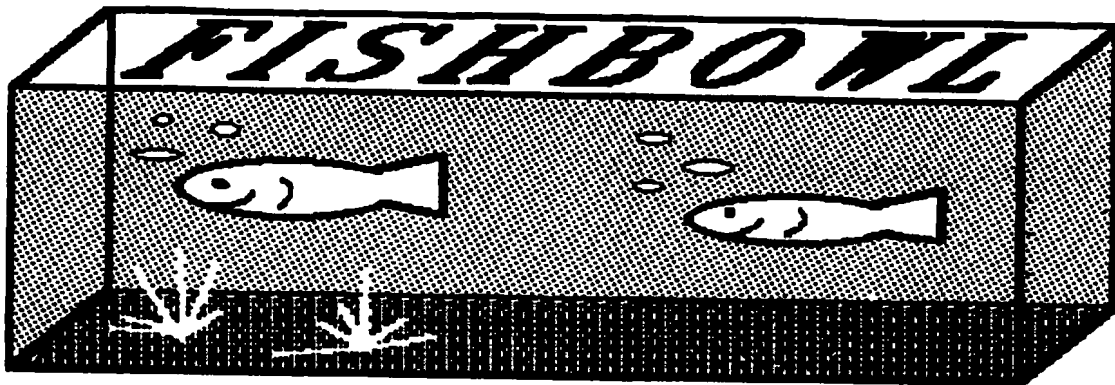


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NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

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EPA HEADQUARTERS' PROFESSIONALS

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BY RUFUS MORISON

*"We must conduct our affairs at EPA as if we worked inside a fishbowl—"
William Ruckelshaus, Former Administrator, U. S. EPA*

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**UNION CONGRATULATES REILLY ON NOMINATION--
REQUESTS AND RECEIVES ASSURANCE OF EARLY MEETING**

On December 27th, Bill Hirzy, President of NFFE Local 2050, sent a letter of congratulation to William K. Reilly, currently President of the Conservation Foundation and the new Administration's nominee for Administrator of EPA. The letter expressed the Union's positive expectations in working with an Administrator with such wide experience and demonstrated commitment to environmental protection, and, on behalf of the over 1,200 professional employees which NFFE represents at EPA, extended warm congratulations.

The letter also requested an early meeting including Mr. Reilly or his representative and the President and President-Elect (Bob Carton) of NFFE to discuss issues of concern to the Union. Included with the letter were: 1) the Union's contribution to the "Blueprint for the Environment," which a coalition of various environmental groups including the Union prepared and delivered to President-elect Bush recently, and 2) the "President's Message" from the December issue of the Union newsletter, "Inside the Fishbowl." These two items were included with the letter because they rather succinctly convey the Union's chief concerns with respect to EPA Headquarters.

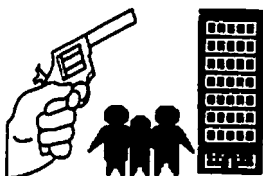
The Union is heartened by Mr Reilly's very positive response to its congratulatory letter. On January 6th, Mr. Gordon Binder of Mr. Reilly's staff called NFFE and indicated that Mr. Reilly would be happy to meet with the Union following his confirmation by the U.S. Senate. In addition, Mr. Bryan Day of Mr. Reilly's staff graciously responded to the request of the Union for a photograph of Mr. Reilly for inclusion in this newsletter. NFFE is very gratified by these positive responses and looks forward to meeting with Mr. Reilly and to working together with him in a positive, problem-solving way to accomplish the very important mission of this Agency, to which both Mr. Reilly and EPA professionals are very much committed.

NFFE urges all EPA employees to write to their U.S. Senators urging confirmation of Mr. Reilly as Administrator of EPA. Mr. Reilly has a long history of concern for the environment. He is currently President of both the Conservation Foundation and the World Wildlife Fund. Both of these organizations have worked very hard for vital environmental goals and have accomplished much in the areas of pollution and toxic substances control, conservation and responsible use of land and water resources, and the preservation of endangered species of wildlife, plants, and natural habitats. These organizations also sponsor scientific research in environmental fields and administer public information and awareness programs which alert the general public to important environmental issues. In addition, these organizations have been quite active in environmental dispute resolution, bringing a realistic problem-solving attitude to bear on very complicated environmental problems.



Photograph courtesy of Bryan Day,
the Conservation Foundation

NFFE is very pleased with the new Administration's nomination of Mr. Reilly as the Administrator of EPA. The Union is hopeful that Mr. Reilly's demonstrated commitment to environmental concerns and his successful efforts in resolving complicated issues between widely-separated disputing parties bodes well for a positive, problem-solving Labor-Management relationship at EPA. The Union, and the 1,200 professionals at EPA which it represents, look forward to working together with Mr. Reilly to successfully accomplish the Agency's vital mission.



SECURITY?

NEGOTIATIONS ON EMPLOYEE SECURITY BEGIN— EPA REJECTS 21 OF 24 UNION PROPOSALS

On December 16th, after reaching a settlement on two Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) complaints issued by the Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA) against EPA on employee security negotiations and related security contract information, Union negotiations began with EPA on employee security.

EPA rejected 21 of 24 Union proposals because the Agency claimed they were non-negotiable. The Union appealed the decision to the FLRA and a copy of the appeal was served on the Administrator on January 13th.

The two NFFE Local 2050 negotiators, Mrs. Eleanor Carney, Chief Steward, and Dr. Pat Hilgard, were surprised by EPA's almost blanket rejection of the proposals. "Most of the proposals are just plain common sense. Unfortunately, EPA's performance on employee security has been dismal, but this will help us tremendously in arguing our case to the FLRA," stated Mrs. Carney.

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The case law on employee security is limited but shows that, if a proposal does not significantly interfere with management's right to determine internal security practices, the FLRA will usually order an Agency to negotiate, especially if the employees will benefit more than management will be impacted.

Of the original Union proposals, which are enumerated elsewhere in this issue in a separate article, the three proposals which were accepted by EPA for negotiations were Nos. 6 and 7 (on emergency phone stickers) and No. 16 (on the adequacy of security). The Union also submitted six more proposals on January 6th for EPA's consideration, which are also enumerated elsewhere in this issue. These proposals came, for the most part, directly from case law and will be harder for EPA to reject.

In related developments, on January 5th, NFFE's Chief Steward wrote a memorandum to Vincette Goerl, Director of the Facilities Management and Services Division, regarding security at the Fairchild Building. The memorandum informed her of recent repeated incidents of unauthorized individuals gaining access to EPA work space at the Fairchild Building. The Union provided official notification of these problems so proper corrective action can be taken. "The corrective action necessary is an armed lobby guard to check ID's of everyone entering this building," the Union's memorandum stated. After the memorandum was sent, a theft of a speaker phone over the weekend was reported. This is the third speaker phone stolen from the Office of Marine and Estuarine Protection in the last few weeks. "What is more disturbing is that these thefts are happening over the weekend when restricted hours are in place. This means the individual is someone who has access to the building with either an EPA ID or someone on Mrs. Fairchild's building staff," Mrs. Carney stated. The Union was recently informed by the Building Manager of the Fairchild Building, Mr. Jack Taylor, that an EPA security guard was recently fired for stealing property from the Fairchild Building.

The Union believes that employees should be warned of the recent incidents of theft and unauthorized entry into EPA space so that they may judge for themselves whether it is safe to work in EPA buildings on weekends, for example.

NFFE LOCAL 2050'S PROPOSALS ON EMPLOYEE SECURITY

The Union's original proposals on employee security are as follows:

1. All bargaining unit employees at EPA Headquarter facilities should receive the same level of protection provided to our bargaining unit employees at Crystal City Mall.
2. All arrest reports and incident reports involving bargaining unit employees shall be provided by EPA to the Union President or his designate within 36 hours of the incident. Also, all arrest reports and incident reports involving non-bargaining unit employees shall be provided by EPA, after removing the names, to the Union President or his designate within 36 hours of the incident.
3. Prior to initiation of changes to existing protection levels of bargaining unit employees at EPA Headquarters' facilities, EPA shall provide to the Union signed statements from EPA's security support services contractor

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or the Federal Protective Service indicating that the changes will result in adequate employee security.

4. All bargaining unit employees shall receive monthly from EPA, through desk-top delivery, a complete crime statistics monthly summary for the EPA Headquarters' buildings and adjacent areas for the previous month.
 5. EPA shall provide for protection from bullets or other projectiles and any other dangerous objects, including automobiles, from entering the work space of bargaining unit employees located in ground floor offices with windows, especially in the N.E. Mall and the ground floors of East Tower, West Tower and the second floor offices with windows facing the terrace at Waterside Mall.
 6. The EPA shall provide and publicize two emergency numbers for reaching the guard service in the telephone directory and on stickers for bargaining unit employee phones. The second number should be an emergency number manned 24-hours a day for use when the guards' phone number is ringing busy or is not answered.
 7. The Agency shall distribute not less than annually stickers with updated emergency numbers for guards and the health unit to bargaining unit employees.
 8. The EPA shall notify the Union President or his designate in writing within 24 hours of the following serious incidents:
 - (a) Lost master keys or any lost external door keys to EPA Headquarters' facilities,
 - (b) windows broken due to objects impacting on or penetrating the windows at EPA Headquarters facilities,
 - (c) totally unmanned posts at any Headquarters' entrances at Waterside Mall, Fairchild, and Crystal City Mall,
 - (d) any door which is reported unsecured or inoperable for more than two consecutive days,
 - (e) armed guards who have worked one day or more without proper weapon certification, and
 - (f) lost weapons reported at HQ facilities.
 9. The Agency shall implement a touch-badge procedure which would require the guards to touch the badges while inspecting them to determine whether access to the Headquarters' buildings should be allowed.
 10. The EPA shall distribute a Security Bulletin, similar to those distributed currently on an irregular basis, at least quarterly to EPA Bargaining Unit employees.
 11. Security Alerts shall be issued by desk-top distribution within 48 hours to bargaining unit employees for incidents at or in parking areas in close proximity to EPA Headquarters' facilities which involve:
-



- (1) armed robberies
- (2) assaults (simple or aggravated)
- (3) murder (attempted or actual)
- (4) rape (attempted or actual)
- (5) shootings (attempted or actual)
- (6) stolen automobiles
- (7) abduction (attempted or actual)

The Security Alerts shall also be posted on all lockable bulletin boards within 48 hours of the incident.

12. EPA should begin an aggressive campaign to prevent theft of personal property and to apprehend suspects or take action to determine the perpetrator if a theft occurs at EPA Headquarters' facilities. The Union should be consulted on campaign approach and implementation.

13. The Union President or his/her designate shall be notified so that he/she or his/her representative can be present at any inspection of a bargaining unit employee's desk, possessions, or other furniture by EPA or its contractors or the Federal Protective Service or its contractors for suspected violations of confidential business information (CBI) regulations or for other security-related reasons.

14. EPA management or its agents shall provide timely, qualified escort service to areas adjacent to EPA Headquarters' facilities for bargaining unit employees.

15. The Agency shall provide the Union with copies of all security surveys of EPA facilities occupied by bargaining unit employees within 30 calendar days of completion by EPA, its contractors, FPS or its contractors or others.

