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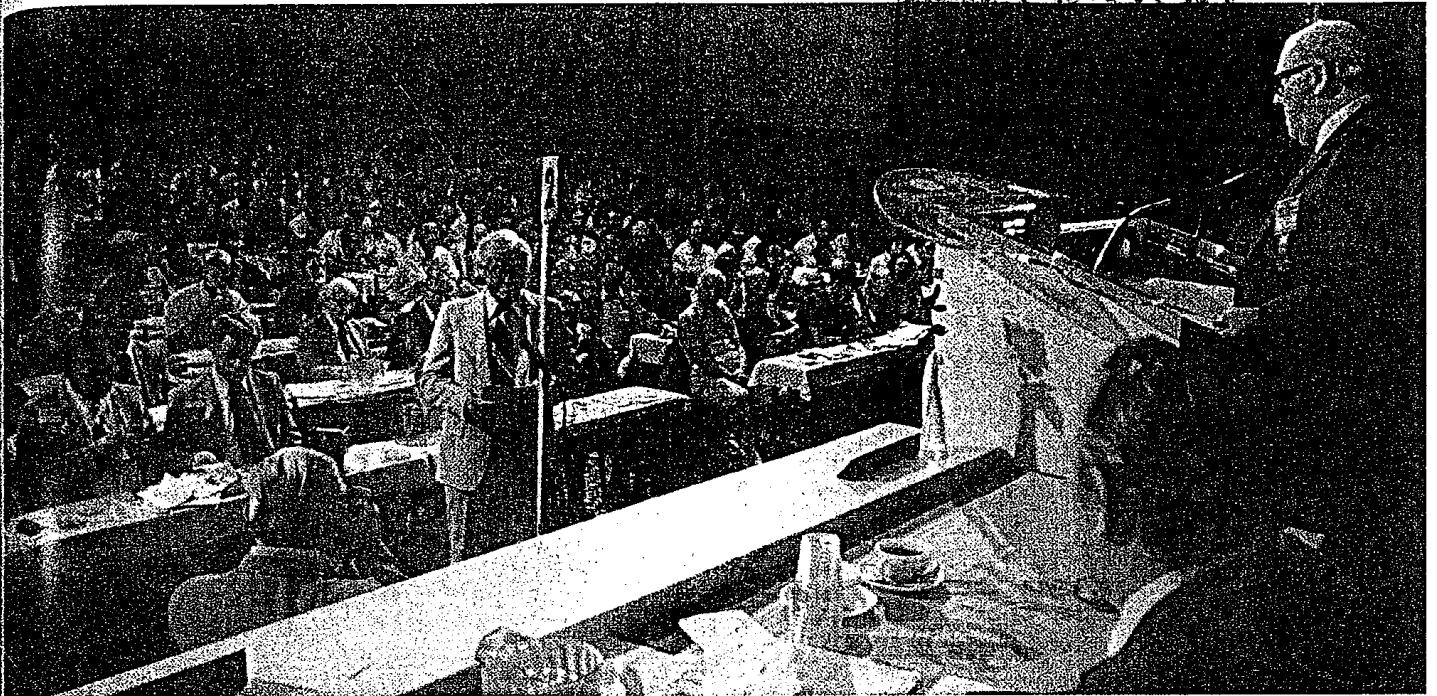
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IBPAT Establishes Health & Safety Dept.

"Safe and Secure Tomorrows Today," got a big boost when IBPAT delegates to the 24th General Convention voted unanimously to establish a Department of Health and Safety. The department's goal is "to reduce death and suffering caused by toxic paint trade substances and other unhealthy or unsafe working conditions," said IBPAT General President S. Frank Raftery.

The resolution adopted by the delegates establishing the Health and Safety Department is Resolution GEB-11. Similar resolutions were submitted by St. Louis Locals 115, 604 and 46, and this resolution, number 33, was also endorsed by Kansas City Local 9.

Occupational hazards are of special concern to painters, whose life expectancy is 11 years below the 72-year average enjoyed by most other Americans. Clinical studies in the United States and the United Kingdom reveal painters 67 percent more likely to develop lung cancer than most other groups of workers, and worker compensation surveys show painters' injury rates at five times the national average. The U.S. Department of Labor classifies the paint trades as a "high-risk" industry.

Prior to the vote to establish the Health and Safety Department, delegates watched a 30-minute videotape presentation on a giant, 16x20-foot screen. The presentation, produced by IBPAT's OSH Project, summarized the activities of IBPAT in the arena of health and safety since the 23rd General Convention in Los Angeles five years ago.

IBPAT delegates reviewed the shocking findings about the health and safety of painters and allied tradesworkers, findings responsible for motivating IBPAT's health and safety activities during the past five years. "Twenty-five percent of 2,000 examined painters had some form of respiratory condition," the delegates were reminded, "ranging from chronic bronchitis to asbestosis and silicosis or lung cancer—

and 84 percent experienced serious 'neurotoxic' effects. . . ."

The two-year process, 1976 through 1978, writing grant proposals; developing a 272-page education book, 60 page quiz book and 10 hours of videotape modules, and delivery of training to over 6,000 members in 69 nationwide training seminars—summarized in 12 minutes of videotape—demonstrated the fevered intensity of IBPAT's efforts.

Finally, the videotape presentation looked at the future, examining what IBPAT can accomplish with a Health and Safety Department. Through legislative and collective bargaining, the presentation held out hope for more stringent testing of products prior to introducing them into the workplace, improved labeling standards and, most important and ambitious, "a program of certification for painters and allied tradesworkers. This pro-

gram will seek state and federal laws to limit the use of certain hazardous paint trade substances to only certified workers. Certification would be obtained through a "safe-handling and use" test and would include periodic medical examination to insure that the certified worker's health is not adversely affected.

Following the videotape presentation, delegates voted unanimously to establish the Department of Health and Safety and to endorse its goals.

Delegates then heard George Taylor, director of the AFL-CIO's Health and Safety Department—created just last year—as he explained the attacks on OSHA by business (see speech excerpts on page 24).

Capping the morning's health and safety presentation was Dr. Irving J. Selikoff of New York's Mount Sinai School of Medicine. A longtime friend of IBPAT members, Dr. Selikoff is a highly-regarded scientist and noted humanitarian. Early this year he was nominated for, and received, Labor's highest honor for humanitarian contribution—the Murray-Green Award. IBPAT General President Raftery had the honor and distinction of nominating Dr. Selikoff for this award. In his nominating letter Raftery said, "The time is long overdue for the American labor movement to recognize that science and scientists are important allies of working people as they battle against disease and death."

It was Selikoff's nationwide investigation into the hazards of the paint trades undertaken in 1974 that sparked IBPAT's "Decade of Job Safety." It was at IBPAT's 23rd General Convention, in 1974, that Selikoff last stood before IBPAT's delegates and explained the hazards he suspected would be uncovered among painters and allied tradesworkers. And it was at IBPAT's last convention that medical examinations of 2,000 IBPAT members began.



More than respected and revered, Dr. Irving J. Selikoff is beloved by IBPAT's members, both for his courageous dedication and pioneering efforts in occupational health and for his humanity in speaking out among the experts in defense of those who do not have the expertise. In appreciation, President Raftery and GST Petersdorf presented Dr. Selikoff with a beautiful certificate framed in metal and etched with drawings of tradesworkers at work. IBPAT delegates gave Dr. Selikoff a standing ovation. IBPAT cited Dr. Selikoff "for refusing to accept occupational injury and illness as a way of life for working men and women."