

USW@Work

A Publication of the United Steelworkers

STAND UP FIGHT BACK!

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INSIDE USW @ WORK

“Freedom is not free. It comes at a price. And the price is our willingness to fight for our rights, to stand and fight for them every step of the way.”

International President Leo W. Gerard

USW Constitutional Convention, August 2011



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STAND UP, FIGHT BACK!

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USW@Work

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Support USW Jobs

My old UAW-built Amana washing machine finally died after 16 years of service. Since Amana and Maytag were bought by Whirlpool a few years ago and the UAW plants closed, I was determined to find a union-made, made-in-America alternative.

After some Internet research, I was delighted to learn that Speed Queen operates a manufacturing plant in Ripon, Wis., and its products are manufactured by some 800 of my USW brothers and sisters.

Reviews of their products are excellent; they are an old company that manufactures commercial grade machines for home use.

Speed Queen's prices are in line with the imported and non-union familiar brands. Best of all, we are supporting fellow Steelworkers and keeping good, family supporting USW jobs here.

For information visit www.speedqueen.com.

Ryan McCoy

Local 2173, Columbus, Ohio

We Stood Strong!

I can't tell you how important it was for our local union to know the USW was behind us when Honeywell International locked us out last year, but I'll try.

With our small local of 230 members facing down a multinational corporation worth billions, it could have been very daunting as the company controlled all the resources.

However, all the money and lawyers in the world at Honeywell's disposal couldn't break us because we knew we could count on the solidarity of over one million active and retired Steelworkers.

Without our union and our supporters, the company would be free to cut and/or eliminate active and retiree health care, contract out our jobs, gut pensions for new hires, abolish seniority rights and reduce wages at will.

What makes us proud is that we have the power to say, "No! And not now or tomorrow or next week, either!"

Luckie Atkinson

Local 7-669, Metropolis, Ill.

Stand Up, Fight Back!

This is in response to Douglas Hansen, who wrote in a recent issue that he doesn't agree with the USW's "blatant partisan politics," and that the union shouldn't be concerned with "how we vote or what we watch on TV."

Unfortunately, the fact is that Republican governors and legislatures in Wisconsin, Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, New Jersey and elsewhere have made plain their desire and intent to destroy unions.

They are pushing the anti-worker, anti-collective bargaining regulations through the statehouses – not their Democratic counterparts.

While highly profitable companies and the

wealthiest individuals enjoy huge tax breaks and bailouts, Republicans and their corporate benefactors (again, not Democrats) are spending millions to convince people that public employees and their pesky unions are to blame for budget shortfalls.

While some Democrats are more union friendly than others, the record is clear: Republicans in power are using it to weaken the ability of workers to organize and bargain collectively for better wages, benefits and working conditions. That's going to hurt all of us who work for a living, Mr. Hansen included.

To pretend this Republican war against unions won't impact Steelworkers, as Mr. Hansen suggests, would be disastrous. More than ever, we Democrats, and especially union members, need to stand up and fight back – at the bargaining table, in the streets and at the polls.

Cynthia Curry

Local 12-590, Plymouth, Mass.

My Job Went to Mexico

Three years ago, the CEO of Corning Inc. received approximately \$27 million in compensation. Shortly thereafter, the company announced that lab glass manufacturing at its Big Flats, N.Y., facility would be sent to Monterey, Mexico, despite the fact that we were very profitable – earning about \$20 million for the company.

For perspective, a "measly" \$1 million would pay 25 trained and experienced USW-represented glassmakers for an entire year. As a form of personal protest, I made two signs for my truck that said, "To preserve executive bonuses, my job was sent to Mexico."

For the plant's remaining months I displayed them everywhere I went – parked at work, driving around the town of Corning and even on a vacation trip to Florida and back, during which we received a lot of support from fellow motorists.

Through our USW Local 1000 officers, I learned that members of the corporate board discussed what to do about my signs. Because the signs named no names, however, there was little they could do but grit their teeth.

James S. Plumley

Local 1000, Painted Post, N.Y.

Right to Work for Less

I was an AFL-CIO union member and later a member of Pipefitters Local 597 with good pay and benefits. Then I moved to Arizona – a "right to work" state.

Most of the jobs were non-union, so I took a job with a cut of \$3 per hour in pay with no benefits. Today I am 72 years old living off Social (in)Security and no pension.

Need I say more?

Ken Nelson

Monticello, Ind.

SPEAKING Out

USW active and retired members and their families are invited to "speak out" on these pages. Letters should be short and to the point. We reserve the right to edit for length.

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STAND UP FIGHT BACK!



Leo W. Gerard
Photo by Steve Dietz

CONVENTION DELEGATES SET FUTURE COURSE FOR USW

Knowing there is no progress without struggle, nearly 3,000 delegates to the USW's 2011 Constitutional Convention pledged to stand their ground and fight hard for North American workers and jobs.

"We have sent a message across the world that this union is going to 'Stand Up and Fight Back,'" International President Leo W. Gerard said in closing remarks to the local union delegates who set USW policy at the convention for the next three years. "Enough is enough."

Over four days beginning on Aug. 15, delegates heard rousing speeches and debated and approved dozens of resolutions aimed at strengthening the union in bargaining, organizing and improving health and safety in industries where USW members work.

Highlights of the convention included signing an enhanced alliance agreement with Los Mineros, Mexico's oppressed national union of mine and metal workers, and a new cooperation agreement with UNITE HERE in Canada, the hospitality workers union.

"We need to stand up for the global labor movement," Andy Voelzke, of Local 2-209 in District 2, said after the convention ended. "We in the USW have to lead the battle for solidarity and fight corporate greed."

Continuing the fight

Delegates showed their appreciation of past USW leaders, including President Emeritus Lynn R. Williams, who attended. They supported growing the Steelworkers

Organization of Active Retirees (SOAR) and Women of Steel (WOS), and welcomed a new generation of future leaders.

They pledged to continue the union's fight against unfair trade by filing legal challenges against those countries that break the law, and they agreed to continue resisting job-robbing trade deals with Colombia, Panama, South Korea and other countries.

Delegates vowed to continue to play a key role in politics by supporting candidates who work for working people at every level of government.

To make sure the fight and the union's work can be financed, delegates overwhelmingly rejected a handful of proposed resolutions calling for a reduction in dues and instead approved resolutions keeping the dues at current levels.

"I found the dues discussion inspiring," said Markeya McDaniel-Wilkerson, a delegate from Local 13-214 in District 11. "It showed that we will do what it takes, and that it takes money to get the job done. It displayed that the floor is united and will not be distracted by a couple of dollars."

Setting the stage for action

In a keynote speech that set the tone for strong actions and debate, Gerard called on USW members, the union movement and its allies to mount a major assault for workers.

Steelworkers, he said, must stand and fight for good

Photo by Steve Dietz



jobs, decent wages, and the right to organize and strike without fear of scabs taking their jobs. They must stand up and fight for universal health care, a national manufacturing strategy and restoration of America's global leadership in manufacturing.

"Corporate executives won't give up living like kings without a fight so let's give them a fight," Gerard challenged the delegates, who responded to his speech with three standing ovations and 20 interruptions for applause.

The convention also opened with a moving video that outlined labor's history of advocating for worker rights and improvements including the right to organize, 40-hour workweeks, paid health care and vacations. It placed blame for the current economic troubles on unscrupulous financiers and the politicians that support them, and ended with members chanting the convention's theme, Stand Up, Fight Back!

Tragic events recalled

Gerard walked through the tragic events of the three years since the previous convention. Unregulated, reckless gambling on Wall Street crashed the U.S. economy, which rocked the world economy.

Unemployment skyrocketed. Wages stagnated. Housing values declined dramatically for the first time in history and foreclosures threw millions of families on the

streets. Income inequality rose to pre-Great Depression levels in both the United States and Canada.

"They call it the Great Recession, but that's too nice a name for what it really is," Gerard said. "What they should really call it is the Great Wall Street Ripoff, because that's what the bankers on Wall Street and Bay Street, and the mortgage brokers they financed, did to everyday working people in both of our countries.

"Their addiction to runaway profits and bloated bonuses destroyed millions of our jobs," he said. "And what really galls me is that they turned right around and stuck us with the bill for their thieving ways."

Instead of aiding suffering working people, Gerard said right-wing politicians demanded austerity from the middle class and balanced budgets – without taxing the rich or ending corporate tax loopholes and subsidies.

Right to bargain attacked

Country-club conservatives attacked the rights of public sector workers to bargain, fought health care reform, opposed extending unemployment benefits and set sights on destroying social safety nets - Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid.

Politicians are not working for working people anymore, he said. "They're working for the corporate billionaires who lavish their campaigns with cash."



To fight back, Gerard said Steelworkers must tell politicians in no uncertain terms that if they don't stand up for workers, the jobs they lose will be their own.

Since workers can no longer depend on politicians, Gerard said they must fight for themselves. He quoted Samuel Adams, a signer of the Declaration of Independence: "It does not take a majority to prevail, but rather an irate, tireless minority keen on setting brushfires of freedom in the minds of men."

Brushfires of freedom

"That's what we've got to do for our members," Gerard told the delegates. "That's what we've got to do for our economies, for our pursuit of universal health care, for the preservation of our pensions, for our families, our countries. We need to set brushfires of real freedom in

the minds of our members."

By sticking together and standing strong, Steelworkers have achieved big advances in bargaining in these dire times, including winning successorship and coordinated bargaining in the paper industry, and winning trade cases that have protected 56,000 members jobs over the past three years, Gerard said.

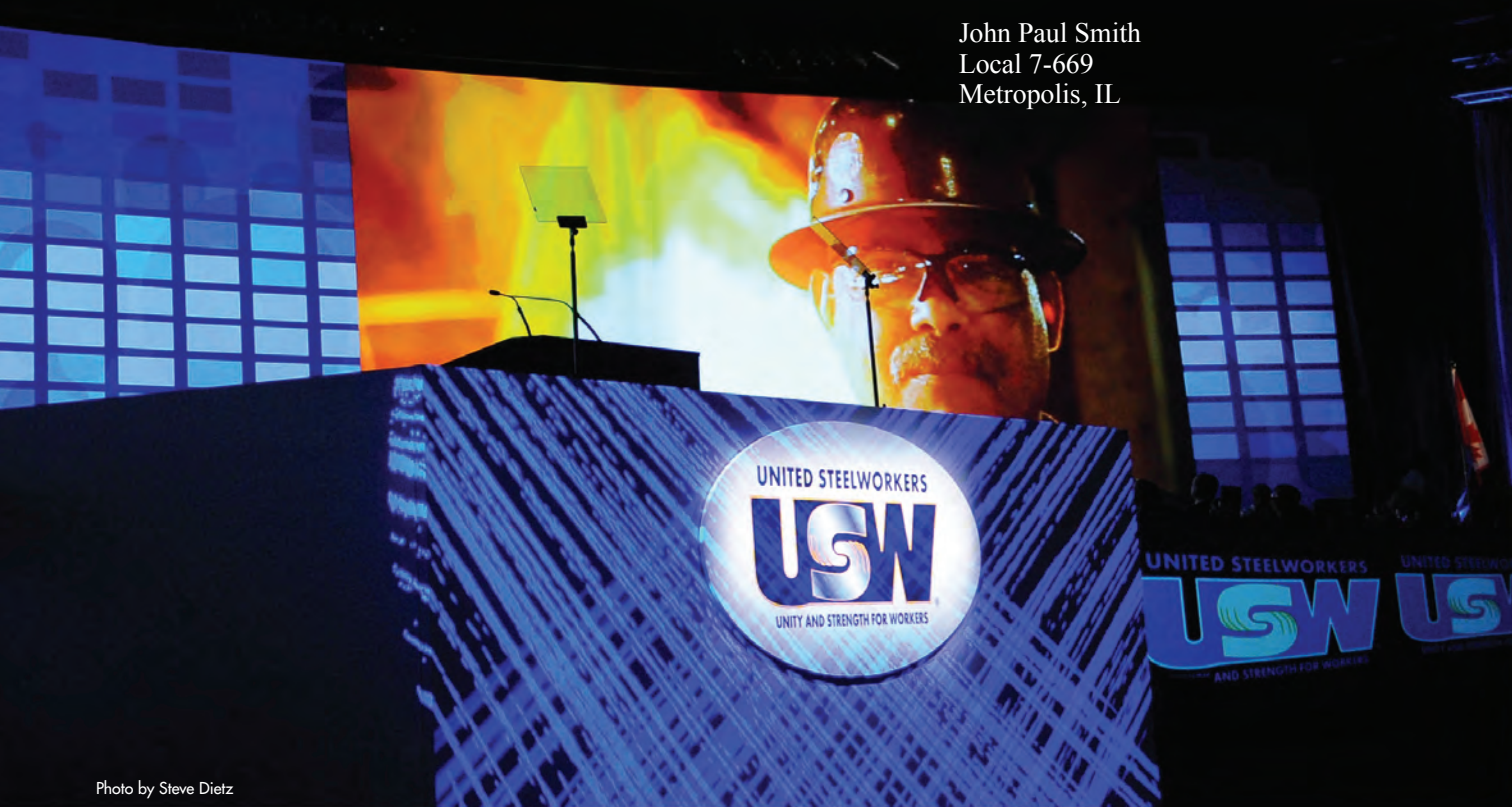
Steelworkers have shown they can win when they stand together, and now, Gerard said, Steelworkers must stand and fight for their rights.

"We can only win the future if we fight for it," he said, adding: "We know from years of bargaining that you can't win a better deal without fighting for strong demands. So sisters and brothers, be strong.

"Stand up and fight back – harder than ever."

“ TO SAY THE CONVENTION WAS INSPIRING WOULD BE AN UNDERSTATEMENT. THE VIDEOS WERE AWESOME, THE SPEAKERS WERE GREAT, BUT BEST OF ALL IS BEING IN THE MIDST OF 3,000 STEELWORKERS WHO HAVE YOUR BACK, THICK OR THIN. IF THAT DOESN'T FIRE YOU UP, NOTHING WILL! IF YOU DIDN'T RETURN HOME READY TO STAND UP, AND FIGHT BACK, CHECK YOUR PULSE. ”

John Paul Smith
Local 7-669
Metropolis, IL



TRUMKA: PLAY OFFENSE NOT DEFENSE FOR JOBS WE CAN DO BETTER

AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka opened his convention speech by recognizing car wash workers who just won representation with USW Local 675 as part of an ongoing campaign to organize the industry in Los Angeles, where workers, often immigrants, are routinely underpaid and abused. The workers received a standing ovation from convention delegates.
USW Photo by Steve Dietz



It is time for the labor movement to play a strong offense in the fight for jobs, AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka told delegates to the USW Convention.

“We’re done playing defense after that debt-ceiling debacle on Capitol Hill and the battles in state capital after state capital,” Trumka said. “Right now, our offensive team is fired up and what we’re after is jobs, good jobs.”

There’s no reason working Americans should settle for 9 percent unemployment, stagnant wages, benefit give-backs, record inequality and the destruction of the middle-class way of life, he said.

“This is America,” Trumka added. “We can do better. We have to do better.”

Tax breaks go to rich

Workers, seniors, people of color, and people with disabilities have been sacrificing and governments, schools,

and police and fire departments are “starving for money,” he said.