16. EPA shall provide adequate security to all bargaining unit employees.

17. EPA shall conduct semi-annually crime prevention seminars for bargaining unit employees.

18. EPA shall significantly reduce the number of false fire alarms due to testing of the alarm system or repairs to fuse boxes at Headquarters' facilities during work hours by restricting these repairs to weekends or after work hours.

19. EPA shall test the loud speakers, at least semi-annually, and fire alarms, as required by law, regulation, or ordinance, at Waterside Mall and at any other applicable Headquarters' facility and provide such test results to the Union within 48 hours after completion of the test.

20. The Agency will establish and maintain a forum for sharing of information between bargaining unit employees and upper management concerning security issues at the Headquarters' facilities. This forum (called the Facilities Advisory Council) will consist of management officials and interested employees. It shall meet every 4-6 weeks. The agenda will be posted in all Headquarters' facilities on the lockable bulletin boards in advance and management will review topics for discussion from all bargaining unit employees.

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21. EPA shall provide the Union with the option of participating in the selection panel for contracts involving guard services or the security support services at EPA Headquarters' facilities.
22. The Union should be notified within 24 hours of any bomb threats received by EPA and EPA's reason for not evacuating the premises, if it decides not to.
23. EPA shall provide oversight by guard of contractors providing services such as cleaning, moving, installation and repair, or similar services at EPA Headquarters' facilities.
24. EPA shall sign for courier packages at the main entrances to prevent entry of unauthorized or dangerous personnel onto the premises at EPA Headquarters' facilities.

NFFE Local 2050 also proposed the following on January 6th:

1. If management determines that any EPA Headquarters' facilities are to remain open for extended periods of time, then management should take the necessary steps to provide for the protection of bargaining unit employees and for property located within these areas.
 2. All hand-carried items by couriers for bargaining unit employees shall be checked at the front desk area at the main entrances to the EPA Headquarters' facilities, to be secured by management and made available to the bargaining unit employees at anytime during the day.
 3. Searches of personal belongings or of bargaining unit employees' possessions (e.g. desk, clothing, cabinets) be permitted only on the basis of reasonable suspicion, based on specific objective facts and reasonable inferences drawn from those facts.
 4. EPA shall provide to all bargaining unit employees secure areas in their immediate office areas for storing personal property.
 5. When EPA exercises its legal right to search a bargaining unit employee's possessions at the work site (e.g. desk, locker, car, clothing, etc.) in a non-criminal matter, the employee will be allowed to be present during the search if the employee is otherwise present at the work site and that employee, upon request, shall be represented by the Union during the search provided that the supply of such representation by the Union shall not unduly delay the search or impede the purpose for which the search is conducted.
 6. EPA shall provide advance copies of all Security Bulletins and Security Alerts to Union representatives prior to distribution to bargaining unit employees for the purpose of comment on the accuracy of the information contained in the publications. If the Union can prove the information is not accurate, then the Agency will modify the statements to make them accurate prior to distribution provided that the Union's review does not unduly delay the publication or impede the purpose for which the publication is intended.
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OPTS AND OAR JOIN NFFE/EPA COMPRESSED WORK WEEK (CWW) PLAN

On Friday, January 13th, and on Wednesday, January 18th, NFFE Local 2050 and Agency negotiators agreed to include the Office of Pesticides and Toxic Substances (OPTS) and the Office of Air and Radiation (OAR), respectively, in the Compressed Work Week Agreement concluded on November 10th between NFFE and EPA for all professionals working at EPA's Headquarters. OPTS and OAR can now implement the CWW plan at any time.

In addition to the Addendum to the November 10th agreement recognizing professionals in OPTS and OAR as participants in the plan, an additional Clarification and Addendum to the November 10th agreement was also signed by Robert J. Carton and Dayton Eckerson on behalf of NFFE which clarified the facts that: 1) an employee's work day cannot begin before the building is officially opened (currently, Waterside Mall-6:30 a.m.; Fairchild-6:30 a.m., and Crystal City-6:00 a.m.); 2) EPA and NFFE will meet periodically to discuss the success of and any problems arising from the agreement (the first of these meetings is now scheduled for July, 1989) and to negotiate any changes which might be made in the agreement; and 3) EPA management may terminate or modify the plan unilaterally only if certain very strict legal conditions are met - which are set forth in 5 USC 6131 or 5 USC 7106(a)(2)(D).

Professionals in EPA units already participating in CWW plans should specify the NFFE agreement in their requests for participation. This is important, as it now seems that there will be different plans for members of the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) and for managers in almost every EPA unit.

As of this writing, the following Offices have not yet complied with the November 10th agreement and have not stated their reasons for not so doing: Office of General Counsel (OGC), Office of Research and Development (ORD), and Office of External Affairs (OEA). NFFE urges professional employees in these EPA units to query their management as to why their particular unit should not be on the NFFE/EPA Compressed Work Week Agreement.

UNION FILES UNFAIR LABOR PRACTICE CHARGE AGAINST GRIZZLE OVER OARM'S COMPRESSED WORK WEEK (CWW) PLAN

Very reluctantly, the Union has been forced to file an Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) charge against Assistant Administrator for the Office of Administration and Resources Management (OARM) Charles Grizzle over the compressed work week plan in his Office.

On November 10, 1988, the Union and Mr. Grizzle's subordinates in the Labor Relations Section of the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) signed an agreement on compressed work week that included OARM as well as the Office of Enforcement and Compliance Monitoring (OECM), the Office of Water (OW), the Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response (OSWER) and the Office for Policy, Planning, and Evaluation (OPPE). The Union has obtained a copy of a memorandum sent to all OARM employees eight days later that

completely ignores the existence of the agreement signed on November 10th, and, in substantial ways, subverts that signed agreement! What many Assistant Administrators apparently fail to comprehend is that the NFFE/EPA agreement of November 10th is the ~~single agreement~~ between the Agency and the Union representing all professionals at Headquarters.

Among the differences between the plan Mr. Grizzle announced in his November 18th "all-hands" memorandum and the plan to which he is nevertheless bound by the November 10th agreement are:

1. Mr. Grizzle wants only a 6-month "pilot" program, whereas the plan to which he is bound is "evergreen", reviewed annually for effectiveness, and problems arising are dealt with immediately by EPA-Union negotiators.

2. Mr. Grizzle wants to include employee performance as a criterion for participation in CWW, whereas the negotiated plan does not permit such a condition.

3. Mr. Grizzle wants to exclude part-time employees, even though they are included in our bargaining unit and are, therefore, entitled to the same representation by us as full-time employees.

The Union met with a representative of Mr. Grizzle to discuss this unfortunate situation and to suggest that a letter from him to OARM employees stating that the November 10th agreement governs for NFFE-represented employees would make the ULP go away.

In a related situation, the Union learned of plans in the Office of Research and Development (ORD) to implement a CWW plan on January 15th that is at odds with the November 10th plan. Upon investigating, the Union found that management's labor relations people apparently never complied with terms of the November 10th agreement which required submission of the November 10th plan to ORD and other AA-ships not covered as yet by it. After submission of the November 10th plan, the AA's were to be invited to come under it or state in writing why they could not.

The Union immediately sent a memorandum to ORD's Assistant Administrator pointing out the problem and offering to have ORD's professional employees come under the November 10th plan while the AA and management's labor relations people sort out the mix-up. Bill Hirzy met with Mr. Grizzle on January 5th to discuss this problem, and Mr. Grizzle ordered an expedited investigation by his staff to find out what went wrong and to fix it. Time will tell—

VICTORY FOR RECYCLING

NFFE's efforts, along with those of local environmental and business organizations, have made the District of Columbia Mandatory Curbside Recycling bill a reality! We won! Thank you all for your help!

RECYCLING



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On January 10, 1989, Mayor Barry gave in to the wave of phone calls generated by NFFE members and other concerned citizens and signed the bill into law, ignoring the advice of his Cabinet to veto the recycling measure. Mayor Barry did add that he thought that the law will be difficult to implement.

This result stems from nearly a year of NFFE's effort of testifying at hearings, lobbying the City Council, and, after the bill had passed the Council in December, 1988, lobbying the Mayor. A job well done! The bill's sponsor, Nadine Winter, said that the Council had received no negative comments and more positive comments on this bill than on any other.

This law now puts Washington, DC, in the forefront of states and cities experimenting with recycling programs. All residents and commercial buildings must comply. Although not frequently mentioned, federal law (42 USC § 6961) requires federal facilities to abide by local recycling laws such as this one. This should mean recycling in all DC federal buildings!

The only negative note in this whole happy story came from an EPA management that complained about NFFE's lobbying efforts, citing Hatch Act concerns. This, of course, is totally absurd! The Hatch Act governs participation in partisan electoral campaigns and specifically approves participation in non-partisan legislative efforts such as this one! Management's chosen interpretation of the Hatch Act would seem to be a bit embarrassing.



Photograph courtesy of Federal Times

EPA'S CARPET PROBLEM WIDELY DISCUSSED IN NEWS MEDIA

The photograph at the left of Kirby Briggs, an EPA employee and a member of the Committee of Poisoned Employees (C.O.P.E.), appeared in the Federal Times of January 2, 1989, in its article, "1988: The Year in Review." Kirby is one of the unfortunate employees at EPA Headquarters who has been so severely adversely affected by the recently installed new carpeting that he must either not enter EPA buildings or utilize a respirator to perform his work. Several other EPA employees have also been so severely affected that their physicians will not permit them to enter EPA buildings. Stories on the carpeting problems at EPA have also appeared in The Washington Times of November 22, 1988, and in USA TODAY of November 11,

1988, to mention only a few of the recently published articles. NFFE still maintains its frequently stated position on this issue: it is unconscionable for EPA to continue to refuse to remove all installed portions of the carpeting which has elicited such adverse health effects in EPA employees!

UNION AND MANAGEMENT FAIL TO REACH AGREEMENT ON ALTERNATIVE WORK SPACE POLICY

Alternative work space (AWS) negotiations are at a standstill after the Agency's negotiators verbally agreed to a policy with NFFE negotiators Rufus Morison, Joanne Bassi, and Eleanor Carney, and then subsequently refused to



sign the same agreement.

The alternative work space proposal arose from an initiative from Charles Grizzle, Assistant Administrator for Administration and Resources Management, in response to the building-induced sickness in approximately 12 of EPA's most severely affected employees (a very much larger number of employees have also been adversely affected, but not so severely). The Agency presented a draft proposal and NFFE responded with a comprehensive proposal in late December, 1988.

The NFFE proposal provided two mechanisms by which employees could gain access to AWS: by obtaining medical documentation by a physician of their own choice that the air quality in their normal work space causes adverse effects in them; or by mutual agreement between the employee and supervisor. The Union retained the right to bargain over the impact of any proposed move, including appropriate warnings about air quality, etc.

After meeting with Union negotiators Joanne Bassi and Eleanor Carney on January 10th, Agency negotiator James T. Jackson, Jr. verbally gave his assent to the NFFE proposal. After consultation with NFFE's Executive Board, the unchanged Board-approved NFFE proposal was presented to the same Agency negotiator by Bob Carton, NFFE's President-Elect, at a meeting of the Labor-Management Committee on January 13th. Jackson again assented to the contents of the NFFE proposal, and January 18th was established as the date for signing the agreement. On January 18th, when NFFE negotiators met with Mr. Jackson expecting the joint signing of the agreement, Jackson refused and expressed objection to almost every part of the proposal. Mr. Jackson then agreed to have a new EPA proposal on AWS ready for bargaining on January 19th at 10 a.m. As of this writing, NFFE is still waiting to view the new EPA proposal. Much worse, some very sick EPA employees are also waiting - waiting to obtain a cleaner work environment so that they may continue to work for this Agency!

