What Has Happened So far? circa 1980
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Abstract
A description of the union organizing process.
WHAT HAS HAPPENED SO FAR?

When a union begins the "organizing process," many wheels are set into motion. As has already been discussed, the real motivator behind those wheels is money - Your Money!

The union will just have contact with a very small group of employees, usually 2-5. The first meeting may either be initiated by the union or by interest on the employee's part. The union's primary objectives are to solidify this employee group and get them totally committed. At the same time the union begins using these employees to find out information about the employer and YOU. There may be a series of secret meetings held in bars, at houses or at dinner. Frequently, employees will be taken to or shown movies like "Norma Rae" or "Nine-to-Five" to convince these employees that they are doing the right thing. After being thoroughly "processed" the Employee Committee begins its work in recruiting other employees to join and sign authorization cards. This is where background information gathered on each employee in the earlier stages becomes vital. The only employees approached are those that the organizer and the committee feel would be supporters. Anyone who's name may be on their "pro management" list is systematically excluded. This is to prevent the upsurge of employees taking "the other side" and also to keep management from becoming aware. Thus, the chosen employees only hear one side of the story. Charts are made by work station or seating arrangement. Employees are divided into target groups and specific committee members are assigned to each group. Committee members are taught how to misrepresent authorization cards so that as large of a number of employees as possible sign cards. They tell employees to sign the card "for more information about the union" or "so that we can have a vote." Committee members may "platoon" (systematically approach specific influential employees over and over again) until the card is finally signed.

Now that the first phase of commitment, information gathering and card signing is completed, the union moves to its next phase - the underground campaign. Employees are told to keep all activities secret from both management and pro management employees because "if the boss finds out you are getting a union to give you equal power to him, you will be fired." Yes, the use of fear in a union drive starts very early. Once this fear is planted, the union continues
to run its campaign of hopes, dreams and visions of better days. This is done by basically finding out what each person wants or feels is wrong and promising either directly or by insinuation that the union will remedy their problems. Since employees wants and desires usually vary and many times conflict, the campaign is run on an individual or small group basis. Meetings may be held for only specific departments or job categories so that each group can be told what it wants to hear.

The union and its "committee of the committed" continue these practices of "discrimination - union style" and begin to program employees against two things - The Employer and Whoever May Represent the Employer (WCIRA). The employer will be portrayed as someone or group of people who have no regard for the employee and who is afraid of a union. Employees will be instructed that the employer will lie to them and, in fact, do anything possible to keep them from organizing. Employees will be programmed to not ask questions at meetings held by the employer. The union attempts to fill the employees minds with what it wants them to hear and then tries to close their ears and minds to the other side.

The EMPLOYER'S REPRESENTATIVE - The next step is to attempt to, in any way possible, discredit whoever is the employer's representative. Emotional statements will be made about "alleged" unfair tactics and illegal practices. The employer, in the union's opinion, should not be allowed to express its point of view.

WHAT HAPPENS FROM HERE?

Employees have a right to a free choice by SECRET ballot to decide whether or not they need to be represented by a union. The election process is governed by the National Labor Relations Board. Also governed is the conduct of both parties - the employer and its representatives and the union and its representatives. Your employer respects your right to a free choice by secret ballot and also supports your right to vote an informed ballot after having heard both the pros and cons. You have already probably heard much from and about the union and you will also hear and see much more as part of the union's systematic indoctrination process.

WHAT WILL THE UNION PROBABLY DO?
ASSAULTS ON WCIRA

One of the Unions favorite tactics is to try to shift the focus of the campaign from what the Union is and can do for you to their favorite diversion of attacking WCIRA. The Union will resort to distortion of West Coast's financial information and of occurrences in campaigns elsewhere. What the Union is trying to do is to make West Coast the issue so that they can avoid the real issue of what can the Union do for you.

HOUSECALLS

Sometime during the campaign the Union will not only approach you on the job but also as part of the pattern will probably come to your home. This is a continuation of their plan to tell each individual what he or she "wants to hear". The information that you discuss with the Union during the Housecall will then be discussed at a Union committee meeting so that they can decide whether or not you are committed to the Union. If you are not committed to the Union a plan of attack to get your vote is initiated. Remember that at the time of the Housecall you have no obligation to let the Union in or to talk with them unless you desire to do so.

TELEPHONE TREE

The Union designs a system of telephone contacts with all potential "yes" voters. This is made up in the design of a tree so that information can be fed quickly and systematically over the phone. You can expect a number of calls at home.

DEBATE CHALLENGE

Also included in the Union bag of tricks is challenging management to a public debate of the issues. This is normally done late in the campaign so that management doesn't really have the opportunity to fully respond. If the Union were really interested in a debate for the purpose of informing you rather than merely another campaign trick, they would surely have requested a debate already. Then you could have had the information from both sides prior to making your decision on whether or not to authorize the Union as your bargaining agency by signing an authorization card. After a petition has been filed much tighter constraints are placed on management and the Union is fully aware that management can not openly debate the issues. For management to make statements of what they would or would not do after a Union comes in or if a Union is voted out would be a direct, flagrant violations of the law. These violations could even possibly deprive you of your right to vote if management were to walk into the Union trap.
WAGE COMPARISON

The Union will probably pass out wage information regarding wages that are paid at other organizations where the Union exists. Naturally the Union will only show you the good ones, but for every good one that is shown there is at least probably only one or two contracts that this Union has negotiated for the same or less than what you are making here. Also, you should be careful to watch for distortions in the comparisons.

The Union will also probably float around contracts or pieces of contract language coming from their best contracts. Again be careful of these comparisons. Just because something has been negotiated in a different situation with a different employer does not mean that you will or will not have the same result in negotiations here.

EMOTIONALISM/SARCASM

The major thrust of the Union will be to divide you from management and employees from employees. This is done through the use of emotion, emotional terms, sarcasm and rumors. Watch for words like dignity, unfair, justice and others. These are the Unions buzz words. Without them their campaigns generally fail, since they stay away from fact and logic.

PARTIES/PICNICS ETC.

Now is the time that you will find the Union unusually willing to spend money on you. You may well be involved in dinners, lunches, free booze, T shirts, buttons, trips to the movies, etc. These things may look free but if you vote the Union in they could be the most expensive that you will ever find. The Union tries these age old tricks but it still boils down to basic fact "there is no such thing as a free lunch."

We talked about what the Union has done and will probably do. Their main attempt is to in every way possible shift the entire focus of the campaign away from you and your employer to an emotional attack on the employees representatives (WCIRA). We also discussed the other tactics utilized in the systematic process of programming you. What we ask is that you make the decision after you have heard the facts and after you have had the opportunity to ask questions and fully explore both possibilities. Your mind does not have to be made up now. Your vote is secret and we urge you to exercise that secret ballot and also to make it as well informed of a vote as possible.