At the same time, Trumka said “hedge fund billionaires get tax cuts, and Wall Street corporations still get tax incentives to export good jobs overseas. It’s not just wrong, it’s shameful. It’s insane and for the future of our country it has to be stopped.”

The AFL-CIO plans a sustained jobs campaign this fall with a National Week of Action to show that America wants to work. In town hall meetings planned across the country, middle-class Americans will demand that politicians of both parties back policies to create jobs and restore the economy.

Shifting the debate

“We’re going to shift the national debate away from deficits and toward good jobs and workers’ rights,” Trumka said. “And you’re going to be at the center of this effort. Educating and mobilizing Steelworkers – educating

and mobilizing your families and your neighbors, your congregations, the Moose Lodge, the bowling league and the carpool – to fight with you for good jobs.”

Stand together

There’s a long way to go before we can fix broken trade practices and make sure every working person has the freedom to form a union and bargain for a better life, but we’ve got to start now, Trumka said.

“We need to stand together for a future, a future when every single worker has the fundamental right to be treated with dignity, to put in a hard, honest day’s work and be rewarded fairly for it, to have the health care and retirement security we need and the opportunity to see our children a little better off than we are.

“That’s the world we want, the world we deserve.”

STANDING UP FOR MIDDLE CLASS

PELOSI CALLS FOR JOBS, HALT TO CHINA'S CURRENCY MANIPULATION

Republicans must address China's currency manipulation before they bring more flawed free trade deals up for Congressional approval, Nancy Pelosi, minority leader of the U.S. House, announced at the opening of the 2011 Constitutional Convention.

Democrats have already held up proposed trade deals by demanding renewal of Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) for workers displaced by imports.

Pelosi suggested that the deals also fall behind action on China's manipulation of its currency, which causes its exports to the United States to be artificially cheap and U.S. exports to China to be artificially expensive. This floods the U.S. market with Chinese goods and kills U.S. industry and jobs.

The USW, the Alliance for American Manufacturing and Democrats have insisted that the United States formally name China as a currency manipulator and consider the manipulation as a factor when import duties are determined.

Pelosi previewed the Democratic agenda to create jobs. For Steelworkers, among the most important of those programs is "Make It in America." This effort, launched by U.S. Rep. Steny Hoyer, (D-Md.), means, Pelosi said, "keeping American jobs on our shores."

Make It in America, Pelosi said, means putting people to work building roads, bridges, and rail lines and developing clean, green technology.

Democrats also want the newly-created Joint Committee on Deficits to also be a Joint Committee on Jobs, Pelosi said. All of its conversations should focus on economic growth and job

creation to reduce the deficit, she said.

Bill of Rights, or as Pelosi called it, an Outsourcer's Bill of Wrongs. In addition, she said, the GOP, at the behest of corporations, is trying to gut the National Labor Relations Board, attempting to punish workers for exercising their right to organize and demand better benefits, and trying to pervert the Federal Aviation Administration funding



process to strip airline workers of the right to organize as other workers do.

By contrast, she said, Republicans are pushing an anti-worker agenda in Washington and in states coast to coast, including attacks on public workers in Wisconsin, Indiana and Ohio.

Republicans in Congress, she noted, are trying to help corporations ship jobs overseas by passing an Outsourcer's

creation to reduce the deficit, she said.

"Steelworkers," Pelosi said, "I know you are ready to fight to get our economy back on track, to create jobs, and to Make It in America. Let us always stand up for a strong middle class – the backbone of American prosperity."

AMERICA'S TOP CHALLENGE IS JOBS...NOT DEFICIT

Creating jobs, not reducing the national debt, is the greatest challenge America faces today, U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders told delegates in a rousing, boisterous Convention address.

"Creating the millions of new jobs that we desperately need is not only vitally important to the economy, but will be the means by which we reduce the deficit over the long term," said Sanders (I-Vt.), who noted that the 9 percent official unemployment rate jumps to 16 percent when those who are underemployed are counted.

"New jobs mean more government revenue, which makes a lot more sense than having to spend billions on unem-

ployment compensation, food stamps and other programs needed during a severe recession," he said.

Sanders' vision includes rebuilding the nation's crumbling infrastructure, transforming the energy system, and rewriting trade policy so that American products – not jobs – are our top export.

"We need jobs that pay decent wages, jobs in the U.S. – not jobs in

China," he declared.

Sanders received repeated standing ovations. His vigorous opposition to efforts to cut Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid benefits brought the biggest positive response.

"Social Security has not contributed a nickel to the deficit, it has a \$2.6 trillion surplus, and it can pay out every benefit owed to every eligible American for the next 25 years," Sanders said.

"Instead of balancing the budget on the backs of working families, the elderly, the children, the sick, and the most vulnerable, it is time to ask the wealthiest people and most profitable corporations in this country to pay their fair share," Sanders said.





The unfettered rise of rich multinational corporations that pit workers against workers around the world has left the USW with no choice but to become increasingly active in the global labor movement.

“We do that because it’s right. Workers should not be pitted one against another, and a rising global economy should lift all boats,” International President Leo W. Gerard told the 2011 Convention.

“It’s right to help each other as workers, but we do it in a rather self-serving way. We do it so we can better

defend our members.”

Delegates to the 2011 Convention unanimously passed a resolution calling for the USW to continue the work of building a global solidarity movement that can stand up around the world for economic and social justice and a sustainable environment.

“The reason this is important is because there’s really no labor dispute that the Steelworkers are involved in these days that doesn’t deal with multinational companies,” said International

Affairs Director Ben Davis. “And if we’re going to deal with multinational companies, we have to have a relationship with the unions that represent those workers in other countries, if they have unions.”

Delegates speak out

Before the vote, Steelworkers from across North America took to the microphones on the Convention floor to tell how international solidarity aided their local unions and fellow workers.

“We saw firsthand how tough it is to fight a multinational,” said Rick

Bertrand, president of Local 6500 in Sudbury, Canada, which struck the Brazilian mining giant, Vale, for over a year. “Without international solidarity, it would have been a lot tougher.”

Vale’s attack on some 3,800 USW members in Sudbury, Port Colborne and Voisey’s Bay, Canada, led the USW to redouble its efforts to build a global network of workers and communities to expose Vale’s disregard for human rights and to organize resistance on a global basis. Campaigns against Grupo Mexico have also led to strengthened cooperation among mining unions.

Larry Burchfield Jr., vice president of Local 13-1 in Texas City, Texas, said global solidarity has meant help from Unite, the largest union in the United Kingdom and Ireland, in confronting his employer, BP, the multinational oil company based in Great Britain.

“With Unite brothers and sisters, we fought

them on their own turf at stockholder meetings when they wanted to take away retiree benefits for new hires,” Burchfield said.

“**IN ORDER FOR US TO BE EFFECTIVE IN THE STRUGGLES THAT WE HAVE HERE IN OUR COUNTRIES, THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA, WE NEED TO MAKE SURE THAT WE HAVE AN EXPANDED GROUP OF ALLIES THAT WE CAN DEAL WITH TO HELP US WITH THESE STRUGGLES.**”

FIGHTING BACK AROUND THE WORLD

Improving safety

Tom Hargrove, president of Local 1010 at the ArcelorMittal mill in East Chicago, Ind., said international solidarity – the collaboration of unions and union federations – has led to safer conditions worldwide.

“As a member of the ArcelorMittal global safety committee, I had the honor and privilege of visiting and trying to make a safer workplace around the world,” he said.

Specifically, the resolution calls for the USW to continue to establish mutually-beneficial alliances with trade union partners in all sectors who share the USW’s willingness to build workers’ power through organizing, bargaining and political action.

“In order for us to be effective in the struggles that we have here in our countries, the United States and Canada, we need to make sure that we have an expanded group of allies that we can deal with to help us with these struggles,” said International Vice President Fred Redmond.

The USW, for example, has supported the organization of global trade union networks that enables workers to share information about working conditions and lay the groundwork for coordinated bargaining with multinational companies, in addition to helping members at Gerdau, ArcelorMittal, Vale and other companies.

Building labor federations

Those efforts include work with the International Metalworkers Federation (IMF), the International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers’ Unions (ICEM), and the Building and Wood Workers’ International (BWI).

At the same time, the USW will continue to build the new global union, Workers Uniting, launched three years ago with UK-based Unite the Union, as a further challenge to multinational corporations.

“The only way that we can even begin to challenge the injustices of globalization is through the building of a global union, a global union that is both active and builds solidarity among workers,” said International Vice President at Large Carol Landry.



UNITE REASSERTS COMMITMENT TO GLOBAL UNION

Unite General Secretary Len McCluskey, leader of the largest union in Britain and Ireland, reaffirmed his commitment to Workers Uniting, the global trade union formed three years ago with the USW.

“If ever there was a need for a global trade union, it is now,” McCluskey, a former Liverpool dock worker, told the USW Convention on the day delegates were considering international resolutions.

“If ever there was a time to make Workers Uniting real and effective, to extend its work to new countries, and deepen the cooperation, it is now,” McCluskey said to applause.

Workers and their trade unions are facing challenges on a historic scale, beyond what the creators of Workers Uniting imagined when the global union was conceived, he said.

He cited the biggest economic and banking crises since the 1930s, a slump that has left millions out of work, mil-

lions facing cuts in their pay and retirement benefits, and millions homeless or fearing for their homes.

Unrepentant big business

McCluskey said communities have been ransacked by “a big business which is utterly unrepentant” and “only wants to get back as fast as possible to the good old days of casino capitalism and the obscene bonuses for the fat cats.”

Workers Uniting, he said, has already done more than show its potential by aiding the USW in its strike against Vale in Canada and helping Unite in a long strike against British Airways.

Unite donated \$100,000 to help Canadian members during the Vale strike, International President Leo W. Gerard said in introducing McCluskey, who thanked the USW for its support against British Airways.

“We have brought our members together in metals, in the forestry sector, in the can and containers industry, in

education, in oil and most of all in the pulp and paper industry,” he said. “In businesses where we have both Unite and USW members, like Alcoa, Pilkington and the National Grid, we have started to work out joint strategies.”

Eventually, McCluskey said, the shared vision and values of workers will be victorious.

“The ideals that you represent of decency, fairness and equality are what stand us apart from the corporate elite and the bosses. They don’t understand these values. They fail to realize that the spirit of solidarity and community courses through our very veins. And that’s why despite their wealth and power, they will never, never defeat us,” he said.

“Our politicians and media barons try to debilitate us, to grind us down!” he added. “I reject that defeatism... Believe in your values! Believe in your strength! Believe in your union! Because another world is possible.”

Wearing a blue and gold USW T-shirt with “Solidarity” written across the chest, Jyrki Raina, general secretary of the International Metalworkers’ Federation, told Convention delegates that international worker solidarity is crucial in a global economy.

In this new globalized world, where corporations operate without national borders, workers cannot fight for a better life if they do not develop allies, Raina said.

His own organization, the IMF, which represents 25 million industrial workers in 100 countries with the USW its largest North American affiliate, will merge in 2012 with the International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers’ Unions (ICEM) to form an organization representing 50 million workers in 130 countries.

Raina said most of his knowledge about corporate campaigns came from actions he engaged in with the Steelworkers. His first partnership with the USW was taking on Mark Rich, the wealthy international commodities trader who owned the aluminum smelter Ravenswood and locked out Steelworkers for nearly two years. European allies helped track down Rich, who was living in Switzerland, and assisted with demonstrations there.

Raina noted that the Steelworkers are coordinating networks of workers at international corporations for joint action.

“A new era of global solidarity has begun,” he said.

IMF LEADER: GLOBAL WORKER SOLIDARITY CRUCIAL



Jyrki Raina
Photo by Steve Dietz

BRAZILIAN LABOR LEADER: CORPORATIONS MUST RESPECT WORKERS AND THEIR CULTURES

Artur Henrique dos Santos
Photo by Steve Dietz



Artur Henrique dos Santos, president of the Unified Workers Central (CUT), Brazil’s largest labor federation with 7.5 million members, brought Convention delegates to their feet when he said multi-national corporations must respect workers and the societies in which they live.

“Any company from any country that goes to any other country must respect the traditions, the culture, and the history of the lives of the workers there,” dos Santos told the Convention, which was highly sensitive to this issue because of the contempt that the Brazilian-based mining corporation Vale displayed toward USW members in Canada.

In introducing dos Santos to the delegates, International President Leo W. Gerard noted that the CUT helped overthrow Brazil’s dictator and elect two successive Brazilian presidents who have created 20 million jobs and lifted 26 million people out of poverty.

Strong and steadfast

The CUT, Gerard said, has proven to be among the Steelworkers’ strongest and most steadfast allies.

Dos Santos said he was glad for the opportunity to go to Sudbury and stand with Gerard and Steelworkers in the Vale strike. “I learned lessons with you Steelworkers that I will carry for the rest of my life,” he said.

In addition to Vale, dos Santos said, “There are many Brazilian companies operating around the world . . . This is another reason we need international solidarity.”

And he promised, “We are together as one fighting for our rights, our dignity. Long live international solidarity!”



FIGHTING BACK
AROUND
THE WORLD

ONE STEP CLOSER

USW, LOS MINEROS
STRENGTHEN ALLIANCE

Delegates to the USW Convention leapt to their feet in standing ovation when International President Leo W. Gerard signed an enhanced alliance agreement with Los Mineros, the Mexican union of mine and metal workers.

The new agreement has its roots in a 2005 USW strike against ASARCO copper mining and smelting operations in Arizona when members of Los Mineros crossed the border to join Steelworker rallies and express their solidarity.

There is a shared corporate connection between the American and Mexican miners. Many Mineros members work at mines and other operations owned by Grupo Mexico, a politically-connected company in Mexico that owns ASARCO in the United States.

The cross-border cooperation in 2005 led to the USW and Los Mineros signing a strategic alliance later that year, and ever since the two unions have worked to improve their relations.

In 2007, for example, when miners in Mexico struck Grupo Mexico in Cananea over health and safety condi-

tions, Steelworkers organized solidarity visits and aid to the strikers.

Unification explored

Just last year, the two unions agreed to create a joint commission to explore unification and increase strategic cooperation.

The reasoning goes beyond solidarity. Achieving better wages and working

“WE BELIEVE WE
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MEXICO TO THE
NORTHERN PART OF
CANADA.”

conditions in Mexico could ultimately protect jobs in the United States by eliminating the large disparity in labor costs exploited by corporations under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

This year's agreement reaffirmed the 2005 pact, and, Gerard said, brings the USW “one step closer” to building a unified North American union that can confront multi-national corporations in the United States, Canada and Mexico, the countries party to the devastating North American Free Trade Agreement.

“We believe we need to create an integrated organization that will defend workers in the mining and metals industry from the southern tip of Mexico to the northern part of Canada,” Gerard told delegates.

Leader pulled off plane

Los Mineros leader Juan Linares, who had hoped to sign the agreement with Gerard, was pulled off an airplane as he attempted to leave Mexico for the Convention. The pact was instead signed by Los Mineros officer Sergio Beltran Reyes.



Napoleon Gomez addresses Convention via video.

Photos by Steve Dietz



USW, UNITE HERE SIGN CANADIAN ALLIANCE

The USW and UNITE HERE signed a strategic alliance agreement pledging to work together in Canada.

