

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*(The following is an excerpt from the remarks I delivered at the funeral of International President Emeritus Charles H. Pillard on April 30, 1999.)*

Charles Pillard was many things to many people. He was a loving husband, a caring father, father-in-law and grandfather. If the quality of a man's life is measured by devotion to family, then Charlie was an unqualified success.

Most of us here knew Charlie in a different capacity, as a friend and as a leader. Before his 30th birthday, Charlie assumed one of the most difficult leadership roles there is—leading men into combat. Even then, the qualities that we came to know and admire were evident. Charlie commanded loyalty and respect because he wouldn't ask you to go anywhere he wouldn't go. He wouldn't order you to do something that he would not do.

As we all know, the young electrician from Buffalo went on to hold the highest job in his beloved Brotherhood. In that capacity, Charlie stood in front of countless audiences of IBEW members, shook hands with presidents and world leaders, had numerous accolades heaped upon him. He handled it all with dignity, but he was not in office for the personal glory. He was there to do the job as he saw it—to figure out every day how to make the lives of IBEW members and their families better in some way.


He personally led the charge for benefits that improved the quality of life for IBEW families throughout North America. He guided this Brotherhood to the high point of its membership in the early 1970s and then kept us on solid footing through years of inflation, recession, economic dislocation and outright greed. Charlie gave us courage to keep the faith in a world of turmoil. He could show us the way because he himself was so firmly grounded in the values of the labor movement. He did not learn them in a book. They came as naturally to him as breathing.

Personally, I will also be grateful for the friendship Charlie and I enjoyed as business managers in neighboring

locals. I will never forget the faith he showed in me by appointing me Vice President of the Third District and recommending me as his successor as International President. I hope he knew that I have spent my tenure in office doing my best to live up to his faith in me and the high standards he himself set.

I know that the many IBEW staff members whom Charlie appointed remember his unmatched dedication tempered by fairness and compassion. The local leaders who served during Charlie's term in office grieve over the loss of a great leader.

But there is another group of people out there today—the literally millions of men and women who held membership in the IBEW during Charlie's time, but who never had the privilege of meeting him. To them, he was a face in the *Journal*, or a name in distant Washington, D.C., or maybe they don't even have an idea who he was. But these were the folks for whom Charlie worked. These were the working people of the United States and Canada who benefitted directly from Charlie's dedication and leadership. They are the decent, ordinary folk from whom Charlie sprang and whose lives were made better by the determination and genuine goodness of this quietly remarkable man.

There is plenty of sorrow to go around, but there is also tremendous consolation—consolation that we had the great privilege of knowing Charlie... consolation of a life lived to the fullest. We can be consoled by the certain knowledge that Charlie is up in heaven now, still looking out for his brothers and sisters. And if I know him, he is probably putting in a good word for us with God. 

## A Leader Remembered

J. J. BARRY



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# SECRETARY-TREASURER'S MESSAGE

One of my pet themes whenever I talk to an IBEW audience is unity. As I see it, real unity requires having a common goal that is generally accepted throughout the organization, and then making sure that every program and activity helps realize that goal. This is the philosophy which guides my work as International Secretary-Treasurer.

A good example is provided by the pension funds that are jointly administered by the IBEW and the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA). In particular, the National Electrical Benefit Fund, with \$8.3 billion in assets, is a foundation of retirement security for many members. As I have reported previously, it is also a source of strength that is used for the benefit of all members.

One of the ways we do that is real estate investing. Our new program called Project Millennium will target more than \$2 billion to be invested and re-invested in new construction projects across the continent. By focusing our energies in this manner, we will be able to seek out prime real estate projects and negotiate superior rates of return. In addition, we expect that Project Millennium will generate billions of dollars worth of new construction and millions of hours of work for our members.

We have also become more aggressive in exercising our power as shareholders in major companies to influence their labor relations policies. Over the past year, we used the fact that IBEW-related funds hold more than one million shares of stock in Boeing as a means to convince the aerospace giant to award \$30 million worth of electrical work at a major facility in Alabama to union contractors. Efforts are underway to make sure that several Boeing projects in California become IBEW work as well.

Our other investment-related programs support the IBEW's goals. The Investment Tracking System is a nationally coordinated system through which local pension funds voluntarily provide information on where their money is invested. Through this, we know if our funds are supporting companies, including IBEW employers, that do not maintain fair labor relations policies. As shareholders, we have the standing and the leverage to protest such policies and help bring about positive changes. In some cases, we have worked with other unions to combine our strength to stop employer abuses. As I have stated before, this is one way we talk to corporate North America in a language they understand.

No matter what we tackle, we do it for one reason—to strengthen our union. We must show nonunion workers and young people looking for a career path that working union is the way to go. An IBEW union card is a ticket to an entire network of benefits and programs designed to promote advancement, training, education, security, and a dignified retirement. As we enter the 21st century, the message to our members, potential members and our adversaries is clear: The IBEW is on the move, and we are taking our rightful place in the industries we represent.

I join President Barry and all of the IBEW in extending heartfelt condolences to the family of International President Emeritus Charles H. Pillard. We have all lost a friend and a great leader. President Pillard appointed me to the International staff in 1982, and I will forever be grateful to him for giving me that opportunity. Let us all strive to carry on his memory in the best way possible, by building a stronger IBEW.



## A Total Effort

**EDWIN D. HILL**

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IBEW Journal (ISSN: 0897-2826) Published monthly, except January/February and July/August, which are combined issues, by the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, 1125 15th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005-2765. Subscriptions prices in the United States and Canada, \$4 per year in advance. Periodicals postage paid at Washington, D.C., and at additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to IBEW Journal, 1125 15th St., N.W., Room 810, Washington, D.C. 20005-2765. This Journal will not be held responsible for views expressed by correspondents. Paid advertising is not accepted.

Canada Post Agreement No. 1454919