INDOOR AIR QUALITY/HEALTH SURVEY COMING SOON

A survey questionnaire covering health status and work environment issues will be coming to all Waterside Mall, Crystal City and Fairchild Building employees of EPA in mid-February. The survey questionnaire will be followed by air monitoring work at WSM and Fairchild in early March. This effort is part of EPA's response to employee complaints about these matters over the past year or so. Air quality of Crystal City offices will not be monitored, in part because of funds limitations and in part because fewer complaints have come from Crystal Mall #2 than from Waterside Mall. The fewest complaints have come from employees working in the Fairchild Building, and it is therefore serving as a quasi-control, "healthy" building in this study.

The survey will be conducted by Westat, Inc. and the information obtained will be held in complete confidence by the contractor--no employee will be identified to either EPA or to the unions. A brief follow-up survey of selected employees (based on their work station's proximity to the air monitoring units) will also be conducted and be done in complete confidence by Westat.

Air monitoring will include 25 6-hour samplings at WSM and 15 6-hour samplings at Fairchild. In addition to these samples, which will be analyzed

for comfort factors as well as a full range of volatile organics and 4-phenylcyclohexene, about 100 and 60 comfort factor samples of 5-minute duration will be taken at WSM and Fairchild, respectively.

Both the National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE) and the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) have actively participated in designing this survey. NFFE Local 2050 endorses this effort and urges every employee to participate by filling out the questionnaire completely and accurately, even if they have previously filled out a Union "short-form" survey last year or have reported to the Health Unit or have been interviewed by the Agency contractor on this issue last spring.

JOINT LETTER FROM UNIONS AND ADMINISTRATOR ON HEALTH SURVEY

The Presidents of EPA's unions (NFFE and AFGE) and the Agency's Administrator are sending jointly a letter to all EPA employees that encourages them to participate in the upcoming health survey related to "sick-building" problems. The survey is confidential and will be used to address problems related to poor air quality in EPA's buildings. NFFE Local 2050 urges all EPA employees to participate. NFFE has heard that official work time will be allowed employees to complete this survey.



**CONTRARIAN'S
CORNER ***

CALL A SPADE - A SPADE!

by Rufus Morison, Ph.D.
Ecologist

I'm often reminded of Stanley Kubrick's masterpiece, Dr. Strangelove, or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb. In particular, the subtitle of the movie is intriguingly familiar and uncomfortable. The subtitle here might go something like, "Trust Me, I'm from EPA, or How I Learned to Love the White Lie and Give Up Ethical Behavior..."

For scientists, the responsibility for ideas and objective statements about the results of analysis and experiment is essential to professionalism. (This is not to say that scientists have exclusive insight on objective statement, only that science is subject to oversight.) However, the method of the scientist, rigorously observed, offers fairly complete guidance for the practitioner. The ethics are reinforced by the nature of the scientific endeavor: supporting the system of analytic and critical oversight is a body of peers who compare their knowledge to the hypothesis being examined. The rules of the system do not depend so much on personality as they do on the validity of the science. (The objects and goals of science and scientists are not often grounded in a cult of personality.) That is, the currency of science is the collective quest to determine how and why the system in question functions as it does. The scientific and professional community, in general, recognizes members for contributions to the advancement of the quest. These contributions are continuously subjected to validation by peers operating within the recognized rubric of science.

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All too frequently, when official EPA faces scientific results that disagree with "policy," it changes the venue for analysis, or the analysis falls into a cosmic "rathole" to be nibbled away beyond recognition by faceless pygmies. Analyses of the risks posed by asbestos, lead, acid deposition, carpets, several pesticides, and countless toxic chemicals represent examples. The list is too long to feel comfortable with, particularly as a scientist having doubts about pronouncements of positive reassurance from a spokesperson for the Administrator. But wait, you say, how about RADON? Yes, EPA did take a stand and sounded a warning: good work, EPA! On the other hand, whose interests are really at stake by sounding the alarm on radon? It is simply too bad that this positive result appears to be an exception to the general rule.

Hopefully, the new Administrator will take the refreshingly new approach of clearly labelling policy decisions as such. Such an approach is entirely acceptable, and obviates the burdens, ethical and otherwise, of staff scientists charged with "scientifically" defending what is, in fact, a policy decision.

* Contrarian's views are by definition individualistic---they do not necessarily represent those of NFFE Local 2050 or its other members.

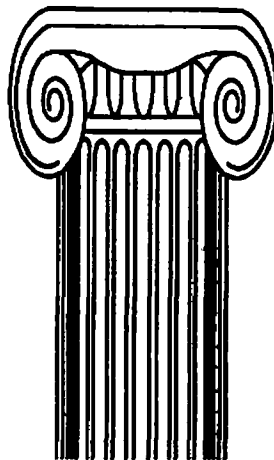
REMEMBER THE HOMELESS AND NEEDY --



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PRESIDENT-ELECT:
VICE-PRESIDENTS
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and
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WH565

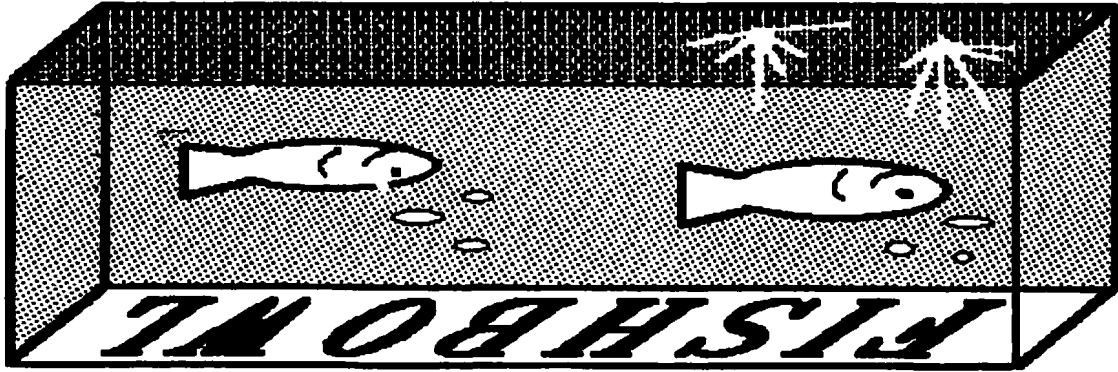
"We must conduct our affairs at EPA as if we worked inside a fishbowl"
William Ruckelshaus, Former Administrator, U.S. EPA

REILLY SWORN IN AS ADMINISTRATOR - -
 See Page 7 for Details!


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TESTIMONY ON THE CONFIRMATION OF WILLIAM K. REILLY
AS ADMINISTRATOR OF EPA

BY J. W. HIRZY, FOR NFFE LOCAL 2050
(JANUARY 31, 1989)



Mr. Chairman:

I am William Hirzy, President of Local 2050 of the National Federation of Federal Employees. Our Union represents 1200 professional employees at Headquarters of the Environmental Protection Agency in Washington. On behalf of those 1200 employees and our Union, I urge the confirmation of William Kane Reilly as Administrator of EPA.

Our Local Union has, through two mechanisms, sought to encourage the selection of just such persons as Mr. Reilly for the appointive jobs at EPA. We sponsored and got passed at our national Union's convention last September, a resolution that NFFE work toward the appointment and confirmation of managers with:

"Knowledge, skills and abilities in the field in which the appointee will be expected to function as a manager;

"Accomplishments indicative of the candidate's dedication to achieving societal goals embodied in the laws for which his/her Agency has responsibility; and

"Behavior patterns and training indicative of a candidate's ability to manage people".



We believe that William K. Reilly fulfills these criteria admirably.

Likewise, our Union participated in the Blueprint for the Environment coalition and sponsored a recommendation that was adopted by the coalition

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which mirrors the language cited above. Our coalition with environmental organizations reflects, among other things, Union members' interest in seeing a greater emphasis on ecological matters in future EPA operations, and Mr. Reilly's background encourages us to believe that this sort of new emphasis will be forthcoming under his leadership.

Our Union has serious concerns, however, about the state of morale in the career Civil Service at EPA. From the attention this subject has gotten in the press over the past year, we believe these concerns are shared by Congress, the President and, we hope, Mr. Reilly. These concerns will fall within Mr. Reilly's scope of authority as Administrator, and we ask that you seek his opinion about these morale-influencing matters.

First, we encourage attention to the proper role of negotiations in the sphere of environmental protection. Negotiating solutions to environmental problems seems to us perfectly appropriate. Such negotiations ensure to the maximum extent that all interests are addressed "up front", thereby speeding the rule-making process and minimizing possible legal challenges. The public is a clear beneficiary of such a process in terms of time and money spent. Negotiating over the existence of environmental problems is not appropriate at all. We see the proper role of EPA's science professionals as one which identifies and quantifies the existence of environmental problems, while the role of EPA's legal professionals and political appointees is to decide what to do about them. Either the ozone hole exists or it doesn't, and the consequences are likely to be of a particular magnitude. Politics, law and negotiations have no role in this process. What to do about the ozone hole falls within the purview of the political/legal process, and negotiations can be vital to a timely and effective solution. In this latter process, EPA Civil Service employees' role is to follow political managers' directives toward politically acceptable solutions--these solutions do not include denying existence of the problem, or minimizing the significance of its consequences, or keeping scientific assessments out of public view. That in a nutshell is the Union's view of professionally ethical Civil Service performance, and we hope it is Mr. Reilly's too.

Second is the issue of ensuring professionally ethical work at EPA. The Union believes that an enforceable code of professional ethics at EPA is in the public interest and the employees'. It will protect the validity of science used in EPA decision-making, and thus will ultimately protect the public we serve from erroneous or fraudulent use of science--or what is sometimes fobbed off as "science" in the often politically charged decision-making atmosphere at EPA. Mr. Reilly's support for an enforceable code of professional ethics will ensure its appearance as a work place norm at EPA. His opposition or ambivalence--in conjunction with the "management rights" provisions of the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978--will ensure that ethically executed professional work at EPA will continue to be at risk from incompetent or unethical management directives.

Third is the issue of the use of Civil Service staff scientists' work as opposed to "purchased science" in EPA decision-making. At EPA now, regulations are sometimes developed start-to-finish by contractors, in total usurpation of the legitimate government functioning of the career staff. The most recent example of this is the Office of Solid Waste's Interim Final Rule covering medical wastes, now in Red Border review. Mr. Reilly's clearly stated support--to employees and to Congress--for the use of Civil Service staff

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whenever possible will go a long way toward improving staff morale and, we believe, the value to the public of EPA's products. And let me be specific about this: we mean that Mr. Reilly should undertake a study of the staff resources now available at EPA versus the resources needed to properly conduct EPA's business with Civil Service employees and then report the findings to Congress.

