equally and the proposal would divide the members into artificial categories imposing a quota system where people were declared eligible for office based on criteria rather than their ability”

This does not differ in any way from the rationalization of the corporate sector when they denied rights to women, people of colour and the physically challenged. There were an estimated 300,000 women in the IBEW representing more than a third of the membership. Yet there was not a single woman among the 12 International Vice Presidents or on the eight-member Executive Council. Was there not at least one woman with the ability to fill one or more of those 20 top leadership positions? Society was changing in both Canada and the United States, and the IBEW in Canada was losing membership because of its inflexibility on some of these positions.

In another resolution on All-Canada Progress meetings submitted by

Local 353, the request that all minutes be circulated was rejected. According to the convention proceedings, the purpose of the meetings was to provide an opportunity for business managers and representatives to discuss matters informally. “It was all right,” the committee said, “if they were so inclined, for those in attendance to keep notes and report back to the members on matters of interest.”

Local 353 delegate Larry Priestman wanted more than that. He believed the purpose of the resolution was “to ensure that all locals – even those not represented – received an accurate record of all matters within the union.” Unfortunately these desires were not addressed.

The absence of formal minutes meant that there was no obligation to act and no record of commitments made. This led to many misunderstandings and with no formal record the ability to overcome these misunderstandings was difficult.

International Vice President Ken Rose reminded delegates similar resolutions had been defeated at the previous three conventions. “If you go back over the last few conventions, no one can in all honesty get up here and say Canadians haven’t had the opportunity to discuss their Canadian problems in the forum of the IBEW conventions,” said Rose. “I’d be interested in anyone coming to me...during this convention and laying out for me the problems or the questions that Canadians haven’t been able to discuss; and I can assure them they’ll be discussed when we get back home.”

Discussion was never the issue. The power to act, involvement, and some control over their own destiny were the real issues.



At the time of the CLC – Building Trades split, there were 70,000 Canadian IBEW members. Fewer than 200 of those members were able to vote on disaffiliating from the CLC.

A resolution submitted by Local 213 had the potential to cause both Rose and the International President embarrassment. The resolution criticized the fact that the Toronto Convention Centre – the venue for the 33rd convention – was not unionized. The resolution also requested that the IBEW receive a written

guarantee that all staff at any convention venue in future is unionized and that the Toronto Convention Centre be boycotted.

In response to the resolution the committee said that the Toronto Convention Centre was organized by Local 351 – Textile Processors, Service Trades, Health Care Professionals and Technical Employees International Union, Toronto, Ontario. In addition, Local 353 members did all the electrical contract work for the Centre.

Local 353 delegate Robert Rynyk nominated Ken Rose for re-election as International Vice President, First District Canada. Rynyk noted that Rose had joined Local 1095 in 1946 and then Local 353 in December 1970 and he described Rose as one who “skilfully guided his staff and our local unions with dedicated leadership and decisions based not on popularity, but always on what is best for the IBEW.” Rose was re-elected.

At the time of the 1986 convention, construction was underway on the SkyDome. The SkyDome was promoted as having “the world’s first retractable roof, which takes 20 minutes to open and close,” and covered an eight-acre area. The groundbreaking ceremony took place in October 1986 and the project was estimated to provide 10,000 person years of direct or indirect employment during the construction phase. It was projected to contribute \$326 million to the metropolitan Toronto economy with an additional \$45 million to the overall Ontario economy.



*Robert Rynyk at Ontario Federation of Labour Rally
at Queens Park - Toronto.*

The Building Trades' 1989 Year Book

"The roof operates on a system of steel tracks and bogies. There are 54 bogies, some with 10 horsepower motors inside, for a total of 750 horsepower. The roof takes 20 minutes to open or close, moving at a rate of 21 metres per minute.

"The lid is made of steel trusses covered by corrugated steel cladding. A PVC single-ply membrane covers the cladding, acting as weatherproofing. The roof weighs 11,000 tons – the equivalent of 3,734 automobiles – and contains 250,000 bolts. When open, 100 per cent of the playing field and 91 per cent of the seats are uncovered.

"It takes 9,000 light bulbs and 776 field lights (2,000 watts) to illuminate SkyDome and 120 miles of electrical cable to handle the 1,558,000 watts of power used. Seen another way, SkyDome generates enough electricity to light the whole of Prince Edward Island.

"How sturdy is SkyDome? The structure consists of 210,000 tons of concrete, twice as much as the CN Tower. In fact, there is enough concrete in the Dome to build a sidewalk all the way from Toronto to Montreal. There are 1,400 precast concrete bleachers at field level, and SkyDome is divided into 48 sections by 48 concrete beams.

"There are 53,000 seats for baseball fans (54,000 for football and 65,000 for concert goers). The Blue Jays' new home is large enough, with the roof closed, to fit a 31-storey building. The field could handle 516 African elephants, eight Boeing 747s, the entire Eaton Centre, a 32-home subdivision, or the Roman Coliseum.

"The playing field features a hydraulic pitcher's mount (sic) built by Ontario yachts. The mound is constructed on an 18-foot fiberglass "dish" that is placed in a holding chamber. As the chamber fills with water, the mound rises to field level, where it is locked into place for the duration of the game. When the game ends, the water is drained from the chamber and the mound lowered below field level."



On the north side, and integrated with SkyDome, a 350-room hotel was added as an afterthought once construction began. Ainsworth Electric Company Ltd. was the electrical contractor for the building and Local 353 member Jerry Mawhinney was the Project Manager. Linda Cranston wrote an article titled SkyDome Distinctive Touches beyond the Roof, that time constraints were

Ainsworth's biggest concern. "The short time of scheduling made it difficult to co-ordinate our role to coincide with the deadlines of other trades," said Mawhinney.

Negotiations for a new agreement were also a subject of debate for Local 353 members. Three separate votes had been held at the Construction Council of



SKYDOME construction – 1987



SKYDOME cabling room – 1987

Ontario (CCO) where only council delegates could vote on the proposed agreement. The new procedure made it possible for the membership to reject the agreement while CCO delegates voted to accept and the CCO vote carried the day—an unusual situation.

KEN ROSE RETIRES

In 1987, Local 353 Member and International Vice President Ken Rose announced his retirement effective July 1.

The local certainly had its differences with Rose throughout his tenure, but Steve Knott recognized Rose's contribution to the union. "Although Bro. Rose has been involved in many controversial activities during his tenure in the office of Vice President of the First District, it is my personal opinion that the best interests of the IBEW, and the electrical industry, have always been uppermost in his mind," said Knott. "We offer our best wishes and thanks to Ken and his family for his years of service and dedication to the Brotherhood."

Ken Rose would be succeeded by Ken Woods, who would be equally as committed to the International's interests as Rose, but less abrasive when protecting them.

Certainly from the beginning to the end of his tenure, Ken Rose proved to be an uninspiring leader. His "my-way-or-the-highway" approach to union leadership only served to weaken not only the IBEW, but also the labour movement in Canada. For the period through which he led, no International Vice President – before or since – created as much havoc within the Canadian wing of the IBEW as he.

Following a three-week strike, an agreement was ratified on May 24, 1988 that provided a \$3.00 per hour increase over two years. The apprenticeship ratio was altered to allow small shops an apprentice sooner than was permitted under previous agreements enabling small, unionized contractors to better compete against the non-union sector. The ratification procedure still had critics because a local with 4,000 plus members – like 353 – had no more voting clout than a local with 200 members. Larry Priestman, Joe

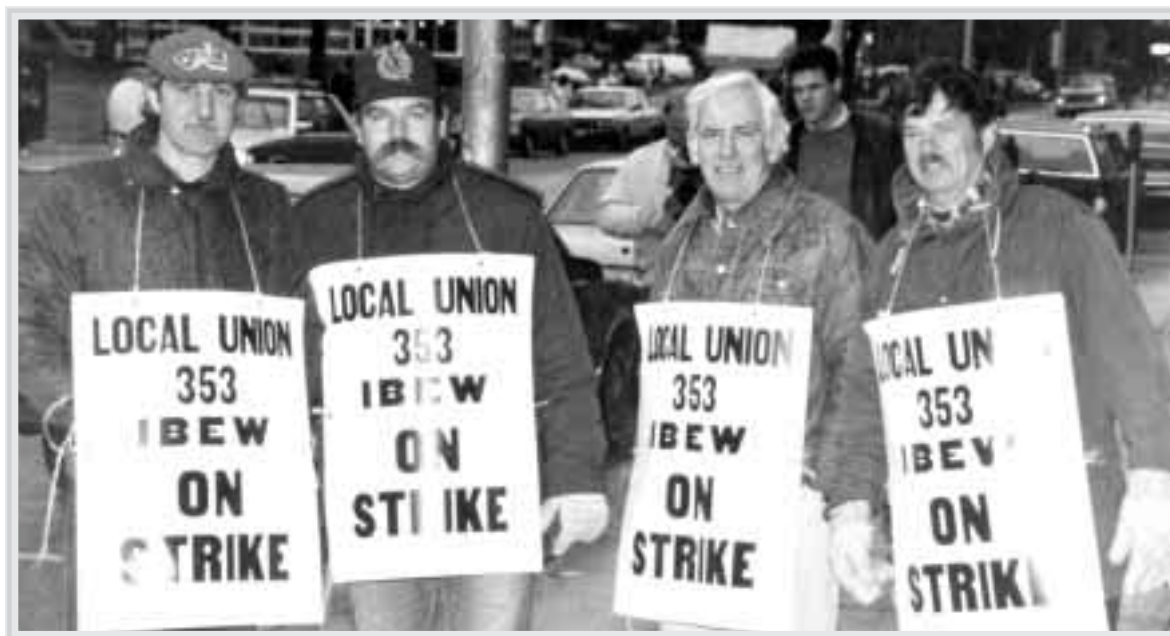
Fashion and John Smith, Don Leitch and Bill Robinson were Local 353's representatives on the negotiating committee.

The election for Local Union 353 President was held on June 26, 1987 and of 1269 votes Baird received 455 and Priestman won with 801 votes (13 were spoiled). The Business Managers position called for a run-off election and Joe Fashion won with 630 votes to Robert Rynyk's 378 votes.



JOE FASHION ELECTED

"I campaigned during the election that I did not think the leadership of 353 were successful at running the local union," said Fashion, "and that if I got elected I would get rid of them all." When Fashion was elected he let his entire staff of Business Agents go and appointed new ones.



*Board of Education Local 353 members on strike – Toronto - 1986
(Tony Conquisti, Len Gilbert, Desmond McGoldrick, John Atkinson)*



During the 1980's a large number of non-union contractors were moving into the Toronto area to pick up some of the work overflow. To combat this non-union intrusion, additional staff was hired to organize and establish contacts in the non-union sector. Members were asked to help in the organizing efforts by promoting the benefits of belonging to a union among their non-union electrician friends.

Their organizing efforts met with early success. From January 1 to June 30, 1988, 409 new members were initiated into the local. Another 150 members were initiated by December 31, 1988, and by June 30, 1989 an additional 362 were initiated.

New construction projects were underway including Terminal 3 at Pearson International Airport. It was described in the June – July issue of *Canadian Business* as, “an airport terminal built for people, not baggage.” It was the first airport terminal that the federal government allowed the private sector to design, build and operate.

The firm chosen (in the fall of 1987) for the project was Airport Development Corporation, a subsidiary of Huang and Danezkay Ltd. The proposal was valued at \$380 million and included the terminal building, a 199,000 square foot office complex, a five-storey parking garage and a 500-room hotel.

Seven million people were expected to use the facility in its first year of operation. To cater to this traffic, 75,000 square feet of retail space was built – double the capacity of both terminals 1 and 2.

Another project scheduled for completion in 1992 was the CBC Broadcast Centre – a Cadillac Fairview Development. The electrical system was

described as a mega-project involving an “incredible number of person years of employment – estimated at 11,100 person years of employment for its four-year construction and installation period. It was one of a kind.”

BCE Place, a \$900 million 2.6 million square foot twin tower project, was also being built in Toronto's financial core.

IBEW launched a new publication in the early 1990's called *Canadian Comment*. In the publication's first editorial, International Vice President Ken Woods thanked International President J. J. Barry for his “foresight and recognition that the uniqueness of the Canadian situation required a method of communicating more directly with the Canadian IBEW membership.” Published quarterly and in the two official languages, the four-page paper would focus on issues of Canadian interest.

The 1986 convention voted to change the frequency of IBEW conventions from every four to every five years and 1991 marked the first occasion to use the new format. Like many other conventions before it, the 33rd convention examined numerous purely Canadian resolutions. A Local 353 resolution asked for a process to elect the Vice President First District. The resolution requested using a secret ballot vote for the entire Canadian membership on a one-member one-vote basis. The committee stated that the resolution would change the voting system from one vote per local union to one vote per member and would be inconsistent with other districts. The non-concurrence recommendation that followed was upheld.

According to convention proceedings, an unidentified Local 353 delegate said that they had met with the Chairman

of the Law Committee and requested a change in the resolution so it would apply to all districts. According to the delegate the law committee chairman said that the request was untimely but recommended an amendment from the convention floor. The delegate did just that, but both the main motion and the amendment were defeated without debate.

Another Local 353 resolution accused Canada's International Vice President of unilaterally and arbitrarily removing the request that applicants who applied for membership in the local should take an examination. The resolve was that it be made clear to International officers that they had neither the authority to change the approved by-laws of a local union, nor to deny the approval of any changes as long as those changes conformed with the constitution.

The resolution received a recommendation of non-concurrence. The committee felt the constitution provided the Vice President with the authority to correct local by-laws so they remained consistent with applicable laws and court interpretations to protect the IBEW and its local unions from costly and unnecessary lawsuits. The committee claimed if the resolution was adopted it would place the IBEW and its locals in direct conflict with the protective provisions of the constitution.

Local 353's Bill Robinson said he was opposed to the committee's recommendation. Robinson felt that the local had a set of by-laws that permitted examinations and that removing the by-law would be a violation of the constitution. The committee's chair replied that the International President had the right, within the parameters of the constitution, to change the by-laws as long as there

was no violation of the constitution or the laws of the land.

Robinson was at a loss as to how the by-laws violated either the constitution or the laws of the United States or Canada. "Unless the International President deems it necessary to correct local union by-laws so they remain consistent with applicable laws and Court interpretations," said Robinson, he was amenable to having an amendment added.

Robinson defended the underlying principle of the resolution. "The Canadian government and companies recruit workers from the Third World, who received job priority in accordance with whatever agreement the government made," said Robinson. "They did not have to take a test to prove their qualifications so there was no way for the local to know if they were qualified electricians."

International Vice President Ken Woods disputed Robinson's claim that he removed the examination requirement from the local by-laws. Woods explained the government qualifications and said that he wrote at least three letters to all construction locals suggesting these people had already been tested and examined. He said he did not remove the right of locals to examine but rather directed locals to accept the examination authorized by the provincial government as proof of qualifications.

Local 105 also submitted a resolution that asked that Canadian locals be permitted to elect executive board members and delegates to the International convention. For example, by permitting Canadian locals to vote for fewer than the maximum, if the executive board had four members at large a member could vote for only three if he or she so chose.





Local 353 submitted a similar resolution that was combined with Local 105's. The resolution received a recommendation of non-concurrence.

Bill Robinson spoke against the recommendation saying that the reason the local submitted the resolution was that some locals were treated differently on the issue. According to Robinson, Local 353 was instructed to vote for the actual number required. The constitution clearly says, "the local union decides the manner in which elections are held and we have the same rights as any other local."

Ken Woods disputed Robinson's contention that there was a difference in the manner in which the rules were applied. "I suggest to him there is not, or has not been, nor will there be any difference in the application of the rules."

Tom Keagan, a Kitchener Local 804 delegate, spoke in favour of the committee's recommendation but said, "We are treated different. 804 had not followed the policy." To verify what the proper procedure was, Keagan contacted an International representative. When the instructions came back, they were told that they had to vote for the number to which they were entitled. "There is no discrimination," he said, "some of us were ignorant of the rules." The debate fizzled.

Local 353 accused the International Vice President of swearing in new members on company premises even though Local 353 had members who were laid off. Some of these 'new members' were in fact old members who had dropped their membership and owed the local money. They should not have been permitted to take the oath of obligation before coming before a local meeting.

Local 353 delegate Bill Robinson said the reason the local proposed the resolution was because they had many travellers working in the local area and had companies that refused to lay off non-members so members could be placed in jobs. Non-members who had not passed a test were sworn in on company premises while Local 353 members and travellers were laid off.

Woods responded by accusing the local of not doing its job and that had it been he would not have sworn anyone into the union. He claimed that there were people in Local 353 working out of the local on 'white cards' for as long as 18 years.

Local 353 Business Manager Joe Fashion, on a point of information, took exception to Woods' characterization but was ruled out of order. Fashion then responded with a point of personal privilege, only to be told by President Barry, "That did not allow you to denigrate anybody."

Fashion said he was not trying to denigrate Woods but that it was the local that had been denigrated by Woods. There wasn't a situation where any member of Local 353 was working under a white card for 18 years. There were, however, many situations where he had taken them in for two years but at the time they were down to one year.

At the 1991 convention, 2,992 delegates were entitled to attend and 2,684 were present, - a remarkably high representation. Local 353 had a total of 10 delegates representing 5,836 members.

Ken Woods was nominated and re-elected as Vice President for First District. In his nomination, J.R. Wacheski from Local 636 Toronto described Woods.

“From his first day as Vice President, Ken has clearly demonstrated that he is a “no nonsense” leader, who will do what is best for the IBEW – not just what is best for his popularity.

“As the leader of the IBEW in Canada, Ken is held in high esteem in all political arenas. He is a member of the Canadian Executive Board of the Building Trades, the Economic Council of Canada and the Construction Industry Advisory Board in the province of Ontario.

“Brother Woods is also an executive board member of the Canadian Federation of Labour.

“Ken has also served as a member of the Electrical-Electronic Manufacturing Association of the Canada Advisory Council on Industry Problems, leading to the establishment of the Joint Industry Training Fund for the electrical-

electronic manufacturing industry, and also served on the Provincial Advisory Committee for the line trade in Ontario”

In the early 1990's many of Toronto's older buildings that IBEW Local 353's members had worked on during their initial construction, were now being vacated, gutted and turned into up-to-date complexes like condominiums and revitalized commercial enterprises combining both the old and the new.

Some were completely renovated right down to the framework while others maintained their exterior appearance and were modernized on the inside. One of these early projects was Metro Toronto's main water treatment plant located at the foot of Leslie Street originally constructed in 1910. Even at 80 years of age it was still considered one of the most advanced facilities of its kind in North America.



New Union Hall Sign, 1377 Lawrence Ave. E. – 1992

“The Grand Opening of our new union hall was a huge success. More than 1,000 people showed up to enjoy the beautiful weather on the Canada Holiday. We had hot dogs, hamburgers and refreshments for everyone. The crowd was so hungry we ran out of food 3 times, but with the help of Brother John Freedman and Brother Bob Gill were able to replenish the food supplies. On behalf of the Local I want to congratulate the Education Committee, the Retirees, the Entertainment Committee, the Staff and all Brothers and Sisters and their wives and families who made this event such a great success. The members and their families had such a great time that they have asked to make it an Annual Event.” — from IBEW Local 353 Newsletter, August 1992, Business Manager's Report by Joe Fashion



The firm of Gore and Storrie Limited completed a major three-part environmental upgrade at the Metro Toronto main treatment plant that met the most stringent air, emission and effluent-limit requirements of the day.

A second large project that presented major challenges for the electrical and mechanical trades was the Art Gallery of Ontario located in downtown Toronto – a building which dates back to 1900.

In 1989 the \$58 million Art Gallery project began and the completion date was set for 1992. A state-of-the-art alarm system was installed along with sensors and systems for controlling heat, humidity and lighting. These systems were specifically designed to detect problems early and facilitate quick action on necessary adjustments and repairs. The work was completed without closing the gallery and there was minimal down time of the exhibition space.



Markham Suites Hotel Crew – 1989

“The following Brothers were employed by Guild Electric at the Markham Suites Hotel: G. Popp, H. Brocumann, V. Bonnici, B. McCormick, R. Nabzdyk, B. Morrow, D. Valousis, R. Cooke, S. Harrison, S. Szalay, U. Gustavson, S. Bilagot, K. Fyffe, C. Bousher, P. Chamney, F. McCormick, R. Lawlor, D. Bresolin, Miro Kielbus, S. McFarlane, J. Jones, O. Grassl, M. Feculak, L. Pires, S. Cherry, C. Hooker, P. Muscat, D. Flaxman, L. Walton, A. Korelewski, Geo Valkanas, Gus Valkanas.” — from IBEW Local 353 Newsletter, March 1989

CANADIAN FEDERATION OF LABOUR PROVES TO BE LIMITED FORCE

While the Canadian Federation of Labour (CFL) remained a force throughout the 1990's, it did not achieve its anticipated goals. Not all of the building trades joined the new organization, nor did the expected, or rather the publicized exodus of other unions from the CLC occur. Even Cliff Evans of the United Food and Commercial Workers, whom some believed would join the CFL, did not leave the CLC. Evans preferred to keep his feet in both camps. The Teachers unions and the Teamsters didn't join either. The result was that the CFL was left talking to itself with its 220,000 members. In fact, from the very beginning many of those members sought to return to the CLC, which unfortunately they weren't allowed because they didn't get a vote.

