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Walter P. Reuther Library

Guide to the ALPA Herndon EAL Strike Center Records LR002456

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English

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Walter P. Reuther Library

5401 Cass Avenue

Detroit, MI 48202

URL: <https://reuther.wayne.edu>

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Summary Information

Repository:	Walter P. Reuther Library
Creator:	Air Line Pilots Association
Title:	ALPA Herndon EAL Strike Center Records
ID:	LR002456
Date [inclusive]:	1986-1990
Date [bulk]:	1989
Physical Description:	4 Linear Feet (4 SB)
Language of the Material:	Material entirely in English.
Abstract:	The Herndon EAL Strike Center Records document the 265 day strike on Eastern Airlines (EAL) from March 4, 1989 - November 23, 1989. During this period 3400 of 4200 EAL pilots went out on sympathy strike along with the flight attendants represented by the Transportation Workers Union (TWU), both of whom voted to honor the International Association of Machinists (IAM) strike of Eastern Airlines. The Herndon EAL Strike Center Records focus on the records of EAL Council 142 located in Herndon, VA, but also include EAL wide communications. The records are made up mainly of the daily fax messages sent to each EAL strike center every day for strike coordinators, and pilots and their families. The updates included information on strike developments, negotiations, media coverage, and research to counter company information. They also provided information about benefits, family awareness blocks, and writings to keep morale up. In addition there is information on Operation Love Song, the IAM/ALPA/TWU travel agent program, MEC updates, and strike/picket information and procedures. Also included are pilot letters, writings, songs and poetry, and cartoons created during the strike.

Citation Style

"ALPA Herndon EAL Strike Center Records, Box [#], Folder [#], Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University"

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History

The Herndon EAL Strike Center Records document the 265 day strike on Eastern Airlines (EAL) from March 4, 1989-November 23, 1989. During this period 3400 of 4200 EAL pilots went out on sympathy strike along with the flight attendants represented by the Transportation Workers Union (TWU), both of whom voted to honor the International Association of Machinists (IAM) strike of Eastern Airlines.

In 1986, Eastern Airlines was bought by Frank Lorenzo and placed under Texas Air Corporation (TAC), which had previously purchased Texas International, Continental Airlines, People's Express, and New York Air. This change in management was not welcomed by the pilots or flight attendants on EAL, as Lorenzo had a bad reputation in labor circles for his Chapter 11 tactic on Continental where he declared bankruptcy and voided all union contracts. Lorenzo immediately pushed for changes in pay and work rules, refused to allow his employees any role in the decision making process, and ignored the strained labor relations he was creating. Labor relations were already poor on EAL, and ALPA and TWU had both almost struck in 1986, now both groups were unhappy with the cuts Lorenzo was attempting to push on them. The IAM entered negotiations which went into arbitration, and after a 30 day cooling-off period they struck on March 4, with the pilots and flight attendants following suit in a sympathy strike.

Management, by refusing to communicate with the unions, were quite out of touch with their employees and believed they could withstand an IAM strike because they did not think the pilots would support the IAM. The EAL Master Executive Council (MEC), however, voted to sympathy strike and walked off with the IAM, crippling Eastern's flight operations. On March 9th, Eastern declared bankruptcy, but because of a change in bankruptcy laws, as long as the unions continued to negotiate, Lorenzo could not void their contracts. As the summer went on the Eastern MEC Chairman, Jack Bavis, realized the strike was doomed; the bankruptcy court judge, Lifland, was allowing Lorenzo to sell off planes, gates, and routes, as well as the profitable reservation system and the Shuttle route at less than market value, he had also refused all buyout offers from outsiders. In late July, Bavis presented the striking pilots with a back to work agreement from the company and backed by ALPA president Hank Duffy, but the pilots refused as they had become invested in the strike and would not to go back to EAL until Lorenzo was gone. The EAL MEC recalled Bavis in September, replacing him with the more militant Skip Copeland to continue the strike. By this time Eastern had scaled back operations, and replacement pilots were already flying the reduced flight schedule, in addition there were no more viable buyout offers. The pilots petitioned Congress to pass a bill forcing President Bush to declare a Presidential Emergency Board, which was usually the way government handled most major airline strikes; Congress passed the bill, but Bush vetoed it. The next day, November 23, the EAL MEC voted to end the sympathy strike and return to work. Eastern Airlines would never recover however. By the time the strike ended there were few, if any, jobs for returning workers, and, with their financial problems continuing, Eastern Airlines ceased operations permanently in January 1991.