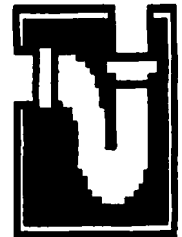
Fourth is the physical work environment at EPA Headquarters. While the Union commends EPA management's efforts to improve ventilation, management has consistently refused to remove a source of indoor air pollution (certain carpeting) at Waterside Mall responsible for severe illnesses and substantial financial loss to EPA employees. One of our people has been without a paycheck since August due to injuries inflicted by EPA management, and she has been refused by her immediate management in attempts to work at another location. We hope that Mr. Reilly will have some constructive thoughts on removing this thorn in the EPA employees' collective side.

Finally, the generally deplorable state of labor relations at Headquarters—just one example of which is the indoor air problem mentioned above—must be improved. We hope that the formerly excellent relations that existed until last Spring between the Headquarters unions and EPA management will be restored by Mr. Reilly's active intervention. The simplest way to achieve this end is to elevate responsibility for labor-management relations to the Immediate Office of the Administrator or to the Immediate Office of the Assistant Administrator for Administration and Resources Management and to staff that function with persons capable of dealing with policy issues of importance to employees in the professional job categories. Such a shift should keep future issues from turning into problems that fester under layers of bureaucratic indifference or ineptitude into hard feelings between the administration and its unions, as was the case last year.

We are certain that with Mr. Reilly's confirmation a completely new era in the Nation's drive to clean up the environment and to protect it and the health of its citizens is about to begin. The Union of EPA professionals eagerly awaits his arrival and the chance to join him in this exciting and important work.

HIGH LEAD LEVELS FOUND IN EPA DRINKING-WATER FOUNTAINS

EPA recently tested water from all drinking-water fountains throughout the Waterside Mall complex. Some elevated levels of lead were found. Testing was conducted under the worst conditions: early in the morning after the water had remained in the building plumbing overnight. This is, of course, the most responsible way to evaluate the human health hazard.



The danger could have been discounted by management in typical bureaucratic fashion. For example, a report might have been issued which maintained that "—it is unlikely that any one person would have received continuing long-term exposure—etc., etc." To its credit, management instead acted quickly and effectively by turning off the fountains where high lead levels were found, and by providing alternative bottled water. NFFE believes that congratulations are due to the EPA officials involved.

Postscript: The drinking-water fountain in EPA's day care center was tested; lead levels were not immediately alarming, but no level is "safe."

FLRA CASES PENDING AGAINST EPA BY NFFE LOCAL 2050

<u>CASE NO.</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>DATE FILED</u>	<u>DATE OF FLRA COMPLAINT</u>
3-CA-80612	EPA relaxes security at the Fairchild Building	9/7/88	1/31/89
3-CA-90090	EPA fails to establish Step 3 Resolution Panels and fails to negotiate in good faith over clarifying procedures for Step 3 Panels	11/7/88	1/30/89
3-CA-90088	EPA fails to provide information on Human Resources Councils (HRC's) and mini-councils	11/7/88	1/31/89
3-CA-90086	EPA management official threatens employee engaged in grievance proceeding	11/7/88	1/31/89
3-CA-90179	EPA fails to negotiate on bulletin boards	12/15/88	Under Investigation
3-CA-90177	EPA fails to negotiate over Bylaws of HRC's	12/13/88	Under Investigation
3-CA-90178	EPA fails to proceed to arbitration	12/16/88	Under Investigation
3-CA-90207	EPA moves employee without notifying Union	1/4/89	Under Investigation
3-CA-90229	EPA fails to negotiate in good faith over compressed work week	1/12/89	Under Investigation
3-CA-90240	EPA fails to provide information on lead in drinking water and carbon monoxide levels	1/18/89	Under Investigation
3-CA-90242	EPA fails to provide information on compressed work week	1/18/89	Under Investigation
3-CA-90241	EPA fails to provide information on compressed work week	1/18/89	Under Investigation

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3-CA-_____	EPA fails to impact bargain over the opening of the Fairchild Building on Sundays	1/24/89	Pending Investigation
3-CA-_____	EPA fails to negotiate in good faith on compressed work week in Office of Pesticides and Toxic Substances (OPTS)	1/25/89	Pending Investigation

FOUR COMPLAINTS ISSUED AGAINST EPA BY FLRA

In late January, the Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA) issued four more unfair labor practices complaints against EPA. An April 7th hearing before an administrative law judge will be held on these matters. The complaints are over EPA's failure to take employee views into account in opening stairwells in the Fairchild Building, the Agency's failure to recognize employee rights to a full hearing on grievances, EPA's failure to provide information on Human Resources Councils, and EPA's threatening an employee for his exercise of a right to a grievance hearing.

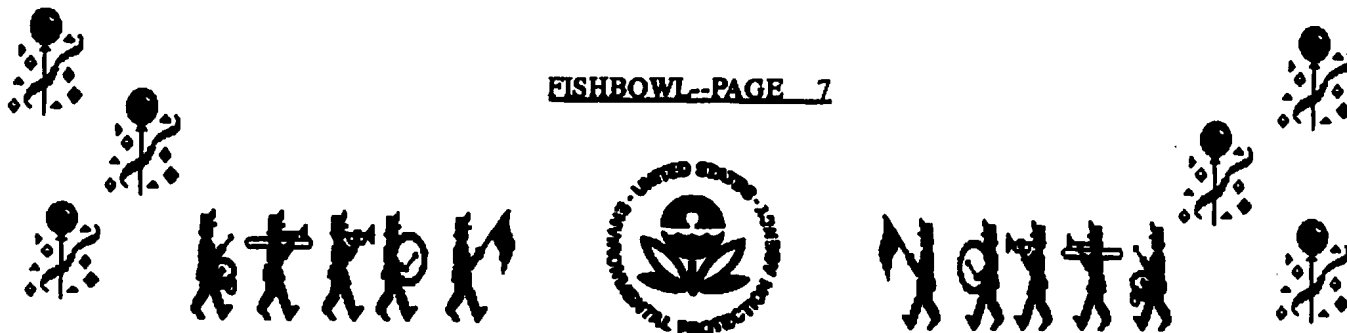
EPA's labor relations group indicated recently that they are interested in "burying the hatchet" and improving relations with the Union. The Union would like nothing better, but performance, and not mere words, is what is need to make relations better. Union officials are skeptical about management's overture. They suspect that the labor relations people who were bent on "teaching the Union a lesson in labor relations" last spring are now faced with the bill for their lessons. The cumulative record of abuses of employees' rights and the ULP's and grievances that those abuses precipitated are now coming under scrutiny by a new boss, and explanations are going to be required. The explanations are coming hard, because the Union's ULP charges have mostly been sustained by the FLRA. This puts the labor relations people in the position of justifying their actions to a management team reported to be interested more in cooperation than contention.

The record speaks clearly of Union offers of cooperation, of pleas to work together on problems of mutual interest to management and employees, and these offers and pleas have been spurned by the people who now want to "bury the hatchet". The Union says, "Fill your peace pipe, sit down in the council circle with us, show us your new face. Let us count the number of tips on the tongue in your new face. If the number pleases, we shall smoke with you".

★
NFFE IN ACTION-
LOCAL 2050

- NFFE/EPA COMPRESSED WORK WEEK AGREEMENT
- NFFE/EPA ALTERNATIVE WORKSPACE POLICY FOR "CARPET- AND/OR BUILDING-SICK" EMPLOYEES
- CONTRIBUTION TO "BLUEPRINT FOR THE ENVIRONMENT"
- EFFECTIVE WORK ON LEAD IN DRINKING-WATER AND CARBON MONOXIDE LEVELS IN EPA BUILDINGS
- NEGOTIATIONS ON EMPLOYEE SECURITY
- UNFAIR LABOR PRACTICE (ULP) CHARGES BROUGHT AGAINST EPA MANAGEMENT FOR DENIAL OF EMPLOYEES' RIGHTS IN SEVERAL AREAS
- REPRESENTATION OF BARGAINING UNIT MEMBERS IN GREIVANCES
- MANY OTHER ACTIVITIES TOO NUMEROUS TO MENTION





THE ADMINISTRATOR'S SWEARING IN CEREMONY -
AN EXCELLENT START FOR A POSSIBLY QUITE PRODUCTIVE FUTURE

On February 8th, William K. Reilly was sworn in as the Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency at Waterside Mall. This ceremony was quite significant. The presence of the President of the United States (the first time a U.S. President has ever attended an EPA function) may signal interest at the highest level in the programs and mission of the Agency. Following remarks by former EPA Administrator, Russell E. Train, President Bush stated, "I hope that it is plain--to everyone in this room and around the country that among my first items on my personal agenda is the protection of America's environment. In addition, the President said "Our great desire is a better life for all Americans, and I believe that economic growth and a clean environment are both part of what all Americans understand a better life to mean."

The decision to hold this ceremony at Waterside Mall suggests a desire that the maximum number of EPA's own employees attend the event. Although seating was quite limited, and tickets (whose distribution was governed by seemingly mysterious criteria) were required, greater attendance of employees resulted from the Waterside Mall location.

Remarks by Administrator Reilly indicated his personal respect for the "--exceptional dedication of EPA's employees," and his intention to "--rigorously enforce the environmental laws of this land." Other portions of the Administrator's remarks likewise reflected a deep personal commitment to the goals and mission of the Agency and a genuine respect for EPA's employees. NFFE Local 2050 welcomes Administrator Reilly to EPA and assures him that the 1,200 professional employees which it represents are eager to work with him to accomplish the goals to which we are all deeply committed. Mr. Reilly has indicated to NFFE that he wishes to meet with Union officials soon, and the Union looks forward to that meeting.

Another significant aspect of the ceremony from NFFE's perspective was that EPA certainly "did itself up proud." EPA's Band, under the able direction of Ms. Mary McInnis, performed so well that, in comparison, it could be said that the U.S. Marine Band played about as well! In addition, the National Anthem was beautifully rendered by another EPA employee, Ms. Darlene C. Cockfield, as were selections sung by the EPA Men's Chorus. Although a list of the names of all of the EPA employees who participated in this event is too long to mention here, NFFE Local 2050 wishes to thank them all for a job extremely well done. Compliments are also due EPA's Office of Administration and Resources Management for assisting in the difficult tasks of ensuring security and providing an appropriate physical environment for the ceremony.

Administrator Reilly's swearing in ceremony gave very positive signals to EPA, the Nation, and to members of the diplomatic corps representing many

other countries of the world. Protecting the environment and human health is, indeed, a global mission. Let us hope that the Administrator's leadership, and resulting EPA actions in the coming years, lend credence to those very positive signals!!!



CARPET RISKS PRESENTED

Bill Hirzy presented an analysis of risks associated with new carpet at a meeting on February 14th. The meeting was designed to show advisors to Assistant Administrator Charles Grizzle why the Union believes that: 1) new carpet caused at least six EPA employees to develop chemical hypersensitivity; and 2) that all portions of that lot of carpet should be removed from Waterside Mall.

The Union analysis, which will be submitted for peer-reviewed journal publication, showed that many people outside the Agency have suffered similar outbreaks of sensitivity after exposure to 4-phenylcyclohexene (4-PC) from carpet and from styrene-butadiene-based adhesives in the absence of carpet. Several detailed case reports were discussed, including one in which two species of domestic animals suffered symptoms like those in four family members. The presence of 4-PC in "old" as well as "new" carpet was established (demonstrating the need to remove even "old" carpet), as were exposure levels of 4-PC that appear to have induced hypersensitivity in EPA employees. The work of EPA scientists Burchette, Singhvi, Tichehor and others was used in the assessment. Epidemiological principles were used to establish a causal relationship between exposure to 4-PC and induction of hypersensitivity. Weight-of-evidence arguments were also advanced to strengthen the association. Then an exposure level to prevent induction of hypersensitivity was derived using standard safety factor assumptions, and a level to prevent simple irritative response was also calculated. The levels were, respectively, 0.005 ppb and 0.02 ppb.