At its second CFL convention in Edmonton, Alberta in May 1984, 230 delegates from the same 10 unions present at the founding convention attended. In addition, there were fraternal delegates from six national and international unions, including the Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada, the Professional Radio Operations Group, the United Food and Commercial Workers Union, the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, the United Carpenters and Joiners of America and the Manitoba Para-Medical Association. Sixty-six delegates and 12 alternates rep-

resented IBEW and Ken Rose was elected as a vice president, making him a member of the executive of the CFL.

There was certainly a continuing presence of IBEW high-level officers at CFL conventions and CFL President James A. McCambly was a fraternal delegate at IBEW conventions in 1986 and 1991. At the September 1986 All Canada Progress Meeting McCambly announced the addition of the Manitoba Para-Medical Association and the Canadian Association of Professional Radio Operators (CAPRO) as new members of the CFL. Neither organization was ever affiliated with the CLC prior to that.



*Local 353 delegates at 1991 IBEW 100th Anniversary Convention on podium
Front, left to right: Larry Venning, Don Putsey, Joe Fashion, Bill Robinson, Rick Lyman
Back: Mike Lloyd, Bob Gill, Dave Hussey, Bob Gullins*

Originally constructed as an art museum, it became the Art Gallery in 1919, and in 1966 was re-named the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO).



Both the IBEW and the CFL did everything in their respective powers to prop one another up. The IBEW credited James McCambly and the CFL with having employer contributions to dental and health care plans exempted from taxation – an annual estimated saving of \$200 per member.

The CFL was also credited with obtaining funding for a labour education program, however this was a plan won by the CLC before the split, and it was extended to the CFL.

Resolutions to re-affiliate with the Canadian Labour Congress surfaced at both the 1986 and 1991 IBEW conventions. At the 1986 convention – held in Toronto – Vancouver Local 213 charged that there had not been a vote by the membership when the IBEW pulled out of the CLC. The resolution claimed that the split weakened the CLC and did nothing for the IBEW. The CLC was the ‘House

of Labour’ while the CFL was composed of nothing more than business managers and international representatives.

The committee recommended non-concurrence of the resolution. It stated that 105 local unions met in Toronto voted to leave the CLC. The IBEW did not support a move back to the CLC and Local 353’s Bill Baird and Bob Rynyk both supported staying with the CFL.

“This Resolution has been before all the Canadian Progress meetings and has been shot down,” said Baird. “This is not the first time that we in Canada have had problems with the so-called voice of labour in this country. And we have turned around and created a more meaningful body called the Canadian Federation of Labour.”

“This local union in Toronto has had numerous problems with CLC affiliates continuing to build their buildings, their



*Local 353 delegates at 1991 IBEW 100th Anniversary Convention
Front row, left to right: Don Putsey, Joe Fashion, Rick Lyman, Larry Venning
Back: Dave Hussey, Larry Priestman, Bob Gullins, Bill Robinson, Bob Gill, Mike Lloyd.*

properties that their pension funds own, non-union,” continued Rynyk. “They raided us when we were with the CLC, they continue to raid the IBEW today.”

The question of re-affiliation with the CLC was also a subject of much debate at the 1991 convention. The committee once more recommended non-concurrence citing that the matter was discussed at the All Canadian Progress meeting and didn’t receive sufficient interest or support and the CLC had not changed its policies. They felt there was no need to change.

In opposing the re-affiliation, one delegate listed the many locals that used to be represented by the IBEW. These included New Brunswick Telephone, Island Telephone, Newfoundland Telephone, Telebec, ADT (Toronto), Manitoba Telephone, Clerks and Traffic, Siemens Electric (Montreal) – all represented by the Communications Workers of Canada.

Others included were Noranda Metal, Square D, Stratford, Phillips Electronics, View Star Cable Tech, Brampton Hydro – all by the Auto Workers union. In addition the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) took the Kitchener Public Utilities Commission.

What was not mentioned was that in each of these situations a vote was held and the IBEW lost each one.

In Manitoba the Communications Workers won a vote for the 700 operators with 285 of the 442 votes, and for the 1,233 Clerical Workers with 557 for the CWC and 471 for the IBEW.

Of the 116 workers at Island Tel in Prince Edward Island, 62 voted

for the CWC while the IBEW garnered 51 and of the 60 telephone operators 33 voted for the CWC and 21 for the IBEW.

At New Brunswick Telephone there were 315 telephone operators and the result was 177 for the CWC and 72 for the IBEW of 268 votes. Of the 754 Craft employees 700 cast ballots – 511 went to the CWC and 151 to the IBEW.

The most astounding defeat occurred in Newfoundland where out of 122 operators 116 cast ballots and 115 of those chose the CWC. This left the IBEW with only one vote. [This had to mean that even the local executive didn’t vote for the IBEW.] Similarly, the Craft Unit’s 383 of 397 employees voted with only five secured by the IBEW. Furthermore, the CWC organized the Clerical Unit that had not been organized and won the unit of 334 employees by 201 votes against 75 for no union.

Obviously with results like these – and the resulting loss in membership – there were issues among the Canadian membership that Ken Rose did not recognize and could not address.

An amendment to the 1991 resolution was proposed and it suggested, “The International President appoint a six-member Committee, the objective of which was to negotiate a merger between the CFL and the CLC.” The amendment was seconded by Local 353’s Larry Priestman and carried.

The CFL celebrated its tenth anniversary in 1992 and celebrated some of its milestone achievements:

- Established a national headquarters in Ottawa creating a national presence for the federation;





- Created a national system of provincial councils to represent the unions interests;
- Lobbied to change government policy on pension portability, worker allowances, taxation of dental and extended healthcare premiums, and investment tax breaks for individuals;
- Developed Canada's best labour-education program;
- Launched the Working Ventures Canadian Fund – a union-created investment capital [fund];
- Introduced a broad range of financial services saving members substantial sums of money through preferential access to financial services at favourable interest rates; and,
- Participated in and recognized from a number of international forums.

GROWING CONCERN ABOUT MARKET SHARE

During the early part of the 1980's many Local 353 members were unemployed with few periods of full employment. Local 353 Press Secretary Knott reported in July 1983 that 500 out of approximately 4200 members were on the out-of-work list. Similar reports continued to the end of 1986. Short periods of improvement occurred during the summer months when vacations permitted the hiring of additional members. Through the early 1980's vacancy rates in down-

town Toronto were as high as 12 per cent and this put a damper on any possibility of office building construction.

CREDIT UNION

The Credit Union was first established in 1955 with 20 members subscribing with a \$1.00 membership. Within five years it grew to 807 members with \$265,854 in assets and maintained a five per cent interest rate for each year of its existence for funds on deposit.

President Jim Woods, Vice President Steve Weslak, and Directors Frank Woodhead, Al Wignall, Bill Godwin. Jim Lambie, Tom Johnstone, Peter Lak and Treasurer/General Manager Reg Geh comprised the Credit Committee in 1960

By its 10th year, the Credit Union had grown to 1,500 members and \$750,000 in assets and continued to boast a 5 per cent return on all funds on deposit. In addition, for the previous four years the Credit Union granted interest refunds on the repayment of loans.

Members borrowed funds to make down payments on homes, mortgages, new cars, furniture and a host of other purchases. In 1966 the Credit Union surpassed \$1 million in assets for the first time and by 1980 the total passed \$6 million.

The late Steve Weslak, who served on the Credit Union board for many years, found the experience very rewarding and credits his time there

with contributing to a broader knowledge of financial issues.

Unfortunately, the credit union did not survive. According to Larry Priestman a major reason for this was the skyrocketing interest rates during the early 1980's. The Ontario government issued a bond offering a rate of 19.5 per cent interest. Local 353 members took their money from the credit union and as a result the cash flow to maintain the credit union was no longer there.

Another reason for the demise of the IBEW Credit Union was the Ontario government's legislation directing smaller credit unions – of which Local 353 was one – to phase out their operations or join a larger organization. This action was taken because the government was fearful that smaller organizations were no longer solvent. Local 353's solvency level was estimated at \$3.5M and its assets at the time were precariously close to that level.

It is unfortunate that the credit union did not survive because for the time it was in operation it served local 353 members well and offered loan interest rates that were competitive with both banks and finance companies.

While still high, in 1985 unemployment was not as horrendous as it had been two years earlier. Long-term projects were promising. The development of the massive railway lands in the downtown area meant a whole new business and financial district would be built over the next 20 years. It would provide hundreds of thousands of person-years of work for trades people.



1st meeting of Credit Union - 1954



10th Anniversary of Credit Union – 1964

By mid-1986 work was steady and only 20 members were on the out-of-work list. This was a considerable improvement over the previous six or seven years but still too unstable for those working out of town to return home without calling first.

The high unemployment rates coincided with the CLC – building trades' split but it's difficult to assess what effect,



if any, the split had. Certainly a united labour movement might have created a more forceful lobby against government inaction.

At the 33rd convention held in Toronto, a resolution was presented requesting retraction of a document entitled *Ensuring our Future* that had been jointly signed by employer representatives and top leaders of construction unions in Canada.

The document was described as asking construction workers to make concessions in their collective agreements so they could compete more effectively against non-union contractors. The resolve was that the IBEW demand building trades' leaders, Ken Rose in particular, retract their endorsement of the document and live up to the policies of the trade union movement and dissociate themselves publicly from the publication.

The committee recommended non-concurrence and dismissed the resolution simply as a labour management study. It said it was no different from many other U.S. and Canadian studies that attempted to identify problems of efficiency and competitiveness and make recommendations for improvement. Many delegates were angry because the document endorsed concessions – calling for wage rollbacks, reduction of overtime premiums, questioned the need for coffee breaks and home-time allowances.

Others were of the opposite view. Local 353's Bill Baird reported that the Electrical Contractors Association of Toronto (ECAT) and their staff and Local 353 representatives held a meeting on January 24, 1985. The discussed why the unionized market place was dwindling and what joint efforts could be made to retain and expand market share. The

local cited many areas where they already co-operated and offered ideas for additional joint ventures. Some of these ideas included foreman training, Canadian Federation of Labour Investment Corporation, participation on various committees, joint presentations to legislative bodies, promotion within the industry, the community and the upcoming 1986 IBEW convention in Toronto.

Both sides thought the discussions were constructive and a sub-committee was formed to draft a questionnaire for past and present foremen. The questionnaire was designed to get feedback from both sides of the industry – union and management. The questionnaires were conducted locally with each trade responsible for its own jurisdiction. Any outstanding issues would be referred back to the main committee for resolution.

As early as 1983 problems about market share were discussed. In the *Electrical Trade Bargaining Agency/Electrical Contractors Association of Ontario* publication *Reason*, an article revealed contractors were bidding less than 50 per cent of projects compared with two years earlier. It claimed that unionized employers were losing contracts to four main groups: non-union forces, union-in-plant forces (U.A.W., U.S.W.A.), non-AFL-CIO unions (Christian Labour Association of Canada), and employers of tradesmen represented by residential unions like the Labourers. The non-union sector was considered the most serious competition.

While it was reported that downtown office tower construction remained union work, retail and commercial renovation was switching to non-union. Hospitals and universities were operating under a low price policy with no regard

to either the union or non-union affiliation of the contractor. Projects described as major mechanical projects were going non-union. In Vaughan, council awarded a \$1 million mechanical package to CLAC.

At a January 1984 meeting between the IBEW and the ECAO, a paper entitled *1984 – Negotiations* was submitted by the ECAO. It referred to a drastic change in the economic environment since the 1980 – 1982 negotiations because “all key players, clients, governments, employers, and workers” were questioning the viability of existing structures and practices.

The paper suggested the discontent arose from the economic recession and the depth and unexpected duration of the downturn. The inability to be flexible and to act quickly left little room to manoeuvre or to meet the new challenges in the market place. Non-union contractors were moving into union “work fields,” cutting into market share, profit margins and pay cheques.

Construction contracts were signed for bargain-basement prices, barely covering costs, and Conservative governments were embracing American open-shop and right- to-work concepts.

The paper argued that Union affiliation, once considered the key to success, was now regarded as a liability. The document cited its goals and objectives:

“The ETBA feels that the provincial bargaining system is at a turning point. The difference between success or failure in this round of bargaining depends upon our ability to react positively and straightforwardly to the messages we are receiving from all those

affected by the outcome. Given the above, we feel that our objectives in this round of bargaining should be:

- A. To achieve a reduction in costs arising out of the collective agreement in order to further cost effective construction and improve contractor competitiveness.
- B. To allow those who have invested in the electrical contracting business a greater opportunity for fundamental decision making through elimination of restrictive contract language.
- C. To recognize that one agreement cannot cover all facets of work and address these different work characteristics in the agreement.
- D. To recognize those areas of electrical work that cannot adequately be addressed within the existing construction agreement and establish separate means for governing the work relationship that meet the requirements of the work, the client, the contractor and his forces.

A successful round of bargaining depends upon the sincerity of the ETBA/IBEW-CCO joint approach to these concerns.

A similar prediction was recorded in *Reason Vol 2, #1, 1985*, through an interview with ECAO President Charles Norris. Norris claimed that clients began to tell contractors – particularly those in the service field – to absorb wage increases or lose the clients completely. Two things occurred. Small clients began to switch to less expensive alternatives and larger clients formed their own in-plant work forces.





According to Norris, the way out was for the unions and contractors to come to “an enduring solution,” not just an agreement based on economic conditions existing during negotiations. Management and union had to work jointly to re-design the package to make it more attractive to the customer.

Norris said he was not overreacting and that the crisis was real. He had never before seen such a “dump-the-union” movement within the industry. It was not anti-unionism but rather what he described as the “discouraged contractor phenomenon.” One company bid on 33 jobs and did not get one of them and “that’s a discouraged contractor,” said Norris. Norris believed part of the solution was to revive the ECAO/IBEW Joint Action Committee.

These and similar concerns were expressed repeatedly by industry, government and contractors alike. It was difficult to determine if they were reacting to a panic situation or deliberately creating one.

Bill Baird informed delegates attending the April 25, 1985 Construction Council of Ontario (CCO) meeting that Local 353 and ECAT had formed a Joint Industry Review Committee to look at all the policies at the local level.

The Ensuring our Future booklet was also a topic of discussion. A motion was passed requesting that Ken Rose retract his endorsement of the document or, failing that, that the Province of Ontario be exempted from its provisions.

Local 353 delegate Robert Rynyk stated that the booklet had some good recommendations and some bad ones. The greatest dispute he had was the lack of any prior report to the CCO before it was released to the press.

Bill Baird was considerably more critical and accused Local 105 in particular of reading things into the document that were not there. He said the booklet reflected what Local 353 and ECAT were attempting to accomplish locally.

Baird said he was an electrician and “now working in the technical part of the trade.” And as for the political connotation being put forward, he commented that “...there are people sitting at the negotiating table who want to use the collective bargaining process to destroy free bargaining by demanding more and more so as to socialize the system completely with no regard whatsoever to the operation of free enterprise,” Baird continued. “I am totally opposed to using the collective bargaining process to drive the free enterprise system out of the industry.”

A motion was passed to defer the motion, but the matter didn’t end there. On May 22, 1985 Bill Baird wrote to Ken Rose and commented on the booklet Ensuring the Future. “The press release prior to a discussion with the CCO and its affiliated locals has created a great concern and misunderstanding as to the content and purpose of the booklet,” said Baird.

“At our May general meeting, there as (sic) a lengthy discussion on this matter. I informed the membership that there was a request by the CCO for an audience with you, so that all points could be discussed to ensure a continuity and understanding of the content of the booklet, continued Baird.

“---You and I are quite aware that there are those with in (sic) our society those who are totally apposed (sic) to having the free interprise (sic) system

alive and will use whatever available means to discredit any venture in support of it----."

On June 18, 1985 the ECAO/IBEW Joint Action Committee (JAC) sent a memo to all local joint conference boards about a joint industry assessment survey. The memo announced that the ECAO/IBEW JAC had taken the first steps toward the development of an Electrical Construction Industry Analysis and Recovery Programme.

Representation from both the union and contractors in each local area were requested to meet under the support of the Local Joint Conference Board to develop a joint response to the survey questions.

In the end, the IBEW/Electrical Contractors' Market Survey revealed that the IBEW share of the construction market between 1980 and 1984 was 63 per cent.

The Blueprint, Vol. 2, #2, published in the spring of 1986 by building trades workers, criticized the union representatives who authored *Ensuring our Future*. It accused employers of attempting to push the trades to the 40-hour week, cutting overtime pay back to time and one-half, and promoting different wage rates for different parts of the province. Dubbing the CFL the "Contractors' Federation of Labour," it criticized them for encouraging the set-up of stabilization funds, which it regarded as giving back money to the contractors.

Whatever the reason there was a considerable improvement in the province's work situation and Local 353 and its members benefited from it.

WORK SITUATION IMPROVES



It is difficult to determine whether it was the result of the attention the economy received from the contractors, the union, academics and others, or just a normal phase in the upturns and downturns of the economy, but the economy did improve. There were signs in 1985 and 1986 but by 1987, for Toronto at least, things were booming.

From 1986, records indicate that there were calls on the books not filled and up to 700 travellers working in Local 353's jurisdiction. This was a vast improvement over the early 1980's. However, the economy would experience another downturn in the late 1980's.

It appeared that everyone was paying closer attention to market share and working towards methods not only to retain current levels of employment, but also to improve upon them.

The Toronto Central Ontario Building and Construction Trades 1992 yearbook contained an article entitled *Attacking the Recession, a Joint Approach* by David Miller. He applauded the formation of what was termed, "a unique new body — established to stimulate major construction projects and create jobs in the battered building industry." The Metro Job Start Coalition was established in 1991 by the construction trades and associations.

The coalition's mandate was three-fold. Firstly, to create jobs at a time



when unemployment ranged from 35 to 50 per cent. Secondly, the elimination of time delays in the approval process and finally co-operation at all levels of government and approval bodies.

John Cartwright, Business Manager for the Central Ontario Building Trades Council, called it an important body because “for the first time, we are all able to sit down in one room and discuss and target major construction projects.” Union representatives on the coalition represented 80,000 workers. After only two months’ effort, the coalition approved two major projects: the Spadina subway extension and the Spadina Light Transit Line. These two projects alone represented 1,500 construction jobs with more than double that number in spin-offs.

Not satisfied with these initial successes, the coalition wanted more and focused on other work:

- The Toronto Sewer Relief project (\$16.7 million) and its potential for 1,400 jobs per year for four years;
- Main Treatment Plant and the Don Trunk Sewer;
- The Front Street extension; and,
- The GO Line expansion.

“...There has never been a better time to build...interest rates and contract costs are low.” If approved and started these projects would serve to help the construction trades weather the worst valley of the depression.

Wally Majesky advocated a municipal fair wage policy. Majesky thought the policy was necessary because many firms were setting up shop for the sole purpose of completing a single contract and then folding. In doing so they

abdicated their responsibility for quality workmanship and future liability claims – including those for workers. According to Majesky, unions were concerned about the current wage policy for two main reasons:

- i. The lack of a comprehensive and universally acceptable municipal fair wage policy, which tended to discriminate against unionized contractors who had collective agreements paying industry standard wages and benefits, and,
- ii. Unionized firms became marginalized from the bidding process because non-union firms underbid knowing they had no obligation to abide by any fair wage standard.

According to Majesky, a current and enforced fair wage policy was absolutely essential. It existed in Canada for most of the century and for good reason. It provides for conditions of equality and opportunity for contractors who are free to bid against each other in efficiency, know-how and skill rather than in wages and fringe benefits.

Majesky also argued that the provincial fair wage program had been unduly prejudiced over the years through government inattention and as a consequence of this neglect the credibility the program had initially was completely destroyed. It was difficult to argue that the fair wage program was an important policy instrument in a unionized contractors’ ability to obtain public work. A feature article in the August 1992 *Labour Times* by Lynda Shorten titled *If You Can’t Beat ‘Em*, she alluded to labour becoming more involved in the economy through Venture Capital Funds, including investing pension funds in enterprises and supporting businesses that met certain ethical and social standards.

FREE TRADE OR FAIR TRADE



Believing it to be just another way for the corporate community to attack working people, the labour movement in Canada was suspicious of free trade from the outset. Subsequent events have proved that their worst suspicions were correct and it would not be labour alone who would suffer the consequences. Pensioners, the physically challenged, the ill, Aboriginals, women – all have experienced the most negative aspects of free trade.

In 1988, Brian Mulroney's Conservative government was re-elected with the promise of free trade. Labour and other progressive groups campaigned vigorously against it hoping to defeat the government. Unfortunately their efforts failed.

By 1991 the initial impact of free trade was being felt in the form of massive plant shutdowns. Manufacturing companies – like the anti-union Fleck Manufacturing firm located near London, Ontario – fled to Mexico with its lure of \$1.00 per hour wages, or less. Government cutbacks and cancelled construction projects confirmed for labour that free trade was not good for anyone but the wealthy few.

James McCambly, President of the CFL, called the free trade agreement with Mexico and the United States wrong for Canada and predicted serious industry and job losses. He felt Canada was only part of the negotiations between the United States and Mexico on the condi-

tions that, “we don't rock the boat and don't delay the signing of the agreement.” He stated, correctly so, that Canada would not be at the table as an equal partner. McCambly felt the proposed agreement would be especially bad for labour because there was no sign that labour issues would even be discussed. He thought Canadian participation should be contingent on improved labour standards in Mexico. Mexico also needed to be told that labour standards in that country had to be raised before it could gain access to the Canadian or U.S. markets. At the 1991 IBEW convention, a resolution against NAFTA passed without debate. The June 1992 *Journal* reported that the CFL had reviewed all aspects of NAFTA and found its terms unacceptable.