The alliance, signed during the USW Convention in Las Vegas, gives both unions the opportunity to support each other and work together on issues of common interest in Canada and globally, International President Leo W. Gerard told delegates.

In the agreement, the two unions recognize the importance of working together in Canada to coordinate efforts on campaigns, legislative issues, member education and bargaining.

Nick Worhaug, the Canadian director of UNITE HERE, told delegates that the alliance with the USW is very important to his union and its members.

If middle-class workers like USW members don't have jobs and good incomes, they won't be spending money in the hotels, bars and restaurants where UNITE HERE members work, Worhaug said.

"That's what we're here to do, to make sure we help you keep your jobs and build those jobs you've already got," he said. "That's our security."

When people think about hotels, restaurants and casinos, Worhaug said they think of hospitality and everyone getting along.

"But the bosses in this industry are no different from yours," Worhaug told the USW delegates. "They want to get every dollar they can out of workers' pockets."

While hospitality employers can't move their work overseas, Worhaug said they can and do build new hotels in other countries, causing the union to lose membership density. One major casino owner in Las Vegas, he said, has built a 10,000 room hotel in Macow, China.

"We need to build an international alliance," said Worhaug, whose duties as Canadian co-director include coordinating collective bargaining for UNITE HERE locals across Canada. "That is why we need the alliance."

Work councils will be created from USW and Minero local unions that will meet regularly to exchange information and facilitate strategic cooperation, support and organizing. A mechanism will be created to support cross-national organizing.

The agreement calls for the USW and Los Mineros to remain separate labor organizations with separate constitutions. Neither will be liable for the legal obligations or debts of the other.

Each union will be entitled to observers with the right to speak but not vote on issues that come before their executive boards or committees.

An exchange program of USW and Minero personnel, staff and members will be developed. Language instruction to facilitate communication will be explored.

Living in exile

The signing of the enhanced alliance came after an emotional address to the USW Convention by Oralía Gomez de Casso, whose husband, Napoleon Gomez, the national president of Los

Mineros, is living in exile in Canada.

Gomez became a fugitive after he described as "industrial homicide" a 2006 explosion at Grupo Mexico's Pasta de Conchos mine in Mexico that killed 65 miners.

In apparent retaliation for that remark, the Mexican government filed trumped-up charges against Gomez, forcing him to flee Mexico for Canada, where he is supported by the USW.

Gomez, who has been re-elected five times as general secretary of the union by his members since his exile, spoke by telephone to the Convention. He was prevented from traveling to Las Vegas for fear of arrest over additional groundless charges recently filed against him.

He thanked the USW and other international unions for their support and solidarity, and pledged to continue his fight for justice in Mexico, a battle he described as a challenge for unions all over the world.

"The struggle is not over," he said. "We will continue until we reach a final victory, not only for Los Mineros but for trade unionists all over the world."

DELEGATES KEEP DUES STRUCTURE UNCHANGED



In a vote for keeping the union strong in a time of adversity, Convention delegates overwhelmingly rejected proposed resolutions seeking to reduce membership dues.

The delegates concurrently approved 272 resolutions submitted by local unions that called for keeping the union's dues structure unchanged. There were five resolutions seeking a dues decrease.

International President Leo W. Gerard asked the nearly 3,000 delegates for a strong showing that would convince corporate America of the USW's resolve to remain a fighting union, and he got it.

"The reality is, brothers and sisters, we came here to stand up and fight back," Gerard said. "We didn't come here to lean back and walk out with our tails between our legs."

Delegates defend dues

Delegates lined up at floor microphones to defend the union's dues structure and detail struggles where members have resisted corporate attacks.

Rodney Nelson, president of Local 207 at a Cooper Tire plant in Findlay, Ohio, pointed to the USW's successful tire trade case against China that led to increased investment in his plant and new jobs.

"The International Executive Board took on China and won and created jobs

back here in the United States," Nelson said. "Why would we want to tie their hands to their sides and limit the fight for us? Keep the union dues the same and keep fighting."

Mike Rodriguez, president of Local 2102 in Pueblo, Colo., said his local in 2004 won a seven-year unfair labor practice strike against Rocky Mountain Steel, formerly CF&I Steel Corp., and \$68 million in back pay because of USW solidarity and the Strike and Defense Fund, which dispersed \$60 million during the struggle.

Pennies per day

District 1 Director David McCall, secretary of the Constitutional Committee, said the rejected proposals would have saved members just pennies per day while depleting the Strike and Defense Fund and crippling other essential union activities.

Secretary-Treasurer Stan Johnson noted that the fund spent \$134 million since the last convention three years ago, including \$95 million on current disputes involving more than 6,000 members.

"We fight for every breath in the labor movement," Johnson told the delegates. "I don't pay enough dues. You don't pay enough dues. We can never pay enough dues to fight the fight that we have to fight."

Actor and human rights activist Danny Glover and veteran broadcaster Ed Schultz electrified the convention hall with their acceptance speeches for the USW's prestigious Wellstone award.

The award is given annually by the USW to honor the late U.S. Sen. Paul Wellstone, a progressive Democrat from Minnesota, and his commitment to public service.

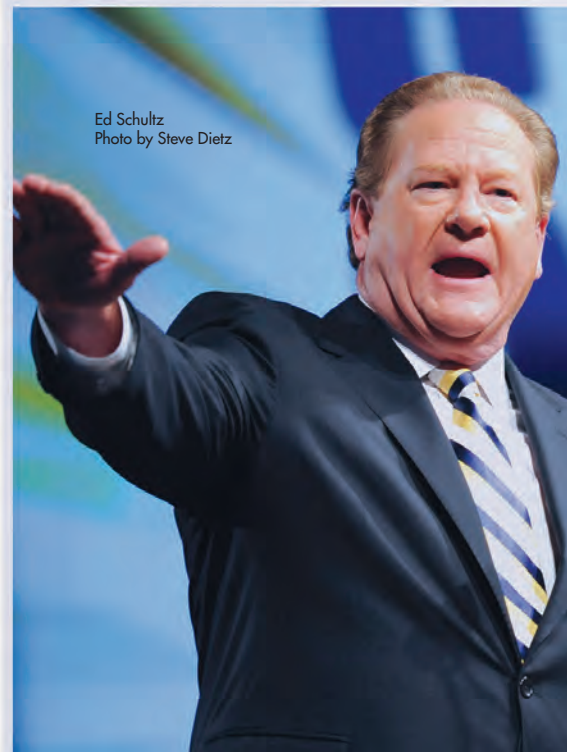
Wellstone, his wife Sheila and daughter Marcia, died in a plane crash on Oct. 25, 2002, while on their way to the funeral of a USW member. Wellstone died just 11 days before his potential re-election to a third term in a crucial race to maintain Democratic control of the Senate.

Glover is known for playing detective Roger Murtaugh in the Lethal Weapon films. But it was his work as a social activist that brought him to the stage to receive the award, particularly his role as chairman of the human rights organization TransAfrica.

Redmond introduces Glover

International Vice President Fred Redmond introduced Glover as a friend of the USW, and Glover praised Redmond for his leadership in linking the U.S. labor movement to workers around

WELLSTONE AWARDEES



Ed Schultz
Photo by Steve Dietz

the world, particularly South Africa, Liberia and Colombia.

“It is such an honor to receive the Paul Wellstone Award. I was such an admirer of his work in so many ways,” Glover said in his address, which was repeatedly interrupted by applause.

“The Steelworkers have been in the vanguard of the labor movement for decades, even during the full-out attack on labor rights in this country,” Glover said, adding that TransAfrica also opposes trade agreements that hurt workers.

“Those do not help anyone and only profit global corporate giants,” he said.

Glover has gained admiration for his wide-reaching community activism and philanthropic efforts, with a particular emphasis on advocacy for economic justice, and access to health care and education programs in the United States and Africa.

The actor said his parents joined the U.S. Postal Service in 1948 after the federal work force was desegregated and were active in their union and the NAACP. He said their values guide him in activism and philanthropic efforts.

Glover told the delegates a story he learned just a few weeks earlier about how he was cast in the Lethal Weapons series. It’s a story with a message about

standing up.

Casting director Marion Dougherty suggested teaming Glover with Mel Gibson, but director Richard Donner initially balked over Glover’s race. “Marion looked him in the eye and said, ‘so what,’” Glover recounted.

“She stood up and that is what we are going to have to do for each other,” he told the Convention. “I will stand with you on the front lines in the battle of the fight for our lives. TransAfrica stands with you. We stand with you, my brothers and sisters.”

Ed Schultz values workers

In accepting his Wellstone award for public service, television and radio show host Ed Schultz called for America to value its workers.

“We need a renaissance of thinking in how we value American workers,” Schultz said to applause. “We need to change the thinking in Washington on how important you are to your family, your community and country.”

The MSNBC host opened his acceptance speech by asking delegates if Wellstone would have extended the Bush tax cuts. They shouted No! Would he have been on the front lines in the fight against Wisconsin Gov. Walker?

Yes! Would he be silent over the attack on public education? No!

A veteran of 30 years in broadcasting, Schultz currently hosts the nightly Ed Show on MSNBC and The Ed Schultz radio show. He has won three Eric Sevareid Awards and has managed and been lead talent for a broadcast team that has won two Marconis and a Peabody award.

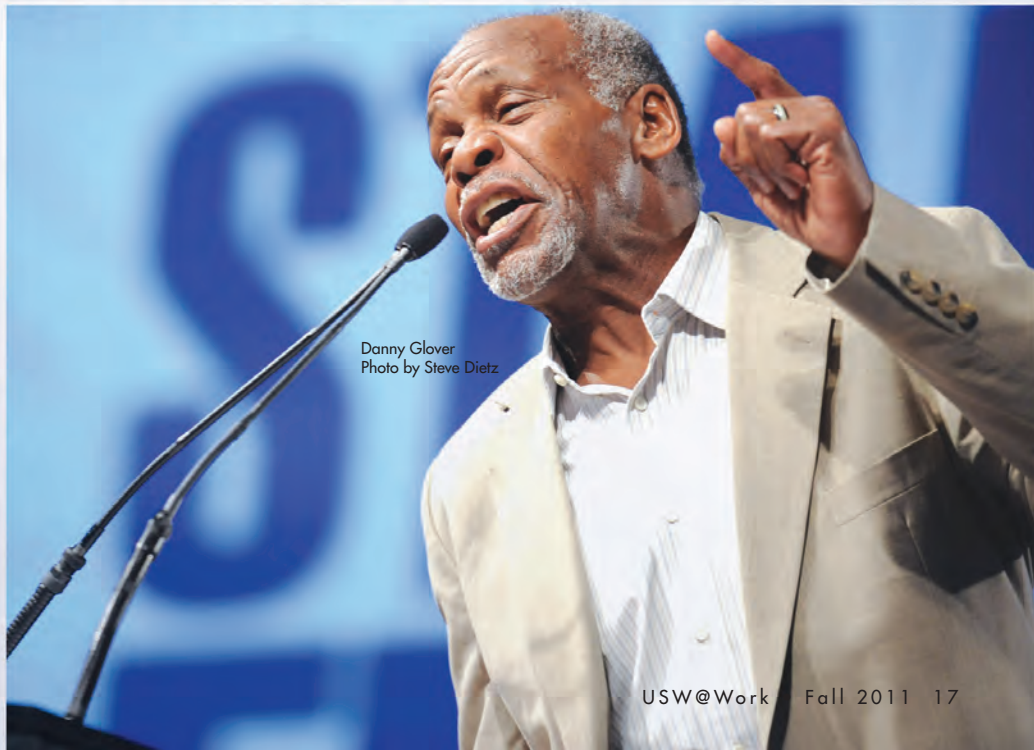
“I am honored my name is on this award,” Schultz said of the Wellstone. “We are the last bastion – the middle class, organized labor – between saving this country or seeing it go down the drain.”

Labor and the middle class, he said, did nothing to cause the nation’s financial troubles. He blamed deals with “Big Pharma,” tax cuts for the rich and unfunded wars.

The veteran broadcaster was applauded several times and booed only once, when he mentioned former Republican President George W. Bush as the most successful conservative president for twice cutting taxes for the wealthy and putting two conservatives on the U.S. Supreme Court.

“That’s when they should have put up the Mission Accomplished sign,” he said.

SCHULTZ, GLOVER ELECTRIFY CONVENTION



Danny Glover
Photo by Steve Dietz

FIGHTING FOR FAIRNESS

SOAR SEEKS
MEMBERSHIP GROWTH
AS RETIREE BATTLES LOOM

Delegates to the 2011 Convention of the Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees (SOAR) resolved to increase membership and activism, two goals supported later in the week by delegates to the USW Constitutional Convention, also held in Las Vegas.

“The reality is that SOAR chapters in the United States and Canada continue to make great contributions to the struggles of our members and the struggles of society,” International President Leo W. Gerard told 164 delegates who attended a SOAR conference held in Las Vegas this August before the USW Convention.

Recognizing SOAR as an advocate for the union and its retirees, Convention delegates pledged to assist the retiree organization in its plan to increase membership, currently 70,000, through local recruiting efforts and dues collection changes.

The delegates unanimously approved a resolution honoring SOAR, its current president, Connie Entrekin, and past President Lynn R. Williams, who was instrumental in SOAR’s creation.

While International President in the mid-1980s, Williams pushed the union to keep activists and leaders connected to the USW and active in its struggles after retirement.

“You’ve fought for the future in your

local union, in your districts, and in this international union,” Gerard told the SOAR delegates. “Some of you fought to build it, some of you fought to grow it, some of you fought to protect it. It’s my generation’s job to fight to nurture it, to make sure it gives our kids and grandkids at least the same shot at life that we had.”

In the resolution, USW delegates also pledged to assist SOAR in expanding its membership by making it a prior-

ity to negotiate SOAR dues check off in employment contracts.

The resolution also urges all local unions to provide the first year’s membership in SOAR to all retirees and surviving spouses in accordance with resolutions passed at four previous conventions.

“We pledge to SOAR and its members that the union will continue to consider the interests of USW retirees in all of its bargaining, social, legislative and political efforts in recognition of the commonality of interest between active members and our retirees,” the resolution said.

“We will build upon our present links to SOAR and seek new ways to involve SOAR members and retirees in the organizing, corporate campaigns, legislative, political and other endeavors of our union.”

SOAR opened its two-day conference the weekend before the USW Convention began with a call to arms from Gerard, who urged SOAR delegates to “take to the streets” to defend programs in both the United States and Canada that are under attack by conservative political parties.

“We need to show our anger,” Gerard said as he urged retirees to continue their activism to protect health care, Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid from the budget-cutting process underway in Washington, D.C.



SOAR delegates
Photo by Steve Dietz

“You have the credibility as seniors to demand fairness, to stand up and say Social Security is not an entitlement,” Gerard said to applause. “You paid for it every day you went to work.”

Barbara Easterling, president of the Alliance for Retired Americans, praised SOAR for its continued activism and urged the USW’s retirees to keep the pressure on Congress, and educate their friends and neighbors about the attacks organized labor and retirees face.

Easterling, a former officer of the AFL-CIO and the Communication Workers of America, urged retirees to stand strong and defend Social Security and Medicare from the budget cutters.

