SPITZ, LAWRENCE

PJB 5.9.09
DIED 12.5.08

ELSEWHERE

SPITZ, LAWRENCE, social activist, trade unionist, and a pioneer of the labor movement in New England, died Dec. 5th, 2008 surrounded by his family, in Sun City, AZ.



Born Feb. 19th, 1912 in Brooklyn, NY, Larry and his family moved to Providence in 1917. He graduated from Commercial High School in 1931, worked for the United Textile Workers in Providence and the Industrial Trades Union in Woonsocket, then served in the Philippines during WW II. In 1946, he was hired by the United Steelworkers as Sub-District Director in the Providence office where he remained for the next 19 years.

A man of boundless energy and drive, he graduated from Brown University on the GI Bill while supporting his young family in Cranston. He helped organize the RI-CIO and later negotiated its merger with the AF of L. He often acted as spokesman for the RI labor movement, drafting and promoting key legislation such as the RI Fair Housing Act and the Anti-Injunction Act.

He was active in many social and civic organizations and encouraged the unions for which he worked to take an active role as well. He was also an early Board member of Rep-