By the late 1980's imports from Mexico had switched from mostly food and raw materials to electrical power equipment, computers and telecommunications equipment. Not satisfied with simply reviewing the agreements, the CFL executive council went to Mexico to see conditions for themselves. They estimated it would take approximately 18 years for Mexican wages to reach 20 per cent of the current U.S. and Canadian wages. Mexico had 10 million unemployed, 20 million under-employed, and one million new entrants to the labour market annually. Mexico's population was expected to exceed 100 million by the year 2000.

At the Maquiladora operations in Mexico, the CFL representative found plants that were good by Mexican standards with take-home pay of \$1.00 per hour. One plant they visited, considered excellent for Mexico, paid \$2.60 per hour including fringe benefits. A good job in Toronto paid \$20 plus per hour!



Certainly the free trade agreements are an example of corporate greed in its basest form, yet there are still those within the ranks of labour, including some in the IBEW, who believe it is the unavoidable and unpreventable 'path of progress.' It highlights that the social and environmental advances made over the last century are not necessarily the result of any largesse on the part of corporate America.

Our society, the Canadian society was considerably more compassionate before free trade. Already we have a whole new generation of workers with no personal recollection of what life was like before free trade. If Third World standards had been substantially improved under free trade its introduction might be acceptable. They were not! In fact, their standards have remained relatively the same and for a great many in Canada, standards have been lowered.



R. Law and R. Gullins demonstrating for Local 353

VOTE BY POLLS OR MAIL-IN BALLOTS

Bill Baird is credited with introducing the mail-in vote for the election of officers in Local 353 in 1981, approximately one year after his election to the presidency. Baird wanted as many members as possible to participate in the elections. The procedure was used in both the 1981 and 1984 local elections.

Baird readily admits that the issue was very controversial and that its intent was to take control from the people who actually attended the meetings. "They are good at driving people away because of their antics on the floor," said Baird. "If they didn't like someone's ideas, they would hassle them until they stopped coming to meetings." According to Baird it was the anti-internationalists who were opposed to the mail-in ballot.

Baird's comments are interesting because 20 years after the events the 'anti-internationalists' are in office and from the floor at educational courses as late as 2002, members were still being criticized for disrupting meetings. Some of these modern day critics, however, readily admit that perhaps their observations may be tainted because of their lack of knowledge of parliamentary procedure and the proper manner in which to conduct and participate in a meeting.

The introduction of the new procedure did not receive positive reviews from the activists, and the voting method was addressed at every convention from its inception in 1981 until it was rescinded in 1987.



In 1983 the by-laws were changed to provide for an election judge and as many tellers as were required – none of whom could be a candidate for any office. On June 6, 1986 International Vice President Ken Rose wrote to Bill Baird reminding him that he had denied a request to rescind the mail-in ballot method of voting back in 1982. Rose’s decision to do so was appealed to the International President, the International Executive Council and the convention itself and Rose’s decision was upheld.

On June 19, 1986 a special meeting was called to discuss a letter from International Vice President Ken Rose. The letter referred to the appeal by the local union on whether to return to voting for officers and delegates at specially called meetings or through the use of mail-in ballots.

John Smith, Ron White and Bob Gill asked to record in the minutes their offer to assist in the ballot counting. They would help, but because they were not in favour of the procedure it would be under protest.

The referendum vote on the mail-in-ballot was held and in a letter to International President John J. Barry, Baird informed him of the referendum results:

| | |
|------------------------------------|--------------|
| Number of Ballots mailed | 3,793 |
| Number of Ballots returned . . . | 1,281 |
| Spoiled envelopes not opened . | 48 |
| Ballots to be counted | 1,233 |
| In favour of mailed ballot | 848 |
| In favour of poll voting | 372 |
| Spoiled ballots | 14 |
| Total: | <u>1,234</u> |

There was one more ballot than eligible but these are the figures submitted to President Barry and as signed by election judge Bill Baird.

This should have been the end of the matter but wasn’t. The September 9, 1986 Local 353 executive minutes show that Baird read a letter that he wrote to President Barry withdrawing Local 353’s appeal. Several Local 353 executive board members wrote to Rose dissociating themselves from Baird’s actions. Bill Robinson, John Smith, Rob White and Robert Gill also wrote to President Barry September 11, 1986 and expressed their objections to Baird’s actions on the referendum vote and the withdrawal of the appeal that was submitted to be heard at the 1986 convention. The letter was copied to Ken Rose, W. I. Taylor – Chairman of the International executive committee, grievance and appeals committee and to William Baird – Local 353 President, and J. Gilmour – Local 353 Recording Secretary.

The letter revealed contradictions in Baird’s actions and said he had initially told the board he had been directed by International Vice President Rose to hold a referendum vote on the mail-in ballot issue when, in fact, the reverse was true. They felt Baird deliberately misled both the executive board and the membership and deemed his actions as “deliberate and contrived and overstepped the bounds of his office.”

Quoting article 19, section 9 of the IBEW constitution, the letter stated, “The Executive Board shall have the power to act on behalf of the local union between union meetings.” The executive board was not consulted on the decision to withdraw the appeal and didn’t endorse Baird’s actions. “We feel it is only just



and democratic to allow the appeal of Local 353 to stand and to come before the Delegates at the convention floor and follow the democratic rules of the IBEW Constitution as they are laid down.”

Local 353 Financial Secretary Steve Knott sent Bill Baird a letter dated August 23, 1986 and reviewed meeting minutes since 1979 that contained information related to mail-in ballots. The information refuted Baird’s recollection that he introduced the mail-in ballot in 1981. The mail-in ballot appears to have developed out of the local trusteeship.

July 12, 1979

Attendance: n/a.

Motion to return to Polled Ballot – no additional information on results

November 13, 1980

Attendance: 105.

Notice of Motion to return to Polled Ballot.

December 11, 1980

Attendance: 122.

Motion tabled to next meeting.

January 8, 1981

Attendance: 74.

Motion Carried.

February 12, 1981

Attendance: 91.

Motion to appeal decision to Ken Rose. Carried.

June 11, 1981

Attendance: 106

To appeal adverse decision to I.E.C. Carried.

April 6, 1982

Attendance: 172 – *Attendance high due to negotiations.*

Appeal Ken Rose decision. Carried.

July 8, 1982

Attendance: 73.

Motion to appeal C.H. Pillard decision. Carried.

July 10, 1986

Attendance: 98.

Notice of Motion to return to Polled Ballot.

August 14, 1986

Attendance: 69.

Notice of Motion from previous meeting. Ruled out of order.

On September 11, 1986 a notice of motion for a by-law change was presented to the regular meeting – specifically Article III Officers Election Duties. The change was slated for discussion and voting at the October 9, 1986 regular meeting. The notice of motion included a return to elections at the polls as opposed to the mail-in ballot method. It was moved by Bill Robinson and seconded by John Morrow and the motion won acceptance so the 1987 elections would be polls.

At the 1986 convention a delegation made up of Joe Fashion, Bob Gullins, John Smith and Bill Robinson were authorized by the members to see what they could do about the appeal for mail-in ballots. As Fashion recalls it they were walking along the convention floor and spotted the International officers. The Local 353 delegation had a letter to present and Fashion shouted to the President, “I have to talk to you.”

An individual responded to Fashion, “whatever you have give it to me and I will give it to him.” At that point Fashion backed off. The pressure was on Rose to solve the issue because the International officers didn’t want to put it to the floor. “After this discussion, we got a commitment,” said Fashion. “We withdrew the appeal and it never went to the floor of the convention.” Fashion claimed the Executive directed Rose to solve the problem.



In 1986 Rose reviewed his previous decision as he had promised to do. He decided that the question of what voting method should be used would be decided by a mail-in ballot vote of the membership involved! Rose instructed Baird to prepare a mail ballot for all members of Local 353, with a covering letter of explanation to read:

1. I am in favour of a mail ballot election for officers and delegates in Local 353;
or
2. I am in favour of a proposal that the officers and delegates representing the local union 353 shall be elected at a specially called meeting of the local union.

Bob Gullins wrote to International Vice President Ken Rose on May 13, 1987 as a concerned union member about items in the by-laws that were contrary to the original approved motion

“In our September 18, 1986 newsletter there appeared a notice of motion to change our bylaws Article III Officers – Election Duties. Section 5 stated “On election night no other business shall be conducted and polls shall be open from 8:00 pm to 10:00 pm.” No mention of Section 5 is included in our newly approved bylaws.

“The IBEW Constitution, Article VIII, Section 11 (photo copy attached) clearly states “The L.U. shall decide the manner in which the nominations and elections shall be held, and such shall be stated in the L.U. bylaws.” L.U. 353 decided the “manner” in which the elections would be held by their approval, of the proposed bylaws as proposed, at our October 9, 1986 regular meeting.

“To ensure delivery of same to your office, the members present also approved a directive to the L.U. recording secretary, John Gilmore (sic), to hand deliver the approved document on October 10, 1986. This we were assured at the next meeting by the chairman, had been done.

“Our April 1987 newsletter notified the membership nominations for L.U. officers would be held at our May 14, 1987 meeting, which was fine.

“The centre fold however, included locations of the polling stations and the date and time for the elections.

“This unprecedented action by the L.U. President, is objectionable and far exceeds his authority and duties as layed (sic) out in our constitution and bylaws.

“For this reason alone, not to mention many others, I am asking you to direct the president of L.U. 353 to rescind his directive to the membership and allow the election judge and tellers to conduct the election in the manner the Local Union has decided.

“There is no opposition from me that the members must have every opportunity to cast their ballots. It is the responsibility of the election judge and tellers however to ensure this happens. I am confident they will.”

Reflecting on these events 15 years later Baird says, “Joe (Fashion) got elected and...there was an alliance, and many of them received full-time positions. If you look at who was in the background



and who got elected, then it all ties together.” Baird says he attempted to become the first full-time president, but it never happened. His opposition was against it, yet within a year of the election Larry Priestman became the first full-time president.

“Fashion, Gullins and Majesky were all part of ‘the cell.’ Majesky lambasted the International as dictatorial,” Baird continued. “He withdrew his card from local 353 and the International and

got it back under Joe Fashion. I was going to go to the meeting when that happened, but I thought, why bother, I am not a supporter of anyone who is an NDP’er. Gullins, Fashion, Majesky are all NDP’ers. I believe in ‘Gomperism,’ not Socialism. We all lost in 1987, that’s when Fashion was elected – ‘the cell’ won.”

Events that Baird looked back on in 2001 with considerable bitterness merit some examination. It is not necessarily true that mail-in ballots are in any way more democratic than ballots by poll. From 1981 to 1987 Local 353 was out of sync with the rest of the union – including the International and the First District. People who attend meetings regularly are probably more informed about the day-to-day issues and the many who don’t may respond to innuendo and rumour.

When Baird was elected President the union was experiencing a severe downturn in the economy over which he had no control. When he was defeated the economy was starting to recover. No doubt both he and Rynyk suffered because of this – just as the improved economy likely benefited both Fashion and Priestman.



IBEW Local 353 Member working at Campbell Soup Company

NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY ELECTED TO POWER IN ONTARIO



While the IBEW has generally had a Gompers ‘reward your friends and punish your enemies’ approach to politics, many IBEW Local 353 members did promote and campaign on behalf of the New Democratic Party (NDP) provincially and federally. It was with tremendous enthusiasm that they welcomed the NDP election to power.

Early in their mandate the NDP government showed great promise granting the public sector workers the right to strike. These early expectations were quickly soured. Certainly the downturn in the economy on their election to office didn’t help matters at all and the business establishment, particularly the small business establishment, virtually ignored the party and refused to co-operate with it in any way. It went so far as to sponsor billboards depicting photos of Premier Bob Rae with Stalin, Mao and Lenin – a ridiculous comparison.

Rae’s attempt to cater to the corporations would, in the end, ignore unions. Michael Lyons, former Metro Labour Council President commented that when both the Liberals and Conservatives were in power, labour could at least gain an audience with them to let them know what their concerns were. Under Rae that became more difficult with few exceptions. Some cabinet ministers appeared reluctant to meet with labour leaders. In

the end the Rae government would be defeated after only one term and Rae would leave elected office and work in the private sector for a prestigious law firm. This left the Ontario New Democratic Party in total disarray, a situation from which it still struggles to recover.

The Rae government did introduce Bill 80. Labour Minister Bob McKenzie, a long-time United Steelworkers of America member and staff representative, described Bill 80 as a way “to provide greater democracy, freedom and local control for construction unions.” The Bill came before the Legislature in June 1992 and addressed the relationship between Ontario-based local unions in the construction industry.

In a letter to the editor of *Our Times*, Jerry Raso, Legal Counsel for the Ontario Sheet Metal Workers and



Joe Fashion and Minister of Labour Bob MacKenzie – 1990



Roofers conference commented on Bill 80. “The issue of arbitrary and undemocratic control by U. S.-based parent unions over Ontario locals has simmered for at least 15 years,” Raso said. “In 1978, for political reasons, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, which is vehemently opposed to Bill 80, placed IBEW Local 353 in Toronto under Trusteeship, and barred several local leaders from holding elected office for five years.”

“Bill 80 can only help to strengthen the Construction Unions in Ontario. Democratic unions are strong unions,” commented Local 353 Business Agent Bill Robinson.

An article in the 1992 Building Trades Council of Ontario yearbook described Bill 80 as “designed to promote greater democracy, freedom and local control in the relationship between internationally-based parent unions in the construction industry, and their Ontario-based locals.”

The highlights of Bill 80 were:

- **Bargaining rights:** If a parent trade union holds bargaining rights within the jurisdiction of the local trade union, the local trade union is deemed to share the bargaining rights. If the parent trade union is a party to a collective agreement, the local trade union is deemed to be a party with respect to its jurisdiction. The minister may require a parent trade union and its local trade unions to form a council of trade unions.
- **Jurisdiction:** A parent trade union cannot alter the jurisdiction of a local trade union without its consent. Provision is made for the resolution of disputes about jurisdiction.

- **Province-wide agreement:** Provision is made for the maintenance of existing province-wide bargaining structures.
- **Interference with a local trade union:** A parent trade union or council of trade unions is prohibited from interfering with the local trade union without just cause. They are also prohibited from penalizing local trade unions officials without just cause.
- **Successorship:** Provision is made for local trade unions to become a successor to a parent trade union with the approval of the parent trade union.
- **Administration of benefit plans:** Local trade unions are entitled to appoint at least a majority of trustees of employment benefit plans (exclusive of trustees appointed to represent employers).

Obviously, more than just a few members were dissatisfied with the lack of local autonomy.

Another piece of legislation that proved to be controversial was Bill 40 (anti-scab legislation). In the January/February 1993 *TC News* in an article entitled *Remember the Alamo*, Temple Harris railed against Bill 40. “I submit their only interest is to box business in by passing labour laws so restrictive they give unions almost total clout – all as a payback to those large union bosses who put them into office, said Harris”

The Council of Ontario Construction Association (COCA) was equally disturbed by the Act. In an article written by Rick Morrison, BILL 40, COCA vows to continue fight. In the same issue of *TC News*, Morrison wrote, “the revised Act will make it easier for unions to get new members, give organ-



ized Labor more clout and make it illegal for employers to hire replacement workers during most strikes.” COCA announced it spent \$440,000 against the Act in six months and attempted to swing delegates attending the NDP convention in Hamilton by placing an ad costing \$8,500 in the *Hamilton Spectator*.

With all this anti-Bill 40 rhetoric, strikes were close to an all-time low during the time the Act was in place. Obviously, given the corporate outrage against the legislation, corporations were more comfortable with long drawn-out strikes like the Fleck strike, the Eatons’ strike and the VISA strike against the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce (all in Ontario). With the anti-scab legislation in place, corporations had less power to intimidate the work force.

Business Manager Joe Duffy of the Provincial Building and Construction Trades Council said he “expected to see COCA oppose the Bill. It wouldn’t matter what the Government brought in, the employer would be totally opposed to it”





SPORTS Fun and Games

IBEW 353 has long recognized that leisure, fun and entertainment are an important part of a balanced life. To help satisfy the need Local 353 has supported dinners, dances, winter and summer sporting events, including baseball, softball, golf, bowling, skiing and hockey. The local and its members have many trophies and plaques to show for their superior expertise in these events.

This support started as early as 1928 when the Local had two softball teams. In 1930 Joe Godden's Bank of Commerce team won the baseball cup and league championship eliminating Jack Price's Bell Telephone squad 24 to 12 (heavy hitters on both teams!).

Sporting events became more frequent throughout the 1960s, perhaps a reflection of the increased membership and better times. Hockey has long been a favourite sport for many in the local.

The Annual Ontario Provincial Council Hockey Tournament has developed from a challenge between locals 105 in Hamilton and Local 530 in Sarnia to "The Tournament" by 1964 – which still exists to this day.

Joe Fashion's hockey team made a good showing at the OPC Trophy Tournament in 1965 when it defeated both Sarnia and Oshawa and was defeated by Kingston in the final game.



Montreal was invited to participate in the tournament in 1970 and walked away with the trophy. Bill Farquhar quipped, "To keep everything straight, we will now have to consider Montreal is now part of Ontario." Shut out for the William Ladyman Trophy that year Local 353 did manage to win the Ontario Provincial Council Trophy, one of the remaining two trophies.

Undeterred, Local 353 won the Bill Ladyman Trophy in 1971 for the second time and it won the Ontario Provincial Council Trophy for the fourth consecutive year. The 1971 team, coached by Dennis and Whitey Youngberg, was regarded as one of the local's finest.

The Tournament was honoured with the presence of Frank Selke Jr., former Local 353 Business Manager, and a member of the Montreal Canadiens Hockey Club, when it hosted the event in 1977. Selke was guest speaker at the tournament dinner dance and reminisced about the local's earlier days in his speech.

Local 353 emerged the winner again in 1986, defeating Sarnia for the Trophy and in 1996, Local 353 goal tenders Marco Deci and Kevin Henderson, shared top goal tending honours and led the local to runner-up status at the 33rd Annual Tournament held in Toronto.

Golf tournaments are another Local 353 favourite. In 1967 executive board member Bev Taylor was appointed as a one-person committee to arrange the local's first golf tournament in August, 1967, and they have been held regularly ever since.

Baseball and softball tournaments are also held regularly between teams within Local 353 and occasionally beyond the local's borders. Local 353 has registered teams in the Building Trades' Softball Tournament and the IBEW Long Island International Softball Tournament.





Bowling is another sport, which has kept Local 353 members active. Steve Weslak organized the first league after World War II and by 1967 the bowling league was divided into east and west divisions, playing off for the Chuck Bailey Memorial Trophy. In 1972 the local was the first Canadian local to participate in the IBEW International Bowling Tournament held in Cleveland, Ohio.

By 1998 the local celebrated its 10th anniversary of organized ski trips to Whistler, British Columbia. Many IBEW locals from both Canada and the United States participated.

The local has extended its interest in sports beyond the local to sponsor teams in the Toronto area through its Promotion Fund. Teams sponsored have won many trophies and accolades in their own right, and team photographs representing the communities' children adorn the walls of the Local 353 headquarters. One of the numerous teams sponsored is the Wexford Raiders who won the 1995 AAA Ontario Championship.





A tree-planting ceremony through the Evergreen Foundation was also sponsored in 1995. To protect the environment and to enhance the community over 600 trees were planted with Local 353's support.

Local 353's activities in sponsoring in-house teams and reaching out to the community are a reflection of its interests beyond what is seen as the regular collective bargaining issues. Christmas parties, summer picnics, fishing trips...all supported by the local.

A casual reading of the "thank-you" letters posted in the common area of Local 353 headquarters shows that they don't just cover the local's sport-oriented side, but many other community activities as well.

Put all together, they show a clear desire on the local's part to participate whole-heartedly in ways to make the community in which it lives a better place for all.



CHAPTER 11

1993 — 2002, A NEW DIRECTION



In 1993 the Canadian Federation of Labour (CFL) conducted a survey of its affiliates and it revealed that 26 per cent of its members were unemployed and 22 per cent had exhausted their unemployment insurance benefits. Construction workers alone revealed a 40 per cent unemployment rate.

In Toronto there were construction projects in the planning or approval stage, many of them on the fast track because of the lobbying efforts of the Job Start Coalition. The \$400 million York City Centre development was approved and the Spadina Loop was referred to the Province for approval. There was the multi-million dollar renovation of the O’Keefe Centre, the Water Control Diversion programme and a \$382 million Trade Centre at Exhibition Place.

Local 353 described the work situation as extremely poor and many members’ unemployment benefits were exhausted.

In February 1993 Prime Minister Brian Mulroney announced his retirement. Many trade unionists welcomed his retirement as good news.

“Mulroney’s term in office offers an important lesson on the power of unity and solidarity,” said IBEW International President J. J. Barry.

“The Conservative coalition, which swept him into office, like that which carried Ronald Reagan in the United States and Margaret Thatcher in Britain, thankfully did not last.”

“—Double-digit unemployment rates, a seven per cent goods and services tax (like a sales tax) and the prospect of the job-losing North American Free Trade Agreement have struck the wallets and heart strings of Canadian Workers,” Barry continued.

In May 1993, 80,000 trade unionists marched through the streets of Ottawa to protest federal government policies. At the time, 1.6 million Canadian workers were without jobs and they and their families were living what CFL President James McCambly termed a “human tragedy.”

McCambly criticized the federal budget for projecting 300,000 new jobs in 1993 and an additional 400,000 in 1994, but allocating no money to assist in the creation of those jobs. Without Government assistance the projected jobs were unlikely to materialize.

