



FIRE PROTECTION CONTRACTOR

Please see Page 42

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FLORIDA HAS ANOTHER SPRINKLER ASSOCIATION!

A new sprinkler association has been organized in the state of Florida. You are probably saying to yourself, "This is not true. How can it be? Florida already has three sprinkler associations operating within their state."

The new organization is F.A.S.T. which stands for Florida Automatic Sprinkler Training. It is an association of non-union, merit shop, open shop sprinkler contractors who are concerned with the training of field personnel for the installation of sprinkler systems.

Organizers are Joe Wiginton, President of Wiginton Fire Sprinklers, Inc. of Longwood, Fla., and Wayne Gey, President of Wayne Automatic Sprinklers, Inc. of Ocoee, Fla. Several sprinkler contractors are involved and many more are expected to join because of the severe shortage of installation people and the growing need for more apprentices and fitters in the state of Florida.

Gey and Wiginton both told us that it was necessary to form this new association because none of the existing sprinkler associations were offering an apprentice training program that met their needs. The need is to produce very rapidly, people who are capable of installing the standard wet and dry-pipe systems. They feel that training for all the specialty areas such as fire pumps, deluge systems, pre-action systems, hydraulics, special hazard systems, etc. can be taught at a later time. They say that if you eliminate the specialties and stick to the basics you can train an installation person in 52 weeks.

Wiginton advised they had approached the Florida Fire Sprinkler Association about the need for training but the FFSA, which is made up of non-union and union contractors, wanted absolutely nothing to do

See ASSOCIATION, page 24

IN THIS ISSUE:

THE SPRINKLER INDUSTRY:
forever changing, changing, changing 16

NFPA:
their report disagrees with Jensen and Schirmer .. 13

SPRINKLER INDUSTRY DIRECTORY:
part III - Independent sprinkler designers directory 37

UNIONS:
a new look at unionism 42

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR 44

SPRINKLER CALENDAR 49

JENSEN & SCHIRMER REFUSE TO PRAISE SPRINKLERS 6

INSURANCE:
contractor's guide to the 1986 commercial general liability program 34

MARKETING:
sprinkler contractors need to know how 19

NFSA:
board of directors invade AFSA convention 39

NON-UNION & UNION COOPERATE AT FORT LAUDERDALE 4

SPRINKLER PEOPLE IN THE NEWS 23

ESTIMATING:
new sprinkler estimating software program 20

RESEARCH:
the national quick response sprinkler research program 32

SPRINKLER ASSOCIATION NEWS 8

THE BULLETIN BOARD:
the classified ad section 50

COMMUNICATIONS:
sprinkler contractors need to know how 40

BUSINESS:
sprinkler contractors are subcontracting some internal operations 15
sprinkler people eliminate paperwork 31
how job profitability can be increased 29
trust; a two-sided coin in any sprinkler business ... 28

INDEX OF ADVERTISERS 46

AND MUCH MORE!



UNIONS

A NEW LOOK AT UNIONISM

BY

Leonard C. Scott

Some people in the sprinkler industry would have you believe that Fire Protection Contractor is anti-union and that we sometimes "fabricate" some of the stories to promote an anti-union movement in side the sprinkler industry. Not true!

Some have said that if we would not publish articles about the non-union movement we would not have the problem in our industry. In fact, we were asked three times in 1983 not to write this type of article.

We at FPC contend that we should report on any subject that may have an affect on the sprinkler industry, particularly those things that occur in the construction industry and specifically the mechanical trades.

From time to time, we have reported on the non-union movement throughout America - in all sectors of our economy and society - for we felt it was wide spread, deep, and would eventually affect us all.

A few of our readers said these articles were not true and FPC was promoting the bad side of unionism and was polarizing the sprinkler industry on union issues.

The following article was published in "THE ROTARIAN", August, 1985. The writer refers to another article in "THE WALL STREET JOURNAL". Leonard C. Scott tells the reader what is really happening in America and why. We at FPC could re-publish a different article about the non-union movement every month. Every article would be written by a different author but their message would be the same. We review approximately 200 publications each month and watch many economic, political, business, and labor programs on TV and listen to similar programs on radio.

We publish what we think our readers need to know and print only the truth as it is revealed to us. No one in the eight years we have been publishing FPC has ever disproved an article. We have on three occasions published corrections regarding company names, ownership, etc.

Please read the article by Leonard C. Scott. If you have a different point of view, share it with us in writing and we will share your thoughts with our readers. editor

A recent article in *The Wall Street Journal* contained some interesting findings regarding the attitudes of U.S. employers and workers toward unionism. Virtually all employers surveyed were anti-union. This was not surprising. However, a wide majority of workers polled also were against unions. Yet, these same workers indicated they think unions can bring about higher wages and better working conditions.

How did this seemingly paradoxical situation arise and what does it mean?

First, workers now identify higher wages and benefits with higher prices, as a result of the wage-price spiral which they experienced in the late 1960's and throughout the 1970's. Second, workers just don't want the problems connected with employer-resisted representation elections, picketing, strikes, lock-outs, grievances, arbitrations, hearings, and other contentious labor-management activities. Workers clearly want to avoid the stress that adversarial labor-management relations bring to their workplaces. Third, they realize that higher wages and prices often lead to the loss of jobs to other countries. This knowledge plus the uneasiness generated by continuing high unemployment reinforces their attitude of shunning unions.

The meaning of this ambivalent attitude toward unions is clear. Workers seem to be ready to team up with bosses to do what needs to be done to increase job security and improve wages and working conditions. All they need is a little encouragement.

Employers can either revert to the indifference and negativity toward workers that existed in pre-World War II days or they can view this situation as a golden opportunity to develop a synergistic relationship with their employees. If workers now look to employers more strongly than ever to improve their economic conditions, why not establish communication and education programs that build solid employee trust, cement labor-management cooperation, and tap the creative energies of workers and managers for the achievement of organization-wide objectives? The time appears to be ripe for employers to take all workers into the fold and fix in them a pride of

employment, loyalty to the firm, respect for top quality, cost control, high productivity, and a competitive spirit *vis-a-vis* both foreign and domestic producers in their industry.

What kind of communication and education programs are needed?

The programs should explain the new market system that is entrenching itself in the world. Workers need to be told about benefits and risks and how they can minimize these risks as they relate to their jobs. The programs should also explain the relationship between wages, prices, and profits. For example workers must understand that if wages go up without a corresponding increase in productivity, prices must rise or profits and the ability to grow must decline. Workers need to be told what foreign competition is all about and how it affects their company, their jobs, and the prices they pay for products. The general economic concept of comparative advantage should be covered. Finally, programs should explain terms like market share, return on investment, strength of the dollar [and the national currency], foreign trade deficit, prime rate, and national debt.

In reality all it will take to capture this golden opportunity is a positive attitude toward human resources, a minimum expenditure of time and money, and a continuing belief that an organization that pulls together is more effective than one that

doesn't. As more and more employers reach out to grasp this opportunity, the economy as a whole will clearly grow in strength.

About the author —

Leonard C. Scott is the President of his own consulting firm based in Dallas, TX. The firm offers consulting services in the areas of: New Plant Start-ups, Supervisory Training, Wage and Salary Administration, Executive Recruiting, Policy and Procedures, and Union Prevention.

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