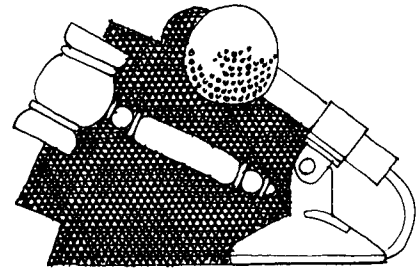


Conventions



Key officer of new police union loses to coalition in close vote

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At the third annual convention of the fledgling International Union of Police Associations (IUPA, AFL-CIO), delegates wrestled with problems of leadership and structure, as they voted for new officers, set legislative goals, and authorized an examination of their bylaws. Seventy-nine delegates representing 40 of the IUPA's 200 local affiliates attended the July 17-22 convention in Chicago.

The IUPA was united in its goals—the growth of the union, the attainment of improved working conditions through collective bargaining, and the passage of police-oriented legislation through a strong political action committee—however, there was some disagreement within the union over the means for achieving these objectives.

Officer elections. This difference of opinion was evident in the contested election for first vice president, one of the three principal leadership positions of the union. David Baker of the Memphis Police Association defeated incumbent Jack Hawkonson of the Illinois State Council of Police, by a 8,108-to-7,907 vote.

The election of Baker, which was the result of a coalition of delegates from the Southern States and California, leaves the leadership divided, with President Edward Kiernan representing the status quo and Baker representing a more aggressive style of management. It is not clear how much influence Baker will have on the IUPA. Heretofore, the first vice president has been in a powerful position, because many of his duties are determined by the international president.¹

Executive vice presidents also were elected for each of the IUPA's 20 regions. These officers serve with the president, secretary-treasurer, and first vice president on the

International Executive Board, which conducts the union's business between conventions and supervises the investment and disbursement of union funds. Other elections involved area vice presidents, who are responsible for advising locals of policies and procedures and for organizing new locals. Elections for the president, secretary-treasurer, and first vice president are staggered, with each officeholder serving a 3-year term. President Kiernan will face reelection in 1983, and secretary-treasurer Robert Gordon, at the 1982 convention.

Legislative goals. Foremost among the union's legislative goals has been preventing the mandatory coverage of public employees under the social security program. The IUPA believes that the inclusion of public employees would do little to salvage the financially distressed program. The union maintains that civil servants presently covered by sound retirement plans would suffer because no concept yet presented for integration into the social security program assures public employees that current benefits will not be lowered.

Kiernan, in his report to the convention, stated that he had received President Reagan's commitment to oppose mandated social security for State and local employees. This position was confirmed by Robert F. Bonitati, President Reagan's special assistant, in his comments to the convention delegates.

The creation of a "Police Officers' Bill of Rights" remains a high priority legislative goal for the IUPA. The union seeks a uniform law which would establish due process guarantees for State and local law enforcement personnel. The bill would ensure police officers that they would not be prohibited from engaging in political activity when off duty; it would institute requirements that police officers be notified when there is any investigation of alleged impropriety on their part; and it would require adequate representation of law enforcement personnel whenever a police review board is established to examine citizens' complaints.

The IUPA has also lobbied in Congress for legislation which would extend the benefits of the Public Safety Officer Benefit Act to include Federal-level law enforcement personnel and firefighters. Currently, the act pro-

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vides a \$50,000 lump-sum benefit to the survivors of State and local police officers and firefighters killed in the line of duty.

Constitutional amendments. Much of the floor discussion at the convention centered on the need for changes in the union's constitution and bylaws. Prior to the convention, some 20 amendments were submitted to the By-Law Committee, covering such varied areas as an officers' retirement and widows' pension plan, age restrictions on candidates for the offices of president and secretary-treasurer, the establishment of a Department of Organizing, and modifications in the authority and duties of union officers.

As the delegates considered these amendments, it became clear that a more complete overhaul of the bylaws would be necessary. The current bylaws, adopted at the founding convention in 1979, were appropriated with little modification from the constitutions of other AFL-CIO unions. The union now needs a constitution tailored more precisely to its own structure and administration.

Therefore, the majority of the amendments which had been submitted to the By-Law Committee were withdrawn. The delegates directed the committee to review the bylaws (including the withdrawn proposals) and issue a report at the next convention. On the recommendation of the committee, the proposed amendments which were not withdrawn were defeated.

The delegates, however, approved an amendment prohibiting the IUPA from recruiting private sector security guards. Because this proposal was made by the delegates on the convention floor, approval by two-thirds of those present was required for its adoption. The admittance of private security guards has been a controversial issue since the union's inception, with one faction seeking to organize such workers and the other advocating a "pure" union limited to public sector law enforcement personnel. The easy passage of this amendment fol-

lowed a recent National Labor Relations Board decision which found inappropriate a bargaining unit which included both guard and other employees. (See *Burns Electronic Security Services, Inc.* 256 NLRB No. 139, June 23, 1981.)

Other issues. Organizing continues to be one of the primary concerns of the IUPA. Kiernan noted that since its birth in San Francisco 3 years ago, the union has continued to grow, with nearly 200 affiliated locals, representing 30,000 members. In fact, each month since the founding convention the IUPA has chartered at least one new local. While these affiliates are primarily small locals, organizations of police officers in a number of larger cities such as San Francisco, Houston, Chicago, and Toledo have also joined the IUPA. The union now represents members in more than 30 States, the Virgin Islands, and Canada.

The delegates endorsed a resolution to provide support for the activities of the Law Enforcement Political Action Committee of the IUPA. Established in 1979 with responsibility for the political education of the member associations, this body had received little financial support from IUPA locals to date. Delegates were encouraged to promote a dues-checkoff program at the local level, with each local president functioning as a liaison to his area vice president on this program. During the next year, the committee will conduct regional seminars to educate union members in the political process and to increase the awareness of politicians and police officers concerning its political action program. □

———— FOOTNOTE ————

¹ The International Union of Police Associations' Constitution and By-laws, adopted July 17, 1979, states in Article VI, Section 3: "The First Vice President shall perform such duties as may be assigned to him by the International President."