Kim Campbell succeeded Brian Mulroney as leader of the Conservatives automatically becoming Prime Minister. She then led the party to one of the greatest political defeats in Canada’s history –



the Conservatives went from a majority government to just two seats in the House of Commons. The defeat was largely attributed to Mulroney's arrogant style and insensitivity to the needs of average Canadians. Had he stayed on as Prime Minister he may have possibly won a few additional seats. Either way, the Conservatives were definitely headed for defeat.

Mulroney was blamed for the stagnant economy that, as International Vice President Ken Woods reported had, "since 1989 resulted in 400,000 lost jobs!" In 1987, 40,600 new jobs were created monthly but by 1990 net job losses were 7,000 a month and by 1993 there was 50 per cent unemployment in the construction industry.

In an effort to reverse this trend, James McCambly consulted with the new Liberal federal government under Jean Chrétien. An initial meeting was held in December of 1993 to discuss ways to maximize the benefits of the government's ambitious rebuilding plans. Billions needed to be spent on basic structural repairs, maintenance, and the development of roads, bridges, railways and services – all in need of attention.

McCambly pressed for the use of unionized labour. Because unionized workers were paid decent wages, this would result in more tax revenue and contributions to pension and health plans and positively impact the economy.

Certainly, Local 353 would benefit. From early 1992 to the end of 1995 the local experienced high unemployment levels with many members working outside the local's jurisdiction. By May 1994, 1,800 of approximately 5,000 were without work, and by November 1994 local officers reported they had sent let-

ters to every IBEW local asking them to let Local 353 know of any available work. These efforts met with some success but the need was so great that unemployment levels remained high.

Local 353 Business Manager Joe Fashion was not content to sit and weather the economic recession-cum-depression. Fashion took a proactive approach to the problem and added more organizers with moderate successes. Nevertheless, his approach triggered criticism from some who couldn't understand why one would organize when unemployment was high. Fashion viewed this as shortsighted because every electrician who remained unorganized was a threat; they undercut unionized rates. If the non-union trend continued it would lead to even greater unemployment in the local.

Fashion met with provincial members of the Legislature and University of Toronto officials in 1994 and successfully negotiated a lighting retrofit project for a unionized contractor. The project included 81,000 ballasts and fixtures – all to be replaced by Local 353 electricians.

The local was attempting to expand the energy savings plan. It was encouraging industrial and commercial enterprises to take advantage of this proven technology that saved energy, improved performance and was environmentally friendly.

Not unexpectedly, the Bob Rae NDP government in Ontario was soundly defeated in 1995 by Michael Harris and the Conservatives after just one term in office. Harris's 'Common Sense Revolution' promised a 30 per cent cut in income tax. Today, many of those who applaud Harris for "keeping his promise" conveniently forget that the second part



of the promise was that tax cuts would not impact on Medicare or education spending. Cuts to Medicare and the education system were not only implemented, but were so far-reaching that they potentially put lives at risk.

Eight years following the election of the Harris Tories, Ontario voters have a greater appreciation of where those tax dollars went. To replace lost tax dollars user fees were introduced (which means that for many there are no tax savings at all), thousands of public sector workers lost their jobs and government services deteriorated. Those thousands of workers would now not build, buy, renovate or engage in any of the thousands of projects that construction workers, including Local 353 electricians, earned their livelihood from.

None of these measures were well thought out before being implemented and as a result there were less Highway Traffic Act inspectors, fewer nursing and health care workers, fewer teachers and fewer water inspectors.

The consequences were many. For the first time ever semi-tractor trailers travelling at speeds of 100 km and over per hour, were losing wheels and causing death and destruction on the highways. Ambulances had to race from one hospital to another with critically ill or injured patients because of the lack of health care workers to treat them or because beds had been shut down due to the shortage of nurses and other support staff.

Classroom student numbers increased cutting down on the time available for each teacher to spend with each student. This had no serious impact on the wealthy that could afford to send their children to private schools.

The most tragic consequence to come out of the Conservatives' economic strategy was in the town of Walkerton. Seven citizens died and 2,300 fell ill, many with life-long complications, because of the presence of e-coli bacteria in the town's drinking water supply. Water inspection had been transferred from the public to the private sector as a cost-saving measure. The government tried to lay the entire blame on the local officials, but an extensive investigation found that the Provincial Conservatives were also responsible.

Even after the tragedy and the release of the report on what led to it, over half of Ontario's water treatment plants were found to be suffering from serious deficiencies. Of 645 plants inspected 311 were instructed to improve testing procedures. Even at that time many water inspectors were deemed to lack the proper qualifications for the job.

When the Tories took office in 1995, they reduced the environmental budget by \$100 million and laid off 900 workers. In 1993 and 1994 provincial government inspectors inspected 75 per cent of water treatment facilities in Ontario. In 1998 to 1999, the number of plants inspected had dropped to 24 per cent and 29 per cent respectively.

IBEW 1996 CONVENTION VICTORY FOR THE MEMBERS



Local 353 was one of 97 locals that submitted resolutions calling for a secret ballot vote for the leadership of the International. Since the 1948 convention the IBEW practice had been to elect officers through a roll call vote of the delegates – a procedure that placed tremendous pressure on the voting delegates.

Each delegate in attendance represented a proportional number of his local members. For example, at the 1996 convention Local 353 had ten delegates who represented 5,528 members. Eight delegates were allocated 553 votes each and the remaining delegates were allocated 552 votes, bringing the total to 5,528.

Locals were polled in numerical order until all locals had voted. When a local's number was called, one spokesperson would give his/her name, local number and the number of members in the local. If every delegate was in favour of one particular candidate then all votes were allocated to that candidate; when the delegates were split, then each delegate's name was called with the name of the candidate for whom he/she voted. The procedure made it difficult for a delegate who was committed to a particular candidate to change his or her mind.

On this occasion, locals from throughout the United States and Canada endorsed the change from roll call to

secret ballot elections. In recommending the change, the committee briefly outlined the history of various changes in convention voting procedures. For the first time, electronic voting machines were available and the delegates voted to have this particular vote conducted electronically. This meant that the ballots were completely secret. The delegates voted against the committee's recommendation of non-concurrence so the 'One Local, One Vote' concept was accepted for the 1996 convention elections.

Another resolution, this one submitted by Local 105, requested that the requirement to vote for all candidates in Local elections be rescinded.

Speaking against the committee's recommendation of non-concurrence, Local 353 delegate Joe Fashion said he was a 39-year member and it was only in the previous 15 years that this voting method existed. It was unfair, he argued, for a local to force anyone to vote for four candidates when in good conscience an individual felt only three were deserving of the vote.

There were three separate votes on the resolution, all by a show of hands, and all were inconclusive. For the fourth vote, International President Barry invited Fashion to come to the platform to observe the vote for himself. Fashion did so and in his view the non-concurrence motion was defeated. A delegate from the floor suggested using the electronic vote method. This request was accepted and resulted in the defeat of the committee's recommendation by a margin of 1,343 to 868 upholding Fashion's impression.

Throughout the years many of Local 353's resolutions have been rejected, including a significant number that



required constitutional amendments. By their very nature constitutional amendments are difficult to achieve. That is as it should be. Whether we are talking about a nation or a union the constitution lays out the rules by which we are governed. To have value, a constitution must be durable, rigid and at the same time flexible enough to stand amendment if the change is merited.

Repeatedly, delegates from Local 353 and other locals asked for changes and were rebuffed. Through the process arguments in favour and against are presented and people are educated. It is through education that people become convinced, and if arguments are well founded change takes place.

Both inside and outside the labour movement there are many who sometimes interpret debate as disloyalty or indicative of a lack of support for the union and/or its officers. It isn't. It is the process through which democracy in unions survives. When the IBEW disaffiliated from the CLC, a member told International Vice President Ken Rose that, "It was not Washington's Union, it was My Union." In all probability that delegate recognized that his union made mistakes, but it was still his union.

Every time a company manager, a right-wing journalist or a Mike Harris-type politician denigrates the union movement, he insults the individual union member. In doing so he increases that



IBEW Crew at CNE - 1996

member's loyalty to his union and its leadership. That loyalty might be to a particular leader. While the member might not be overly impressed with that leader he or she was elected through a process defined in the constitution. Members might argue with the process but they will live with it until the process is changed. The debate continues and it never ends. New ideas emerge and through new ideas come new life.

In 1997 Ken Woods retired as International Vice President First District and was replaced by Don Lounds. Certainly Woods was a refreshing change from Ken Rose, and both Woods and Joe Fashion worked well together. Through discussions on Local 353 and International Office difficulties, both managed to put the battles behind them.

During Woods years as International Vice President he attempted unsuccessfully to create a single IBEW electricians local in Ontario. He believed this was necessary to meet future challenges in the industry.

Don Lounds, Woods replacement, also worked well with Local 353 and the cooperation with both Lounds and Woods throughout the years has permitted both the International Office and Local 353 to expend all their energies towards achieving many successes for the benefit of the Local, the International and, above all, the membership.

LOCAL 353 MEMBERS RESPOND TO SURVEY

Union members do not always attend local meetings. Of the approximately 7,400 Local 353 members, an average of only 200 attend meetings. Of those, 75 per cent are regulars leaving 7,200 of their members who occasionally attend meetings. Like the officers of any union, Local 353 officers must wage a constant battle when discussing the course of action to follow on any given issue.

A local union officer is not like a company CEO who makes decisions and demands they be followed. Union officers seldom, if ever, make decisions either individually or in concert with the executive and the membership that are not criticized by the membership, and occasionally the executive itself. Every decision is second-guessed. Your closest ally on one issue will be your fiercest opponent on another. Most of the time this ebb and flow of debate is conducted with everyone understanding it is the normal procedure and nothing is taken personally. A member from the floor may have what appears to be a mean-spirited and vicious argument with the chair and emotions run high. Yet, a couple of hours later the two combatants may be seen sitting at a table having an after-meeting beer before heading for home. To all appearances there is no lasting animosity and generally speaking, there isn't.

Nonetheless, it is sometimes difficult to assess what members are thinking. The member in the aforementioned





debate at least attended the meeting and vented frustrations, but what about the members who never attend? Their needs must also be addressed.

Outsiders sometimes interpret non-attendance as non-support but this is not necessarily so. In an effort to assess the membership's wishes Local 353, together with 13 other IBEW locals, had FP Consultants (owned and operated by Local 353 member Wally Majesky and his son Gary) conduct a membership survey in 1997. They received a total of 3,400 responses from the members of the 13 local unions in the province. This represented a return rate of almost a 25 per cent – considered very high for a mail-in poll. Of the responses 41.8 per cent were from Local 353 members.

The survey was far-reaching and cannot be addressed in depth here but the responses were revealing and reflect a strong membership commitment to one another. Over 77 per cent were willing to engage in a Market Recovery program to win local market share from the non-union sector. The survey also revealed

that 62 per cent were in favour of work-sharing, 85 per cent thought the local was doing an average to excellent job in servicing the members, 76.9 per cent thought it important to have a monthly newsletter and 61.3 per cent thought it important for the local to have an effective tele-message system.

With respect to direct assistance to the membership 72.8 per cent wanted to see a social/service employee assistance program, 66.2 per cent said they wanted a substance abuse programme and 64 per cent wanted to see an employee assistance/stress counselling program. In addition, 72.9 per cent wanted to see counselling for laid-off members, and 86.8 per cent wanted to see an assistance program to address employment insurance and employment insurance training.

Six years later many of the suggestions have been implemented either in whole or in part, and the officers who were in office when the survey was conducted were re-elected in June 2002 to another three-year term.



April 13, 1995 union meeting, graduating apprentices raised to journeymen: Vince Bell, Anibal Calvo, Leonardo Cordeiro, Roman Ruzycky, Michael Dlugosz, John Ferreira, Sion Jones, Robert Kaszuba, Antonio Raso, Biago Scola, Bradley Shannon, Douglas Walton.

The local hired Gary Majesky in 1998 to look into Local 353's workers' compensation problems. Majesky has a 90 per cent success rate winning benefits for members who were denied on their initial claims. Majesky also expends considerable time and energy educating Local 353 members on the importance of contacting him as soon as an injury occurs and before a claim is filed in order to minimize complications that arise from incorrectly filed claims.

THE CANADIAN FEDERATION OF LABOUR FOLDS

The IBEW returned to the Canadian Labour Congress in February 1997 – 16 years after disaffiliating from them. The CLC building trades dispute and its consequences are a tragic episode in Canadian labour history and one for which both sides paid a price. Neither side could claim victory. If there were any spoils they went to the anti-union forces, which are much more united against labour after the split than before. Had the dispute not occurred labour's position might not have been weakened to the same extent as it has been by NAFTA plant closures and downsizing. Certainly the CFL attained few of the goals it set for itself at its founding convention.

No other construction trades unions joined the original 10 and no additional affiliates left the CLC. In

1994 the CFL had about the same number of members – 250,000 – that it had when it split from the CLC, showing quite clearly that no new growth had taken place.

Re-affiliation with the CLC was raised at every IBEW convention and All-Canada Progress Meeting since the union left the CLC. Carpenters, millwrights, labourers, painters, glaziers, the sheet metal workers International union, bricklayers, ironworkers and IBEW locals in British Columbia had re-affiliated.

Nevertheless, the 1996 IBEW convention still received a resolution on the re-affiliation. The resolution received a recommendation of non-concurrence because at the 1995 All Canada Progress Meeting Ken Woods was given authorization to re-affiliate when he deemed it appropriate to do so. In this circumstance the committee decided it was inappropriate to interfere in Canadian affairs.

A delegate from Thunder Bay Local 1565 spoke in support of the committee's recommendation. "...I stand here and also state clearly that this shouldn't even be on the floor because what this local is trying to do is to get 2,400 delegates to force 70-some odd thousand members back into a labour body it don't (sic) want to be into, and I ask for your support and please back the committee and non-concur." It was an astounding statement when one realizes that fewer than 200 of the 70,000 Canadian members actually voted to disaffiliate from the CLC.

On announcing the re-affiliation with the CLC in 1997, First District Vice President Ken Woods said, "It was time to put our differences behind us and work for the good of all Canadian working people."





In re-joining the CLC, the IBEW disaffiliated from the CFL.

IBEW International President J. J. Barry said that because Canadian workers were facing some unprecedented challenges that demanded solidarity in the labour movement, re-affiliation with the CLC was a major step in enabling the leaders and members in Canada to achieve that goal.

Ken Woods presided over his last First District All Canada Progress meeting before his retirement on October 1, 1997. In his parting address Woods said that the IBEW would be governed and guided by the CLC constitution. To his credit, Ken Woods was at least open to the Canadian members who felt the IBEW's departure from the CLC was a mistake from the outset.

The IBEW Canadian membership in 1996 was estimated to be 58,000 – a drop of 12,000 from when it left the CLC in 1981. Not all the loss can be attributed to the split but a substantial portion

of it was. With its re-entry into the CLC CUPE President Judy Darcy instructed her union that no more raiding would be tolerated.

IBEW President Barry also commented on the re-affiliation at the All Canada Progress Meeting as “—a positive step...Even though differences exist between us, we are better off discussing our problems and finding solutions.”

CLC President Ken Georgetti who worked in co-operation with Woods for the re-affiliation, welcomed the IBEW back and stressed the need for all union members to oppose provincial governments efforts to introduce right-to-work legislation.

The May 1997 *Journal* termed the re-affiliation as a “step towards unity in difficult times...IBEW's recent reaffiliation... helps bring unity to organized labour at a time when corporate greed and hostile provincial governments are eroding the social and economic position of working people.”

Unemployment was running at 45 to 65 per cent in the industry. The urging that gave impetus to the idea of re-affiliation was that re-joining would mean combining significant resources in a collective effort. This would increase and strengthen union clout in the wake of unfair trade issues, outsourcing and job losses. Woods said that the re-affiliation with the CLC would better serve the IBEW membership.



IBEW Local 353 members protesting U.I.C. cuts

1998 ICE STORM – THE BROTHERHOOD COMES THROUGH

A number of ice storms struck parts of Ontario, Quebec and the New England States in rapid succession over a four-day period starting on January 7, 1998. The weight of the ice on wires and poles was of such magnitude that both poles and hydro lines broke under the strain in quick succession. Hydro crews struggled to keep pace but when the day's work was completed it became undone by falling trees and more heavy ice and snow.

Several Local 353 Toronto members worked with their Local 636 brothers from the same city in what became a competition between each crew to splice live wires, run new lines and set new poles.

In the May 1998 *Journal* article, a Local 636 lineman was quoted saying, "on Thursday night, I was standing on Highway 1 looking out at the pouring rain. That was my lowest point. It was unbelievable. More lines were coming down than we could put up. Just then, 20 trucks from Willowcreek, Pennsylvania came by in a convoy and gave us a thumbs up. That's what it must have felt like to be liberated. We realized it wasn't going to be just us. Then things started to look up."

The brotherhood comes through again!



MARKET RECOVERY — Market Share and Stabilization Funds

Local 353 had expended considerable effort in re-gaining market share. The Market Recovery Program (STAB funds), which has met with significant success, has also received criticism from a small part of the membership. The critics see the program as giving members money back to the contractors instead of simply organizing the work force. The advocates, many of whom have employment from the use of the STAB funds, are

pleased to have the employment and the union rates and benefits they receive. The critics view it as "buying your job with your own money."

In reality, the program addresses both the concerns of critics and advocates. By supplying funding to unionized contractors, Local 353 forces non-union contractors to bid even lower decreasing non-union profits and wages even farther. To remain in the market place the non-union contractor is forced to become unionized.

The ultimate goal for Local 353 is 100 per cent unionization eliminating the need for stabilization funds.

In its 2002 election campaign, Local 353 incumbent officers defended market recovery as consistent with the aims of the constitution. They believe it



supports the economic advancement of the members by organizing and obtaining work in all sectors. In the campaign, local officers reminded the membership that the program was approved overwhelmingly in a membership vote at a special call meeting.

In the eight years since the inception of the market recovery program, the local union has successfully recaptured

work that was previously non-union. The results are impressive. An investment of \$49 million created 3,488 full time jobs, 5.5 million person hours of work, and \$218 million in wages and benefits for Local 353 members. As the Local 353 executive boasted, this is an extraordinary 443 per cent return on investment.

Market recovery is beneficial because it puts members to work at unionized rates and benefits, slows down the non-union sector and gives Local 353 a larger share of the electrical contract work. It creates revenue for the health and welfare plan, the pension plan, the sub-plan and other plans. It improves and assists the financial and operating expenses of the local. All of this is an outstanding success.

The local has placed an increased emphasis on organizing. Often, the successes are small with 25 to 50 members added here and there. But on occasion, as happened not too long ago, a larger unit is organized. The 230 employees of Tron Electric recently voted to join Local 353 in 2002.

For the first time in approximately 10 years, Local 353 is at virtually full employment. Local 353 has organized 80 to 85 per cent of the low rise sector, with 40 of the top electrical contractors under contract and 700 dues-paying members. A recently signed three-year agreement added \$5.04 over the life of the agreement, bringing the total package to \$38.42. The high-rise sector adds 500 members to the local and 90 to 95 per cent of that sector is now organized.



Local 353 members working on a low-rise job site

Much of this was accomplished since 1999 with the addition of four additional representatives and five organizers:

- Cameron Commandant – ICI Representative
- Ted Szwec – ICI Representative
- John Chapman – ICI Representative
- George Smith – ICI Representative
- Bill Finnerty – Line Section Organizer
- Tony Chiappetta – Low Rise Organizer
- Rudy Lucchesi – Low Rise Organizer
- Nino DiGiandomenico – High Rise Organizer
- Bill Martindale – ICI Organizer

The present officers have increased efforts in education and political action. As part of its educational efforts, the local wants new members to be better informed about their work and their union.

A healthy opposition that does its best to expose any shortcomings constantly challenges the officers. All of this adds up to a healthy local equipped to face any challenges its second century might present.

At the moment, the economy is healthy although the recent outburst of SARS, West Nile virus and the world situation threatens this. Employment is brisk, but every Local 353 member knows that with every boom comes a bust. A union local's strength is measured by how well it survives the busts. Local 353 always survived because it was prepared for them.

In June 2002, following an intensive campaign the officers were re-elected en masse. Former Local 353 President Bob Gill ran against Joe Fashion for business manager. Gill was a full-time business representative for 13 years and has worked in the trade for 19 years. He campaigned with the promise to conduct an independent and forensic audit of all the union's funds. He promised to improve the pension plan, make full disclosure to the membership regarding the use of Market Recovery and Stabilization funds. He promised better representation on low-rise residential job sites, to make business representatives more accountable to the membership and to ensure health and welfare benefits were upgraded and improved. He promised an open-door policy for members to restore what he termed "honesty and credibility," and to improve hiring-hall practices. He promised to open a satellite despatch and promised residential stewards would receive the same protection as IC1 stewards. He would protect the work jurisdictions and enforce the collective agreement.

The Joe Fashion team comprises himself as Business Manager, Bob Gullins – President, John Smith – Vice President, George Smith – Recording Secretary, Len Zawaski – Treasurer, Barry Stevens, Robert White, Steve Belanger and Wally Majesky for the executive board. (Wally Majesky passed away in August 2002 and Dan Drummond was appointed to a board position by the executive board.) Fashion's team defended its record and promised more of the same.

They reviewed their track record of successes with the membership including; the success of market recovery program; consulting with the membership for the second time in five years through a membership survey; the upgrade of the





local *Newsletter*; the development of new initiatives in education for all members, apprentices and new members; shop stewards training; and, the development of a new web site. In addition they promised to launch a new electronic *Newsletter* and make union-based education compulsory for all apprentices.

The Joe Fashion team members were easily re-elected, with Treasurer Len Zawaski gaining more votes than any other candidate. The members were obviously content that their money was being spent wisely!