“We are all in this together. They are coming after us – all of us,” Easterling said. “For retirees like us, our working days may be over, but our fighting spirit still burns stronger than ever.”

International Vice President Tom Conway, a lead contract negotiator for the union, told the SOAR delegates that labor is under attack and the climate at the bargaining table for retiree issues is difficult.

It is a challenge, Conway said, for the union to convince its younger members that retiree health care is an important issue that must be defended.

“We will continue to do our best for you at the bargaining table,” Conway said. “You are part of this union and you always will be.”



Lynn Williams addresses Convention delegates. Photo by Steve Dietz

PRESIDENT EMERITUS WILLIAMS RECEIVES CONVENTION TRIBUTE

To the focused silence of 3,000 Steelworkers, International President Emeritus Lynn R. Williams explained the history and importance of Steelworkers standing up and fighting back.

And to thunderous applause, Williams reminded the Convention that “trade unionists are special people who have the courage to take up the fight for each other.”

A founder of the Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees (SOAR), Williams received a special Convention tribute in a motion that also expressed appreciation to members, officers and the board of SOAR.

The first Canadian to lead the United Steelworkers, Williams rose through the ranks to become International President from 1983 to 1994, a period of turmoil in the steel industry. A former national president of SOAR, Williams was appointed an officer of the Order of Canada in 2005.

Known as a great storyteller, Williams recently put to paper his inspirational stories of a life as a committed activist, fearless leader of the Steelworkers and as one of the most respected heroes in the history of the labor movement.

Unveiled at the Convention, his memoirs, *One Day Longer*, vividly recount his life in labor with all its triumphs, challenges, hopes and dreams. Williams traces the rise and transformation of the labor movement from World War II to today.

To an emotional standing ovation, Williams concluded his address with the uplifting words of Tommy Douglas, a prominent Canadian politician who was an early leader of the New Democratic Party.

“Courage my friends, ‘tis not too late to build a better world,” he said, adding, “That is what our kids deserve; that is what our grandkids deserve, and that is what we will leave them.”



Connie Entrekin Photo by Steve Dietz

ENTREKIN RE-ELECTED AS SOAR PRESIDENT

Delegates attending this year’s SOAR conference unanimously re-elected retired District 9 Director

Connie Entrekin as its president for another three years.

Also re-elected were retired District 6 Director Harry Hynd, the group’s vice president; Al Becco, long-time union activist from Pueblo, Colo., vice president West; and Charlie Averill, Alliance for Retired Americans board member and retired union activist from Knox, Ind., secretary-treasurer.

Delegates elected the following

district representatives: District 1, Willie Moore; District 2, Mimi Rinna; District 3, Gerry Edwards; District 4, Jim Bickhart; District 5, Robert Saumure; District 6, Doug MacPherson; District 7, Steve Skvara; District 8, Jack Caspariello; District 9, Don Badie; District 10, Denise Edwards; District 11, Dave Trach; District 12, Bob Rankin; and District 13, Jack Golden. Bill Gibbons was elected as PACE representative, and Jack Munro, the IWA representative.

Emeritus members include SOAR President Emeritus Williams, George Edwards and Dan McNeil.

Grammy-winner roots rocker Dave Alvin, a son of a Steelworker, entertained delegates and guests for an evening at the USW Convention in Las Vegas. Joined by his band, "The Guilty Ones," his set included, "Gary, Indiana, 1959," an ode to the national steel strike that year and the slow, steady decline that followed. Behind his searing guitar, he sang:

*"The factories are in ruins
decent jobs hard to find
You can't get ahead
no matter how hard you try 'cause the big boys
make the rules
tough luck for everyone else out on the streets
it's every man for himself"*

"I was just channeling my dad," Alvin told International President Leo W. Gerard after the show. Cas Alvin, his father,

was an organizer in the U.S. southwest and an editor of Steelworker magazine.

Dave Alvin and his older brother Phil, also a musician, spent their childhood in a working-class neighborhood in suburban Los Angeles. In 1979, they founded the Blasters, a rock and roll group.

Their father's work took him to steel mill communities in California and to copper and coal mines in Arizona, Utah, New Mexico, Colorado and Wyoming. Sometimes the brothers would tag along to union events and travel with him on organizing drives during school vacations.

"Dad was a dedicated union man," Alvin said. "In fact, I'm named after Steelworker President David McDonald." His brother Phil is named for Philip Murray, the USW's first president and director of the Steel Workers Organizing Committee (SWOC).

You can check out "Gary, Indiana, 1959" on Dave's recent release "Eleven Eleven" and find out more about him and his music at <http://www.davealvin.net/>

STEELWORKER'S SON ROCKS DELEGATES

Dave Alvin
Photo by Steve Dietz

USW MEMBER INFUSES MUSIC WITH HIS UNION PRIDE



Michael O'Brien
Photo by Steve Dietz

When Steelworkers struck Brazilian mining giant Vale, veteran members helped lead the fight. They also inspired a new generation of members to get active in their union, including Michael "OB" O'Brien.

O'Brien, 30, a mine lift operator and aspiring musician, became active in the local and with the help of his music, became a fresh, new voice for workers during the strike.

Known as "OB," he was inspired by the strike to pen "One Day Longer," a rap that symbolizes union pride, strength and the fighting spirit. Since then, he's performed the song on the picket line in Sudbury, Canada, at the massive worker protests in Madison, Wis., and most recently at the USW Convention in Las Vegas.

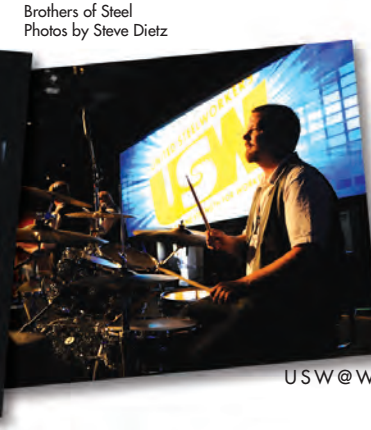
"I love my union and everything our move-

ment stands for. My music is another vehicle with which we can spread our message of solidarity, power and change for a better future," O'Brien said.

OB and his band, Kill the Autocrat, released an album, "A New World Disorder," on Aug. 30 on 682 Records. The album features a song O'Brien calls a union anthem for a new generation, "Working Man."

O'Brien is a member of the USW Next Generation Advisory Council, a group of emerging leaders who have dedicated themselves to help recruit and retain the next generation of USW members.

Visit the USW website, www.usw.org, to watch a video of O'Brien's Convention performance and to download a free copy of "One Day Longer."



Brothers of Steel
Photos by Steve Dietz

Brothers of Steel, USW members from Canada, pumped up the Convention daily with their hard-driving sound.

PUT AMERICA TO WORK

DEMAND CONGRESS PASS THE JOBS ACT NOW!

President Barack Obama is coming to your corner of the country. He's asking Americans in every nook of this nation to support his American Jobs Act.

And they should. Because, as Obama told Congress when he presented the American Jobs Act on Sept. 8, Americans don't care about politics. They care about jobs. With unemployment above 9 percent, they want jobs. And they want Congress to do its job; they want Congress to make America work fairly for everyday Americans.

Obama pointed out that his \$447 billion proposal is completely paid for and contains only programs that both Democrats and Republicans have supported in the past. An assessment of the plan by the Economic Policy Institute determined it would save or create 4.3 million jobs and recharge the economy.

Obama proposed a massive building program to move America forward, both economically and educationally. The American Jobs Act would provide \$30 billion to modernize schools, \$50 billion to improve transportation, \$10 billion for an infrastructure bank to help fund public construction projects and \$11 billion to rehabilitate vacant homes. The plan also contains worker and employer payroll tax cuts that would give companies more money to hire and employees more money to spend. The more workers spend, the more demand rises and the more jobs are created.

Obama explained it this way, "The purpose of the American Jobs Act is simple: to put more people back to work and more money in the pockets of those who are working. It will create more jobs for construction workers, more jobs for teachers, more jobs for veterans and more jobs for the long-term unemployed. It will provide a tax break for companies who hire new workers, and it will cut payroll taxes in half for every working American and every small business. It will provide a jolt to an economy that has stalled, and give companies confidence that if they invest and hire, there will

be customers for their products and services."

Adopt the act now

International President Leo W. Gerard repeated what Obama said a dozen times in his speech: Congress should adopt the act immediately. "The billions of infrastructure investments announced by the President will drive new jobs in manufacturing. He is right in saying that the next generation of manufacturing must be made in America," Gerard said. He asked Steelworkers across America to tell their U.S. senators and congressmen to pass the act right away.

In addition to creating jobs, the act would begin restoring fairness in America. Obama explained, "These men and women grew up with faith in an America where hard work and responsibility paid off. They believed in a country where everyone gets a fair shake and does their fair share – where if you stepped up, did a good job, and were loyal to your company, that loyalty would be rewarded with a decent salary and good benefits; maybe a raise once in a while. If you did the right thing, you could make it in America."

The President continued: "But for decades now, Americans have watched that compact erode. They have seen the deck too often stacked against them. And they know that Washington hasn't always put their interests first. The people of this country work hard to meet their responsibilities. The question tonight is whether we'll meet ours."

Obama said paying for his jobs plan in part by raising taxes on millionaires and closing corporate loopholes that allow highly-profitable corporations like GE to pay nothing is a matter of basic fairness: "I'm also well aware that there are many Republicans who don't believe we should raise taxes on those who are most fortunate and can best afford it. But here is what every American knows: While most people in this country struggle to make ends meet, a few of the most affluent citizens and corporations enjoy tax breaks and

loopholes that nobody else gets. Right now, Warren Buffet pays a lower tax rate than his secretary – an outrage he has asked us to fix. We need a tax code where everyone gets a fair shake, and everybody pays their fair share. And I believe the vast majority of wealthy Americans and CEOs are willing to do just that, if it helps the economy grow and gets our fiscal house in order.”

Tax breaks for millionaires?

He continued by asking: “Should we keep tax loopholes for oil companies? Or should we use that money to give small business owners a tax credit when they hire new workers? Because we can’t afford to do both. Should we keep tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires? Or should we put teachers back to work so our kids can graduate ready for college and good jobs? Right now, we can’t afford to do both.”

“This isn’t political grandstanding,” he said, “This isn’t class warfare. This is simple math. These are real choices that we have to make. And I’m pretty sure I know what most Americans would choose. It’s not even close. And it’s time for us to do what’s right for our future.”

Over the summer, Republicans held Democrats hostage over raising the debt ceiling. Despite giving George W. Bush no trouble when he needed the ceiling raised, Republicans refused to raise it for Obama unless he agreed to massive budget cuts. Several said they didn’t care if the nation ran out of money to pay bills, destroying its credit rating and raising the cost to borrow.

Obama and the Democrats couldn’t make enough concessions to appease them. In the end, the careless brinkmanship of the GOP, particularly the Tea Party, prompted one rating agency to downgrade U.S. creditworthiness.

This is the party that openly said its primary goal after last fall’s elections was to ensure Obama failed, to ensure he didn’t win a second term. During the fall campaigning, the GOP told America jobs were its first priority. But afterwards, the GOP did nothing to create jobs.

Their job creation ideas were the same failed refrain: cut taxes on the rich and corporations and eliminate regulations. Republicans insisted regulations caused “uncertainty” in the market, preventing businesses from hiring – although there’s absolutely no evidence of that.

In fact, it was lack of regulation on the financial markets that led to unbridled speculation by banksters on Wall Street, which, ultimately, caused the economic collapse.

Save basic protections

In calling for Congress to pass the American Jobs Act, which would create jobs by increasing consumer demand, Obama confronted the GOP contention about regulation. The President noted that his administration’s review of federal regulations had eliminated

those that were unnecessarily burdensome.

Then, he said, “but what we can’t do – what I won’t do – is let this economic crisis be used as an excuse to wipe out the basic protections that Americans have counted on for decades. I reject the idea that we need to ask people to choose between their jobs and their safety. I reject the argument that says for the economy to grow, we have to roll back protections that ban hidden fees by credit card companies, or rules that keep our kids from being exposed to mercury, or laws that prevent the health insurance industry from shortchanging patients.”

And, importantly for the USW, teachers and other public sector workers and every worker in America who wants a union, the President continued, “I reject the idea that we have to strip away collective bargaining rights to compete in a global economy. We shouldn’t be in a race to the bottom, where we try to offer the cheapest labor and the worst pollution standards. America should be in a race to the top. And I believe that’s a race we can win.”


After the virtual political stalemate over the debt ceiling this past summer, Obama said he recognized that some in Congress might be comfortable doing nothing until after the next presidential election determines the will of the electorate.

“But know this,” Obama told them, “the next election is 14 months away. And the people who sent us here – the people who hired us to work for them – they don’t have the luxury of waiting 14 months. Some of them are living week to week; paycheck to paycheck; even day to day. They need help, and they need it now.”

Because so many USW members in every corner of this country have suffered in the bankster-caused recession, and because so many USW members’ children and parents and communities in every nook of this nation have been devastated by this relentless recession, the USW will mobilize to join Obama in demanding that Congress do its job and pass this jobs plan right away.

President Barack Obama tours the Alcoa Davenport Works in Bettendorf, Iowa, this summer with (from left) Alcoa Chairman and CEO Klaus Kleinfeld, General Manager Malcolm Murphy and USW Local 105 President Charles “Skip” McGill (right). Alcoa announced on Sept. 15 that it will spend \$300 million to expand the Davenport plant. The expansion will add 150 full-time jobs, bringing total employment to more than 2,300. (AP Photo/Carolyn Kaster)



A photograph showing two individuals, a woman on the left and a man on the right, both smiling. The woman has short brown hair and is wearing a dark top. The man has white hair and is wearing a dark suit with a pink tie. They are in an office setting with wood paneling and a framed picture on the wall behind them.

Outgoing National Labor Relations Board Chairman Wilma B. Liebman poses with former board member Peter Carey Schamber at the NLRB headquarters.
AP Photo/ J. Scott Applewhite

USW REMAKES NLRB LAW IN TWO LANDMARK CASES

The USW won two landmark cases before the National Labor Relations Board that ensure the ability of workers to more freely exercise their right to organize a union.

“These cases represent monumental victories, not just for unions but for all workers as well when they attempt to organize in support of better wages and benefits and safer working conditions,” International President Leo W. Gerard said of the decisions.

The two cases were among a flurry of decisions released at the end of August as the term in office for the board’s chairwoman, Wilma B. Liebman, expired. She asked to not be reappointed.

In a case involving Lamons Gasket Co., the NLRB overruled a 2007 Bush-era decision known as *Dana Corp.*, which made it more difficult to obtain voluntary recognition from an employer.

Return to original intent

The *Dana* decision, the USW contended, violated almost 50 years of prior NLRB and court law. With *Lamons Gasket*, the board has returned to the original intent of Congress in passing the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) to promote union organizing and collective bargaining.

In a case known as *Specialty Healthcare*, the USW successfully argued that the NLRB should apply its standard community of interest rules to define bargaining units in the nursing home industry.

Both decisions were predictably criticized by Republicans as activist measures that display union favoritism. AFL-CIO General Counsel Lynn Rhinehart, however, applauded the rulings and called them mainstream decisions, consistent with the original purpose of the NLRA.

“These are not radical,” Rhinehart told *The New York Times*. “What was radical was the Bush board overturning decades of precedent to invent new rules.”