The Agency is being asked to produce monitoring data gathered in November to determine how exposure levels compare with the calculated values. Information from outside sources indicates that levels are not likely to be below the calculated values.

UNION WINS ALTERNATIVE WORKSPACE POLICY FOR
"CARPET- AND/OR BUILDING-SICK" EMPLOYEES

Many of EPA's employees have been made so severely ill by recently installed carpeting that, on their physicians' advice, they have been unable to enter EPA buildings to perform their work for the Agency. NFFE Local 2050 still maintains that the only reasonable solution to this problem, which EPA management still resists, is to remove all portions of this newly installed carpeting to protect the Agency's employees from both the acute and, more importantly, potential long-term adverse health effects due to exposure to this carpeting. The story of the "carpet-and/or building-sick" employees at EPA has been carried in several previous issues of Inside the Fishbowl, and has had nationwide media coverage as well. The vast majority of these employees do not wish to retire from EPA (either on regular or disability retirement); they wish to continue to work for the Agency in an healthful environment that will permit them to do so.

Since many of these employees simply cannot enter EPA buildings to perform their work, the Union has been working very hard to come to some agreement with the Agency that would permit these employees to continue working for EPA in an alternative work environment outside of EPA's buildings. The Union was successful in negotiating the following Alternative Workspace Policy with EPA, which was signed on January 30, 1989, by representatives of NFFE Local 2050 (Dr. Rufus Morison and Ms. JoAnn Bassi) and EPA management (Mr. James T. Jackson, Jr. and Ms. Marita Llaverias). NFFE's negotiators worked long and hard to obtain this policy for EPA employees, the full text of which is presented below. Employees having questions regarding this negotiated policy should contact NFFE's President, Dr. Bill Hirzy, at 382-2327 or 382-2383 or contact other Union Officers, whose telephone numbers are listed elsewhere in this issue.

ALTERNATIVE WORKSPACE POLICY

Employees desiring to be considered for relocation to alternative workspace are required to submit the following documentation:

- 1) A narrative explanation of the medical basis for any conclusion which indicates the likelihood that the employee is or is not expected to experience subtle incapacitation;
- 2) A narrative explanation of the medical basis for any conclusion that duty restrictions or accommodations are or are not warranted;
- 3) A narrative explanation of the medical basis for any any conclusion which indicates the likelihood that an individual is or is not expected to suffer harm by carrying out his/her normal duties.

This process is voluntary, and employees may use the services of the Health Unit or a private physician to obtain this documentation.

Any medical information provided by an employee in connection with this process shall be kept confidential and will not be released to any person or organization without the written consent of the employee, except as provided in law or regulation.

All pertinent medical documentation shall be submitted to the physician in attendance at the Waterside Mall Health Unit. The physician will at the employee's written option, either: 1) translate the medical information into layman's terms so that the employee's supervisor can act on the request for alternative workspace; or 2) certify to the supervisor that the employee is eligible for alternative workspace. The supervisor shall notify the employee of the disposition of the request within a reasonable time. If a request is denied, the supervisor shall provide the employee written reasons for the denial.

An employee may determine, after moving into alternative workspace, that the space is not appropriate and request that further action be taken. The Agency shall make reasonable accommodations for employees making such requests.

Nothing in this policy supercedes 5 CFR Part 339, the title of which is, "Medical Determinations Related to Employability", or the collective bargaining agreement between NFFE Local 2050 and the Agency.

HRC's - A WORD TO THE WISE

For those of us who have been laboring under the misapprehension that Human Resources Councils (HRC's) are "all for the employee," here's a little tidbit that may open some eyes. The Union has discovered that the OSWER (Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response) HRC's chairperson pulled a fast one on the employees in that Office regarding the compressed work week (CWW) program. Chairman Bob Knox, well aware of the buttered side of his bread, arranged the OSWER program so that every week the official work week is "re-defined" to permit management to unilaterally change an employee's CWW schedule. Why would Mr. Knox do this? If a holiday falls within that week, Mr. Knox has arranged it so that the holiday is the "automatic" 8-hour day for the pay period. Let's say, for example, that your regular CWW schedule had the Friday following Thanksgiving as your 8-hour day in the pay period and you wanted to take leave for that day. Except for Mr. Knox's fast one, you would be charged the regularly scheduled 8 hours of leave for that Friday. But thanks to Bob, you get charged nine hours of leave, thus saving the "Company" one hour of leave expense. Good going, Bob, that ought to be worth at least a Bronze Medal and a couple of bucks next award season!



**CONTRARIAN'S
CORNER ***

WORKING CONDITIONS FOR PROFESSIONALS

by

Rufus Morison, Ph.D. and Robert J. Carton, Ph.D.

Earlier in this publication, Bill Hirzy's testimony on the confirmation of Mr. Reilly stressed the need to recognize the difference between identifying and negotiating the solutions to environmental problems. He called for an enforceable code of professional ethics to ensure that the identification of problems is protected from political manipulation. Many people have asked us: "Is the Union's involvement in this issue appropriate? Is this really a working conditions issue? We offer the following.

At the heart of the Union-Agency interface is the basic issue of working conditions, and the EPA is no exception in this regard. One might ask: "Just what are working conditions? Are there any peculiar to professional occupations?" Some obvious conditions are the physical environment of the workplace, the issues of personal security on the job (including assurance of bodily safety and protection of personal property), issues relating to the effects of the workplace environment on the health of the employees, the availability of adequate resources (support personnel, equipment, and supplies) necessary to accomplish the tasks of the job at hand, and the availability of the ordinary amenities of the workplace, such as adequate exercise and public parking facilities, and eating establishments - among which should be a cafeteria run by and for employees.

These issues are important to all EPA employees. However, for professionals, we believe there is an important issue that is quite different in nature from the others we have discussed. This is the issue of feeling free to fully exercise one's professional judgement with respect to scientific issues in

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an honest and ethical manner without fear of reprisal or of being treated as a pariah for presenting scientific or technical opinions at odds with the prevailing wisdom. This is not, of course, to imply that other non-scientific considerations do not have a valid place in the decision-making of Federal agencies. However, when choices are made based upon other than scientific criteria, then these bases should be publicly acknowledged.

With any freedom comes responsibility. It is the responsibility of the professional community to ensure that the practice of science is available in a polity devoid of self-service. This freedom of experienced professionals to bring their particular expertise to bear on the highly complex problems which confront this Agency in an atmosphere which does not threaten reprisal is a crucial working condition for professionals. In addition, we believe that this freedom represents the very underpinning of the endeavor that is science, and reflects an essential Constitutional right. We believe that the concerns relative to this vital working condition with respect to professional employees reflect in many ways what it actually means to be a professional.

* Contrarian's views are by definition individualistic---they do not necessarily represent those of NFFE Local 2050 or its other members.



SOMEONE IS NOW INSPECTING EPA'S INSPECTOR GENERAL !

According to a recent article by Jack Anderson and Dale Van Atta (The Washington Post; February 10, 1988, p. E5), EPA's Inspector General (IG), Mr. John C. Martin, and his chief assistant, Mr. John E. Barden, allegedly spent thousands of EPA's dollars to attend a week-long conference in Hong Kong, but, two months later, curtailed his staff's job-related trips. NFFE agrees with Mr. Anderson that the expensive Hong Kong trip would seem a bit far afield from EPA's mission. On the other hand, curtailing the staff's travel to Duluth (or elsewhere) to make sure that EPA's funds are actually being spent for activities aimed at protecting the environment and human health, and nothing else, seems to defeat one of the major purposes of EPA's Office of the Inspector General.

It is also interesting to note that, according to two employees in the IG's Office, the IG has allegedly travelled at EPA's expense in recent years to Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Alaska, and Hawaii, in addition to the Hong Kong trip. Allegedly, the IG took off for Hong Kong flying high--first class, no less!

Anderson and Van Atta asked the following questions in their article: "Who's watching the watchdogs? Do we need someone to make sure the inspector general isn't guilty of the abuses he is supposed to stop?" NFFE Local 2050's response to these questions is: "You bet your hard-earned tax dollars, we do!"

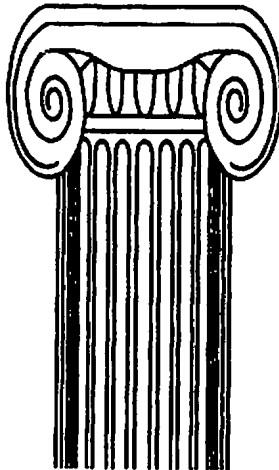
In fact, NFFE has documentation that the Office of the Special Counsel is now inspecting EPA's Inspector General and a variety of employee concerns in that Office. In a letter, dated August 4, 1988, Mr. Leonard M. Dribinsky, Assistant Special Counsel for Prosecution, Office of the Special Counsel, indicated to one affected EPA employee that, "Based on our initial review, we have determined that further investigation is warranted which we will now pursue."

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Apparently, both the FBI and the General Accounting Office (GAO) have also taken interest in EPA's Office of the Inspector General during the past year. In a letter, dated September 30, 1988, Senator Barbara Mikulski (Dem-MD) informed one affected EPA employee that she had forwarded documentation relating to the alleged filing of false travel vouchers/claims as well as questionable personnel practices in EPA's IG's Office to the GAO for review. Subsequent inquiries and investigations by the GAO and FBI have centered on complaints of travel voucher fraud, perjury, illegal personnel actions, and harassment and retaliation against "whistle-blowers."

NFFE is, itself, aware of what would appear to be several instances of harassment of employees and other questionable personnel practices which have occurred within the Agency's Office of the Inspector General. Local 2050 will be watching the Office of the Special Counsel's investigation with great interest. Hopefully, Administrator Reilly will be watching with similar interest. The Union's newsletter derives its very name from a quotation from the remarks of EPA's former Administrator, William Ruckelshaus; we hope that Administrator Reilly also agrees that, for EPA to retain public credibility, "We must conduct our affairs at EPA as if we worked inside a fishbowl."

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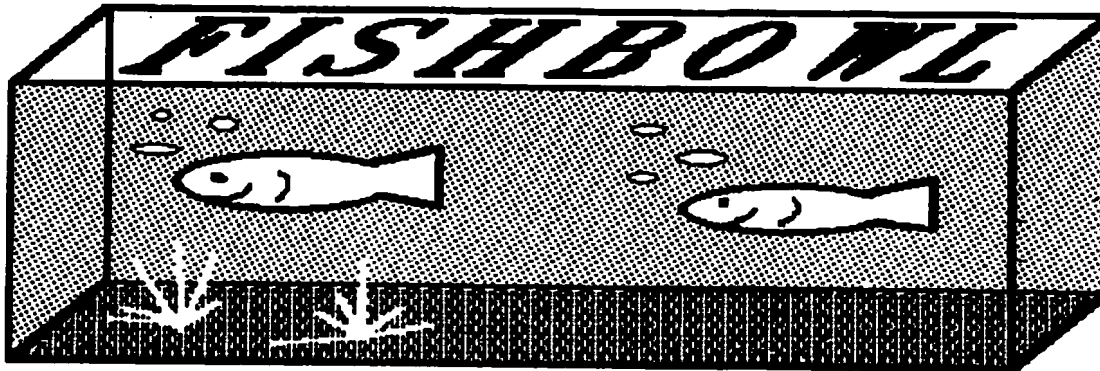
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MARCH-1989

EPA HEADQUARTERS' PROFESSIONALS

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NFFE WINS CWW FOR OGC !

