Hampton Hit With Charges By ACT Locals

ACT local unions have hit Hampton Inn with unfair labor practice charges. Members of Iron Workers Local 301, Carpenters Local 1207, Operating Engineers Local 132, and IBEW Local 466 filed unfair labor practices in mid-December with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) over Hampton Inn’s project in Charleston.

The workers are claiming the contractor, Construction Concepts, refused even to consider hiring union workers for the job. The unions also believe the company has committed a host of other violations of state laws and regulations.

The Charleston Building and Construction Trades Council staged a series of protests last month with more than 100 building trades members picketing the job site.

The workers are claiming the contractor, Construction Concepts, refused even to consider hiring union workers for the job.

"The workers are claiming the contractor, Construction Concepts, refused even to consider hiring union workers for the job."

STARRING IN THE NEW ACT television commercial are Harold Powell of Carpenters Local 302 and Larry Childs of Ironworkers Local 769. The commercial is the latest in a series highlighting local building trades members.

Two State Councils Gain New Leaders

Two building trades councils in West Virginia have recently seen a change of leadership. Charlie Finkenbinder retired after 12 years service as business manager of the North Central Building and Construction Trades Council, which covers 19 counties in the Eastern Panhandle and Central West Virginia.

Finkenbinder hands over the reins to Rick Williams. And Sam Davis recently replaced Steve Crum as business manager for the Parkersburg-Marietta Building and Construction Trades Council.

Finkenbinder has been a member of IBEW Local 307 of Cumberland, MD, for the last 42 years. He is currently working two days a week for the council in the Eastern Panhandle counties of Morgan, Berkeley, and Continued on page 3

Grant Hospital Problems Continue

The problems with the $6.5 million Grant County Hospital project continue to go unresolved. They began when Steve Montoney, ACT’s northern representative, discovered the project was not put out to bid. Montoney said that when he questioned the lack of a bid.

The Grant County Hospital is being built on county property with $2.4 million raised through a local tax levy.

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JUST COMPLETED DAMON'S $1 million remodeling project in Huntington. This is just an example of the many private projects using local union labor.
Grant Hospital

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"We want to get this project straightened out at the start," he said.

The hospital asked for estimates from four area contractors for an additional parking lot. The lowest bid was from

"We're seriously questioning the fact that the hospital has employees trained to operate heavy equipment."

Gerald Cites Construction, Inc.
"I believe they are renting his equipment and saying the people operating it are hospital employees," Montoney said.
"I feel they're doing this to bypass the prevailing wage laws."

Montoney said he thinks Cites' employees were hired about a week before the project began.
"There's no way they had people working for the hospital trained in how to operate heavy equipment," he said.

The state Division of Labor (DOL) has been contacted and will be investigating the charges immediately.
"If the hospital has its own employees working on a project, then it doesn't have to pay prevailing wage," he said.
"But we're seriously questioning that the hospital has employees trained to operate heavy equipment."

Montoney said it was for this project and the Pocahontas County hospital that Sen. Walt Helmick asked the DOL to lower the prevailing wage.
"I guess since the DOL wouldn't lower it they looked for a way to get around it."

ACT Six Mission’ Seeks Trus Joist Job Information

A group of six construction workers, along with ACT's northern representative Steve Montoney, went to the offices of Trus Joist MacMillan (TJM) on an "information seeking mission" in early December.

Members of Sheet Metal Workers Local 33, IBEW Local 596, Boilermakers Local 667, along with B.B. Smith of ACT participated.

"When we walked in carrying that video camera the secretary recognized me. I asked her 'How do I get a job here?' She didn't say a word. She just went straight to the plant manager, and brought him out."

Lynn Comora, the TJM plant manager, told them there was no work to be done and more contracts would be bid soon.
"He said they were looking for people to bid some electrical and plumbing work.
"And he said they needed millwrights for some welding work to be done," Montoney said.

"But we're not going to leave them alone."

A partial list of the contractors at the TJM plant include:
* Breckenridge Corp. of Buckhannon (concrete).
* Valley General of Fairmont (carpenter).

Behind-The-Scenes ACT Legal Work

Behind the scenes at ACT there's a lot of legal work the members don't know about.

Once a case enters the legal system, it can either remain tied up for a long period of time or move along at a rapid pace.

The following are some of the cases that ACT's attorneys are currently working on.

Some have had recent developments, some not.

But all are important cases the membership should be aware of.

ACT versus Dupont of Belle

ACT appealed a permit by the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to the company because the permit was in violation of the Clean Water Act by allowing a large amount of cyanide to be released into a stream.

The Environmental Quality Board upheld DEP action maintaining the permit writer exercised the proper amount of inquiry in writing the permit. ACT plans to appeal.

ACT versus Federal Bureau of Investigations

A status conference was held before a federal judge regarding the certified payrolls requested by ACT.

The judge signed an order directing the FBI to disclose the actual owner of the building and the status of the response to the Freedom of Information Act.

ACT will file a motion based on a decision which established the right of unions to access certified payrolls.

