

Underlying principles keep unions strong

John Topp

July 29, 2005

The papers have been full of labor news recently, particularly about the AFL-CIO convention in Chicago this week. We are seeing history in the making.

There is an evolution under way in the manner in which business is conducted in the United States. This strikes at the core values of virtually every person employed in the country, union or not.

Whether one views these changes as power struggles of a few or as strong differences of opinion by leaders in addressing a fundamental change for our working people dealing with a global economic reality, change must be addressed. Making the correct changes at the right time is the challenge, and differences of opinion make for interesting debate. However, different viewpoints do not defeat the willingness to work diligently toward a long-term solution that is the best for everyone involved: customers, employers and workers.

All of the union groups have the best interests of their members and organizations at the forefront. The different opinions and the ability to challenge one another is what makes this country great. When the debate subsides, underlying principles will prevail.

The average worker understands the need to survive and is more than willing to pull together whatever is necessary to make things work. This is the strength of unions. However, there are times when there is a real threat to job security, and this is at the root of worker unease. The leadership of all interested parties must become more keenly aware of this and constantly strive for balanced economic success.

No matter what happens at the national level, locally there will still be customers, employers and workers. We will all continue to communicate and work together to solve the challenges in front of us.

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