Departing from past practice

In the overturned *Dana* case, the NLRB departed from years of precedent by inventing a new procedure that required voluntarily recognized unions to inform the board and employees of the recognition and gave employees a 45-day window in which to attempt to decertify the union.

In *Lamons Gasket*, a board majority said *Dana* imposed an “extraordinary notice requirement” based on the completely unfounded suspicion that workers are coerced to sign voluntary recognition cards. The board returned to the rule that a union, once voluntarily recognized, has a “reasonable period” of up to a year in which to bargain free from the threat of a petition to eliminate representation.

According to the NLRB, employees decertified a voluntarily-recognized union under the *Dana* procedures in just 1.2 percent of the 1,133 cases in which *Dana* notices were filed.

In *Specialty Healthcare*, the NLRB

ruled that the USW could organize 53 certified nursing assistances at a non-acute care nursing home in Mobile, Ala., as one bargaining unit without including the facility’s other nonprofessionals such as janitors, cooks and clerical workers.

The board, again returning to the original intent of the NLRA, said the potential bargaining unit for employees at non-acute health care facilities would be based on the same “community of interest” standard used at other workplaces. Under that standard, bargaining units are generally based on whether employees have similar responsibilities, supervisors, skills, working conditions and pay scales.

The USW ultimately won the election at the Specialty Healthcare nursing home in Alabama. Ballots that had been set aside from a 2009 election were counted after the ruling was issued. The USW was notified of the victory on Sept. 16.

The USW’s Organizing and Legal departments worked together in the cases to secure positive changes for unions and working people. Organizing counsel Brad Manzolillo handled the petition for review that got the *Lamons* case started. Associate General Counsel Dan Kovalik briefed the board in both cases.

“These cases will now permit workers to more freely exercise their rights to organize and collectively bargain – rights enshrined not only under the National Labor Relations Act, but also under the International Labor Organization’s (ILO) core conventions,” Gerard said.

Fired from a railroad car repair facility for participating in a USW organizing drive, Faith Clark knows firsthand the delaying tactics employers use to harass and threaten workers who support unionization.

The former shipping clerk from Dubois, Pa., told the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) that she supports new rules the agency proposed to streamline the current election process that companies now abuse.

Clark told the board that management threats and maneuvers delayed an election for nearly a year at Rescar Inc., frightening workers and eroding their willingness to support the union.

“They were threatening and scaring a lot of people,” said Clark, who was singled out for weekend duty and “onerous” outside work apparently because she supported the union.

“Guys would come up to me and say, ‘oh that’s not right, how they treat you,’” she testified.

NLRB proposes new rules

The board is expected to vote on a final rule later this year after public comments are considered. If made permanent, the new rules could significantly cut the election period by simplifying procedures, deferring litigation, allowing electronic filing of petitions and other documents and setting shorter deadlines for hearings and filings.

“The current rules give employers all the options and discourage workers from having a fair and timely election,” said International President Leo W. Gerard.

The USW was contacted in October 2007 by some of Clark’s co-workers who were concerned about poor and dangerous working conditions. A petition for an NLRB election was filed in February 2008. The election was held in October 2008.

Strong support dwindles

Support for the union was strong at first. More than 60 percent of eligible employees signed authorization cards. But when the vote was held, the union lost by 61 to 25.

“By delaying the election, the company had time to work on everybody and work everybody down,”

SPEEDY ELECTIONS SOUGHT

FIRED USW SUPPORTER TELLS OF THREATS AND DELAYS



Faith Clark



Clark told the board.

Management hired a union-busting law firm, held captive audience meetings and threatened to eliminate benefits including 401(k) accounts, the only available retirement plan. Pro-union employees were prohibited from distributing information during the campaign while supervisors constantly passed out anti-union flyers.

Rescar tried to exclude Clark, an internal organizer and outspoken USW supporter, from participating in the voting by falsely claiming she was a supervisor. That tactic, intended to taint the organizing efforts, forced hearings that unnecessarily delayed the election.

The company next tried to add additional employees to the bargaining unit who did not belong, and when it lost on those issues, further delayed a vote by committing unfair labor practices.

Management delays typical

Rescar sought hearings for seemingly any reason. When hearings were scheduled, the company sought postponements and presented dozens of exhibits to force additional hearings.

Clark is convinced she was terminated after the vote because of her support for the union. When she and the USW filed charges against the company, her co-workers were so afraid of retaliation that no one would testify on her behalf.

The company settled the case prior to a hearing. But Clark’s unemployment benefits are exhausted and she continues to search for a new job with comparable pay and benefits.

USW Organizing Director Mike Yoffee said employer delays of the type Clark encountered are typical in contested election campaigns.

“We had more than majority support of signed cards at Rescar when the petition was filed, but repeated challenges of eligibility, multiple hearing requests and delay tactics wear down union support prior to the vote,” Yoffee said. “The proposed rules are a step to remedy this unfairness to workers.”

Honeywell Uranium Plant Lockout Ends

ONE LONG

USW members ratified a new three-year agreement that ended a 13-month lockout by Honeywell International at a uranium processing plant in Metropolis, Ill., the world's largest maker of fuel for commercial reactors.

The agreement was approved Aug. 2 by members of Local 7-669, who were then required to undergo safety training and recertification mandated by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) before returning to work. The first two-week training class began on Aug. 15.

"We fought one day longer on all the core issues and won them to our satisfaction," said Local 7-669 President Darrell Lillie. "All of us who were locked out by Honeywell in June of last year who want to go back to work are doing so with union pride, a union contract and union solidarity."

The new labor agreement retains all the major provisions that Honeywell sought to eliminate concerning existing seniority, the pension plan, health care coverage and overtime pay practices.

Benefit and work practice provisions were the most important issues to the locked-out members, but the new contract will provide a 1 percent wage increase in the second year and a 2 percent raise in the final year. Newly-hired workers will be in a different pension plan.

Temporary workers to go

Some of the original 230 locked-out workers moved on to other jobs, quit or retired, creating vacancies for new hires at the Metropolis plant. Temporary workers will leave under a back-to-work agreement that was also approved by USW members.

A tentative settlement was reached on July 20, but the vote was delayed while talks were held on the return-to-work plan for USW members whose jobs had been filled by the inexperienced replacements.

The lockout was a major event in Metropolis, a blue-collar and tourist town of 6,500 where a 15-foot tall statue of the comic book hero Superman stands watch outside the county courthouse.

International President Leo W. Gerard led a national and global campaign to support the approximately 230 workers who were locked out by the company in June 2010.

Gerard flagged the dispute in meetings at the White House and with congressional leaders. He also complained to federal regulatory agencies that Honeywell was operating a critical nuclear energy facility with inexperienced replacement workers.

Victory earned in struggle

"This is a victory earned in struggle by the Metropolis workers, their families and the community," Gerard said. "Local 7-669 leaders and the members stood on the picket line as heroes who showed a commitment to fight an American multinational on principles that are rock solid about workplace safety, family health care, pensions and job fairness."

District 7 Director Jim Robinson, who represents workers in Illinois and Indiana, mobilized rallies, raised picket line contributions and filled buses with Metropolis members for protests.

Local 7-669 members twice journeyed to protest at Honeywell global headquarters in Morristown, N.J. And they lobbied legislators in Washington, D.C., and Springfield, Ill., the state capitol.

They also went to Wisconsin to join public service workers in

Locked-out Wisconsin worker rallies in Madison.



DAY LONGER



rallying against Gov. Scott Walker's anti-union campaign, earning the nickname Road Warriors for their travels.

The local's efforts led Robinson to call Local 7-669 "a leading voice in the ongoing fight for justice and economic equality against corporations with no loyalty to anything except the almighty dollar."

A USW delegation also went to Europe to join leaders of Honeywell's German and European Works Councils in Hamburg and Brussels at unity actions that kept the company coming back to the bargaining table.

That effort was part of a global labor coalition of organized Honeywell workers in the United States and Europe led by Alabama-based District 9 Director Dan Flippo.

"The company got the message and finally got serious about putting together a deal we could take to the locked out members," Robinson said.

European unions help

European labor federations, whose members include 30,000 people employed by Honeywell, issued a statement calling on the company to "take all measures to ensure that this lockout be ended immediately, with all workers welcomed back to their plant without reprisals, and with full agreement of the United Steelworkers."

The document was signed by leaders of the European Metalworkers Federation, the European Mine, Chemical and Energy Workers' Federation, and the European Federation of Public Sector Unions.

Unite, the UK union that is a partner with the USW in Workers Uniting, the trans-Atlantic global union, was also actively engaged in the European campaign.

Safety a key issue

Combining inexperienced replacement workers with the dangerous process of using highly toxic combustible and corrosive chemicals to process uranium into nuclear fuel made safety a key issue in the dispute.

The union issued a report, "Communities at Risk?" that raised concerns over the use of temporary workers and noted that a major release of just one of the chemicals used in the process could kill or injure thousands of residents in the region.

“This is a victory earned in struggle by the Metropolis workers, their families and the community.”

On Sept. 10, 2010, shortly after the temporary work force entered the plant, hydrogen and fluorine were accidentally recombined; causing an explosion that shook the ground outside the facility and could be heard up to a mile away. Honeywell claimed the explosion was a routine noise.

In November 2010, the NRC cited Honeywell for illegally coaching and assisting its replacement workers on exams that ultimately allowed them to begin operations – casting doubt on the adequacy of the training.

In December 2010, a release of hydrofluoric acid triggered emergency sirens and activated the facility's emergency mitigation towers used to spray water and knock down escaping gas.

By the time the lockout reached the one year mark, the facility had been cited by the NRC, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

CHINA LOSES APPEAL TO WTO OVER U.S. TIRE TARIFFS

China has lost its appeal to the World Trade Organization (WTO) over import relief granted to American tire industry workers by President Obama, who acted on a petition filed by the USW in 2009.

In a clear victory for the USW, a WTO appeals panel on Labor Day affirmed tariffs imposed by President Obama, saying the United States “acted consistently” with international law in imposing them on Chinese passenger and light truck tires.

International President Leo W. Gerard called the ruling “good news” for workers and said the tariffs have had the intended positive effect on U.S. industry and jobs.

The tariffs have stemmed the hemorrhaging of jobs and investment that the flood of Chinese imports caused. They have helped the industry regain its footing, retool and expand, providing a rare bright spot in the struggling economy.

“Investments in U.S. tire manufacturing are up, jobs have been created and our companies are shipping more tires to consumers,” Gerard said. “While we still need to accelerate the nation’s economic recovery, the economic benefits of the trade relief are clear and indisputable.”

China argued that the three-year tariff approved by the president in 2009 under Section 421 of U.S. Trade Act of 1974 was protectionist and would hurt the Chinese industry.

Section 421 was added by Congress as an amendment to the Trade Act as part of the deal granting China WTO membership. It acts as a temporary safeguard for workers and industry against import surges.

The tariffs were placed in each of three years after public hearings were held before the U.S. International Trade Commission (ITC) in response to the USW petition, filed on behalf of members employed in tire plants.

Gerard commended President Obama and U.S. Trade Representative Ron Kirk for using America’s trade laws to fight China’s claims before the WTO.

“This represents an important victory for America’s workers and benefits passenger and light truck tire producers operating here,” Gerard said. “It should signal that enforcing our trade laws is a vital part of an economic program to revitalize the economy and strengthen manufacturing.”

Kirk called the WTO panel ruling a “major victory” for the United States.

“We have said all along that our imposition of duties on Chinese tires was fully

consistent with our WTO obligations. It is significant that the WTO panel has agreed with us, on all grounds,” Kirk said.

This win and another earlier ruling involving the use of antidumping and countervailing duties demonstrates, Kirk said, that the Obama administration is strongly committed to using and defending trade remedy laws to address harm to workers and industries.

The tire tariffs continue to restrain Chinese tire imports. In 2010, Chinese tire imports were 34 percent lower than in 2008, the year before the USW filed its petition. And imports were down another 12 percent in the first six months of 2011.

The industry and its workers have experienced significant improvement in terms of production and sales of tires.

Some manufacturers have failed to take full advantage of the improved environment for domestic tire manufacturing following import relief. One company, Goodyear Tire and Rubber, decided to close a productive facility in Union City, Tenn., but overall reinvestments and expansions have demonstrated import relief is working.

Companies including Goodyear and Cooper Tire have reported significantly higher sales revenues for the second quarter of 2011, compared to the second quarter of 2010.

In response to improved conditions, the industry has invested in new capacity.

Bridgestone-Firestone announced in August that it was investing \$135 million to create 120 jobs in a plant in Aiken County, S.C.

Cooper invested some \$30 million in its Findlay, Ohio, plant in 2010, and Continental Tire completed a \$224 million expansion of a plant in Mt. Vernon, Ill. Continental has also started work on a new tire plant.

According to the USW and tire industry reports, U.S. companies are hiring. Michelin, according to a public fact sheet, employs nearly 300 more workers in their U.S. plants producing passenger car and light truck tires in 2010 than in 2008.

U.S. government statistics also show that employment in the overall tire industry, which had declined by more than 25 percent between January 2005 and September 2009, has stabilized significantly since President Obama imposed the Section 421 tariffs.

The Section 421 relief continues to provide important benefits to workers employed in the U.S. passenger car and light truck tire industry, and the union believes improvements will continue as the market enters the third year of the special tariffs.





TING INA

TIRES
WIND POWER
RAW MATERIALS

CHINA STOPS ILLEGAL SUBSIDIES TO WIND POWER MAKERS

China has revoked wind power equipment subsidies it granted to Chinese manufacturers in violation of World Trade Organization (WTO) rules.

The subsidies were challenged by U.S. Trade Representative Ron Kirk after the USW filed a Section 301 trade case alleging that China used protectionist and predatory practices to grow its renewable energy sector at the expense of American industry and jobs.

The USW's petition and the Obama administration's pursuit of the union's complaint brought the Chinese to the table with a commitment to end the program, International President Leo W. Gerard said.

"That's good news for our members, U.S. companies and American workers," Gerard added. "It needs to be followed up with continued vigilance, to ensure the Chinese fulfill their commitments."

The subsidies, paid from China's Special Fund for Wind Power Equipment Manufacturing, illegally required grant recipients to use key parts and components made in China.

Kirk's office estimated that the grants provided to Chinese companies since 2008 likely totaled several hundred million dollars. The Obama administration sought the termination of subsidies during formal consultations

with China that took place as a result of the wide-ranging clean energy complaint that the USW filed last October with the USTR under Section 301 of the 1974 Trade Act.

The USW's more than 5,000-page complaint outlined dozens of measures by China that violated WTO rules and allowed it to jump ahead of the United States as a leading producer of new energy technologies. The illegal measures include massive trade-distorting subsidies that have crippled U.S. companies, export restraints on critical rare earth minerals and discriminatory requirements that disadvantage U.S. exports in China.

"Termination of this program is one less distortion in the marketplace for clean energy technology products," Gerard said. "Our union membership, American workers and our nation face many more distortions and other clear WTO violations by the Chinese."

Gerard encouraged the Obama administration to continue working to level the playing field for clean technology companies and sustain employment and create opportunities for American workers.

"We need continued action on our other complaints in our petition to ensure that China's protectionist and predatory practices in the clean tech energy sector are eliminated," he added.