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"We must conduct our affairs at EPA as if we worked inside a fishbowl—"
William Ruckelshaus, Former Administrator, U. S. EPA

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**NFFE TESTIFIES BEFORE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
"CONTRACTING-OUT"**

On February 23rd, NFFE Local 2050's President, Dr. William J. Hirzy testified before the U.S. House Committee on Post Office and Civil Service, and his entire testimony appears below.



Mr. Chairman:

I am William Hirzy, President of Local 2050, National Federation of Federal Employees, representing about 1200 professional employees at the Headquarters of the Environmental Protection Agency in Washington. I would like to give you the Union's impressions of the effect of present contracting-out policies on employee morale and on the efficiency of the Civil Service in carrying out the mission of EPA.

I will draw heavily in this testimony on the work of my predecessor, Bill Coniglio, who last year completed a study of staffing at EPA Headquarters and its relationship to EPA's ability to accomplish its assigned mission with the staff resources available.

The issue of contracting out EPA's scientific and technical work is a serious morale problem, and it also affects EPA's ability to do the job the public expects of the Agency.

You may have noticed the "B.C." comic strip that Johnny Hart did in December on EPA. In that strip a baby ant asks its daddy, "What's an example of environmental waste, Dad?" The reply was, "The E.P.A.". Environmental organizations accuse EPA of "bureaucratic senescence", "voodoo toxicology", and "failure of spirit". And Richard Dowd, writing in the December issue of Environmental Science and Technology said, "Political stalemates, institutional barriers and resource constraints have combined to make the environmental regulatory system unresponsive, even unworkable". None of us signs on at EPA with the expectation of being pilloried in these ways. We expect to do a professional job of executing the laws you in Congress have passed, with the President's concurrence, to protect human health and the environment. But Dowd has hit the nail right on the head.

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EPA has become a different organization from the one created nearly two decades ago to address the Nation's environmental problems. No longer is it an Agency that uses the knowledge and experience of a skilled, broadly-based scientific and technical staff to identify and solve environmental problems. It has largely become a management and contract-support organization that operates in a reactive rather than pro-active fashion in dealing with environmental problems. No longer are scientists encouraged to "Go out and identify and solve environmental problems". They are instructed instead to await a pronouncement of the existence of a problem from you in Congress or citizens' groups, outraged at toxic insults to their communities. They are not encouraged to publish their work and gain the stature among peers necessary to advance their careers and, in so doing, bring additional credibility to the Agency's work.

This shift in philosophy by the Agency has been implemented, to a great degree, by a conscious or unconscious drive to eliminate senior scientific and technical people from the career staff, and to "buy science" from the private sector instead. Sometimes "science" is "purchased" from other agencies. An example of this, which illustrates not only the morale, but the efficiency-of-the-Service problems, is the Toxicological Profiles program under the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986.

It was perceived by Congress that EPA did not have the scientific personnel (or standing?) to write these profiles. As a result, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) was given the job instead of EPA. Then, because ATSDR in fact didn't have the resources to do the job, EPA was brought back into the picture. But now, EPA's job was not to use high-level scientific expertise to address an environmental problem; instead, EPA was to manage contracts that were let to the private sector to do the work EPA should have been doing as a matter of course. What I mean by that is, had EPA been operating as a science-based, mission-oriented Agency, encouraging the development and maintenance of senior-level scientific personnel in the Civil Service, "toxicological profiles" could literally have been taken off the shelf, turned out by resident EPA Civil Service staff scientists who were experts on the chemicals of concern—more quickly, more cheaply, and with the public interest as the paramount consideration. What has happened instead is that EPA staff have gotten the message loud and clear, "You are not worthy to perform this kind of scientific work".

Another astounding example of contracting out, recently brought to the Union's attention, is a contract that EPA has with the Cadmus Group. This contract permits contracting out virtually every single staff function in the Office of Toxic Substances except that of the Office Director. The contractor is authorized to do everything from health effects-, exposure-, and risk assessments to laying out of regulatory options to response to public comments on proposed rules. The only job left for a Civil Service person is to select a regulatory option, a job reserved for the Office Director—no staff needed, thank you very much!!

This Agency's mission is one of protecting humanity's ability to live on this planet, and it is inextricably bound up in science. Mr. Chairman, there are no senior level scientists in EPA in the fields of plant physiology and pathology, wildlife biology and zoology, fishery biology, soil science and geology, oceanography or immunology, and you are looking at the one and only GS-15 level chemist in all of EPA Headquarters.

This Union sees a dark future for the Agency unless the trend toward ever more contracting out of Civil Service jobs is reversed, and the public's interest in environmental protection is again entrusted to sworn-to-duty Civil Servants. That dark future is one in which political appointees and their legal pathfinders decide on a course of action, then they go to the private sector to purchase "scientific cover" for their decision, and EPA "scientists" (in reality merely technically literate clerks) are relegated to the job of managing contracts to provide the "scientific cover" for purely partisan political decisions.

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Let me assure you, Mr. Chairman, that staff Civil Service professionals at EPA recognize their Constitutional role as advisors to those who hold elective or appointive office under our democratic government. We have no quarrel with that role; we simply want to be able to do the best possible professional job as members of the Civil Service in that role.

Mr. Chairman, if the Congress wants the Nation's environmental programs to be run as exclusively partisan political exercises, if the public thinks that "EPA as Environmental Waste" is a function of too much science and engineering professionalism at EPA, if environmental organizations prefer to trust political appointees, their legal advisors and contractors to restore the spirit and zeal of EPA in faithfully executing environmental laws, then, by all means, contract out the whole of EPA's science function.

If, on the other hand, Congress and the public want a political administration of environmental laws, if they want excellence in science and engineering to drive implementation of those laws, then EPA needs to reverse course and to send proposals for more contracting out of our professional jobs to the destination they deserve—a Subtitle C landfill!

We urge to you ask our new Administrator, Bill Reilly, in whom we place high hopes, to conduct a full-scale study of the staff resources needed to do EPA's work with Civil Service professionals, and to report the result to you—and us.

NFFE'S ROLE IN OPPOSING THE FLUORIDE-IN-DRINKING-WATER REGULATION

In January of 1987, NFFE was invited by the EPA Times to submit a letter to the editor explaining why the union filed an amicus brief in the suit by the National Resources Defense Council (NRDC) to stop EPA from raising the allowable level of fluoride in drinking water. The letter was first accepted, and then later rejected, when upper EPA management put a stop to its publication. The following are excerpts from that letter:

"Last September (1986), the EPA union for professionals, NFFE Local 2050, filed an amicus brief in the District Court of Appeals in a law suit by NRDC challenging an Agency regulation. The regulation in question was the proposed Recommended Maximum Contaminant Level (RMCL) for fluoride in drinking water, which was promulgated in November, 1986, under the Safe Drinking Water Act. This act defined a RMCL as the maximum level of a chemical in drinking water which is safe when consumed by the most sensitive subgroup within the U.S. population and which allows an adequate margin of safety. This definition leads to a health-based goal, grounded in scientific evidence. By law, this goal cannot be modified by cost, feasibility, or political factors.

"The new RMCL of 4 mg/L for fluoride doubled the interim RMCL set in 1976. The Agency claimed that the new RMCL met the requirements of the law. NRDC thought otherwise and took EPA to court.

"While this confrontation was brewing, NFFE discovered that the new RMCL was in apparent violation of the law and based on shoddy science. Certain adverse health effects (dental fluorosis and crippling skeletal fluorosis) would occur in humans using water supplies with fluoride concentrations at this level. These conclusions followed from information in EPA's own Federal Register documents. We discovered that the Agency dodged the question of dental fluorosis (brown, black, and brittle teeth) by claiming this was only a "cosmetic" effect - not an adverse health effect. This reversed the previous Agency position taken in 1976. Common sense and scientific evidence - testimony by experts in psychology - showed that dental fluorosis could affect mental health.

"How the Agency management ignored the certainty of crippling skeletal fluorosis was even worse. They claimed that no one would obtain the 20 mg of fluoride per day necessary to cause crippling skeletal fluorosis at the RMCL of 4 mg/L. This was

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said even though there were documented cases of individuals in the U.S. with crippling skeletal fluorosis at levels less than 4 mg/L. The Agency claimed that the most people would obtain would be 8 mg/day - a safety margin of 2.5. In the Federal Register document, however, it was noted that 1% of the population drink more than 5 liters per day. Thus, for those people with 4 mg/L fluoride in their water supply and a high water intake, such as diabetics, they would be assured of receiving 20 mg/day - the toxic dose! Only those people drinking 2 liters per day or less would have the safety margin of 2.5. And this exposure assessment did not take into account the fluoride from the diet (e.g., as much as 1.5 mg/day from tea and 3 mg/day from tooth paste). Nor did it consider people with impaired kidney function who do not clear fluoride from the body efficiently.

"Further investigation by NFFE showed that the contractor-generated criteria document did not represent an in-depth, accurate representation of the scientific literature on fluoride. About 90% of the studies on mutagenic effects (almost all of which were positive) were not reported in the document. An important epidemiology study (showing higher cancer rates in fluoridated cities) was dismissed by citing an out-of-date report the author had already corrected in the peer-reviewed literature. Secondary sources were used uncritically in several cases, even though the original work was available in the open literature. Professional opinions were rejected with no scientific or technical justification. No determination was made of the identity and size of susceptible populations, nor of the levels of fluoride to which they could be safely exposed.

"NFFE also discovered that a report from the U.S. Surgeon General's Office misrepresented the testimony of an expert panel convened by the Surgeon General to examine the health effects of fluoride. (EPA used this report to support its regulation.) The first draft, reflecting the testimony of the experts, states that "...dental fluorosis per se constitutes an adverse health effect that should be prevented" and "...that mottling or pitting of teeth could represent as yet unknown skeletal effects in children..." at levels "...over 3 ppm and potential cardiotoxic effects at that level." Mysteriously, the final report refers to dental fluorosis as "uncosmetic," minimizes the significance of the lack of knowledge of bone effects, and conveniently drops the reference to cardiotoxic effects.

"Based on these discoveries and discussions with professionals involved in preparing the documentation, NFFE concluded that the new RMCL for fluoride in drinking water was not supported by the body of scientific knowledge on fluoride and did not meet the requirements of the law. We were appalled that EPA management had embraced less than good science and abandoned the risk control principles of Bill Ruckelshaus. Although we attempted for more than a year to point out these problems to top EPA management in meetings and letters, we were unsuccessful. Apparently, forces were at work that EPA management was unable to "buck." So we found a lawyer and filed the "friend of the court" brief in the U.S. District Court of Appeals. We did not want the public and our peers to think that EPA professionals acquiesced in this unethical behavior, in which science and law take back seats to other considerations."