ACT versus Union Carbide, South Charleston

This case is an appeal of two permits issued by the DEP’s Office of Air Quality (OAQ) to Union Carbide.

The primary issue in the appeal is the major sources of pollution, apply to the permits. In the past the OAQ has permitted each unit of a company’s factory as though it is an individual factory, rather than permitting the entire facility as a unit under Regulation 14.

The result of the erroneous permitting practices of the agency is to allow a greater increase in the emission of air pollutants.

ACT filed an appeal maintaining the Union Carbide plant should be considered as one complete entity rather than several small generators of pollution.

Other ACT Legal Activities

Some other cases ACT is currently working on are:

Two State Councils

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Jefferson.

“Were monitoring some jobs for prevailing wage and we’re working closely with the West Virginia Division of Labor,” Finkenbinder said.

Even though he is still working during his retirement, Finkenbinder said he plays a lot of golf and he and his wife plan to do some traveling.

Finkenbinder said when he looks back on his career, “I think probably the biggest accomplishment is the working relationship we have within the building trades.

“Everyone here in West Virginia is under the building trades system.

“I think that the building trades of West Virginia is as good as, if not better than, any state in the union.

“Needless to say I’m very proud of our state organization.”

When asked if he thought the good working relationship North Central now has with ACT would continue, Finkenbinder said “I would hope it would even improve.

“I think that ACT, along with the building trades, is the salvation of the construction industry as we know it.”

At the Parkersburg-Marietta Building and Construction Trades Council, Davis began his new job on Sept. 1, replacing outgoing Crum.

Crum had replaced retiring John Seafier in April.

Davis of Marietta, OH, has been a member of Laborers Local 639 for 34 years. His father was a business manager for the Laborers for 28 years.

“I was part of the original group that brought Parkersburg and Marietta together to become one building trades council 14 years ago,” Davis said.

“I spent 12 years with the labor council, five years in the field and five years getting the

“We’ve got to get involved in politics.

Just look at the last election. Our members are either not educated in politics or are taking what we tell them the wrong way.

Sam Davis,

Parkersburg-Marietta

labor management committee together.

“But I think it’s been a pretty smooth transition.

“Steve Crum had been here for a long time as an organizer before he took over for John (Seafier). I couldn’t have asked for a better person to show me the new job.”

As far as ACT goes, Davis said it’s something new to him.

“Until taking over this job, I hadn’t had a chance to get familiar with it,” he said.

“We’ve got to get involved in politics. Just look at the last election. Our members are either not educated in politics or are taking what we tell them the wrong way.

“We need to open up a line of communication to show them that labor always has a role in politics.

DEP’s Callaghan Fights EPA Over Study

West Virginia Division of Environmental Protection (DEP) Director David Callaghan is trying once more to block efforts to determine the level of dioxin in the Ohio River.

Callaghan has repeatedly fought for a dioxin producing pulp and paper mill for Apple Grove in Mason County.

Callaghan has taken on Alvin Morris, director of the Water Management Division for Region III of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Morris wants the DEP to conduct a study at three Ohio River locations to determine the river’s level of dioxin before approval is granted to the mill.

Throughout what now totals a three-year-plus fight, Callaghan has:

■ Accused ACT of opposing the paper mill only in an effort to win union construction jobs. ACT, meanwhile, has said while it wants union jobs its only opposition to the

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Industrial Sector Construction Busy And Watching

Much has been happening recently in the industrial sector of the construction industry according to Bill Thomas, ACT’s Industrial Representative.

Rust Engineering, Inc. of Birmingham, AL, was awarded the engineering contract for the Weyerhaeuser project in Braxton County.

A Rusk spokesperson, T.C. Smith told Thomas if the company gets the construction contract they will discuss the hiring process with the building trades.

Thomas said ACT remains uncertain of the owner’s intentions “because of the lack of information we’ve been able to obtain from the company.”

“On the other hand, Weyerhaeuser has publicly vowed that at least 70 percent of the workers will be local.”

The award for the $5 million building shell is due the end of December. The bid for the remainder of the $100 million project is scheduled to be awarded in early spring.

Thomas has also been working closely with Appalachian Power Co. on the high voltage power line being considered for southern West Virginia.

Thomas said he thinks the power line, if approved by the public, would create more jobs in the long run.

It would enhance the possibility of a new coal-fired power plant being built in the state.

Thomas said one of his goals for 1995 is to get ACT’s membership more involved with the Construction Organizing Membership Education Training program (COMET).

COMET focuses on the advantages organizing plays for construction union members.

Callaghan

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Callaghan mill is based on local hiring and environmental reasons.

- Accused The Charleston Gazette and environmentalists who have expressed concern about deadly dioxin levels in the Ohio River of being “extremists.”

‘ACT Six Mission’

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- WPS Industries Inc. of Louisiana (sheet metal).
- Grinnell Fire Protection Systems of Columbus, Ohio, (sprinklers).
- Gea, Inc. of Atlanta, Georgia, (fire brick).
- Battle Ridge, Inc. of Charleston (site prep).
- Mountaineer Resources of Fairmont (welding).