WTO PANEL RULES AGAINST CHINA ON RAW MATERIALS

The USW lauded a World Trade Organization (WTO) ruling that China, in an attempt to protect its own domestic producers, illegally limited the export of nine raw materials that are used widely in the steel, aluminum and chemical industries.

"China has once again been found to flout international rules to the detriment of our members and their companies," International President Leo W. Gerard said of the decision by a WTO dispute resolution panel.

The panel upheld complaints by the United States, the European Union and Mexico that Beijing unfairly restricted the export of industrial raw materials bauxite, coke, fluor-spar, magnesium, manganese, silicon carbide, silicon metal, yellow phosphorus and zinc.

The materials are used in many downstream applications in steel, aluminum and chemical processing. The United States, Europe and Mexico all argued that China was driving up the prices for raw materials by set-

ting export duties and quotas on them.

U.S. Trade Representative Ron Kirk called the panel report a "significant victory for manufacturers and workers in the United States and the rest of the world" and said the findings confirm fundamental principles underlying the global trading system.

"All WTO members, whether developed or developing, need non-discriminatory access to raw material supplies in order to grow and thrive," Kirk said.

"If left undisciplined, these types of policies could proliferate not just within China but around the world – at the expense of everyone's growth and development."

The USW believes that the decision adds weight to allegations that the union made in its landmark Section 301 trade complaint filed last year that accuses China of engaging in illegal trading practices to stimulate and protect its domestic producers of green energy technologies. Those practices include restricting export of critical rare earth metals.

PUBLIC SECTOR

Petition Drive Forces Voter



Thanks to thousands of volunteer activists who collected a record 1.3 million petition signatures, Ohio voters will decide in November whether to repeal a new law that slashed the collective-bargaining rights of 360,000 public employees.

Steelworker rank-and-file activists joined community groups and other public and private sector unions in the successful campaign to collect enough signatures to force a ballot measure on Senate Bill 5, enacted in March by a Republican-controlled state legislature.

“We have to be engaged. We can’t sit back and say it doesn’t matter,” said Elva Flowers Martes, a municipal employee and member of Local 6621 in Lorain, Ohio, who circulated petitions, made telephone calls and set up a Facebook page for leadership communications as part of the effort.

“People don’t realize how much it means, how important it is to send an e-mail or write a letter to their politicians,” said Martes, who attended the USW Public Sector conference, held in Pittsburgh from May 16 to May 19. “Everyone has to stand up and do their part.”

The Ohio campaign is an example of the activism that public sector employees

and unions must embrace to survive the unprecedented assaults they are facing on the state and local levels nationwide.

Maximize our power

“We are witnessing an unprecedented attack, and must learn to maximize our power,” International Vice President Fred Redmond told some 100 members who attended the conference for public sector workers. “Every state in the nation is running into a deficit, every state. And their position is we have to balance budgets on the backs of workers.”

We are Ohio, a citizen-driven, community-based bipartisan coalition that included Steelworkers, on June 29 paraded through Columbus, Ohio, to deliver the signatures to Secretary of State Jon Husted, who validated more than 915,000 of the submitted signatures, well over the 231,000 required.

Bill Crooks, president of USW Local 7 and the Tri-County Regional Labor Council in Akron, Ohio, participated in the voter petition drive to protect good jobs.

“Being politically active gives you the opportunity to be part of the process,” Crooks said. “And you can’t effect change if you’re not in the process.”

It is impossible to precisely measure

the USW’s impact. But Donnie Blatt, the Rapid Response coordinator in Ohio, estimated members circulated more than 500 petitions and gathered some 20,000 signatures to help the effort.

“It was the biggest referendum in the history of Ohio,” Blatt said. “A lot of people put a lot of work into it.”

Public Sector conference

Blatt’s instruction on petition drives was one of the numerous workshops available to the 100-plus delegates who attended this year’s Public Sector conference.

Rapid Response Director Kim Miller encouraged locals attending the conference to utilize the Rapid Response program, a non-partisan way of educating and delivering relevant information to members on workers’ rights and issues.

Rapid Response “Action Calls” alert members to current worker issues and prompt them to make their concerns known to local legislators through phone calls, letters and demonstrations.

A strong Rapid Response program benefits individual local unions and helps to build bargaining strength, Miller said.

“The more engaged we get in Rapid Response programs, the more it helps us,

STANDS UP!

Referendum in Ohio



particularly in the public sector, where all of our contracts, all of our bargaining, are dependent on public entities,” she told conference attendees.

International President Leo W. Gerard, International Secretary-Treasurer Stan Johnson, International Vice Presidents Tom Conway and Carol Landry, and Naomi Walker, the AFL-CIO’s director of state government relations, were among the conference speakers. Also participating were Fiona Farmer and Frank Keogh of Unite the Union from the United Kingdom and Steve Schnapp of United for a Fair Economy.

The AFL-CIO’s Walker gave an overview of the “right-wing apparatus from think tanks to foundations” that are behind anti-worker legislation in states across the nation.

“It is time for elected leaders to be focusing on how do we get people back to work, how do we create jobs,” Walker said. “But instead the legislatures that were elected in 2010 are focusing on attacking workers and paying back their corporate CEO buddies and friends.”

Manufacturing decline hurts

Gerard cited Wall Street shenanigans the decline of tax-paying manufacturing for the financial crisis in local and

state governments that has, in turn, led to extraordinary pressure on public employees.

“We’re in this mess in the United States, Canada and Great Britain because of plain and simple corruption and runaway greed that is almost incalculable, wanting to have access to finances with no regulation, cutting taxes for the already rich and the already powerful as if it were going to create more jobs,” Gerard said.

More than 58,000 factories closed in the United States from the time former President George Bush took office in 2001 until the end of 2009. Another 3,000 were lost in the Wall Street collapse. Similarly, Canada lost about 5,000 factories in the same period.

“Those 58,000 factories used to pay municipal taxes, state taxes, school taxes and for every worker in that factory there were three, four or five other workers who had support jobs,” Gerard said.

The tax base in communities across the country has been clobbered by the offshoring of American manufacturing jobs, making the union’s fights against unfair trade an issue for both private and public sector employees, added International Vice President Tom Conway.

“As they hollow us out where we make things in America, eventually they’re going to stand and face you and say we don’t have a tax base, we can’t meet your pension demands, you’ve got to roll back your health care, you’ve got to roll back your collective bargaining agreement because we have no taxes and the rich aren’t willing to pay,” Conway said.

Feeling the downturn

Flowers Martes, who works in the utilities department for the City of Lorain, said manufacturing closings in her town have put financial pressure on the drinking water and sewage systems because they are no longer paying customers.

“It took a while for the public sector to feel it, but now we’re bearing the brunt of the economic downturn,” she said. “We’re the ones

who fix the streets, who make the water run clean. You can’t get rid of those services. What’s going to happen when there is no one to fix your street?”

International Vice President at Large Landry urged delegates to educate and engage their union brothers and sisters as well as other people in their communities – union and non-union, friends, family and neighbors.

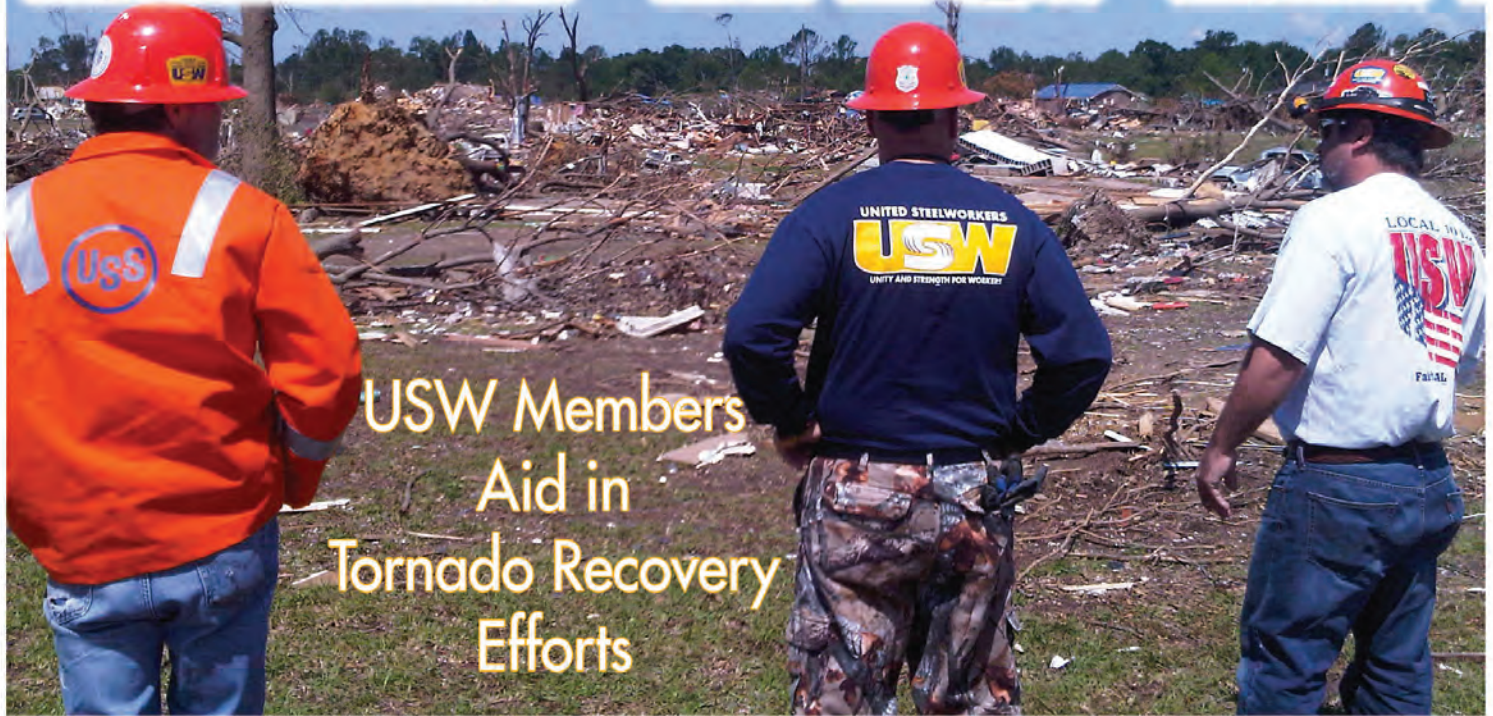
“And we must educate our elected officials, who too often take the propaganda of big donor corporations and their supporters as gospel,” Landry said.

“We just can’t let the right-wing, corporate-backed, cable news talking heads fool us. This attack has nothing to do with budget balancing and everything to do with union busting.”

At the end of a far-ranging speech, Gerard called on the public sector workers to join the union’s Stand Up, Fight Back campaign for themselves and their communities.

“I know how you feel, the anxiety you feel,” Gerard said. “But gain strength from knowing none of this is your fault. Gain strength from knowing it doesn’t have to be this way. Gain strength from knowing we’re going to fight.”

HELPING HA



USW Members Aid in Tornado Recovery Efforts

A day after a tornado tore across Pleasant Grove, Ala., USW Local 2122 set up coolers outside the union hall and distributed water to patrolling state troopers, National Guardsmen and storm victims.

“The next thing you know strangers began driving up and dropping off donations at our hall,” said Local 2122 President Bob Irwin. “Our hall became a full-fledged relief center.”

The volunteer efforts in Pleasant Grove were among many examples of generosity by USW members as a deadly burst of tornadoes swept through the South and Midwest this spring, leaving a swath of destruction and more than 500 dead.

Three USW locals – 2122, 1013, and 2120 – coordinated their relief efforts in Pleasant Grove. The suburb of Birmingham, Ala., lay in ruins after the tornado struck. The twister mowed down trees, pulled houses off their foundations, scattered belongings and flipped cars.

“We ran the center for a month like a community food bank and thrift center,” said Irwin, whose local represents workers from U.S. Steel, the Birmingham

Southern Diesel Shop, Warrior & Gulf Navigation, Vulcan Refineries and Tube City.

Food, clothing and heavy work

Because of its proximity, Local 2122 became a collection point for food, clothing and other items assembled by all three locals. Irwin stayed abreast of peoples’ needs through a Facebook account set up for community members to interact.

USW locals from all over the state participated in the efforts. Volunteers distributed food and clothing in addition to the heavy work of cutting trees and clearing away mountains of debris.

“It was wonderful to see Steelworker locals from throughout Alabama participate in the relief,” said David Clark, president of Local 1013 in Fairfield, Ala., which represents workers at U.S. Steel, Fairfield Southern, Steelscape and Air Liquide.

“This was a very unfortunate episode. One of our members lost his wife,” Clark said. “But the relief efforts, Steelworkers helping people they didn’t know, had to be one of my best experi-

ences.”

While the USW relief operation in Pleasant Grove was in full swing, the Central Alabama Labor Council also went to work. Steelworkers joined electrical workers, operating engineers, laborers, pipe fitters, and others on Saturdays to help with the cleanup. At one point, over 100 union volunteers showed up.

Tuscaloosa hit hard

Some of the worst damage was in Tuscaloosa, a city that is home to the University of Alabama. Entire neighborhoods were leveled.

Some 15 members of Local 351 at the BFGoodrich plant in Tuscaloosa lost their homes, said local President Jimmy Price. Two members, one a retiree, were killed.

Local 351 provided \$400 in gift cards to members who lost their possessions, donated 250 t-shirts to the Salvation Army and served 100 lunches to the National Guard and county police, Price said.

Price saw the tornado lift his house and drop it a couple of hundred yards

NDS

away. It also picked up his 60-foot houseboat, ripped off its roof and dropped it nose down in a nearby cove. Three guests inside survived.

As the April 27 storm was moving towards them, Price and his wife made a split second decision to take shelter under concrete decking. After the house was blown from its foundation, the tornado lifted and dropped the six-inch concrete slab that was over their heads. It broke into pieces without crushing them.

“We were lucky twice,” Price said.

Recovering in Joplin

Less than a month later, on May 22, more than 100 separate tornadoes ravaged the Missouri-Oklahoma region. Much of Joplin, Mo., was destroyed and the death toll reached 155.

An estimated 8,000 homes were damaged or destroyed in Joplin. The storm also caused serious damage to St. John’s Regional Medical Center and hundreds of commercial and public buildings.

“The destruction is so thorough, it becomes disorienting,” said Teresa Buckmaster, president of Local 812 at EaglePicher Technologies in Joplin. “You don’t know where you are, no landmarks, no trees, no street signs.”

Several 812 members lost their homes. Concern rapidly grew into action, with multiple USW locals providing time money and provisions. Offers of assistance came from as far away as Canada.

“I can’t explain how grateful and thankful we are to all those who helped us,” Buckmaster said of USW members who came to their assistance.

Local unions in Springfield, 70 miles away, drove to Joplin and began cooking food, cutting wood and sorting through rubble, said David Wiseman, a District 11 staff representative in Independence, Mo.

Wiseman was also part of a group that made two 170-mile trips from Independence to Joplin hauling pallets of water, flashlights, bedding and toiletries

Disaster Relief Donations

When hurricanes, tornadoes, flooding or other natural disasters hit our communities, Steelworkers step up to the plate to help.