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Scope and Content

The Herndon EAL Strike Center Records focus on the records of EAL Council 142 located in Herndon, VA, but also include EAL wide communications. The records are made up mainly of the daily fax messages sent to each EAL strike center every day for strike coordinators, and pilots and their families. The updates included information on strike developments, negotiations, media coverage, and research to counter company information. They also provided information about benefits, family awareness blocks, and writings to keep morale up. In addition there is information on Operation Love Song, the IAM/ALPA/TWU travel agent program, MEC updates, and strike/picket information and procedures. Also included are pilot letters, writings, songs and poetry, and cartoons created during the strike.

Important Subjects: Air safety; Airline pilots; Airlines Collective bargaining; Airlines—Employees—Labor unions; Airlines—Mergers; Airlines—Safety measures; Airlines—Safety regulations; Airlines—Security measures; Airlines—Strikes and lockouts; Airlines—United States—Management; Airplanes—Piloting—Safety measures; Continental Airlines; Eastern Airlines; Federal Aviation Administration; Flight attendants—Labor unions—United States; National Mediation Board (U. S.); Pilots and pilotage; Sympathy strike; Texas Air Corporation; Union busting

Important Names: Anzalone, Tom; Babbitt, Randy; Baldwin, Lew; Bavis, Jack; Breen, E.J.; Bryan, Charles; Copeland, Skip; Duffy, Henry; Lifland, Burton R.; Lorenzo, Frank; McMullen, R.L.; Petachenko, Greg; Shapiro, David; Shugrue, Martin; Skiados, Don; Testa, Frank; Trump, Donald; Welch, Bob

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Arrangement

The collection is arranged in alphabetical order.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Acquisition

Records came from the EAL Strike Center at Herndon, VA, EAL Council 142.

Processing History

Processed and finding aid written by Kathy Makas on October 8, 2013.

Access

Collection is open for research.

Use

Refer to the Walter P. Reuther Library "Rules for Use of Archival Materials." Restrictions: Researchers may encounter records of a sensitive nature – personnel files, case records and those involving investigations, legal and other private matters. Privacy laws and restrictions imposed by the Library prohibit the use of names and other personal information which might identify an individual, except with written permission from the Director and/or the donor.

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Related Materials

Related Materials

ALPA Miami EAL MEC Records Parts 1 and 2 also contain information on the 1989 strike.

Transfers

Video cassettes relating to the strike are in the Reuther's audiovisual department.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Aeronautics Safety measures
- Airlines -- Collective bargaining
- Airlines -- Employees
- Airlines -- Management
- Airlines -- Mergers
- Air pilots
- Air quality
- Flight attendants
- Pilots and pilotage
- Strikes and lockouts -- Airlines
- Strikes and lockouts, Sympathetic
- Continental Airlines
- Eastern Air Lines
- Texas Air Corporation
- United States. Federal Aviation Administration
- United States. National Mediation Board

Collection Inventory

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ACCESS, 1989	Box 1	Folder 1
Advertisements; DC-3, 1989	Box 1	Folder 2
ALPA PR, 1989	Box 1	Folder 3
American Express Continental Promotion, 1989	Box 1	Folder 4
Another View Newsletter, 1988-89	Box 1	Folder 5
Anzalone, T.; Strike Files	Box 1	Folder 6
Anzalone, T.; Strike Files	Box 1	Folder 7
Bankruptcy	Box 1	Folder 8
Cartoons, 1986-89	Box 1	Folder 9
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