QUESTIONS RAISED ABOUT ORIGINAL FLUORIDE STUDIES

NFFE has been concerned for some time about the shoddy science surrounding any discussion of the health effects and benefits of fluoride exposure. Now it seems our concerns were more than well placed. Based on information that has recently come to NFFE's attention, it seems that the original studies demonstrating the benefits of fluoride to teeth are not so clear-cut. According to the paper cited below, all that propaganda you have heard about the benefits of fluoride to your teeth are a chimera-- or worse.

In a paper delivered last September by J. Colquhoun at the International Symposium on Fluoridation, Porto Alegre, Brazil, he revealed that the classic research from 1942 on the relationship between dental cavities and fluoride concentration in

drinking water used a technique known as "selective use of data." H. Trendly Dean, the "Father of Fluoridation" used data from 21 cities which when plotted (see Figure 1., below) show a wonderfully smooth curve of decreasing cavities with increasing fluoride exposure (for reference, 1 ppm is the level added to most drinking water). There is only one problem with this curve. At the time, Dean had access to data from 272 locations which show an almost complete lack of correlation when plotted (see Figure 2., below). Colquhoun offers many other examples of the data manipulation in the studies conducted by the medical establishment. (Colquhoun's article is available upon request.)

NOTE: NFFE has just learned that a new study has been completed on 40,000 U.S. children, ages 5 through 17, which correlates the number of cavities with fluoride in drinking water. Guess what the study concludes? Keep your eyes open for press stories or a bulletin from NFFE.

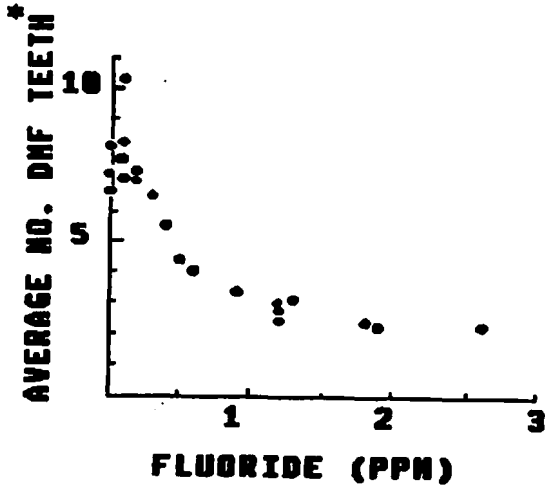


Figure 1. From Dean's classic 21-city study. The study itself was of "white children aged 12 to 14 years, of 13 cities in 4 states." The graph was compiled by adding data from 8 Chicago suburbs reported in an earlier study. *Decayed, missing, or filled teeth.

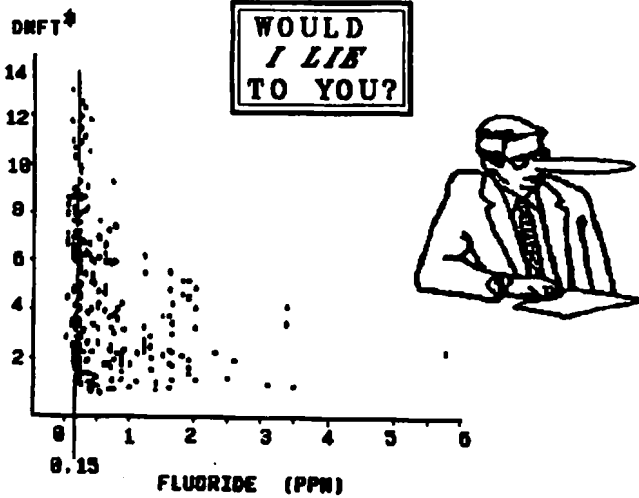


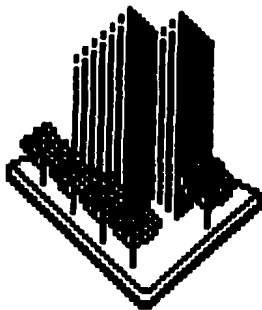
Figure 2. Dental caries and natural water fluoride. Data obtained for 272 samples from all known published studies in North America and Europe (including Dean's 21 cities), showing little correlation. Despite the wide range of caries levels when little or no fluoride was present, a 50-60% reduction was nearly always claimed to result from 1 ppm fluoride. *Decayed, missing, or filled teeth.

WHY FLY WITH "SCABS?"

NFFE Local 2050 and its sister union, AFGE Local 3331, have submitted a proposal to protect bargaining unit members who must fly on official business from having to fly in aircraft such as the one featured on Channel 4's 11 o'clock news on Tuesday, March 14th. That was the airplane from which a large spill of fuel occurred at National Airport, while the allegedly "trained" Continental Airlines ground crew worked on the plane. (Continental is owned and operated by Frank Lorenzo, who also owns Eastern.)

With that example in mind, along with reports of "management" pilots coming out of the office and into the cockpit, and "scab" maintenance people coming from who-knows-where onto the flight-line, the two unions at EPA Headquarters have proposed to management that no bargaining unit employee fly either Eastern or Continental on official business until striking workers sign a contract with their employer and return to service and fly those airlines' planes.

Virtually all employees we talked to about this union proposal gave it enthusiastic support. While management may or may not be as enthusiastic, we hope consideration of employees' concerns about safety will move management to make an accommodation in this situation. Give us a call at the Union office (382-2383) and tell us what you think about it.



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NEW BUILDING' UPDATE

NFFE representatives (Otto Gutenson and Vice-President David Ritter; both from the Office of Pesticide Programs) met on February 28th with Mr. Nelson Hallman, EPA's Director of "Project 1992" (planning project for EPA's new Headquarters building) to discuss issues related to the new building. The following report, summarizing the major points presented at the meeting, was provided by Dave Ritter, Chairman of the Union's New Building Committee:

1. The Southeast Federal Center, at 2nd and "M" Streets, SE, is only one of several sites being considered for the location of EPA's new building. This site is favored by Mr. Dick Austin, acting Head of the General Services Administration (GSA). Land acquisition costs are less (by about \$40-60 million) for this site as opposed to others. However, the funding required for this land (about \$250 million) is an "up-front" expense, requiring immediate full payment, which Congress will probably not favor. The present EPA plan, the one approved by Congress, is for a "Lease-Purchase" arrangement, which will distribute costs to the Federal government over a 25-30 year period. In addition, the GSA plan will fund only 75-80% of the original 1.4 million square feet of space approved by the Congress for EPA's new facility.

2. Other tenants currently using the Southeast Federal Center site include the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the Federal Protective Service. Hopefully, if located at this site, EPA personnel would not be expected to bear weapons, as do personnel from the other two agencies. We are not so inclined. However, the site does resemble a post-thermonuclear battle zone, and does not appear to us to be conducive to professionalism. (NOTE: We are aware that a private group of investors with alleged ties to the DC government is lobbying for the selection of this site.)

3. EPA is actively considering other sites, such as one near Union Station; the "Wax Museum location" at Fourth Street, SW, near the Southwest Freeway; and the "Portal site" between 12th and 14th Streets, SW, near Main Avenue and the 14th Street bridge. The latter site is favored because it meets all of the original criteria for EPA's new location: low-crime area; close to Metrorail; close to major highways; and close to civilized amenities - shops, restaurants, public parking facilities, etc. However, at this point, no definite selection of the site has been made.

4. With respect to timing, the current thinking is that it will be over 4 years before EPA moves in. Therefore, new leases are currently being negotiated for EPA's current facilities for use until the new building is completed.

EXTRA! EXTRA! EXTRA! **OPEN MEETING ON NEW BUILDING LOCATION**
****APRIL 10th**NOON**EPA TRAINING CENTER AUDITORIUM**

AFGE LOCAL PRESIDENT LOREE MURRAY HONORED

On March 18th, AFGE Local 3331's President, Loree H. Murray, was honored by both the Gallaudet University Community Relations Council and the District of Columbia Congressional Office for her work in fighting drugs and crime in Northeast DC. Loree has worked with her organization, the Near Northeast Citizens Against Crime and Drugs, on these problems since 1986. Loree was presented with an Individual Achievement Award by Congressman Walter E. Fauntroy, who documented its presentation in the Congressional Record.

Congratulations, Loree!! -for recognition in a tough job that needs more dedicated workers like you. NFFE Local 2050 is proud to work with you for the betterment of our EPA community and this City.





NFFE WINS COMPRESSED WORK WEEK (CWW)
FOR OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL (OGC)

On March 15th, Local 2050 and the Agency signed an addendum to the general agreement on compressed work week of November 10, 1988, bringing professionals in that Office under the plan. The addendum acknowledges certain special needs of the General Counsel's office under CWW.

This leaves only the Office of External Affairs without a CWW program for professionals. The Office of Research and Development (ORD) was given leave by Local 2050 to have its professionals come under the general agreement during the interim, while ORD's AA, Mr. Bretthauer, and the Agency resolve their differences over CWW.

MORE ON THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

Union President Bill Hirzy was asked to meet with Inspector General (IG) John Martin following the appearance of last month's Fishbowl article on the IG. Mr. Martin wanted to know our policy regarding checking with subjects of articles before publication and to tell his side of the story. The Union offered to print any reply Mr. Martin cared to make. After the meeting Mr. Martin sent documents to the Union showing that his trip to Hong Kong was above-board and for professional purposes, and other documents illustrating the Office's activities. These activities include a recommendation to the Office of Administration, based on Local 2050 initiatives, that renovation materials be pre-tested for toxic off-gassing prior to purchase.

In addition, he submitted a one-page detailed explanation of the Hong Kong trip that included a statement that neither he nor Mr. Barden, Assistant IG for Investigations, have otherwise traveled outside the continental U.S. in the five years since he became IG for EPA. IG Office employees pointed out to the Union, however, that trips to Hawaii, Alaska and Puerto Rico have been taken. Mr. Martin says that these were all official business.

The Government Accountability Project, a whistle-blower advocacy organization, has sent a letter to Administrator Reilly asking that, pending an investigation of charges of reprisals against IG whistle-blowers, of false statements on an official document relative to a former IG employee, and of "nepotistic hiring under false pretenses," a decision on rehiring Messrs. Martin and Barden not be made. Mr. Martin tells the Union that these charges were investigated and resolved months ago.

UNION BRAGAINING OVER IG'S QUESTIONNAIRES

Over the past several months, some professionals have received investigative questionnaire forms SF-86, SF-87, and SF-171, along with a memo from the Inspector General's (IG's) office explaining that these must be completed by incumbents in sensitive positions. Several of these professionals asked NFFE for help, in that potentially self-incriminating questions and others involving highly personal matters are asked on the forms.

The Union asked to conduct impact bargaining on the matter and for information necessary to conduct bargaining on February 23rd. A preliminary meeting took place on March 16th among Marc Turgeon and Bill Hirzy (NFFE) and Brenda Bray and Anna Virbick (OIG) to discuss the matter. Union representatives explained our interest and what impact bargaining is, and IG representatives explained the statutory and regulatory authority and the need for the questionnaires and the background of their use at EPA and Federal government-wide.

Pending receipt of the information requested, the Union will pursue bargaining. Any bargaining unit employee who receives the questionnaire package and has questions about it should call Turgeon, Hirzy, or Eleanor Carney, Chief Steward.