Shortly after the June 2002 election, the re-elected officers released the results of the most-recently conducted survey. The questionnaire sent to all

Local 353 members sought input on how to improve meetings and encourage more membership involvement. Approximately 1,300 responses were received.

Briefly, the survey revealed that 63 per cent of the respondents wanted meetings rotated on a geographical basis; 53 per cent thought members should be required to attend a minimum of one or two meetings a year; 87 per cent felt that meetings were unruly, but at the same time, 70 per cent felt the meetings were getting better; 78 per cent felt that stewards should actively promote membership attendance at meetings on the job site; 88 per cent of the respondents believed that Local 353 should involve and encourage apprentices to attend monthly meetings; 75 per cent believed that the local newslet-



Local 353 members on a low-rise job site

ter – *News and Views* – should have more trade-specific information, more articles on union activities and more information and articles on issues that affect 353; 81 per cent of the respondents were supportive of “setting up an employee-assistance plan to service the unique human needs” of Local 353 members; and, 78 per cent wanted to see more polling stations added in local union elections.

In her book, *Dreams of Dignity, Workers of Vision – a History of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers*, Grace Palladino spoke of Canadian IBEW members. “In many ways militant nationalists had forced the Brotherhood to rethink its concept of international unionism and improve services to Canadian members,” said Palladino. “Although their arguments rarely persuaded a majority of locals to vote with them, even within their own national delegation, and their arrogant style convinced many that they only intended to disrupt convention proceedings, these dissident Canadians nevertheless raised important questions about minority membership rights and majority rule that other groups within the Brotherhood, particularly women, were also beginning to ponder.”

That’s part of the problem. Dissent, legitimate dissent, is often interpreted as arrogant and disruptive. Many of Local 353’s delegations would have been placed in that category. Absolute control is not democracy even if you do get a vote. Too often forward-thinking resolutions received non-concurrence recommendations and debate was stifled. Interestingly, when the delegates did get the opportunity to cast a secret ballot, as they did in 1996, they voted against the recommendations.

On February 2, 2003 Local 353 reached its 100th Anniversary. Its loyalty to the International should not be questioned. The local raised legitimate concerns and, given that these concerns were not addressed, the membership of the IBEW dropped from 70,000 at the start of Ken Rose’s tenure to 58,000 by the time the IBEW re-affiliated with the CLC. Its telephone representation (communications unions) was all but eradicated.

You can criticize your opponents for raiding, but the fact is that there was something fundamentally wrong within the IBEW. Those problems should have been addressed and were not.

The Canadian membership of national unions is compelled to develop a greater understanding of the loyalty construction trades unions share for the International.

The answer should be obvious. The Canadian membership of industrial international unions seldom have any interaction with their American brothers and sisters except at conventions. The same does not hold true for the memberships of international construction trades unions.

The rationale for the loyalty to their Internationals of the memberships of Canadian construction trades unions, including Local 353’s membership, is the same today as it was when Canadians were motivated to join back in 1899 – the ability to get a job in any area represented by the IBEW.

The ability to get a job anywhere should not be under-estimated. Many Local 353 members have travelled to other parts of Canada and the United States to work when there were few jobs within the local’s jurisdiction. In good



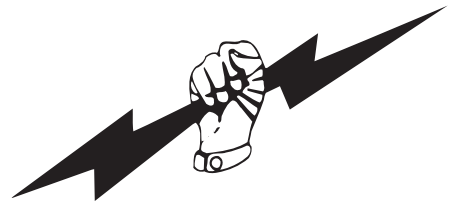


times, Local 353 has reciprocated in kind. This generates an increased feeling of security within the membership and it creates a sense of brotherhood and sisterhood between different locals. It also fosters a greater understanding between them, in short, solidarity. In that sense, the International is not remote and commands greater loyalty from the members.

Tenacity and resilience are what this local has in abundance. When you review the local's documents one theme emerges repeatedly –each generation of local members was critical of the next generation. Senior members sometimes scorned the naiveté of the younger worker, yet as the apprentice matured to the journeyman and he gained wisdom through experience and also contributed to the IBEW Local 353 history. Apprentices entering the field today will prove themselves equal to the task and each, in his or her own way, will build on the local's wonderful legacy.

And as Local 353 Technical Education Director Ed Nott explained, when an industrial or public sector worker loses his or her job in the industrial and public sector union membership is severed. In the construction trades membership continues.

The older Local 353 members have illuminated the past...and we're sure that the new generation of IBEW Local 353 members will continue to lead the way and brighten the future.



**Tenacity and resilience
are what this local has
in abundance.**



APPENDIX A

Retirees Club



Many union members work their entire adult lives, retire, walk away from the job and never look back. They completely sever their ties with their place of employment and their workplace friends as well. Others have tremendous difficulty severing those ties because a major part of their lives has been spent on the job where important friendships developed.

Local 353 retirees have the opportunity to maintain those long-standing friendships by becoming members of the Retirees' Club. The retirees meet monthly for a luncheon, reminisce about 'the old days,' and keep up the friendships established throughout their working lives. Not surprisingly, many of the activists in the Retirees' Club have merely transferred their activism from the Local to the Club.



The September 1947 *Journal's Local Lines* mentioned there was some talk about starting a 20-year club in the Local. There were an estimated 100 members who had 20-year cards and might be interested. The December 1947 *Journal* reported a gathering of the "Old Guard, lads with 20 or more years of service, 97 of them, with 70 expressing an interest in attending."

The April 1948 *Journal* reported that on January 23 the "old timers" had a party for members who had 20 or more years in good standing. Of the 97 who were eligible 67 turned out.

It was not until 1985 that the Retirees Club was established. Steve Knott recorded in the September 1985 *Journal* that the first Local 353 Retirees' Club meeting was held on June 17th 1985, and said the following:

"L.U. 353 (i&co), TORONTO, ONT. –

On June 17, 1985, the retired members of this local union gathered together at the Holiday Inn on Wynford Drive to form a retired members' club and to elect its officers.

"The following members were elected to hold office: James Lambi (sic), president, William Anderson, vice president, S. Woolnough, secretary-treasurer, Warren Chapman, M. J. Mungy, D. Seivwright and Steve Weslak, Executive Board.



"Although their newly elected president, Jim Lambie, could not be on hand because he is presently hospitalized, the following members were present at the inaugural meeting: H. Hoffman, J. Forsythe, A. Taylor, O. Chappel, W. Whitehair, W. Hall, R. Ploon, J. Lynn, K. Peter, L. Mowat, R. Barker, F. Simpson, F. Hedges, R. Hamilton, D. Seivwright, Oliver Booth, W. Anderson, F. Swales, S. Weslak, J. Gillespie, A. St. John, E. Gower, G. Campbell, B. Lavery, F. Griffin, E. Gering, S. Woolnough, B. Jackson, W. Hamilton, G. Corlett, R. James, G. Brown, W. Barber, R. Nixon, R. Wright, J. Glenn, P. McWilliams, T. Roberts, J. Bosley, W. Chapman, I. Marcus, J. Hymson, J. Hamilton, W. Work and M. Mungy, Sr.

"Our special thanks go to Don Putsey who assisted in polling the members and in organizing the preliminary meetings as well as the June 17 meeting."

In an interview with the author in Steve Weslak's presence, Mike Mungy spoke about the first Retiree Club meeting. "As you recall (referring to Weslak) (Jim) Lambie was in the hospital, and I was sitting next to you --- at the first meeting to elect the first president. You nominated me and you said 'you know, Mike, you would make a good president. I refused, I said, I am not going to be around, I am going to be doing a lot of travelling. So, anyway, you nominated me, and there was a letter read from Lambie. He wanted to be president. He was in the hospital and he just lost his leg. I said to you, 'Steve, how the hell do you run against a guy who is in the hospital with a leg off?' So I

refused. I was nominated for comptroller and I accepted. I forgot about the first meeting and you phoned me and said 'what happened?' I said 'what do you mean what happened,' and you said 'you missed the meeting.' I never missed another one."

Mungy recalls having a Charter made up, having a bunch copied, and selling them for 25 cents to the members. He put one in a frame and handed it to the President Bill Baird, and it's now hanging up in the hall.

The retirees had their first report published in the Journal in March 1986. Retiree Club Vice President and Press Secretary Bill Anderson described that the purpose of the club was "to provide a continuing bond among our local members and members of any other...locals who may be interested."

Highlights of its first half-year of operations were described as a buffet lunch – a great success and a source of satisfaction for the organizers. Thirty-two members and their spouses were there for "a delicious lunch...arranged and supervised very efficiently by Mike Mungy, our catering expert."



Retiree booth at 1986 Convention in Toronto



The club promised to continue having pleasant and entertaining meetings open to all retired Local 353 members and visitors from other locals.

By the summer of 1986, the club was still operating and making progress although it was not as much as was anticipated. There were fewer than 50 members. A program of summer activities including theatre, sightseeing and lunches at different locations were held to boost interest.

IBEW's 1986 convention was held in Toronto and the Local 353 retirees used the convention to welcome many of their American brothers and sisters to Toronto. Local 353 retiree Don Putsey addressed the convention to promote the club. He said that for over 40 years as a Local 353 member he had heard people say, "...we should get some-

thing going for our retirees. Well, about two years ago, I went to my president, Brother Baird, and I said, 'Brother Baird, could I try to work to get our retirees organized?' He gave me his blessing; told me he would give me all the help he could.

"So, being an officer of 353, I got in touch with hard workers, I knew who had worked so hard in Local 353 and I asked them if they would come out to a hotel room, and we'll talk it over. We got the programme off International Office in the retiree booklets and we talked it over.

"Finally, we sent a letter to all our retirees, and we got to a hotel room, gave them a cup of coffee, and had Brother Ken Rose, our International Representative of District 1 there and we formed the Retiree Club.



Brother Bill Smith receives Honorarium from President Bob Gullins with sons George and John Smith.



Alex Hay - First Retiree member to receive 50 year pin

"The one mistake I made, Brothers and Sisters, is to remember this here: I did not have any stick on things for the Brothers; so these are Brothers who haven't seen each other for years. They were scratching their heads and saying, 'I know you!' So if you form a club, make sure you have some kind of a thing to identify them."

The club was now a year old and the retirees dug out old plaques and trophies going back to the 1930's and put them on display.

According to Mike Mungy, the first Retiree Club meetings were held in Jim Lambie's house. Those who attended put in \$20 each to keep the club going. Eventually someone read the rules and saw that "no meeting could be held in a private home."

Bill Anderson, Local 353 Retiree Club Press Secretary, reported in April 1987 that the club had a very successful year and had received letters from a few locals about their activities.

Bob Barker started taking photographs of the retirees and recording their birth date, initiation date, retirement date and, when it occurred, the date of death. Barker's practice of taking photographs didn't start right from the beginning. "It occurred to me that people were coming in and disappearing, so I started taking the retirees' photos."

Taking photographs of events has continued. Sadly however, the recording of details – a convenient method of keeping track of the important dates in each member's history – has not.

Mike Mungy recalled the night in 1991 when the Local gave him a plaque for doing such a good job for the retirees. "They had a special night for us, they called it the Night of the Stars. They drove us down in a limo," Mungy recalled. "It was at the Convention Centre, they spent a fortune. They had six or eight of them, and they asked me who should go with me. I said 'I think all the guys who worked with me.' Jim Shaw had a ticket, he won a watch. I got my 50-year pin. That was ten years ago."

A motion regarding retirees was presented at the 1991 Convention. The resolve was to go on record as asking each local to form a Retired Members' Club. The motion received a recommendation of concurrence and Local 353 retiree Don Putsey spoke. He thanked the delegates for coming to Canada in 1986 and expressed his 100 per cent support for the resolution. He outlined the activities that the Local 353 club was involved in and asked the delegates not to forget the men and women who built their local unions.

Local 353 submitted a resolution to the 1996 convention requesting a constitutional amendment granting voice. The resolution

addressed other issues including retired members not performing work that was under IBEW contract. The committee offered a substitute resolution providing for permission to attend local meetings with voice, but no vote.

The local submitted the resolution because it believed there was an inequity in the Brotherhood. Many retired members were dedicated and worked in the local. For some of them it was their greatest interest in life. When they retired the members were cut off from input in the local as well as from participation and involvement.

“We need their involvement, experience and participation,” said Fashion. “Many were prepared to work as volunteers on committees, but could not speak at local meetings.” In



Fashion's view, the Law Committee's recommendation did not go far enough but the substitute resolution was adopted.

The Local 353 Retirees Club continues to thrive and provides a wonderful social outlet for its members. Spouses are full participants in the activities ranging from the regular monthly meetings, specially arranged tours and other interesting events.

The current Retiree Club President, Larry Priestman, reports that the club has 1,100 members – over 2,000 including spouses. Meetings are still held on a monthly basis and approximately 100 members attend them regularly. Attendance increases on special occasions, such as the presentation of service pins to members.

It is a certainty that, when the 100th anniversary of the local is celebrated the retirees will be present to share in the accolades. And deservedly so!

RETIREEES SCROLL

The 1950 IBEW convention authorized the Secretary to design a scroll and pocket card to present to IBEW members on receiving their pension. A certificate bearing the union seal in gold, and a replica on a pocket card enclosed in a plastic case was designed. It is inscribed in decorative script and issued with their first pension cheque.

Scrolls and cards were inscribed and sent to over 3,000 members who were



already on pension at the time and the Pension Scroll and card concept were extended to include Honour Scrolls and are for award by local unions, along with pins designating members years of service.

The pins, scrolls and pocket cards were also issued to members with 50 years standing in the Brotherhood.

Local 353 is a signatory to the Scroll. As noted previously in this book, Alex Hay was the first Local 353 member to complete 50 years of service.



APPENDIX B

Education and Apprenticeship Training



The idea of apprenticeship for training craftsmen is many centuries old. During the Middle Ages individual craft guilds were organized and became the workingman's fraternities. They established systems for the individual trades, set standards for workmanship, determined the number and training of apprentices, and even set prices for their products.

The system began to break down with the coming of industrialization. Factories were able to turn out goods faster and at a lower cost than guild workmen could and entire trades were destroyed. The construction trade was one of the few that survived. Even though the electrical tradesman's job was spared the ax, he still felt the pressures of the machine age. The door was opened up to unskilled workers taking jobs from those held by the highly skilled electrician.

But the industry continued to change and the application of electricity would grow beyond what an unskilled person could deal with. This led to the need, once again, for intensive training and great skill at mastering the power source known as electricity.

Members of IBEW Local 353 have been blessed with leaders both in the past and in the present who recognize the need for intensive training and education demanded by the continuously evolving electrical field. From its earliest beginnings, the IBEW insisted on a well-trained and educated work force, and this is no less true of Local 353 today.

When Local 353 was chartered in 1903, the Technical School Board raised concerns that expectations for aid granted to the board had not been fulfilled. It was estimated that \$1,800 worth of equipment was needed in the mechanics and physics departments. These funds were particularly important for the teaching of electricity. The class for electrical students was the largest in the school. Of equal concern was the teacher-to-student ratio, which was one teacher to 95 students.

The Canadian membership of IBEW locals held a conference in July 1903 with representatives from London, Ottawa, Hamilton, Winnipeg, Sault Ste Marie, St. Catharines, Québec, Montreal and Toronto. Over 3,000 members were represented and the conference Chairman was J. H. Hurd – IBEW's first Canadian International Vice President. The conference endorsed by-laws for cities and towns that compelled all electrical workers to pass a proficiency examination – training that was necessary for public safety.

By the summer of 1928 the local announced that an apprenticeship plan was underway. There were 56 helpers enrolled and the list grew daily. The Apprentice Committee and the local executive board anticipated that the program would extend to all helpers in the trade. There was no registration charge for the first six months training but a 50 cents per month charge was levied for the second six months, and 75 cents for the third six-month training session.

Upon completion of the second year, all helpers that were registered for a minimum of six months were admitted to the union as regular members. There was no initiation fee and dues were \$2.50 a month. The Helper Training Courses were reported to have a superior participation rate than the Journeymen's Courses. The local regarded helpers' education as a step in the right direction because "the helper of today will be the journeyman of tomorrow."

Helpers' wages were 20 cents per hour for the second half of the first year, increasing to 40 cents an hour in the second year, 55 cents an hour in the third year and 70 cents per hour in the fourth year.

On completion of three years of continuous service with one employer and successful standing at the end of the third year, the fourth year apprentice would be lent a kit of tools. These included a brace hacksaw, frame, keyhole saw, torch, 10-inch wrench, 14-inch wrench,

brace extension, feeler bit, 11/16-inch and 1-inch auger bits, 1/4-inch and 3/8-inch twist drills, cold chisel, 3/4-inch wood chisel, hammer, cutting pliers and screwdriver. Once he completed four years of continuous service and received his journeyman's card, the tools were his to keep.

At the time, the collective agreement permitted one apprentice for every two journeymen employed in each shop.

A new apprentice plan enacted by the Ontario government at the request of the Ontario Building Trades Union was termed "the most vital subject now before the Brotherhood" by Frank Selke Jr. in the March 1929 issue of the *Journal*. Selke claimed it was "potentially the best legislation ever brought forth in the cause of organized labor in Ontario."

The intent of the legislation was to put a beginner on a three-month probation period and if he wasn't successful in proving his qualifications he would be encouraged to try other work. The legislation covered both theoretical and practical training that would provide "better mechanics for the boss and better conditions for the boys," because it eliminated half-trained workers. Between December 1933 and June 1934, 73 fourth-year apprentices wrote the

exam and of those, only 24 were successful.

Peter Elsworth, the Chairman of Local 353's Examining Board, reported in 1935 that classes for electrical workers were held at the Central Technical School on Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings. The classes covered topics in blueprint reading, electrical estimating, lead cable splicing and the preparation of cable ends for pot heads. The Ontario Apprenticeship Act controlled the number of men entering the electrical trade, but they were given the "ultimate" in training.

In 1937, the board for examining and regulating electrical workers comprised R. S. Gillies – the city architect; E. Longfellow – representing the Electrical Contractors; and Peter Elsworth from Local 353. The board addressed issues related to the examination of electrical contractors and journeymen who applied for a city licence.

The enforcement of the licensing by-law was under police supervision and members were encouraged to inform either the police or the committee if they had personal knowledge of anyone performing electrical work without a licence.

As of July 1938, 239 electrical contractors and 753 journeymen were issued licences.



1931 Central Tech Apprentice grads



There were 143 unemployed electricians and only 16 had found placements between January and June 1938.

The situation worsened in the later part of 1938 and into 1939. With the onset of World War II a problem of a different kind began to develop. The war effort required additional electricians for the home front as well as on the battlefield. Local 353 alone had 104 members in the armed forces and that situation would, to a varying degree, be repeated in every community across the country. There was an acute shortage of electricians. The result was that contractors attempting to meet their needs hired almost anyone and pressured the local into accepting them as members. Many electricians, who had been out of the trade for years because of the Depression, were also pressed into service if not as fully participating electricians, then as instructors.

In the December 1944 *Journal* Local 353 applauded the International for forming a class in electronics in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Nevertheless, the local had difficulty taking advantage of the course. The problem was financing the cost of getting members to the course – travel, lost time wages, accommodation and tuition fees.

Consequently, Local 353 decided to hire a qualified instructor, purchase the course materials and conduct classes in Toronto. The venture was an overwhelming success. By December 1944 they signed up Professor Cass Beggs, an electrical engineer on staff at the University of Toronto, to teach the course. Credit for this approach went to Cecil Shaw and the Investigating Committee including Jimmy Wiggins, George Campbell Sr. and Bob Gardiner. The electronics' course consisted of 12 lessons and 70 Local 353 members enrolled in the class that started in January 1945. Jack Nutland noted that the local had more members taking courses than were attending union meetings!

At War's end in 1946 the local began to introduce a system of apprentice registration and training, the goal was to "...turn out better men." Local 353 retiree, Larry Priestman recalls that after the war immigrants entered the country in large numbers. Many claimed to be electricians but it didn't take long to find out that many of them had no papers to prove their qualifications – *they lost them in the blitz!* All of them required improved testing procedures to prove they were properly qualified.

By 1947, Bill Farquhar – Assistant Business Manager to Cecil Shaw – was predicting the 20-hour workweek within two or three years because it seemed to Farquhar "...that everyone had a son or a nephew they wanted to have employed in the trade, and the majority of

the lads returning from overseas also wanted to be electricians." At the time, the agreement called for one apprentice for every three journeymen and the legislation required the same.

Even so, Mr. Hawes, the Director of Apprenticeship for the ministry, explained that the act was purely for educational purposes. He claimed that signing on an apprentice was not binding on the employer or the apprentice. They could be signed off or fired as soon as their wages got too high, with new, lower-cost apprentices hired in their place. One shop had six journeymen and eight indentured apprentices. Other shops had as many as six apprentices to one journeyman, but not all the apprentices were indentured.

Farquhar viewed Hawes' assertions as ridiculous and believed that he did not want to enforce the law but to call indentured apprentices "labourers." To have followed Hawes' logic to its logical conclusion, no apprentice would ever attain journeyman status.

At the request of Local 353, night classes were set up in 1951 to improve journeyman electrician qualifications at the Provincial Institute of Trades. At its 1952 convention, the IBEW announced that the union would issue apprenticeship certificates. A full-time Director of Apprenticeship and Training was appointed by the IBEW and the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA).

Larry Priestman apprenticed in 1954 and recalls having to write both a provincial examination and a union examination before receiving his union card, his Certificate of Qualification from Ontario and his Toronto Licence.

At the 1954 convention the National Joint Apprenticeship Committee developed a full Apprenticeship program for outside electrical apprentices. It required a three-year course of study with detailed units and related instruction material.

