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Livewire

DEFEND JOB

The victory by Scottish Power in the take over battle for Manweb has brought the question of jobs and security into sharp focus for thousands of loyal Manweb workers.

While city fat cats were popping champagne corks at the killing they have made on Manweb shares, a shocked workforce are desperately hoping they still have a job over the coming weeks and months.

Unions seek talks

The questions of job security and protection of existing terms and conditions are the paramount issues for Unison and the other trade unions. Within minutes of the takeover announcement the trade unions issued a strongly worded statement calling for immediate talks with Scottish Power and outlining crucial demands to protect our members.

- ◆ NO COMPULSORY REDUNDANCIES
- ◆ CONTINUED TRADE UNION RECOGNITION AND NEGOTIATION RIGHTS
- ◆ PROTECTION OF EXISTING TERMS AND CONDITIONS
- ◆ PROTECTION OF PENSION RIGHTS
- ◆ CONTINUATION OF THE SHARE SAVE SCHEME

These issues are critical to thousands of Manweb employees who have seen jobs slashed by more than 50% in five years and have seen terms and conditions throughout the industry eroded to satisfy the appetites of the city.

Unemployment high

With unemployment in the North West and North Wales significantly higher than many areas of the country thousands of families in Chester, Merseyside, and Wales are dependant either directly or indirectly on employment at Manweb and will not respond kindly to widespread job losses.

In the weeks ahead the success of the fight to protect jobs and defend member rights will rest on the strength of the trade unions and the active participation of YOU the membership. If you are **not** a member then JOIN NOW. If you **are** a member then take part in any meetings and help recruit non-members in your workplace. If you have no steward then VOLUNTEER yourself. Remember - YOU ARE THE UNION, and this is a fight for YOUR FUTURE.



"So tell me, what exactly is a synergy?"

YOUR UNION NEEDS YOU

Over the years that I have been active in Manweb branch, it has never ceased to amaze me how so many people could sit back and let so few take the strain when it comes to the trade union. Even in times of crisis (privatisation, new company agreement, reorganisations, pay negotiations) AGM's have been poorly attended. Attendance at branch meetings dwindles back to the few stalwarts once the money is in the pay packets or a particular reorganisation is over.

A message from your President

The Way Forward

I am aware that the last 6 months has been a period of major change and uncertainty with the decision to exit retail, more recently the take-over bid and the impact of those staff leaving through severance

It is important for you to remember that the high value placed upon the Company by the Financial world, is a direct reflection of your efforts and achievements since Privatisation.

There is no doubt in my mind, that ScottishPower have already researched the importance of the part you will play in the future development of the Company. It is essential that all staff commit to the ongoing growth of Manweb, which in turn will accrue benefits to yourselves and the customers.

This will only be achieved by sensible negotiation, which requires not only strong Trade Union membership but also, perhaps more importantly, professional representation.

- ◆ **SUPPORT YOUR TRADE UNION**
- ◆ **HELP RECRUIT NEW MEMBERS**
- ◆ **VOLUNTEER TO BE A REP**

Jim Brown
Branch President

Well colleagues, the time has now come to stand up and be counted. VSS has not only decimated your departments it has also lost you many of your most dedicated representatives and it's up to you to replace them.

Manweb has the best industrial relations reputation within the electricity industry. That has not come about by accident or through the benevolence of management. It is in large part due to the way in which the branch has been organised by people who care about the members they represent.

Very few employees have a Trade Union full-time officer dedicated solely to them - you have! But he can't do everything on this own. That's not the way Unison works and especially not this branch. It has always been member led, that means the members have to make a bit of an effort.

I feel angry when I hear members say "what's the union doing about it?". **YOU** are the union and if you don't like then way things are done then do something about it. Now is the ideal time to start.

We will need new representatives in a lot of locations. Think about it and if you are interested or know somebody you think would be contact our branch organiser Steve Williams. There will be difficult times ahead for those of us who have staked out future on Manweb and it is essential that our trade union continue to be active throughout all the changes.

For those of you who are not members, **WHY NOT?** You have accepted the negotiated benefits all these years and there are more to be had as a member, so obtain a form from the branch office **NOW**. Get it signed and returned, don't leave it to someone else, they may have gone on VSS!

Linda Ingram (Vice Chair)

**(To contact Steve Williams phone
01244-816773 or via Office id WILLS3)**