Here is a list of local unions and councils that have made exemplary donations to disaster relief through the Steelworkers Charitable and Educational Organization (SCEO) and a *Workers Helping Workers* disaster relief benefit concert at the 2011 Convention.

SCEO was founded in 2004 to provide financial assistance in cases of natural disaster as well as to promote human and civil rights and educational opportunities for working families.

Local	District	Donation	Local	District	Donation
675	12	\$20,000	241	11	\$1,000
831L	8	\$15,000	275	13	\$1,000
10-86	10	\$10,000	307	11	\$1,000
SRU		\$5,000	530	9	\$1,000
550	8	\$5,000	620	13	\$1,000
2801	12	\$5,000	931	12	\$1,000
7600	12	\$5,000	1155	9	\$1,000
4-200	4	\$5,000	1167	9	\$1,000
1057	9	\$5,000	1200	1	\$1,000
D-12 Council	12	\$5,000	1312	13	\$1,000
1329	13	\$3,121	1350	11	\$1,000
2001	13	\$2,000	1398	13	\$1,000
8586	13	\$2,000	1444	9	\$1,000
9477	8	\$2,000	6787	7	\$1,000
13-0555	13	\$2,000	6817	9	\$1,000
6860	11	\$1,796	8526	9	\$1,000
507	9	\$1,598	8567	10	\$1,000
4856	12	\$1,500	8713	9	\$1,000
1011-7-5	7	\$1,313	8888	8	\$1,000
Sub-District 3			9059	13	\$1,000
Council Fund	7	\$1,312	9231	2	\$1,000
227	13	\$1,241	9360	4	\$1,000
13-1	13	\$1,360	9443	8	\$1,000
1148	13	\$1,200	12044	4	\$1,000
310	11	\$1,200	12934	2	\$1,000
1557	10	\$1,116	7-1	7	\$1,000
3657	10	\$1,100	13-447	13	\$1,000
13-423	13	\$1,070	211-A	13	\$1,000
Medco Council	1	\$1,020	2-209	2	\$1,000
1196	10	\$1,004	753L	9	\$1,000
105	11	\$1,000	7700	9	\$1,000
			3-1704	9	\$1,000
			16031	4	\$1,000
			8-00719	8	\$1,000
			14087	9	\$1,000
			407	12	\$1,000

to Local 812 for wider distribution.

Showing character

“Many of our members who experienced property damage declined our assistance and asked that we give it to those who lost everything,” Wiseman said. “It says a lot about their character.”

Tyler Little, a member of Local 11-500 in Carthage, Mo., put his compassion to work. In the days after the storms first hit, Little would pitch in where he could after putting in a full midnight shift at a storage facility, getting only a few hours of sleep.

Little started helping members of

his local clear downed trees and later moved on to aid others who were digging through the rubble of their homes to find anything worth saving.

After the first week, it got easier for Little to find his way around Joplin. People began using pieces of lumber and sheetrock to mark street names where signs and landmarks had been destroyed.

“It was really sad to see these people,” Little said. “To drive through there, not even knowing them, it was really hard to keep from tearing up.”

SUN SETS ON GOODYEAR TIRE PLANT



UNION
DECRIES
CLOSURE

COMMUNITY
LOSES
1,800
SKILLED
JOBS

The ongoing deindustrialization of the United States showed its ugly face in Union City, Tenn., when Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. abruptly closed a tire plant that had been the region's largest employer since 1968.

"We are very angered by the company's decision to close its Union City facility," said International President Leo W. Gerard. "The harm being done over the years by our government's inaction and manufacturers' ongoing deindustrialization of the economy is relentless."

Some 1,800 USW members from Tennessee and Kentucky lost good-paying jobs as the Union City plant joined more than 57,000 U.S. manufacturing facilities that have closed in the last dozen years, eliminating 6 million jobs.

Goodyear told Local 878L on July 10 that it had filed a plant closing notice and would no longer need its employees effective immediately.

Many workers learned of the closing as they arrived at the beginning of their shift that Sunday night. First shift workers received word at 7 a.m. Monday.

"Unfortunately, nothing we can say minimizes the impact this decision has on the lives of our members who work there, their families and the community," Gerard said. "But we will continue to fight to help them in this tragic situation."

Goodyear said it would pay workers for 60 days in lieu of the advance closing notification required by the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act of 1988. USW members are also eligible for substantial benefits negotiated in advance of the shutdown.

"Our heart goes out to all of our members there as they embark on a transition, which is too common these days: hard working Americans, their families and communities suffering the loss of skilled production jobs because of our country's inability to adequately enforce trade laws designed to maintain a level playing field in the global marketplace," said International Vice President Tom Conway, who heads the union's bargaining with Goodyear.

Trade assistance sought

The local petitioned the U.S. Department of Labor for Trade Adjustment Assistance, a program that provides reemployment services and other benefits to workers who have lost their jobs or suffered a reduction of hours and wages as a result of increased imports or shifts in production outside the United States.

"We did our best to keep this plant running, but the flood of subsidized foreign product in the marketplace and our stagnant domestic economy were too much to overcome," Conway said.

The USW's success in winning tariffs on low-cost Chinese tires in 2009 under Section 421 of the U.S. Trade Act "probably provided the plant with two more years of life it otherwise might not have had," Conway said.

International Secretary-Treasurer Stan Johnson, who directs the USW's Rubber and Plastics Industry Council, said the union tried to convince the company to put different product lines in the Union City facility. "But its response was that it did not need the capacity in the North American market," Johnson said.

The tire maker initially announced in February that it planned to close the plant by the end of the year. But the closure came earlier with Goodyear saying it transferred production to other facilities faster than expected.

LOCAL 7686 HONORED FOR PAC CONTRIBUTIONS

For most of the past 40 years, the Political Action Committee (PAC) of Local 7686 in Southeast Missouri was like many others – running on near empty. That is until local President Stan Ivie figured it was time to make some positive changes.

The 825-member local donated about \$8 a month to the PAC before Ivie started a campaign in August 2010, to boost participation. That was such a small amount of money that the local's major employer, Noranda Aluminum, asked to process the payroll deduction once a year instead of once a month.

"I told them we are fixing to change that," Ivie said.

Change came quickly. Today, the local collects about \$35,000 a year, a little less than \$3,000 a month – enough to be named by International PAC Coordinator Michael Scarver as the top PAC contributor in District 11 and number four for the union overall.

"I have to give special thanks to our Chief Steward Dallas Snider, Rapid Response Coordinator Mike Milam and

all the workers for giving up their hard-earned money to try to make a difference," Ivie said.

Voluntary support

Federal Election Commission rules prohibit the use of union dues money for political purposes, making it important that USW members voluntarily support local PAC fund raising efforts, Scarver notes.

"Nearly everything that the USW does for its members, from negotiating labor agreements to fighting for worker-friendly legislation and employment issues on the national, state and local levels can be affected by politics," Scarver said.

Ivie was motivated to act in part by the wave of anti-union legislation sweeping state governments across the country, including a move by Republican state senators to make Missouri a "right to work" state.

"I've got a little saying I like to use. 'You can sit back and complain and watch the big bull gore you to death or you can grab him by the horns and hope

the rest will join in and take him down.' Our strength is in numbers," Ivie said.

Missouri's new senate leader, President pro-Tem Rob Mayer, has made it a priority to pass legislation that would bar the negotiation of contracts with union security clauses. Such clauses require union dues or an equivalent fee to cover collective bargaining costs.

Fund raising events

Ivie attended a District 11 meeting and heard Scarver, the PAC coordinator, give a presentation on PAC and how to hold fund-raising events featuring a Harley-Davidson motorcycle. Ivie contacted Scarver, who agreed to help get the ball rolling at Local 7686.

The local laid out a plan to ask everyone at the Noranda plant to participate in the program and manned the gate during shift changes in the mornings and evenings for several weeks. Riceland, the smaller of the local's two employers, refused the local's request to set up payroll deduction.

The motorcycle fund raiser was held on July 14.

"This event helped to bring some solidarity and excitement to our local," Ivie said. "We need all the locals to make this commitment to gather the resources, so we can help the International take these big bulls down before it's too late!"



Stan Ivie

PAC Awards Announced at 2011 Convention

Highest Local Union Check off 2008-2010

1. Local 831L, Danville, Va.
2. Local 307L, Topeka, Kan.,
3. Local 338, Spokane, Wash.

Highest Local Union Annual Average Per Member

1. Local 602, Malvern, Ark.
2. Local 338, Spokane, Wash.
3. Local 9423, Hancock County, Ky.

Highest District PAC Check off Received 2008-2010

1. District 8, Billy Thompson, Director
2. District 9, Daniel Flippo, Director
3. District 7, Jim Robinson, Director

Highest District PAC Funds Overall 2008-2010

1. District 8, Billy Thompson, Director
2. District 9, Daniel Flippo, Director
3. District 7, Jim Robinson, Director

Highest Annual Average Per Member

1. District 8, Billy Thompson, Director
2. District 12, Bob LaVenture, Director
3. District 9, Daniel Flippo, Director
4. District 7, Jim Robinson, Director

By telling police they were raped by factory bosses, two brave seamstresses have focused an international spotlight on the sordid side of the U.S. free trade agreement with Jordan.

The USW and the union-supported Institute for Global Labour and Human Rights helped the women guest workers report the rapes and organized an international campaign against abuses that appear to be rampant in Jordan's garment industry.

The campaign threatens to close down Classic Fashions, Jordan's largest garment exporter to the United States, and may ultimately force government and industry to improve conditions for thousands of foreign guest workers in Jordan, mostly women from South Asia.

Jordan has become a magnet for apparel manufacturing in the 10 years since the United States ratified a free trade agreement allowing American companies to import goods from Jordan without duties.

The campaign has sought help from Queen Rania of Jordan and launched an on-line petition that demands protection for foreign workers in Jordan, removal of abusive factory managers and compensation for those workers who have been harmed.

Incredible courage

Institute Director Charles Kernaghan said it took incredible courage for a 27-year-old Bangladeshi seamstress he calls "Nazma" to identify Classic manager Anil Santha to Jordanian police as her attacker, and for a second victim he calls "Anowara" to identify Classic production manager Faruk Miah as her attacker.

"Now, it is our turn to stand up and make certain that no one, ever again sexually abuses any of the thousands of young guest workers who are sewing garments at Classic for duty-free export to the United States," said Kernaghan, who was recognized at this year's USW Convention for his work in helping disenfranchised workers around the world.

"Nazma," a pseudonym used to protect the rape victim's identity, swore to police that Santha ripped her dress off, repeatedly raped her and bit her in shabby hotel rooms in Irbid, a city near Jordan's border with Syria. She said the attacks occurred once in March and twice in May.

Kernaghan and USW Political Director Tim Waters were in Jordan and witnessed Santha's arrest. The 46-year-old Sri Lankan factory manager faces up to 15 years in prison if convicted of rape.

RAPE REPORT PUTS SPOTLIGHT ON FACTORY ABUSES IN JORDAN



Anil Santha, a Sri Lankan manager at a Classic Fashion factory in Jordan, denies rape charges brought against him by a young Bangladeshi worker.
AP Photo/ Mohammad Hannan

Santha denied the allegations in an interview with The Associated Press (AP) as did Sanal Kumar, Classic's owner. Kumar blamed U.S. labor unions and Israel for the scandal.

U.S. retailers drop orders

Classic, with annual exports of \$120 million and some 4,900 employees, is Jordan's largest garment exporter to the United States. It produces garments for Wal-Mart, Hanes, Target and Sears. Shortly after the allegations emerged, Macy's, Land's End and Kohl's pulled work from Classic, Kernaghan said.

Kumar told the AP that Classic lost \$10 million in orders within four weeks after the allegations were made public and said the company would close if it loses the business permanently.

Conditions, however, have apparently improved for Classic workers. Pay was increased by 18 percent to 75 cents an hour, take home. And for now, at least, guest workers are no longer being slapped, punched, groped, cursed at or raped.

Kernaghan said Classic management put the factory into lockdown and moved senior male workers to other facilities. The women workers remain terrified and fearful of being spied upon.

Report details suffering

This June, the institute issued a scathing report, "Sexual Predators and Serial Rapists Run Wild at Wal-Mart Supplier in Jordan," that claimed scores of young women who worked at Classic have suffered sexual abuse, repeated rapes, and in some cases, torture.

"It is our intention along with the United Steelworkers and our women's rights colleagues in Sri Lanka to rescue the women who have been victimized and return them safely home to their families," Kernaghan said in the report.

"We expect Wal-Mart, Hanes and the other labels to pay significant compensation to the rape victims to restore some dignity to their lives," he added. "This is the least they can do."

Altogether, Jordan's largely foreign-owned garment factories employ more than 30,000 foreign guest workers, most poor and female. They come from Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, India, China, Nepal and Egypt.



The standard work week at Classic is 13 hours a day, six and seven days a week, with 18-hour shifts common before clothing must be shipped to customers in the United States.

No heat or hot water

According to witness testimonies cited in the report, workers were routinely cursed at, hit and shortchanged of their wages for failing to reach production goals. Women were groped and fondled by managers.

The workers are housed in primitive,

bug-infested dormitories with no heat or hot water. Freedom of movement is limited with women allowed to leave the compound just once a week for six hours.

Sri Lankan women used cell phones to tape testimonies in their native Sinhalese language. The tapes were given to the institute in December 2010 during a visit to Jordan and were translated into English back in the United States.

"When we were finally able to watch the tapes, we sat there and cried," Kernaghan wrote in a preface to his report. "We were stunned at how these young Sri Lankan women had been raped and tortured while sewing clothing for the largest retailer on earth, Wal-Mart, and for Hanes, the most popular label in the United States."

The women said they were motivated to testify by the desire to keep others from the same fate, and if they could save one person from experiencing what they had suffered, they would feel vindicated.

Little has been done

The institute and its predecessor organization, the National Labor Committee, have made the Jordanian Minister of Labor and others aware of the sexual abuse allegations, but little has been done.

Most U.S. retailers have been using third-party monitors to pay surprise visits to the foreign factories that manufacture their products. But Kernaghan said the experiences in Jordan prove that using monitors to ensure factories comply with human rights doesn't work.



A supervisor stands inside the Classic Fashion factory in Irbid, Jordan. AP Photo/Mohammad Hannon

GLOBAL INITIATIVE SAFETY IMPROVING AT AR

A safety initiative, unique in the international steel industry, has reported significant progress in reducing deaths and in fostering cooperation between workers and management to decrease hazards.

The ArcelorMittal Joint Global Health and Safety Committee (JGHSC), created just a month before the 2008 International Convention, reports that fatalities declined by 30 percent in 2009 and 2010 as compared to 2008.

“The committee’s work has had a positive impact on the number of accidents in the workplace, especially fatalities, and helped to reduce the risk faced by workers,” according to the report, which was discussed at the 2011 Convention.

The safety committee was created after the USW, the International Metalworkers’ Federation and the European Metalworkers Federation asked Laksmi Mittal, chairman and CEO of ArcelorMittal, the largest steel company in the world, to genuinely address safety.

“He is interested in and committed to safety,” USW Health, Safety and Environment Director Mike Wright said, explaining Mittal’s willingness to cooperate.

Wright, who serves on the committee, said Mittal hired

“superb people to do safety and he agreed that this project could not be done without union involvement.”