At the 1958 convention in Cleveland, Ohio, International President Gordon Freeman said, "We have endeavoured to do all in our power to assist and encourage our local unions to train their members, both in the field of technology, in order to fit them for the ever-changing electronic developments in the electrical industry, as well as in basic union education which we feel is so important for the survival and growth of organized labor today." From 1952 to 1957, the number of apprentices in training in the construction field increased 46 per cent.

The 1955 issue of the *Labour Gazette* announced that according to Roland Demers of the Electrical Contractors Association of Ontario (ECAO), electrical apprentices were

still in short supply in Ontario. Full advantage was not taken of the opportunities available because there were only 833 apprentices in the entire province, far short of the 5,800 positions available. Whether there would have been jobs for all 5,800 was not divulged.

In 1957 an assistant to direct apprenticeship training was appointed and by 1959 a full-time Director of Skills Improvement Training was added to the International office staff. A complete electronics course was developed and the program had well-defined rules and regulations within the industry.

Each trade understood that for its continued success as a craft, procedures had to be developed to ensure sufficient numbers of workers were trained to meet the industry's needs. IBEW continued to standardize training courses to meet training needs for every branch of the Brotherhood's jurisdiction. By 1962, over 50,000 IBEW members were involved in skill improvement training.

In response to requests for more information on new materials and trends in the electrical construction trade, Press Secretary Frank C. Bentley announced that an Education Committee was appointed. In addition to Business Manager Bill Farquhar and Assistant Business Manager Bill Hardy, the committee included Local 353 Vice President J. A. Pritchard, A. G. Boivert, R. Hooper and F. Micel.

The committee arranged a monthly series of talks, demonstrations and plant trips, all described as successful. The next step was to establish an Electronics School under the direction of the International's department of skill improvement and training. To meet the needs of the 220 students, 11 evening classes were held at four Toronto technical schools. Each student paid \$10 for the registration fee and some textbooks. Local 353 maintained a library for the use of each class. The electronics field was expanding and to meet the educational requirements local unions needed to train their members in each new phase of the electrical industry as it came on line.

Technical training was not the only area of concern. The opening of the Labour College of Canada in 1963, a joint co-operative effort between McGill University in Montreal and the Canadian Labour Congress, was considered a "firm foundation for the development of union leaders, young in spirit and trained in the technology of modern industrial life."

Retiree Herbert Worthington was initiated into the local in October 1951 with a Green card and received his Blue card in January 1957. In the early 1960's Worthington applied for a teacher's position because they were "putting all kinds of extensions on schools

in Metro, adding Tech shops." His application was not successful until 1963 when he was an Installation and Maintenance teacher for the Hamilton Board of Education.

One advantage of the Hamilton system was that every school had a technical wing. Academic and technical schools were not separate and there were 3,600 students and the teaching load was divided. The electricity and electronics instructors met monthly to ensure that everyone was following the same teaching agenda. Since every teacher was teaching the same material, any student who transferred from one school to another did so with little difficulty.

While he was teaching in Hamilton, the Technical Director at the school approached him and asked permission to submit his name as part of a group that would develop a standard course for installation and maintenance. He did this over one winter in consultation with other teachers from Western Tech and Central Tech. When the course material was completed, the committee was asked to discuss it with school trustees and representatives from industry. Worthington was asked to get a trade union representative for the committee and he submitted Wally Majesky's name.

Majesky was with the Toronto and District Labour Council. As it turned out, one person on the committee strenuously objected to Majesky – mostly because of a personality conflict. This necessitated another call to Majesky who took the news with good humour and was most understanding.

Worthington then approached Local 353 member Ed Nott who agreed to serve on the committee.

In 1964, the 46th annual meeting of the Canadian Construction Association was held. A report was presented on the progress being made in labour-management relations with new approaches to apprenticeship training. The Apprenticeship Training Committee proposed the indenturing of apprentices to joint committees and recommended pre-employment training. Among its 25 recommendations was one requesting that the "provincial government introduce and enforce compulsory tradesmen's qualifications' legislation for the construction industry."

In 1964, the Apprenticeship and Tradesmen's Qualification Act was proclaimed, and certification of all electricians was a legal requirement. Electricians already in the trade had two years to demonstrate their competency and to obtain a Certificate of Qualification. By November 1, 1966 all existing electricians had to be certified and were required to present documentary evidence to the Ontario Department of Labour.





In addition to a certificate issued by the department of labour, a sworn declaration of experience as a Journeyman had to accompany the certification application.

Local unions were encouraged to take advantage of the expanding apprenticeship training programs.

In 1966, new regulations governing the training and certification of electricians replaced those issued in 1964. The new regulations made a Certificate of Qualification (C of Q) compulsory for everyone engaged in the trade. Anyone new to the trade was required to register as an apprentice within three months.

The trade was divided into two branches instead of three. Branch one covered the Construction and Maintenance Electrician, and branch two covered the Domestic and Rural Electrician. A construction and maintenance electrician was described as a person “who lays out, assembles, installs, repairs, maintains, connects or tests electrical fixtures, apparatus, control equipment and any wiring for systems of alarm, communication, light, heat or power in buildings or other structures.”

While attending full-time courses at a provincial institute of trades, apprentices were required to meet the following standards:

- Take prescribed courses, the details of which were set out in Schedule I, or an equivalent course of training;
- Apprenticeship consisted of four terms of 1,800 hours, which would be reduced to 1,600 hours if the apprentice had a Grade 12 Certificate;
- Minimum starting rate for the apprentice electrician was 40 per cent of journeyman’s wage in the same trade. This rate increased by 10 per cent annually in each period reaching 80 per cent in the fifth period of training and instruction; and,
- The Certificate of Qualification was compulsory and was to be renewed annually.

By 1966 Local 353’s Education Committee continued to offer courses. Over 200 members were taking electronics courses at four different Toronto technical schools. A course on electric heating was held during the 1964-1965 term with the co-operation of Ontario Hydro and the Electric Heating Association. In this 30-hour course of classroom instruction and a written examination, 35 members enrolled and all but one graduated.

There was also a Commercial and Industrial Lighting course conducted by Ontario

Hydro. Half of the students who participated were Local 353 members.

In 1966, a report was issued by the 28-member Economic Council of Canada that said, “...to achieve greater gains in productivity, there must be more education and worker training programmes.” This report tied in with Local 353’s policies advocating better apprenticeship training.

In 1966, International Vice President William Ladyman offered any interested Local 353 officer to take the International Leadership Training course. Business manager Bill Farquhar worked with International representative Ken Rose in setting up the course and the four one-day sessions were held at the Westbury Hotel in Toronto. Thirty Local 353 members attended the course and were pleased with the result, and it was deemed an excellent opportunity to have more informed officers and members.

The January 1969 *Journal* in *Local Lines* applauded the efforts of the Labour College of Canada which, in just a few short years, had produced good results. This program was an eight-week in-residence program. In a survey, where 220 of the 299 graduates replied, the following was revealed:

- 85.2 per cent remained in the labour movement after graduation;
- 4.5 per cent were full-time teachers or students;
- 1.2 per cent worked for a Credit Union or Co-operative; and,
- 6.5 per cent went into business.

In two months of study students covered the equivalent of half a semester at University in the social sciences. They returned to their unions better trained to provide leadership.

By 1970, apprenticeship in the province of Ontario required an apprentice to have a minimum Grade 10 education. The IBEW apprentice, however, required a Grade 12 education. The length of the apprenticeship was five terms of 1,800 hours each totalling 9,000 hours. There were three seven-week classroom sessions included in the first three terms, with progress from one term to another dependent on the apprentice’s performance. A fourth classroom session on electronics was available, but not compulsory.

Applicants with Grade 12 qualifications required only 8,000 hours divided in five 1,600-hour terms. The agreement Local 353 had with the contractors required the higher academic standard.

The apprentice, by law, was indentured to an employer or a committee with equal representation from labour and management all appointed by the Ministry of Labour. In Toronto an apprentice was indentured to one employer, which, in Bill Farquhar's view, did not give the apprentice a sufficient variety of work for proper training and it made it more difficult to move them from one employer to another.

Local 353's goal at the time was to convince the Electrical Contractors Association of Toronto (ECAT) to co-operate in a joint effort to develop a standard apprenticeship-training program to cover all apprentices in union shops in Toronto and to have them indentured to a joint committee.

By 1971, some progress was made through the formation of the Joint

Apprenticeship Council (JAC). Supplementary classes for apprentices were held under the auspices of the JAC with first and second-year apprentices participating.

The Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee (JATC) was not appointed by the Director of Apprenticeship, but it would need to be done eventually if the Joint Committee took full charge of apprenticeship training.

By 1972 Local Press Secretary Steve Knott praised the training program set up by the local JATC. At the time there were 642 apprentices in the local; 555 fell under the JATC supplementary training courses.

By this time, the members donated five cents per hour into an Industry Fund to fund the program. The fund was controlled by the ECAT and administered by Local 353 member Martin McBride.



Instructor Dick McRae teaching IBEW Local 353 members - 1972



The classes were held from 8am to noon on Saturdays without pay, but the hours were credited to the apprenticeship contracts. They were instructed in approximately 120 subjects including types of conduit; types of wire and wiring methods; the care and use of all fastening devices; arc and acetylene welding; the layout and installation of different types of lighting; motor controls; the calculation and installation of electric heat; CAD welding; ground fault detectors; blueprint reading; rigging and hoisting; the IBEW by-laws; the constitution and log books.

The JATC office tracked each apprentice's training through the logbook. A foreman signed the book – recording the type of work each apprentice performed – and the office ensured an apprentice received a fully rounded education.

In 1972, six months after signing the master agreement, the Conference Board agreed to a Trust Fund for the JAC making it one of the “most advanced, expensive and autonomous” within the IBEW. The funding for the program came from the industry fund. In 1972 it was estimated at \$61,000 to fund the

supplementary education of approximately 700 apprentices. Local 353 apprentice Bill Reynolds received an award for being the top apprentice of the year.

In 1976 Local 353 President Bill Johnson praised the excellent training apprentices received. Business manager Warren Chapman encouraged the JAC “to carry on with the fine example set by their predecessors.”

Between 500 and 600 apprentices were in the program at any one time – attending classes at Humber, George Brown and Centennial Colleges. The purpose of the program was:

- to prepare apprentices so they would benefit more from their government-sponsored day classes;
- to give them all-round practical training by exposing them to every facet of the industry;
- to build loyalty to the trade and decrease the drop-out rate;
- to establish very early in their careers that



Rigging and Hoisting course – 1975

Some of the graduates of the Safe Rigging and Hoisting Course offered by Local 353, Toronto, Ont., are, seated, left to right, John O'Dea, Wayne Sharp, Morley Hughes, Michael Webb and Paul Seidel. Standing, Lou Hauser, John Friedman, Gunther Frisch, Bill Bebe, Ed Smith, John Murray, Bill Robinson, Keija Maruya, Hubert Werner, Gordon Stephenson, Leonard Graves, Bill Singleton and John Smith

they must guard against obsolescence through a continuous learning process;

- to establish the importance of safe working habits;
- the choice and care of tools;
- the necessity for accurate log book records; and,
- the worker's responsibilities to his union, the employer and the industry.

Applicants were carefully screened before they were selected as apprentices. The course lecturers were members of Local 353, the ECAT, Toronto Construction Safety Association, and the Industrial Training Branch of the Ministry of Colleges and Universities.

In March 1978 Steve Weslak was presented with a plaque honoring his years of work on the JAC as Chairperson, Supplementary Trainer and delegate.

In 1975 the Ontario School Board developed a work-experience program designed to place 14 and 15-year olds in the workplace. It supported the introduction of work experience committees into the educational system. A resolution opposing the concept was submitted to the Ontario Federation of Labour convention reading;

“WHEREAS many school boards are developing a ‘work experience’ program, and

“WHEREAS no trade-unionist should endorse or support the placing of 14 and 15-year old children into the work place, and

“WHEREAS nothing will destroy a child's ability to study and think clearly, more, than to be subjected to the daily grind of industry:

“THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Ontario Federation of Labour oppose the introduction of ‘Work Experience’ committees into the education system.”



Joint Apprenticeship Council – 1975

Union and management men on the Joint Apprenticeship Council work together to formulate the policy for the Supplementary Training classess. From left: Jack Heaton (ECAT), Mac MacNaughton (ECAT, retired), Rick Brodhurst (ECAT), Ron Neal (ECAT Alternative), Chairman Leo Cunningham (ECAT), Steve Weslak (IBEW, L.U. 353), Bill Johnson (IBEW), Gord Watson (IBEW, retired) and Ron Carroll (IBEW).



The resolution received a recommendation of non-concurrence and the committee's recommendation of non-concurrence was carried. Wally Majesky, a member of the Local 353 education committee, spoke in favour of the non-concurrence recommendation. "I think it's very important that we understand that wherever there is a pilot project that talks about work experience programs, and I'm speaking now as a parent, that we have some responsibility to sit down and find out what the work experience program is, what does it entail what rates of wages are involved, and if we have some apprehension at that level, we can say we are not willing to co-operate," said Majesky. "If we say we are not in favour of work experience programs, I'm very scared that programs will be developed without our co-operation."

Local 353 has always vigorously promoted apprenticeship training. Trade union education also. It goes beyond job-related training and works towards ensuring that local union leaders and officers are well informed. This training has included stewards' training, and a course was held in 1970 with 125 stewards in attendance. The course covered matters dealing with clauses in the principal agreement, local union by-laws, the IBEW constitution, and handling jurisdictional issues. Bill Hardy, who

led the seminar, said that every steward should know the agreement, the constitution and the by-laws.

In 1969 Local 353 member Tom Hart was the first to receive the IBEW Founder's Scholarship – providing \$2,500 a year. Local 353 member Glenn Rennie was awarded the scholarship in 1970.

An interesting development for the trade union movement in Ontario occurred in 1975 when the Labour Council of Metropolitan Toronto, in conjunction with Humber College, established the Centre for Labour Studies.

This program was unique. IBEW Local 353's Wally Majesky was a driving force behind the project. Majesky was the Project Director for the Labour Council and worked with the college. The college appointed one of its instructors – Joe Grogan – to oversee the program. Twenty-eight years later the program still exists with the Labour Council and George Brown College as joint partners. Courses established from the outset included labour leadership, industrial hygiene, instructional techniques for labour education, labour history and labour politics. Local 353 enthusiastically endorsed the project and reimbursed any member who completed a course and received a certificate.

The Centre has expanded far beyond its initial concept and, in addition to its Labour Studies program it offers computer training, English as a second language, and others programs designed to facilitate easier entry into the work place for people who had lost their jobs through plant closures and down-sizing.

We have already mentioned the Labour College of Canada that was established in 1963. By 1972 the College was in need of urgent assistance according to Bert Hepworth, the Director of the education department. The eight-week program was difficult to fund because of the tremendous cost of lost-time expenses. The College pressed unions to contribute more in the form of scholarships to offset some of those costs.

The eight-week residence program offered instruction in economics, history, sociology, political science, trade unionism, and industrial relations. A correspondence course consisted of 12 lessons – three in economics, three in political science, three in sociology and one each on *How to Study*, *How to Read Graphs* and the *Basic Elements of Accounting*. By 1972 over 750 people had graduated from the college.

Bill Baird was the only Local 353 member to attend the Labour College. In a 2001 interview with Baird, he described the experience as the most enlightening he ever had. He



*Tom Hart receiving Founders' Scholarship – 1969
Brother Tom Hart, Local 353, Toronto, Ont., was one of the 12 Founders' Scholarship winners. He is shown here, at left, as Business Manager Bill Hardy congratulates him.*

said he "...could not believe how left-wing it was, it was against profit, and when you take a look at the Graduation List, you have the leadership of the labour movement in this country." When interviewed, Baird says that he thinks he is the "...last buildings trade representative to have attended," and compared his experience with going to a "Moonie Camp." Claiming to have come close to a nervous breakdown, Baird says the only thing that saved him was the fact that he came home on weekends.

It is interesting to note that Baird's 2001 recollections do not correspond with a report to the local on March 26, 1982 where he wrote, "My attendance at the Labour College of Canada for the months of May and June this past summer was an experience I would like to see more of this membership become involved in...I highly recommend this program."

Ed Nott formed a Technical Education Committee within the Local in 1977. The committee collapsed in 1978 (under the trusteeship) and resumed in 1981. Martin McBride, Herb Worthington, Bill O'Halloran, Gord Henderson, Phil Bova and Dave Kennedy were mainstays on the committee for more than ten years.

In 1977, the local negotiated a one-cent per hour contribution to the Educational Training Trust Fund. This fund was to assist funding of all courses offered by the technical education committee and safety committee taken outside those offered by the local union committee. This was increased to three cents per hour in 1984.

The Fund provided scholarships up to \$1,000 in any year for members attending college or university. In the event these scholarships were not used, the trustees of the fund were permitted to consider reimbursement for other job-related courses or seminars. In order to share the funds with more members, the Fund was amended to provide \$250 per calendar year to members who took technically related courses at a recognized training facility.

The trustees of the education and training trust fund in 1984 were Bill Baird, Robert Rynyk and Steve Knott. They worked with the chairman of the committee, Ed Nott, the safety education committee and the labour-management education committee. The goal was to continually provide up-to-date courses and equipment so Local 353 members would have the skills required to maintain their employment in a rapidly changing market place.

With partners including the Metro Labour Council, Toronto Building Trades, Construction Safety Association, Joint Apprenticeship Committee (JAC), George Brown College, and the ECA Manpower Committee the Technical Education department

offered courses in labour studies, safety, and industrial electronics.

The industrial electronics program at George Brown College came about because of the dedication of Harry Mooradian – Chairman of electrical technology. Mooradian did an excellent job in coordinating the program and found funding and set up the space. The program was a 13-week day program funded by the federal government – ran for five years, and greatly assisted a number of our members in obtaining their 309D electronics endorsement.

Both the federal and provincials governments understood the need for skills upgrading in the electrical and electronics fields. In the mid-1980's through the 1990's the union was offered funding for a Trades Updating Program. They recognized the trade as one of the nation's most critical, and designated funds for training facilities, research and development as well as equipment and course materials. Local 353's Education and Training Fund Trustees negotiated with officials of both governments to access those funds in order to expand and upgrade its own training programs.

In 1982 the Technical Education Committee offered six courses to members. In the mid-1980's, the committee conducted a survey to determine the level of interest in approximately 20 different courses that were available. The survey indicated that from 52 to 215 members were interested in each course, more than enough to conduct multiple courses in each subject. The purpose of the survey was to help the committee in its continuing efforts to improve old courses and to develop new ones where there was interest.

The committee arranged demonstrations of the latest innovations in equipment and merchandise to keep themselves, and the course participants, current with the latest technological developments. In 1982, the Tech Ed department offered the first ever Fibre Optics course at George Brown College. There was a rapid expansion and acceptance of computers into the working world. In 1984 the Technical Education department offered the first Build *Your Own Apple* (computer) course. This meant that computer skills' upgrading courses were becoming a necessity, and assistance for this project was sought from the Ontario Job Strategy Fund.

Ed Nott, the Committee's Chairman and Director of Technical Education, attended the *Building Tomorrow* conference in Toronto in 1986. On the agenda was an item on the changing structure of provincial government funding that placed increased emphasis on youth training. This reduced technical education funding significantly. A new training pro-





gram was developed by the federal government to retrain skilled workers and Local 353's committee felt it would be beneficial in developing electronic electricians.

In 1986 a new Industrial Electrician Certificate Apprenticeship Program was initiated and in 1987 Local 353 began to search for ways to access both provincial and federal government funding.

That was the impetus for Local 353 instructors and JAC teachers to meet and discuss a new curriculum. It was also deemed appropriate to establish formal lines of communication between IBEW's Tech Ed department and the JAC to address the educational needs for fifth term apprentices and new journeymen for the betterment of the industry.

The intensity of training for new apprentices was hammered home at one JAC meeting when JAC Representative Ron Carroll reported the termination of three apprentices from the joint program for refusing to comply with the terms of their apprenticeship. This action was taken reluctantly, but because there were so many applicants waiting to start in the electrical trade, the committee felt it could not afford to have anyone abuse the system at the expense of others who were willing and anxious for the opportunity to participate.

Carroll, obviously disturbed by the necessity of taking such action, outlined what he regarded as "musts" for any apprentice including:

- Regular and accurate entries into log books;
- Accurate records of an apprentice's progress;
- Regular attendance at Trade School and Saturday morning sessions; and,
- To seek assistance from persons specifically appointed for that purpose if experiencing difficulty.

In 1985, Ron Carroll reported on a number of complaints he received from JAC apprentices who were working in an atmosphere of fear of reprisals from the JAC Director, the JAC Council, the co-coordinators and instructors. He expressed his awareness of the pressures all apprentices were under when striving to do their best for the employer, the foreman and the journeyman – all of whom sometimes expected and demanded too much from a person just learning the trade. In addition to those pressures, the apprentice was expected to participate in Trade School and supplementary training.

Carroll said that human relations were important in how well an apprentice progressed. The working relationship in the workplace was important, requiring patience from the trainer in a hectic environment, and where too much emphasis was sometimes placed on how fast a job was completed and not how well it was done.

He understood the apprentice's fear that if all these needs were not met, or something was done contrary to the guidelines, the apprentice would be summoned to the JAC office for an interview with the director of the committee. Carroll assured all apprentices that every day-to-day problem was not brought to the director or to the committee and he promised to have the committee meet regularly to assist in any way possible with these issues.