REILLY'S CHIEF OF STAFF AND UNION LEADERS CONFER

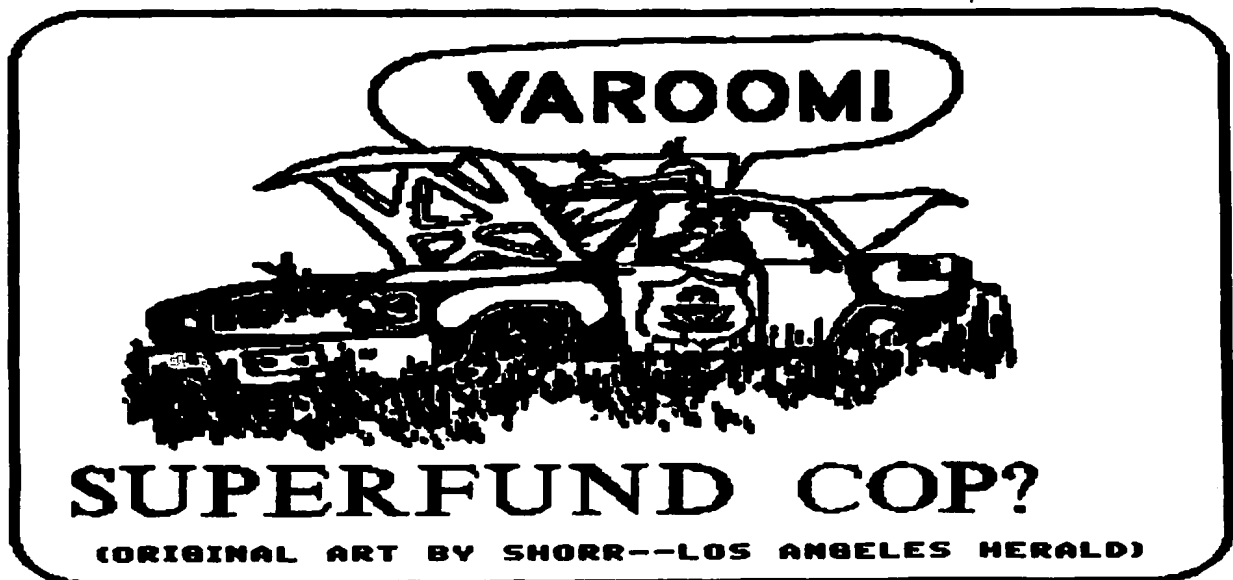
Gordon Binder, Mr. Reilly's chief of staff, met for an hour with Bill Hirzy and Bob Carton on March 7th in a get-acquainted session. The three discussed the Union's origins in the Gorsuch era and its goals and concerns. Aspects of the new building were discussed, as were Assistant Administrator appointments, the state of labor relations, indoor air quality, and mechanisms for on-going contact between us. A meeting with Mr. Reilly will take place sometime after the March 21st general staff meeting.

Gordon asked the Union to review and comment on "Future Risk: Research Strategies for the 1990's", published last September by the Science Advisory Board. A committee headed by Hale Vandermer, Bob Carton, and Rufus Morison are putting the Union's response together.

Mr. Binder impressed the Union people as a refreshingly different, sincere kind of guy, and we look forward to working with him and his boss harmoniously.

UNION PEOPLE JUDGE SCIENCE PROJECTS AT BERTIE BACKUS J.H.S.

As Part of Local 2050's participation in the Partners-in-Education program, Drs. Rufus Morison and Bill Hirzy judged science projects done by 7th, 8th, and 9th graders at Bertie Backus Junior High School, N.E. First-, second-, and third place awards plus six Honorable Mentions were assigned. Leading projects involved measurement of heart- and respiration-rate of students before, during, and after exercise, and correlation with weight; determination of predictability of snowfall (and amount) from temperature, humidity, and atmospheric pressure data; experiments on effects of water quality on seed germination and growth and on factors influencing meat tenderization; and several displays of geological and evolutionary principles. It was difficult to differentiate rewards among many of these fine projects, and it was obvious that many of the Bertie Backus students have a bright future. If you are not yet involved with Partners-in-Education and would like to be, contact Charlie Garlow, who is the Union coordinator.





GUEST EDITORIAL *

* Views expressed in Guest Editorials are those of the authors; they do not necessarily represent those of NFFE Local 2050 or its members.

ABLING THE DIS-ABLED

by

Sandra Strassman-Sundy

Well, it was a painfully slow start. In 1973, Congress passed the Rehabilitation Act. Among other things, this act required Federal agencies to establish a Handicapped Employees Advisory Committee. Fourteen or so years later (before my time on the Committee), some very dedicated and tenacious people finally saw the EPA Headquarters Handicapped Employees Advisory Committee (HHEAC) chartered. This committee now functions to advise the Agency on matters pertaining to handicapped individuals.

Until recently, our HHEAC did little more than fulfill this statutory requirement. However, thanks to our advocates in OARM's Facilities and Support Services Division (Facilities) and to our new Administrator, Bill Reilly, Facilities has recently been authorized to transfer substantial funds from other projects to improve access and provide other facilities for physically-challenged individuals working in buildings at EPA Headquarters. At EPA, the targeted groups are comprised mainly of the developmentally-disabled and mobility-, hearing-, and visually-impaired.

In what had appeared to be a languishing effort to improve accessibility for the mobility-impaired Waterside Mall employees, we on the Access Subcommittee developed a "list of 23 items" requiring immediate attention for basic access. With the new building somewhere on the horizon, convenience was not considered, just basic, safe access to current EPA-occupied buildings at minimal cost. Although it took Facilities more than two months to respond, we certainly did get a wonderful response! Some items on the "list of 23" have already been taken care of. Even the steps to the main East Tower entrance are being repaired. Now there will be indoor wheelchair access between the East and West Towers. Now mobility-impaired persons will be able to access the auditorium stage. Now all of us will have the benefit of mirrors at visually-obscured corners! Now modifications to Crystal Mall #2 can be undertaken to accommodate mobility-impaired individuals there. I hope we can establish target completion dates for the remaining items. I'll keep you posted on progress!

The Access Subcommittee still has a lot of work to do. One major area of concern is emergency evacuation, for example. Special evacuation plans for handicapped employees are also required by the Rehabilitation Act. Presently, a supervisor is responsible for identifying the handicapped individual(s) and establishing individual evacuation plans. Handicapped employees are then asked to sign them—regardless of how nonfunctional they may be. As far as we have been able to discern, handicapped evacuation plans throughout the Federal government follow the same general scenario: the handicapped individual goes to a designated location to meet up with an assigned able-bodied employee. Although given no training to assist handicapped individuals evacuate, and certainly not paid to do this or take the obvious risks, this designee is solely responsible for the handicapped person until the calvary arrives—in the guise of security personnel or firemen. (This is just fine for fire drills, although security personnel and/or fireman frequently do not show up. But tell me, would YOU stay with a handicapped individual if there was a serious blaze on your floor? Would you expect a handicapped person to ASK you to?) We feel this system unfairly jeopardizes two people—the handicapped individual as well as his or her monitor.

There are no plans to cover instances when the handicapped employee is not at "home base," or when one's monitor isn't there! To the best of our knowledge, provisions for people with temporary impairments (sprains, broken bones, etc.) are rare. Presumably, if the person with a temporary handicap requests, the same sort of "non-

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plan" could be arranged! To the best of my knowledge, individuals without visible impairments (such as heart conditions, arthritis, etc.) are not targeted for special evacuation plans. Remember, however, that EPA is not the lone offender; this is the current "Federal Way!"

If you really think about it (and most of us don't), you will quickly realize that physical and other types of handicaps are society's great "leveler." No distinction is made with respect to economic status, age, race, sex, etc. Becoming handicapped could happen to **YOU**. Who hasn't known or, at least, read about sports or car accidents after which the victim awakens in a hospital physically-impaired (broken limbs, blind, paralyzed, etc.). Who among us doesn't know someone with a significant hearing impairment--old or young. Don't you know at least one individual with substantial arthritis or heart problems that might prevent rapid evacuation down stairs? Haven't you ever pulled a muscle, or sprained or broken a limb, so it was difficult to do some everyday chore, such as walking down a few steps or putting on your socks?

There's so much more to be done! We on the Access Subcommittee will continue to fight the good fight. And I think I can speak for the whole EPA HHEAC when I say that. Won't all of you help us?

DID YOU KNOW ???

o Rita Jensen is the Headquarters Handicapped Program Coordinator. She may be reached at 382-3278. Rita serves the HHEAC in an advisory capacity only; she is not a voting member of the Committee.

o EPA has contracted a special transportation service to take severely handicapped individuals (read: wheelchair-bound) to and from other Federal buildings for work-related business. To use this service, contact Rita Jensen or Brian Smith (382-2088) at least 24 hours before the event.

o The Rehabilitation Act requires "reasonable accommodations" for handicapped individuals. If you have special needs, even of a temporary nature, contact Rita or me. We will see what can be done to help--or point you in the right direction.

o All Federal agencies have special non-competitive appointments (Schedules A and B) for handicapped individuals. If you know someone who needs a special chance OR you would like to help give someone that chance, call Rita Jensen.

o Sign-language interpreters for the hearing impaired are available for interviews, meetings, conferences, special programs, etc. Contact Rita to arrange for this service.

o Telecommunications Devices (TDD's) for communicating with the hearing-impaired by telephone are available in Rita Jensen's office (Room 3624, Mall) or in the Office of Civil Rights. Rita also has access to a TDD at her desk phone (382-3141). Feel free to make arrangements to use one of the available TDD's, should the need arise.

o If you are handicapped, temporarily or permanently, you have a right to special evacuation plans. Although they are not terrific, they are all we have at present. See your supervisor to arrange one, or contact Rita for "how-to" information. It is the safe thing to do.

o If you have an issue that you would like our HHEAC to consider, contact Rita or me.

o If you are interested in joining HHEAC, contact Rita Jensen.

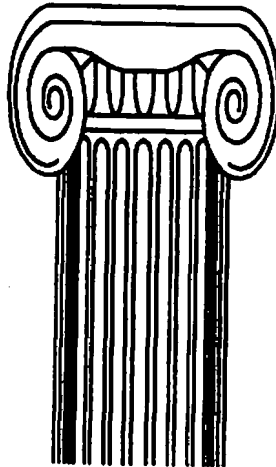
ABOUT THE AUTHOR - - -

Sandra Strassman-Sundy is a Biologist with the Risk Analysis Branch, Existing Chemical Assessment Division. She represents the Office of Pesticides and Toxic Substances (OPTS) on EPA's Headquarters Handicapped Employees Advisory Committee. A year-and-a-half ago, she was diagnosed as having multiple sclerosis (MS); she is now mobility-impaired and drives a three-wheeled, battery-powered scooter. Sandra may be contacted at 382-3564.

NOW HEAR THIS - - -

On Sunday, April 9th, the National Organization of Women is sponsoring a march in support of a woman's right to choose and the Equal Rights Amendment. A group of EPA staffers and friends plans to march together and welcomes you to join them. Meet at a green and white sign stating "Washingtonians for Choice" between 10 and 10:30 a.m. at the NE corner of Independence and 14th St. (USDA side lawn). For more information about the march, call NOW at 331-0066.

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