



**INTERNATIONAL
BROTHERHOOD
OF ELECTRICAL
WORKERS**

June 14, 1994

**TO: ALL INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES
IN THE UNITED STATES**

All of you have received several communications from International Representatives Owen Schleisman and Don Mahoney, concerning their efforts to organize a union of IBEW International Representatives. I want to take this opportunity to express my opinion on the need - or lack of it - for a union of International Representatives.

As I will explain below, I strongly believe that it is not in the best interests of the IBEW or its International Representatives to establish an organization to negotiate the terms and conditions of employment of International Representatives. I want you to know at the outset, however, that I am firmly committed to a policy that protects the free exercise by all International Representatives of their rights under the National Labor Relations Act. To that end, I have advised all International Vice Presidents in the United States that there must be no interference with the organizing activities of any International Representatives.

I do want to advise each of you, as indicated above, that I am opposed to the organizing effort commenced by Brothers Schleisman and Mahoney because I believe it is not in the best interests of either the Brotherhood or its Representatives. There are several reasons for my belief.

First, many of the key economic terms and conditions of employment of International Representatives are specified in the IBEW Constitution, which can be amended only by the International Convention, which meets every five years. I firmly believe it would be a mistake to change this stable system for setting the economic employment terms of International Representatives for many years. As you know, the obligation to bargain with an exclusive bargaining representative encompasses all terms and conditions of employment, including salary and retirement benefits.

Second, although there has been some mention in the correspondence from Brothers Schleisman and Mahoney of obtaining a grievance procedure for International Representatives, that issue - like other terms and conditions of employment - would be determined through the give-and-take of the bargaining



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process. Thus, while the IBEW would certainly bargain with a union of Intentional Representatives over a grievance procedure, there is no requirement that the IBEW agree to such a procedure.

Third, I believe that most International Representatives feel as I do that their present working relationship with the Brotherhood serves everyone's interests. The selection of a bargaining representative is likely to change the nature of the employer/employee relationship, by making it more formal and structured, and diminishing the present system of direct resolution of issues between Representatives and their Vice Presidents, Department Directors, etc. My record, and that of my predecessors, demonstrates a long history of fair treatment of International Representatives under our present system.

Finally, if you believe that your present terms and conditions of employment are beneficial to you, I think you should ask yourselves whether it is worthwhile to change the system that brought those benefits to you and your fellow International Representatives across the country, solely because of an effort stemming from the isolated complaints of a few Representatives. I am confident that the overwhelming majority of you will conclude that such a change would be unwise.

Best wishes.

Fraternally yours,

J. J. Barry

International President

JJB:plg
cc: All U.S. IVPs