Ed Nott wrote in the Tech-Ed Part-Time Course calendar in the fall of 1985 about the realities of the modern day workplace for electricians. He said, "Routine electrical work - the bread and butter of the electrician and contractor - still occupies most of the working hours. But times are changing and each of us must change with the times or be left behind."

Some of the changes were computers and computer room wiring; shielding; grounding; noise suppression; UPS systems; computer power centres; CAD/CAM; computer controlled systems; robotics; and variable-speed drives.

"The future is here now, placing demands on our know-how, capabilities and initiative. To keep up, it is vital to know as much as possible about these sophisticated new tech-



Training Director Ed Nott and instructor Dave Howard

niques,” stressed Nott. “The answer lies in training, education and reading. Whether it is a course offered in this calendar, or one at the community colleges, manufacturers’ seminars or in-plant courses. New product literature, trade shows, equipment exhibits and trade magazines offer more opportunities to obtain knowledge.”

Increasingly, Local 353 has come to recognize the importance of communicating the attractiveness of electrical work as a career option to the younger generation. In 1988, the local participated in *Future Building – 88*, held at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre. The project was an initiative of the Building Industry Strategy Board and the Ontario Ministry of Housing, with the support of the building and construction industry and the education and training community of Ontario. Its purpose was to attract a new generation of workers. At the time it was expected that 50 per cent of skilled workers would retire within 10 years, creating a demand for skilled trade’s personnel. Approximately 50,000 young people attended what for most of them was their first exposure to the construction industry.

In 1991, the Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto noted that four features dictated the training policy at the time:

- A critical reduction in funds for training;

- An overwhelming emphasis on short-term entry-level employment training;
- Fewer opportunities for skill development;
- A lack of standardized training objectives to meet the needs of workers and industry.

In the 1980’s the federal training policy shifted from Community Colleges to the private sector – even though only one in four companies spent any money on formal training for employees.

The report revealed that the average Japanese company provided each employee with 200 hours of training annually compared with only one hour for the average Canadian company.

In the August 1991 *Journal*, IBEW President J. J. Barry stressed that he wanted “...this generation of electrical workers to be that much farther along than the last generation. And the next generation should be a notch higher than that. Building strength in the union by organizing the unorganized work force and continuing education throughout a worker’s career are the ways...to move the Brotherhood forward.”

Yet the federal governments’ Canadian Jobs Strategy Program reduced its funding budget for training. This was at a time when



Communication Cabling class



the Canadian Labour Market and Productivity Centre revealed that 70 per cent of Canadian workers believed that increased education and training were needed for the future.

It was during this period that two new programs were introduced – the Construction, Organizing, Membership and Education Training project (COMET) and Membership Education and Mobilization for Organizing course (MEMO). Both these efforts were credited with organizing successes throughout Canada. The programs were designed to break down membership opposition to bringing in new members and to illustrate the direct relationship between the degree of unionization and the corresponding success at the bargaining table. International Vice President Ken Woods said, “The training programmes were designed to enhance organizing initiatives in the First District.”

The Canadian Labour Market and Productivity Centre released results of a major survey in 1991. The survey was a joint business and labour effort in labour market research in Canada. It gathered comprehensive information on the types of training available, who was

being trained and the average number of hours spent on training. Survey highlights were:

- 70 per cent of private sector firms in Canada provided structured training with a range of 67 per cent for firms employing 500 or more;
- Average length of training – 14 hours;
- 62 per cent provided orientation training;
- 57 per cent provided computer training;
- 44 per cent provided health and safety training;
- 40 per cent provided managerial training; and,
- 8 per cent provided literacy, numeracy and training in other basic skills.

In 1993, the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board (OTAB) was established. Its purpose was to build a system of training and adjustment programs and services to meet Ontario’s future needs and to train and assist people in adjusting to changes in technology and the economy.

OTAB comprises representatives from business, labour, racial minorities, women, Francophones, the disabled, educators, trainers and ex-officio representatives from all levels of government. The work place was to be considered as a place of learning with the establishment of training programs in specific areas – including the electrical/electronic sector.

There was to be equal access to training for those with systemic and other barriers (including those for shift workers). One goal was to review, broaden and enhance the apprenticeship system to ensure a flexible, adaptable and highly skilled work force, and to develop a market information base to identify future skills’ requirements.

These trends merely confirmed for Local 353 that its emphasis on education and training was the correct path to assist its members in developing the skills needed for the 21st century.

When Local 353 participated in the 14-local membership survey in 1997, it identified what its members’ expectations were regarding education. The survey showed that Local 353 members wanted and needed training the following skills areas:

- Motor and Motor Controls;
- Controls Automation Systems and PLCs;



Communication Cabling class

- Communication cabling;
- Electronics;
- Fire alarms and systems;
- Installation of power generation, stand-by power generation, power condition systems;
- Conducting preventative maintenance programmes; and,
- Estimating costs.

Over 75 per cent of Local 353 membership respondents thought the ECAO and Local 353 should take full control of all apprenticeship training and they wanted all training conducted at the Local 353 training centre. This would mean ECAO/IBEW Local 353 would provide all apprenticeship training as opposed to having it delivered at community colleges.

The survey also revealed a high level of computer literacy in the local. Over 51 per cent had their own personal computers, and 53 per cent said they would use a Local 353 website. An astounding 82 per cent believed that the local should use computer-based learning for various upgrading programs. Of the respondents, 35 per cent of the membership had post-secondary education through a community college or university.

In 1999 the Harris Conservatives threatened long-standing and proven apprenticeship training techniques in the province by passing detrimental legislation aimed directly at the construction industry. This was an attempt by the government to drive down wages and conditions through project agreements. Part of the legislation was to force apprentices to work for less so they would have to borrow money for their trade school courses traditionally funded through federal and provincial grants.

The union continues to support ventures that encourage young people to enter the trade. One of these is Skills Canada – a non-profit coalition of educators, labour groups, employers and government groups that seek to promote skills’ trades and technological occupations. Skills Canada also hosts an annual competition and students from elementary, secondary and post secondary schools support their peers who compete in over 40 technology and trade-specific contests spanning construction, manufacturing, communication, trade seminars and leadership.

Through the competition, the union has an opportunity to speak with students about the unionized electrical industry and to commend the achievements of competing students and

apprentices. The show highlights the need for skilled trades’ people and the prominence of technology in our lives. The efforts at recruitment are enhanced because both students and their parents have an opportunity to discover that electricians have a dynamic career with portable skills.

These efforts to recruit new workers to the trade are extremely important when it was estimated that as late as 2001 Canada faced a shortage of 20,000 to 50,000 skilled technology workers because of an aging work force in the industry.

The July 2002 issue of *News and Views* highlights the 13th Annual Ontario Skills Competition held in Kitchener, Ontario on April 29, 2002. “There were fifty trade and technology careers showcased,” reported Ed Nott. “Among the winners was Local 353 apprentice Ryan Cooper, who won a gold medal and went on to win the National Competition held in Vancouver in May, 2002. Ryan will celebrate Local 353’s 100th anniversary in style when he competes on the international stage in Europe.” Ryan Cooper is the first Local 353 member to win both the provincial and national competitions.

In addition to Ryan Cooper, Local 353 sponsored Local 353 apprentice Taras Petryshyn who won silver in the Electrical Wiring Industrial category competition. Frank Ornat also won silver.



Instructor Joel Liburd (right) teaching computer skills to Local 353 members



In the October 1973 *Journal* President Charles Pillard congratulated locals for keeping pace with changing times and keeping current with changes within the industry by taking in qualified apprentices, training them and educating them in the principles of good trade unionism.



Skills Canada – 2001



Fire Alarm Level III class

In an August 2002 interview, Ed Nott revealed that since 1991 over 3,000 different IBEW Local 353 members have attended classes whose courses are designed to upgrade members' skills and are completely voluntary.

One of our most popular programs, the Fire Alarm program has also expanded since its inception in 1981. Bill O'halloran, Dave Busato, John Wickens, Steve Smith, Doug Weston and Dave Kennedy were tireless in their commitment and successfully developed the Fire Alarm program. Because of the technical expertise and dedication of the instructors, the Ministry of Skills adopted the four-level Fire Alarm program as an industry standard in 1993 and in 1995 the Fire Marshall's office recognized the program for Fire Alarm certification.

Local 353 continues to meet the challenge of constant evolution by offering training and continued education to its membership. A major contributor to the success of the Technical Education department was the opening of the Training Centre in 1991. Ed Nott, Peter Olders, Dave Griffiths, Cy Segeal and Bill Martindale were instrumental in developing the training facility – a symbol of progress and expertise within the electrical trade industry.

Starting with four classrooms in 1991, the Training Centre expanded its program by 1993 to six classrooms – including a shop area. The shop area allowed unprecedented opportunity for hands-on training for our members. The Training Centre was a major step forward in expanding the number of courses that could be offered to the membership. We have dedicated equipment for practical hands-on training allowing us to offer programs in more detail than ever before. We have labs that cover computers, programmable controllers, motor control and fire alarms.

Under the direction of Peter Olders the Communications Cabling program was introduced. When the economic downturn of the 1990's gripped Ontario, the Communications Cabling program jumped in to full swing. The program allowed our unemployed members to upgrade their skills during this slow work period and opened the door for work in the new trade of the communications electrician.

The Communications Cabling program was expanded in 2003 to include a Network Cabling Specialist pre-exam course – a certified trade with the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.

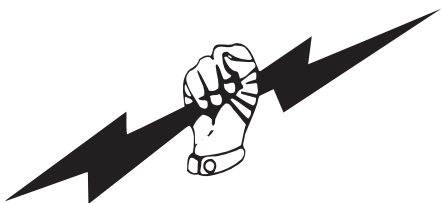
The Training Centre continues to offer Technical Education courses and gives us the flexibility to offer programs in other areas like Safety, Labour Studies and Apprentice orientation.



Instructor Peter Olders teaching cabling class

As we enter the future, there is no doubt that changes in technology will reshape and expand our industry. Local 353 will be in the forefront to ensure its members the opportunity to enhance and evolve their skills, and offer the best skilled and motivated workforce to service the Greater Toronto Area.

Local 353 has been blessed with officers who understood that maintaining the status quo was simply not good enough. This was true 100 years ago, it was true 25 years ago, and it is equally true today.



Communication Cabling - Level III class - 2002



TECHNICAL EDUCATION





APPENDIX C

Substance Abuse



Bill Baird is credited with being the motivating influence for Local 353's Substance Abuse program. Baird admits to having defeated his own addiction and started pushing for a program for the local. Baird blames the media for much of the alcohol and drug abuse in society because the media depicts a "cool" lifestyle where drinking is acceptable. For the construction worker, it was considered macho if you could drink a lot. "Guys bang back a half dozen beers over a half-hour lunch break," says Baird. The problem still exists today for a variety of reasons.

Baird says that the first six years of the program were not easy, but when the media began to turn their attention to the problem, the program began to gain wide acceptance. With older workers, drinking leads to what Baird terms as cross addiction. A worker visits his doctor complaining about depression – often brought on by his heavy drinking. The doctor is not told about the drinking problem and prescribes medication to ease the depression. Before long the worker has difficulty making it through the day without both a drink and a pill.

Baird credits the Electrical Contractors Association of Toronto for its 100 per cent vote of approval for the project. In 1988, the plan was called MAP – Members Assistance Programme. He also stresses that since it was first publicized in 1984, other locals have requested details of the program, and instituted programs of their own.

Throughout the years, Baird has made numerous presentations on Local 353's Program and in 1987 presented an article in the April issue of the local newsletter. "It is always rewarding to know that, as trade unionists, we are fulfilling our objectives in improving our lifestyles," wrote Baird. "Our Substance Abuse Programme is doing just that for those who have recognized that they have a problem with alcohol or drugs." The local held seminars open to members, spouses or friends.

Larry Priestman is also a long time supporter of the locals alcohol and drug abuse program. Priestman believes that the success rate with alcohol and drug abuse is difficult to mon-

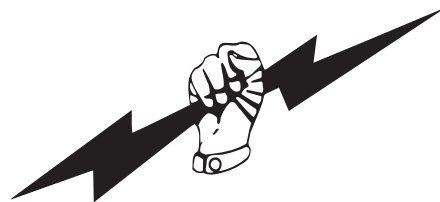
itor. He also believes that a person with a dependency on either alcohol or drugs has to be really motivated to stop. Priestman claims that anonymity is crucial in any successful program designed to combat alcohol and drug abuse. He claims there are usually 4 – 5 members of Local 353 active in the program at any given time.

Initially, the local had an association with The Donwood Institute in Toronto. More recently, it has teamed with the DeNovo treatment center – an organization that has an ongoing association with the construction industry.

The DeNovo objective is "to help individuals regain responsibility to themselves, their family and their jobs." The DeNovo approach tailors treatment and recovery to the needs of each individual through pre-treatment, post-treatment and counseling programs on a one-to-one basis, or on a couple and family therapy basis. DeNovo promotes education and awareness programs and gives presentations upon request to the community, unions and industry at no cost to the worker and his family.

DeNovo is a joint union-management program that offers help to people in the unionized construction industry. It is funded through a .01 cents per hour worked from both the employee and the employer.

The DeNovo objective is
"to help individuals
regain responsibility to
themselves, their family
and their jobs."



APPENDIX D

Local 353 Executive



BUSINESS MANAGER — LOCAL 353

| | | | | |
|-------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|---|
| 1903 – 1926 | Not available | 1969 – 1975 | Bill Hardy | * Business Manager and Financial Secretary offices combined |
| 1927 – 1930 | Bill Brown | 1975 – 1977 | Warren Chapman | |
| 1930 – 1932 | Frank Selke Jr. | 1977 – 1983 | Bill Hardy | ** Business Manager and Financial Secretary become joint office in 1990/1991. |
| 1932 – 1949 | Cecil Shaw* | 1983 – 1987 | Robert Rynyk | |
| 1949 – 1969 | Bill Farquhar | 1987 – Present | Joe Fashion ** | |

FINANCIAL SECRETARY — LOCAL 353

| | | | |
|-------------|---|--|----------------|
| 1903 | Chris Walker | 1976 – 1982 | Steve Weslak |
| 1904 – 1916 | Not available | 1982 – 1989 | Steve Knott |
| 1917 | Fred Einbooen/Tom Crawford | 1990 – present | Joe Fashion*** |
| 1917 – 1918 | Fred Einbooen and E. Holden | * From 1932 position was both Business Manager and Financial Secretary | |
| 1919 - 1921 | H.E. Carter, Joseph Gunn, G.W. McCollum, A. Garland, R. Gilette | ** 1969 office split and Farquhar assumes office of Financial Secretary only. | |
| 1922 – 1927 | P. Elsworth | ***Business Manager and Financial Secretary positions merged again and Joe Fashion holds both offices. | |
| 1927 – 1949 | Cecil Shaw* | | |
| 1949 – 1976 | Bill Farquhar** | | |

PRESIDENTS — LOCAL 353

| | | | |
|-------------|------------------|--|-------------------------|
| 1903 | D. Mathieson | 1962 – 1964 | Norm McAllister |
| 1904 – 1917 | Not available | 1964 – 1970 | J.D. Pritchard |
| 1918 | C. Phelps | 1970 – 1975 | Tom Hart |
| 1919 – 1920 | Not available | 1975 – 1978 | Bill Johnson |
| 1921 | Cecil Shaw | 1978 – 1979 | Trusteeship** |
| 1922 – 1923 | Not available | * June 1979 – Tom Hart appointed President | |
| 1924 – 1932 | Jack Nutland | * July 1979 – Hart resigns | |
| 1932 – 1934 | Ed Forsey | * July 1979 – December 1979 – Ray Tyrell assumes President | |
| 1934 – 1940 | Jack Nutland | * January 1980 – July 1980 – Robert Rynyk President | |
| 1940 – 1942 | Joe Dent | 1980 – 1987 | Bill Baird |
| 1942 – 1944 | Jack Price | 1987 – 1992 | Larry Priestman |
| 1944 – 1945 | Bill Farquhar | 1992 – 1998 | Bob Gill |
| 1945 – 1948 | Percy Eversfield | 1998 – 1999 | Bob Gullins (appointed) |
| 1948 – 1962 | Jack Price | 1999 – Present | Bob Gullins |



VICE PRESIDENTS — LOCAL 353

| | | | |
|-------------|----------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| 1903 – 1922 | Not available | 1954 – 1956 | George Summers |
| 1922 | Cecil Shaw | 1956 – 1958 | Herb Ransone |
| 1923 – 1926 | Not available | 1958 – 1964 | Jack Pritchard |
| 1927 – 1930 | J. W. Curran | 1964 – 1969 | W.J. Jackes |
| 1930 – 1932 | D. Morris | 1969 – 1970 | Finley Gerow |
| 1932 – 1934 | T. Redburn | 1970 – 1972 | J. White |
| 1934 – 1936 | E. Forsey | 1972 – 1975 | Ron Carroll |
| 1936 – 1938 | George Murray | 1975 – 1979 | Ray Tyrrell |
| 1938 – 1942 | Not available | 1979 – 1980 | Rob Rynyk |
| 1942 – 1946 | T.P Eversfield | 1980 – 1983 | Larry Priestman |
| 1946 – 1948 | Charles Bailey | 1983 – 1987 | John Smith |
| 1948 – 1950 | Bill Findley | 1987 – 1993 | Gerry Benninger |
| 1950 – 1952 | Not available | 1993 – 1998 | Rick Lyman |
| 1952 – 1954 | Doug Gullins | 1998 – 1999 | Stan Balding (Appointed) |
| | | 1999 - Present | John Smith |

TREASURERS or SECRETARY-TREASURERS — LOCAL 353

| | | | |
|-------------|------------------|----------------|---------------|
| 1903 – 1918 | Not available | 1966 – 1975 | H. Ransome |
| 1919 | G.M. McCollum | 1975 – 1981 | Roy Patterson |
| 1920 – 1926 | Not available | 1981 – 1984 | Steve Weslak |
| 1926 – 1928 | J. Godden | 1984 – 1996 | Roy Patterson |
| 1928 – 1930 | H. Price | 1996 – 1999 | Frank Velente |
| 1930 – 1960 | J. Dolson | 1999 – present | Len Zawaski |
| 1960 – 1966 | Stan A. Melville | | |

RECORDING SECRETARIES — LOCAL 353

| | | | |
|-------------|---|----------------|--------------------------|
| 1903 | John S. Fyfe | 1932 – 1934 | Frank Selke |
| 1904 – 1916 | Not available | 1934 – 1938 | Bert Maunder |
| 1917 – 1925 | J. Barnaby, J. Beverly, S.M. Bugg, J.B. Cuglen, Fred Einboden, Alex Farquhar, J.T. Gunn, Cecil Haglund, George Haglund, Jas Harman, A. Milligan, D. Morris, Jas Naughton, Cecil Shaw and Vern Widdifield. | 1938 – 1946 | Stan Melville |
| | | 1946 – 1949 | Frank Bentley |
| | | 1949 – 1964 | Len Mowat |
| | | 1964 – 1984 | Walter Wray |
| | | 1984 – 1986 | J. Gilmour |
| | | 1987 – 1988 | Roy Cooke Jr. |
| | | 1988 – 1996 | Steve Belanger |
| 1925 – 1927 | J.W. Curran | 1996 – 1998 | Doug Irwin |
| 1927 | W. Whitaker | 1998 – 1999 | George Smith (Appointed) |
| 1928 – 1930 | J. Dolson | 1999 – Present | George Smith |
| 1930 – 1932 | Not available | | |

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS — LOCAL 353



| | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| 2002 Steve Belanger Walter Majesky* Barry Stevens Rob White <i>*deceased – Dan Drummond appointed to fill vacancy</i> | 1999 Steve Belanger Walter Majesky Barry Stevens Rob White | 1996 Al Hossack* George Smith Barry Stevens Rob White <i>*resigned in 1998 and replaced by Mike Vanderhyden</i> | 1993 Steve Berry Bernie Robinson George Smith Ron White |
| 1990 George Smith Bernie Robinson Rick Lyman Steve Berry | 1987 Larry Jackson Don Putsey Dave Sutherland Robert Topley | 1984 Bob Gill John Gilmour Bernie Robinson Ron White | 1981 J. Gilmore Steve Knott R. Newman Bernie Robinson |
| 1979 Bob Dawson Steve Knott Art Mahon Bob Rynyk Dennis Somerville | 1975 Joe Fashion R. Gullins N. McAllister Ed Nott Rob Rynyk | 1972 Joe Fashion W. M. Johnson Steve Knott Norm McAllister D. Youngberg | 1952 Chuck Bailey Stan Melville Bob Hamilton Jim Sparks Sam Genise |
| 1946 Tom Bolton Stan Melville Herb Ransome Eddie Saker | 1944 Jack Nutland C.F. Cheevers J. Bankier J. Hughson | 1942 J. F. Nutlan T. Bolton J. Hughson A. McGovern | 1938 James Wiggins Jack Price Harry Wilson Allen Whalen |
| 1936 Roy McLeod Jimmy Wiggins Harry Wilson Bob Robertson | 1934 R. McLeod F. Ainsworth J. E. Price W. Mead | 1932 J. E. Price J. McKenzie P. Vesfeld N. Murphy | 1930 J. Curran P. Elsworth J. Godden J. McKenzie |
| 1928 E. Curtiss E. Forsey J. Gardiner J. Godden F. Todd | | | |



