

LIVEWIRE

Issue 12 March 97

UNISON Manweb Branch

Flexitime threat !

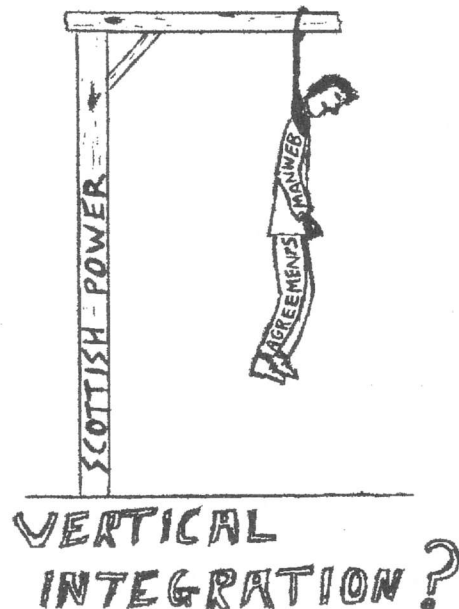
The latest pronouncements from the company about future integration plans have put a question mark over Manweb's long-standing commitment to Flexitime.

Fixed Hours?

Call Centre staff reacted with shock and anger when they were told in management briefings that the company would like to move to fixed hours and a single spine agreement in all Call Centres.

Staff have already accepted dramatic changes in hours and working conditions since privatisation. From the 9 to 5 Monday to Friday service which was available pre-privatisation the Call Centres are now staffed 24 hours a day.

Staff work a range of different hours, some starting at 8:00 a.m., some at midday, some working through the night and at weekends. All this is currently done with existing flexitime arrangements which the company confirmed they had no intention of changing when the new Manweb



Agreement was signed.

Flexitime not for sale

The angry response of staff to the announcement should be a warning to the company that flexitime is not for sale. It is one of the fundamental terms and conditions which staff hold dear and will fight tooth and nail to keep should there be any attempt to remove it !

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YOU AND YOUR AGM YOU AND YOUR FUTURE

What is a union? - defn.
uniting, being united,
coalition, concord agreement

What is unison ? - defn.
coincidence of pitch or
sound, agreement

UNISON in MANWEB
ideally should be a coalition
of members being united in
agreement coinciding with
one voice. IDEALLY !!!

This can only be achieved
when the membership
become actively involved or
at least are prepared to voice
their opinions to the active
members or reps. This chance
came on the 18th February at
the AGM , but unfortunately
only 30 people attended so
the meeting was adjourned
because we need 50
attendees to make decisions
that may affect all the
membership.

**Do you think your job is
safe?**

In the last 5 years no person
has been made compulsorily
redundant in Manweb and
UNISON policy is STILL to
fight for any individuals job.
But is it right that a person is
obliged to apply for a job
after a reorganisation when
others have been allocated
equivalent posts? And is it
right that a managers pep talk

should include the statement
"you should thankful that you
have a job".

**Are your terms and
conditions safe ?**

In the Brave New World
where our futures are linked
inextricably with
our Scottish colleagues what
will happen to the MANWEB
agreement. Don't all
employees in MANWEB
deserve to be treated equally
in terms of pay and
conditions and not sold off
piecemeal like appears to be
happening in the Manweb
Metering Business?

Manweb as an employer can
be kind-hearted, considerate
and charitable but when push
comes to shove they will still

be prepared to take our
privileges away unless we are
prepared to fight. Fight is
perhaps the wrong word
because sometimes all that is
needed is a discussion with
your manager.

But UNISON needs people
to stand up and convey the
views of the majority to the
management . Actively
canvass for Local Forums
where issues can be
REGULARLY discussed and
are seen to be resolved. Ask
your manager why the MJC
is not prepared to even
discuss this pay award ?

So please come to the revised
AGM or send an office note
to WILLS.

**Your union needs YOU
and you need your union**

**Howell Watson
ISD Steward**

DID YOU KNOW?



*"Unison members can
open a special TESSA
that really makes my
blood boil!*"*

Britannia House Leek Staffordshire ST13 5RG
* Free of UK income tax.
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01538 391738
Lines are open 9am till 7pm Monday to Friday and 9 am - 12 noon Saturday



LEARNING BUSINESS

I am currently on secondment to the Learning Business as Staff Representative, which means that, not only will I be involved with new initiatives, but I will be ensuring that the needs of staff are met and that the views of the Trade Unions are represented. The Learning Business was launched on 17 July 1996 with the full support of the Trade Unions. It is company funded to the extent of £2m in each of the first two years and it focuses not only on employees and their families but also on the community, including schools, youth and adult unemployed.

As an initial programme we have taken on 24 trainees at Hoylake (12 from Merseyside and 12 from Cheshire) and have just recruited 12 from Wales. These trainees will be put through a two year craft training programme which provides them with two level 2 NVQ's through a mixture of college work, off-job

training and work experience in our regional operations.

It is the objective of the Learning Business, not only to widen the range of programmes available to staff, which has already started to take place with the introduction of practical and academic tutored programmes, but also to extend the facilities to employees' families and also to the community at large.

It is my intention to keep you all fully up to date with the progress of the Learning Business.

This is a good opportunity for staff to take advantage of - and what's more it's FREE. If you require any further information, contact your local co-ordinator, or myself on Chester 652095.

Pat Lewis
Staff Representative

WHAT DOES VERTICAL INTEGRATION MEAN FOR YOU?

Scottish Power have a clear ambition to vertically integrate all businesses within the Group. Already in ISD the Data Centre has been contracted to CFM

along with 12 Manweb staff. Wide Area Networking has been moved to Scottish Telecoms. All 54 Civil staff have been told that their work is to move to the contracting business by the end of March. Manweb Metering staff fear they are

Pay 1997 ?

"What has happened to this years pay claim?" is the question on the lips of many staff.

Surprisingly enough it is also the question on the lips of most Trade Union representatives as well. This years claim (for a two year deal) was submitted by the Joint Trade Unions as far back as November last year.

To date the company has responded with deafening silence. Perhaps the two year gap since the last negotiations has resulted in memory loss about how to conduct negotiations!

Or are the cynics amongst us correct in assuming that there is something more fishy afoot? There wouldn't be a great big pile of string being carefully attached to the company's offer this year would there - Vertical Integration or no pay deal perhaps?

to be shunted into separate Metering Business for 'commercial considerations'. These examples are just the tip of the iceberg. Staff need to remain vigilant and active in their union to ensure our rights and benefits are not trampled under foot.

UNISON AGM



Vertical Integration?
on whose terms?

Your Union, Your Future

*Tuesday 22nd April
Plantation Inn, Chester
From 6:00 p.m.*

Includes bar, free buffet & travel