CONVENTION DELEGATES — LOCAL 353

| YEAR | LOCATION | CONVENTION | IBEW MEMBERSHIP TOTAL | DELEGATES |
|------|--------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------|--|
| 1929 | Miami, Florida | 20th | | Jack Nutland, Ed Forsey, Jack Price, Cecil Shaw |
| 1941 | St. Louis, Missouri | 21st | | Cecil Shaw, Joe Dent, Jack Nutland |
| 1946 | San Francisco, California | 22nd | | Stanley A. Melville, Cecil M. Shaw, James Wiggins |
| 1948 | Atlantic City, New Jersey | 23rd | | T.P. Eversfield, William Farquhar, R. Hamilton, A.G. Matthews, Stanely A. Melville, J.R Schaefer, Cecil M. Shaw, G.C. Summers |
| 1950 | Miami, Florida | 24th | 1003 | Chas. Bailey, William Farquhar, William Findlay, Samuel Genise, Robert Hamilton, Wm. G. Hardy, Arthur G. Matthews, Stanley A. Melville, Cecil M. Shaw, James M. Sparks |
| 1954 | Chicago, Illinois | 25th | 1348 | Charles Bailey, William Farquhar, Samuel Genise, Douglas L. Gullins, Robert Hamilton, William G. Hardy, Stanley A. Melville, P. V. Picard, George C. Summers, Frank Swales |
| 1958 | Cleveland, Ohio | 26th | 1584 | Charles Bailey, F. C. Bentley, William Farquhar, W. G. Hardy, Robert Hamilton, N. McAllister |
| 1962 | Montreal, Québec, Canada | 27th | 1858 | Charles Bailey, Frank C. Bentley, Samuel Genise, Robert Hamilton, Michael Kostynyk, Norman McAllister, Jack D. Pritchard |
| 1966 | St. Louis, Montana | 28th | 2859 | Frank C. Bentley, William Farquhar, J. M. Fashion, Morley J. Hughes, Norman McAllister, Jack D. Pritchard, Donald C. Putsey, W. Beverly Taylor, Steven Weslak |

CONVENTION DELEGATES — LOCAL 353 (continued)



| YEAR | LOCATION | CONVENTION | IBEW MEMBERSHIP TOTAL | DELEGATES |
|------|--------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------|--|
| 1970 | Seattle, Washington | 29th | 3601 | D. J. Cordery, J. M. Fashion, T. P. Hart, Morley J. Hughes, W. J. Jackes, W. I. Johnson, G. H. Mackay, Wally Majesky, Steven Weslak, D. A. Youngbert |
| 1974 | Kansas City, Montana | 30th | 4242 | R.F. Boose, R. Carroll, T. P. Hart, W.J. Jackes, R. G. Jamieson, W. I. Johnson, A.S. Knott, Wally Majesky, T. G. Tyrrell, G. W. Watson |
| 1978 | Atlantic City, New Jersey | 31st | | No delegates at this Convention – Local under Trusteeship |
| 1982 | Los Angeles, California | 32nd | 4238 | W. C. Baird, R. Carroll, R. Gullins, M. Hughes, A.S. Knott, E. Nott, D. C. Putsey, R. Raw, R. Rynyk, D. Somerville |
| 1986 | Toronto, Ontario, Canada | 33rd | 4150 | William C. Baird, R. Carroll, J. Fashion, R. Gullins, M. Hughes, A.S. Knott, L. Priestman, D. Putsey, R. Raw, R. Rynyk |
| 1991 | St. Louis, Montana | 34th | 5710 | J. M. Fashion, R. H. Gill, R. A. Gullins, D. J. Hussey, M. E. Lloyd, R. Lyman, Larry Priestman, D. C. Putsey, B. A. Robinson, L. D. Venning |
| 1996 | Philadelphia, Pennsylvania | 35th | 5528 | S. Berry, J. M. Fashion, R. Gill, A. Hossack, R. Lyman, G. McDougall, W. O'Halloran, G. Smith, B. Stevens, R. B. White |
| 2001 | San Francisco, California | 36th | 6304 | S.L. Belanger, J. M. Fashion, R.H. Gill, R. A. Gullins, A. E. Hossack, W. Majesky, J. D. Smith, B. D. Stevens, R. B. White, L. Zawaski |

APPENDIX E

Press Secretaries — Local 353



The press secretary is a unique feature of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers' Journal. It is through the local's Press Secretary that contributions to Local Lines were submitted. The Press Secretary was usually the President or Business Manager of the local, although not always. The first Local 353 contribution to *Local Lines* was in March 1903 - one month after the Local was chartered. This wonderful feature offers many marvellous insights into the local's history.

While some Press Secretaries only made one or two contributions and others submitted items faithfully to the feature for years. Reading these in 2003, one is left to wonder if the Press Secretary was aware that his contributions would be read so many years later and that in many respects would comprise a major part of the 100th anniversary history.

Local 353's contribution to the Local Lines feature hasn't always been consistent so there is not a continuous, unbroken thread; nevertheless, they are quite significant.

When one reads Frank Selke's description of Local 353 members walking in the Labour Day parade during the Depression, you can't help but feel a sense of pride. Bill Hardy, Bill Farquhar, Cecil Shaw, Steve Knott, Peter Elsworth, Jack Nutland and so many others left a legacy of words the local can be proud of. The man who wrote might not always agree with the leadership; sometimes he defended them vigorously.

In the mid-1920s, Peter Elsworth went so far as to suggest how the Journal could be improved. Many of his suggestions are found in subsequent issues of the Journal such as "a different design each month, in colour, with a photograph of some great electrical project to create a real understanding of the greatness of the electrical industry."

He wanted to see at least "three full pages featuring electrical apparatus, new power stations, and one on radio, with written material on each subject." Elsworth wrote, "If we are to keep in progress with this super power, we must make the Journal talk. We must make our Journal a recognized authority on all things electrical." He believed that Canadian locals

should contribute more to the Journal.

The Local Lines contributions (through the Press Secretary) recorded the good times, the bad times, the happy times and the sad times. In good-natured style, fun was poked at some of "the more colourful members" and their antics are recorded for posterity.

In March 1987, Local 353 Press Secretary Steve Knott announced in the March, 1987 Local 353 newsletter that the International office was restricting contributions to Local Lines to once every two months. The length of the submissions was reduced as well.

Whether or not that was the reason, the submissions from Local 353 declined in number and have trailed off almost completely these past few years. Realistically, given the membership size and postal rates, it is not surprising that the cutback became necessary. But a significant means of communication between locals where members in both countries can follow events throughout the entire union has been lost.

Perhaps some day it can be revived. Even with all our modern-day technology, the word on a printed page carries its own powerful message.

Local 353 Press Secretaries throughout the years . . .

| | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| F. Ainsworth | Frank Bentley |
| S. M. Bugg | J. B. Collam |
| Peter Elsworth | William Farquhar |
| Bob Gill | Bob Grant |
| E. Hewson | Larry W. Jackson |
| Steve Knott | G. W. McCollum |
| H. W. Link | S. Phelps |
| Jack Nutland | Frank Selke Jr. |
| Ron Raw | John D. Smith |
| Cecil Shaw | D. J. Stuart |
| Dennis Sommerville | E. J. Swift |

APPENDIX F

Members with 50 Years or More Years of Service



| Last Name | First Name | Initiation Date | Last Name | First Name | Initiation Date |
|--------------|------------|--------------------|--------------|------------|--------------------|
| Ackerman | Raymond | July 14, 1949 | Burns | Anthony | January 21, 1949 |
| Ager | Arthur | January 25, 1952 | Buxton | Arthur | February 21, 1949 |
| Aldersley | Harry | June 8, 1950 | Campbell | Joseph | March 1, 1952 |
| Aldersley | William | January 10, 1929 | Campbell Jr. | George | October 1, 1946 |
| Alexander | C | | Campbell Sr. | George | |
| Allen | William | | Camplin | George | April 21, 1942 |
| Aquilana | George | October 18, 1948 | Carless | Gilbert | October 1, 1944 |
| Archbold | S | | Cathcard | Jim | February 1, 1952 |
| Astill | E | | Cavanagh | Richard | February 17, 1947 |
| Balanoff | Vlad | March 16, 1946 | Chaulk | Boyde | June 1, 1951 |
| Banks | M.D. | | Cheesman | Stanley | September 12, 1947 |
| Baran | Mike | January 6, 1949 | Ciccarelli | John | October 20, 1950 |
| Barfield | James | October 13, 1949 | Clark | Keith | April 1, 1949 |
| Barker | Robert | September 19, 1941 | Clarke | Earl | July 26, 1950 |
| Beatty | William | June 1, 1952 | Clarke | Frederick | November 1, 1947 |
| Beaumont | E. | | Cleland | James | February 1, 1952 |
| Bell | Patrick | February 9, 1952 | Clements | Robert | August 15, 1947 |
| Bell | Bruce | November 18, 1947 | Clint | Robert | July 1, 1948 |
| Berriault | Bernard | May 1, 1948 | Cochrane | Borden | |
| Berry | Edward | August 1, 1948 | Colbourn | John | November 1, 1949 |
| Berwick | Edward | November 18, 1946 | Collett | Hubert | October 1, 1948 |
| Black | Thomas | December 1, 1949 | Colley | Mervin | October 19, 1945 |
| Boisvert | Alphonse | December 29, 1950 | Cooling | Frederick | July 11, 1950 |
| Bowins | Art | 1926 | Copeland | George | March 1, 1948 |
| Boss | Alan | November 1, 1951 | Cotter | Percy | July 5, 1911 |
| Bradshaw | Ray | November 1, 1947 | Coulson | William | August 1, 1951 |
| Brann | Herbert | September 1, 1947 | Courneya | Aleric | March 1, 1951 |
| Brennan | Frederic | November 1, 1951 | Cowling | Colin | December 7, 1948 |
| Brown | Fred | December 1, 1947 | Craik | Don | June 1, 1942 |
| Brownsberger | Norman | February 1, 1952 | Crawford | James | November 1, 1947 |
| Burgess | William | March 31, 1951 | Crawford | Arthur | April 24, 1950 |
| Burnett | Stanley | July 1, 1947 | Curnew | Reginald | February 1, 1951 |



| Last Name | First Name | Initiation Date | Last Name | First Name | Initiation Date |
|-------------|------------|--------------------|--------------|------------|--------------------|
| Currie | William | March 1, 1951 | Godwin | William | September 1, 1948 |
| Daines | Howard | November 1, 1947 | Gourley | John | July 1, 1949 |
| Dale | Douglas | September 1, 1949 | Gracey | Tom | |
| Davis | Bill | | Grant | Alan | March 1, 1949 |
| Davis | Douglas | September 1, 1946 | Greer | Richard | November 3, 1947 |
| Day | Alfred | November 1, 1952 | Gregory | Robert | January 1, 1946 |
| Deffett | Donald | December 17, 1946 | Hall | W. | June 11, 1946 |
| Delaney | Alan | September 1, 1948 | Hallam | John | February 1, 1947 |
| Derewlany | Peter | June 16, 1950 | Hamilton | James | September 11, 1947 |
| Digby | Alfred | May 21, 1948 | Hamilton | Robert | April 28, 1941 |
| Doan | Ronald | October 1, 1952 | Harder | Corey | October 10, 1947 |
| Down | Gordon | January 1, 1952 | Hardison | Lloyd | October 8, 1946 |
| Doyle | Paul | | Hardy | William | May 31, 1937 |
| Duncan | Stanley | July 1, 1946 | Hare | John | October 1, 1947 |
| Dunlop | Edward | May 1, 1952 | Hare | George | February 20, 1947 |
| Dunn | James | February 1, 1952 | Harradine | Gordon | May 1, 1945 |
| Durling | Earl | March 1, 1952 | Harris | Herbert | June 1, 1951 |
| Durling | Russell | September 1, 1948 | Hay | Alex | |
| Duz | Charles | December 17, 1945 | Hayes | Godfrey | June 1, 1951 |
| Eardley | Arthur | January 17, 1949 | Hayes | Richard | May 1, 1947 |
| Elder | Bill | | Hayes | Henry | November 1, 1945 |
| Ellis | Julius | December 8, 1949 | Hertfelder | Ira | 1916 |
| Everett | Bert | December 17, 1947 | Hester | Frank | June 8, 1944 |
| Farquhar | Bill | | Hill | Alf | |
| Farrell | Robert | June 8, 1950 | Hill | Joseph | February 7, 1952 |
| Fava | Carl | February 9, 1950 | Hill | William | |
| Ferguson | Robert | October 22, 1946 | Howard | Kenneth | February 1, 1947 |
| Ferrie | Douglas | September 6, 1949 | Howard | Samuel | June 15, 1948 |
| Fisher | Charles | June 16, 1947 | Hoyle | Edwin | March 9, 1944 |
| Flanagan | Edward | December 14, 1950 | Hucklebridge | William | September 1, 1950 |
| Fletcher | Harry | | Hudson | George S. | |
| Foster | Harry | September 18, 1949 | Hummel | Frank | May 1, 1947 |
| Frost | Gilbert | September 25, 1945 | Hunter | George | September 1, 1950 |
| Frost | Stan C. | March 8, 1928 | Isnor | Harold | December 25, 1952 |
| Fuller | James | January 16, 1946 | James | Robert | December 10, 1946 |
| Gallaughier | Maurice | October 1, 1946 | Jarvis | Raymond | November 18, 1947 |
| Gardner | Robert | September 1, 1948 | Jeffries | Allan | October 1, 1947 |
| Genoe | Mervin | June 1, 1952 | Johnson | F | |
| Gerstl | Paul | July 1, 1951 | Johnson | Harold | January 6, 1941 |
| Gillespie | James | November 1, 1948 | Jones | Donald | April 1, 1951 |
| Girouard | Antoine | November 1, 1945 | Kelly | Wilfred | February 1, 1947 |
| Girouard | Tony | | Kirk | William | September 1, 1951 |
| Godden | Alex | | Kirkness | Watt | June 1, 1952 |
| Godden | Joe | | Knight | Norm | |



| Last Name | First Name | Initiation Date | Last Name | First Name | Initiation Date |
|------------|------------|--------------------|-----------|------------|--------------------|
| Knapp | William | July 13, 1948 | Morbach | Nicholas | March 1, 1950 |
| Kupchanko | John | January 1, 1952 | Morgan | David | November 1, 1950 |
| Lacey | Charles | August 1, 1952 | Morning | James | November 1, 1950 |
| Lawrenson | Alan | August 1, 1950 | Morris | Harold | October 11, 1951 |
| Lee | Frank | October 9, 1952 | Mowat | W. | |
| LeeBody | James | January 17, 1949 | Munroe | Kenneth | September 26, 1951 |
| Leonard | Thomas | May 14, 1947 | Murray | John | July 1, 1952 |
| Loran | Steve | April 10, 1951 | Neal | Ronald | March 15, 1948 |
| Loranger | Paul | January 21, 1952 | Noble | Jack | |
| Lummiss | James | April 22, 1943 | Norris | Fred | February 9, 1951 |
| Lyman | Leslie | December 17, 1947 | Nutland | Jack | |
| Lynn | Clayton | July 13, 1951 | O'Brien | John | November 1, 1947 |
| Maddocks | Roy | February 17, 1947 | O'Hara | Francis | June 1, 1950 |
| Madeley | Fred | November 1, 1948 | Oostdyk | James | July 1, 1952 |
| Mapes | John | April 12, 1948 | Oostdyk | Leonardus | July 1, 1952 |
| Marans | Sheldon | May 11, 1950 | Palmer | Austin | September 1, 1951 |
| Marcus | Rubin | June 6, 1951 | Paraschuk | Joe | February 9, 1950 |
| Marshall | Jack | September 1, 1948 | Parsons | Ronald | July 1, 1952 |
| Martin | Hubert | April 1, 1952 | Paterson | William | July 13, 1948 |
| Matson | Reg | December 12, 1931 | Paton | Ronald | October 1, 1947 |
| Matthews | Arthur | May 23, 1940 | Patterson | Roy | August 1, 1950 |
| Maxwell | Stanley | October 24, 1951 | Paul | Joseph | October 9, 1952 |
| McAskin | Thomas | October 16, 1946 | Peers | Donald | December 1, 1950 |
| McClelland | Kenneth | March 1, 1952 | Pendock | Gerald | September 1, 1950 |
| McCoy | Robert | December 17, 1951 | Perrin | Bruce | July 12, 1949 |
| McCaldon | D | | Petherick | Douglas | November 3, 1949 |
| McCrudden | James | September 3, 1947 | Pfeiffer | Fred | June 8, 1950 |
| McCrudden | Edwin | October 1, 1948 | Pfeiffer | John | August 23, 1949 |
| McGeachie | Arthur | May 15, 1947 | Phillips | Fred | |
| McGee | Rod | March 28, 1951 | Phillips | William | July 15, 1951 |
| McGuigan | J | | Poole | Lawrence | December 1, 1945 |
| McIlveen | Gordon | May 13, 1946 | Porter | Forrest | December 17, 1947 |
| McLeod | Neil | | Postello | Carl | May 1, 1951 |
| McKay | Henry | April 10, 1952 | Priest | George | March 1, 1950 |
| McKeag | Hugh | September 14, 1950 | Prychitko | Walter | November 1, 1947 |
| McMullen | Reginald | January 20, 1948 | Putsey | Donald | November 18, 1946 |
| Mead | William | July 11, 1951 | Putsey | Albert Jr. | September 1, 1941 |
| Meilach | Archie | May 22, 1952 | Quesnel | Marc | December 1, 1947 |
| Miller | Roy | September 12, 1947 | Quick | William | March 1, 1948 |
| Milligan | James | November 18, 1947 | Quigley | Allan | October 1, 1951 |
| Milton | James | May 1, 1950 | Ralph | Robert | December 1, 1945 |
| Mitchell | Robert | October 1, 1951 | Ramsey | Leonard | September 6, 1949 |
| Moore | Kenneth | May 11, 1950 | Reiter | Jack | March 8, 1951 |
| Moore | Denton | November 1, 1949 | Reynolds | John | May 12, 1941 |



| Last Name | First Name | Initiation Date | Last Name | First Name | Initiation Date |
|-----------|------------|--------------------|-----------|------------|--------------------|
| Ridout | Carl | August 15, 1947 | Thomson | Harry | November 1, 1949 |
| Rigley | George | April 18, 1949 | Todd | William | May 1, 1951 |
| Robbin | Cormac | October 12, 1948 | Tombs | Russell | October 1, 1947 |
| Robinson | Edward | September 14, 1950 | Troughton | Henry | March 11, 1949 |
| Rose | Kenneth | June 11, 1946 | Trude | Willis | November 1, 1950 |
| Ross | James | January 1, 1951 | Vigus | Eric | September 1, 1951 |
| Ross | Campbell | November 8, 1951 | Wallace | Ralph | November 1, 1950 |
| Ross | Stanley | January 1, 1951 | Wallace | James | December 1, 1949 |
| Rothwell | Herbert | October 11, 1949 | Wands | William | May 1, 1947 |
| Rotstein | Meyer | February 1, 1949 | Ward | Norman | May 1, 1950 |
| Saban | George | October 1, 1951 | Webb | Jack | November 1, 1946 |
| Salter | Harry | May 1, 1951 | Whimsett | C.J. | |
| Sanders | Frank | April 25, 1929 | Wignall | Alfred | February 1, 1947 |
| Selke | Frank Jr. | | Williams | F. | |
| Sellon | George | March 1, 1947 | Williams | John | February 14, 1952 |
| Semple | Martin | November 18, 1947 | Wilson | Alan | November 1, 1952 |
| Shamanski | Howard | November 1, 1946 | Wood | Glen | November 1, 1952 |
| Shaw | James | March 9, 1939 | Wood | George | February 1, 1952 |
| Sims | T.G. | | Woodhead | Frank | May 1, 1948 |
| Simpson | Albert | November 1, 1950 | Woolnough | Sydney | December 17, 1947 |
| Simpson | John | August 1, 1950 | Work | William | December 17, 1947 |
| Singleton | Arthur | May 1, 1950 | Wray | Walter | June 11, 1946 |
| Smith | William | January 1, 1952 | Wright | Robert | September 12, 1947 |
| Smith | Thomas | June 1, 1946 | Yeomans | St. Clair | December 17, 1947 |
| Smithers | Chris | December 17, 1947 | Young | Jack | September 1, 1947 |
| Smyth | Norman | December 1, 1949 | Youngberg | Dennis | April 1, 1952 |
| Southam | George | | | | |
| Speers | Herbie | February 1, 1952 | | | |
| Spence | Alfred | February 1, 1950 | | | |
| Spencer | Jack | August 1, 1949 | | | |
| Spendiff | Howard | March 1, 1950 | | | |
| Spragge | Robert | April 1, 1949 | | | |
| Spratt | Donald | September 1, 1952 | | | |
| St. John | Allan | December 13, 1949 | | | |
| Stanley | Michael | September 1, 1943 | | | |
| Steiner | Louis | November 1, 1951 | | | |
| Sullivan | Edward | June 1, 1947 | | | |
| Sutton | Warren | June 1, 1952 | | | |
| Swailes | Frank(Red) | | | | |
| Swankie | Robert | November 1, 1951 | | | |
| Taylor | William | November 1, 1952 | | | |
| Taylor | Frank | March 1, 1947 | | | |
| Thompson | Gordon | June 11, 1946 | | | |
| Thompson | Philip | November 1, 1952 | | | |

* We have given our absolute best effort to ensure that every member who has achieved 50 years of membership in Local 353 is recorded here.
We apologize for any omissions.



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Miscellaneous:

Page 51 – Courtesy of Cliff Hoy

Page 55 – Courtesy of Mike Yarkony

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A photograph of the Chicago skyline at night, viewed from across a body of water. The city lights are reflected in the water. The sky is dark blue. The text is overlaid on the lower half of the image.

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By Edward E. Seymour