Because of the involvement of the union, the agreement creating the committee is the only one of its kind in the steel industry.

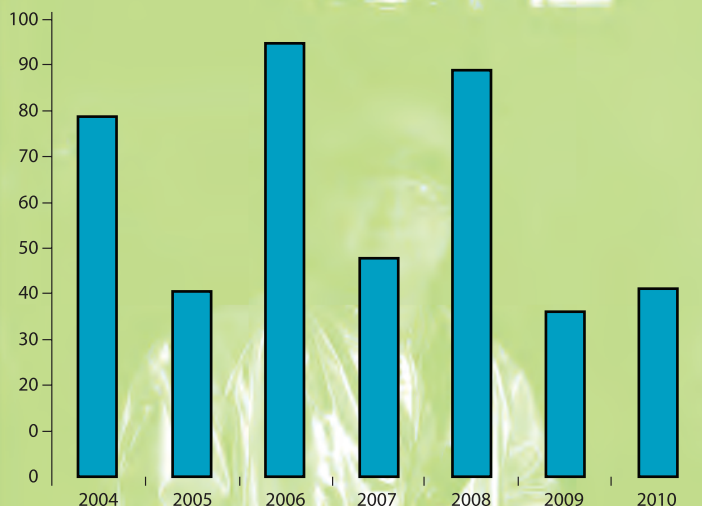
The committee has visited mills and mines in nine countries: the United States, Mexico, Brazil, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Romania, Czech Republic, Argentina and South Africa.

The most recent safety review occurred in August at the ArcelorMittal LaPlace Steel Plant in New Orleans, La. It followed a melt shop explosion and fatality in February.

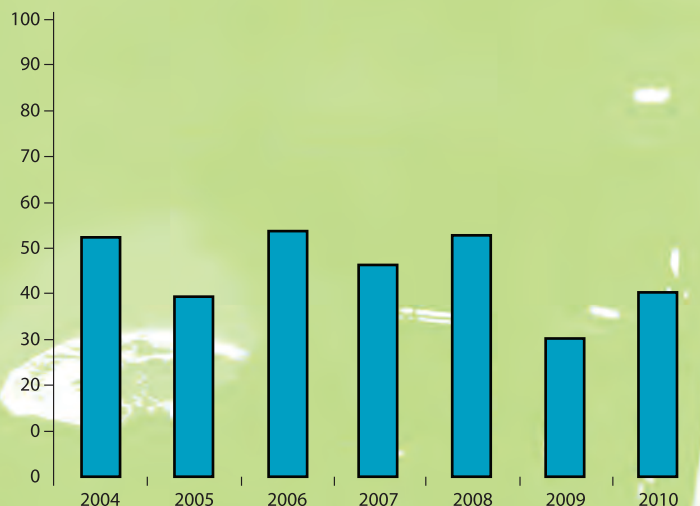
Local 9121 President and Safety Coordinator Kinley Porter said safety has improved at the mill under ArcelorMittal ownership. Before, he said, not a day went by without an accident. Still, he said, he would like to see more hourly workers involved in safety and more resources devoted to it.

At the Louisiana plant, the committee identified several areas needing improvement, just as it had at other plants it has reviewed. At LaPlace, the committee said areas that could be strengthened include training of workers and

Number of fatalities



Number of fatal events



INITIATIVE CELORMITTAL

managers on corporate standards, joint safety audits and personal protective equipment.

The committee returns to the mills and mines to evaluate progress in the areas of need it identifies, particularly those facilities with large numbers of fatalities. A standard format is followed for evaluating each facility and the committee discusses issues with both workers and management.

Union representatives on the committee do not always agree with the management representatives, Wright said, but it's clear all committee members are committed to safety. "The differences usually are how to go about it," he said.

Significant to the committee's success is the company's commitment, Wright said. If plants fail to respond to the committee's recommendations, he said, "Headquarters gets on them."

Health and safety resolution passed

Two resolutions, one supporting expanded health and safety measures and one backing improvement of the USW Emergency Response Team, passed unanimously at the 2011 Convention after delegates read the names of 140 USW members killed at work since the last Convention and after officers reported three more recent deaths.

"It's unforgivable. It's unconscionable. It should be illegal," Secretary-Treasurer Stan Johnson said.

Numerous delegates stood to support the resolutions, including Jeff Bell of Local 415 in District 9, who said a young worker died in March 2009 at the Florida paper plant where he works.

"The old-timers told me this is a good job," he said, "but if you work here long enough, you will get hurt." That is not right, he said, and USW members can make a difference.

Delegate Bob Johnson from Local 7495 in District 7 said a young worker at the aerosol can plant where he works crashed through a skylight to his death.

"I can't tell you how that affects a workplace," he said, "I can't tell you how it feels to walk back in when they open back up and see the yellow tape where that young man died. His name was Lucky. He wasn't a statistic. He was my union brother . . . Until we stand up and fight back it is going to keep happening over and over again."

WORKERS' MEMORIAL PARK HONORING GERARD DEDICATED IN SUDBURY



On Labor Day, Leo W. Gerard's hometown of Sudbury, Ontario, Canada officially opened a workers' memorial park named after the USW's International President.

The Leo Gerard Workers' Memorial Park, located on Main Street at Highway 69 North, features plaques holding the names of fallen Sudbury workers – men and women, union and nonunion.

Gerard said he was humbled by the honor.

"We should think of this park as a park for workers," he said at the dedication ceremony. "We should think of this park as a place that acknowledged those that came before us, those that led the fight for safer, healthier workplaces. We should acknowledge this park for those whose names will be on this plaque and their families."

Gerard said he remains optimistic that one day, there will be no more workers who die or are injured on the job.

Deputy Mayor Ron Dupuis, a former Inco miner and USW health and safety representative, had been looking to create a workers' memorial park for almost two years and teamed up with people who wanted to honor Gerard.

"We wanted the families and friends of those who have lost their lives on the job to have a peaceful setting to reflect, remember and honor their loved ones lost to workplace tragedies," Dupuis said.

Establishing a monument to remember workers killed on the job is long overdue, said John Closs, president of the Sudbury and District Labour Council.

An eight-ton piece of ore donated by a mining company, Xstrata Nickel, is a feature of the park. The names of those who died on the job will be attached to it. Dupuis said the ore is appropriate "because Sudbury was built on mining."

How can the United States create over 100,000 new American jobs in the chemical industry and, at the same time, protect the public health and the environment?

The answer is innovation in sustainable chemistry and reform of the 1976 Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA), according to a new study commissioned by the BlueGreen Alliance (BGA), a national partnership of labor unions and environmental organizations.

Currently, the non-pharmaceutical chemical industry in the United States is attempting to remain competitive by cutting jobs and costs. It has eliminated 300,000 jobs since 1992, and if that trend continues, another 230,000 jobs will disappear by 2030.

Yet the study estimates that 104,000 new jobs could be created in the U.S. economy if, for example, the industry shifted 20 percent of current production from petro-based plastics to bio-based plastics.

“This report charts a different course to update and revitalize an industry so important to our security,” said International President Leo W. Gerard. The USW, which co-founded the BGA in 2006 with the Sierra Club, represents an estimated 30,000 chemical workers in North America.

“Instead of our members losing quality jobs in the chemical industry and accepting the myth that policy reform will somehow cost more jobs, TSCA reform will create sustainable, good-paying jobs while protecting the health of workers and the environment by encouraging investment in education, technology and research,” Gerard said.

Protecting workers, communities

The BGA commissioned the Political Economy Research Institute (PERI) to do the study to further the BGA’s work in creating toxic chemical policies that protect workers and their communities. The resulting report is titled *The Economic Benefits of a Green Chemical Industry*.

After probing the industry’s challenges, the report’s authors came up with three recommendations to build a stronger chemical industry and create good and safe jobs in the United States.

The first recommendation is to

reform TSCA to create an effective regulatory environment that reduces hazards and supports innovation and competitiveness.

The USW has for a long time pushed for legislation to reform the nation’s system for managing chemical safety and to protect the union’s members at all workplaces. The union currently supports the proposed Safe Chemicals Act of 2011, which was introduced in April by U.S. Senators Frank Lautenberg (D-N.J.), Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.), Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.) and others.

“Instead of our members losing quality jobs in the chemical industry and accepting the myth that policy reform will somehow cost more jobs, TSCA reform will create sustainable, good-paying jobs while protecting the health of workers and the environment by encouraging investment in education, technology and research.”

As it currently stands, a company is not required to prove a chemical is safe. Instead, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) must prove the chemical is harmful before regulating it. The result is that many chemicals remain unregulated, posing potential health problems for workers and consumers.

Reforms under consideration would require safety data on all chemicals so users would be able to make better decisions without compromising safety.

Test in laboratories

“TSCA reform isn’t about whether we test chemicals, it’s about where we test them,” said Mike Wright, director

of the USW’s Health, Safety and Environment Department.

“Right now we test them in the bodies of our workers, our children, our consumers, ourselves. With TSCA reform the industry will have to test them in the laboratory.”

The second recommendation is to implement policies to promote innovation, commercialization and work force development to create a greener and safer chemical industry.

Companies in other parts of the world are already moving towards safer chemicals, creating a competitive dilemma for the U.S. industry, which will need to modernize and make changes to follow suit.

“Europe, Japan, even China have stronger toxic chemical protections than we do,” said Wright.

“Eventually consumers worldwide will come to trust their products more than ours. ‘Made in USA’ should be a guarantee, not a warning,” Wright said.

Support for innovation

Government support for innovation, such as tax incentives, has helped other industries to transform and remain competitive, the report noted. These strategies could spur investment in green chemistry and raise public support for innovation in the industry.

Moving toward sustainable production, spurred by chemical policy reform like the proposed Safe Chemicals Act, would make the U.S. chemical industry more competitive by lowering costs for the industry and downstream users.

It would also meet increasing demand from consumers for safe products, ensure access to important global markets, reduce waste and curtail future cost pressures from non-renewable fossil fuels.

The report argues that such a transformation would protect shareholder value and encourage research and development of more innovative products. Currently, the domestic industry spends only 1.5 percent of sales on research and development, compared to 3.4 percent for the manufacturing sector as a whole.

James Heintz, associate director of PERI, the report’s author, said the chemical industry in the United States must become safer in order to remain competitive in the global market.

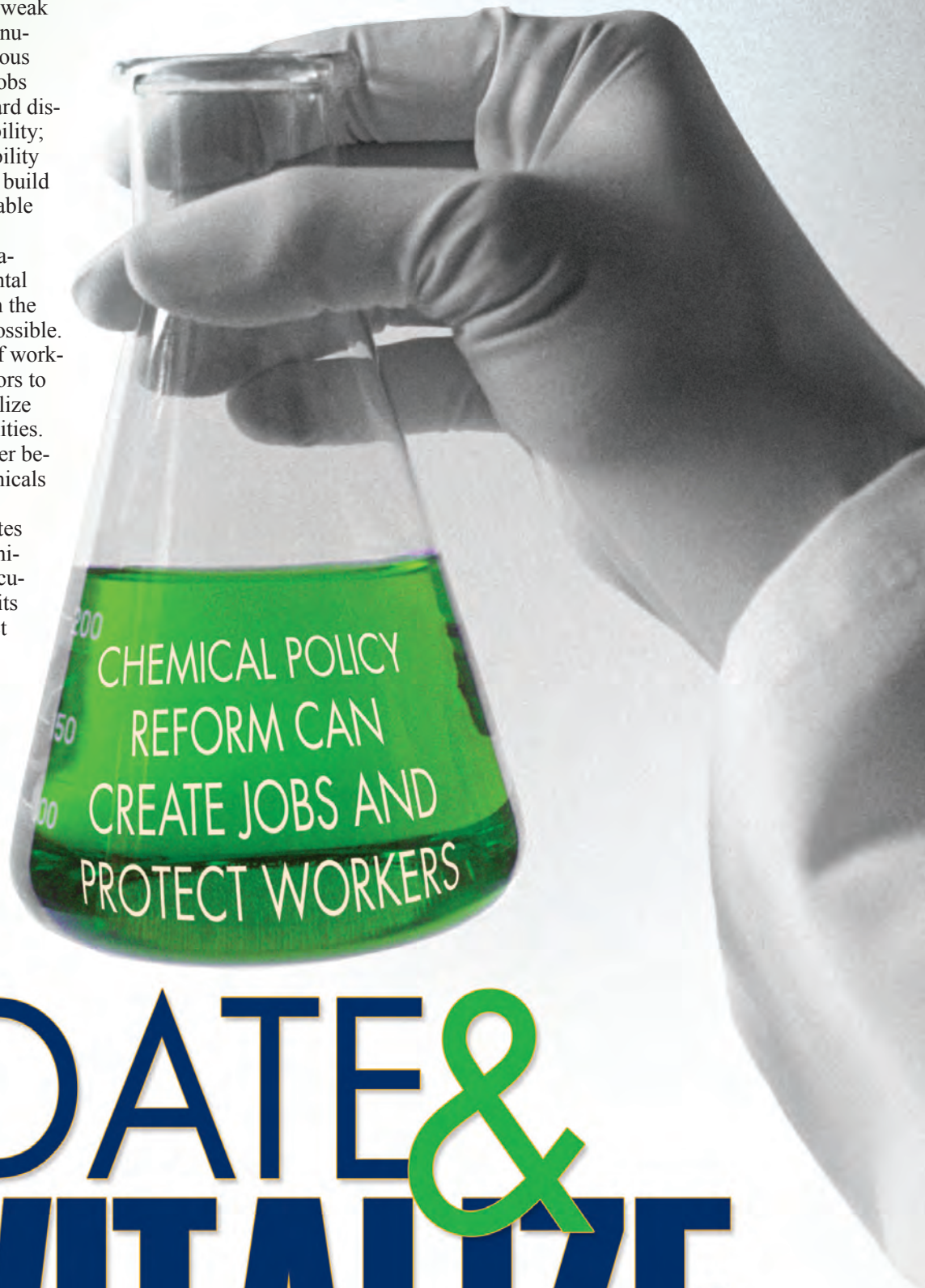
Creating stability

“Either we can continue with weak and ineffective regulation – continuing to produce potentially hazardous chemicals while manufacturing jobs disappear – or we can move toward disclosure, regulation, and sustainability; encourage innovation; create stability for businesses and investors; and build new markets for safe and sustainable chemicals,” Heintz said.

The study’s third recommendation is to disseminate environmental and health-related information on the chemical industry as widely as possible. This would improve the ability of workers, consumers, users, and investors to choose safer chemicals and mobilize investment in emerging opportunities. TSCA reform will make this easier because safety information on chemicals would be more available.

Overall, the report demonstrates the job-creating potential of chemical policy reform, said BGA Executive Director David Foster. And its recommended actions will protect the health and safety of workers, consumers and the environment and ensure the industry’s competitiveness in the future.

“The United States is searching for answers to our unemployment crisis and this report provides just the opportunity our economy needs, while protecting the health of our people and our environment,” Foster said.



UPDATE & REVITALIZE

USW WIN

EMPLOYER FAULTED FOR FAILURE TO BARGAIN ON SAFETY PROGRAM

If your employer unilaterally implements a safety program and disciplines workers for not following it, that violates the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA), an administrative law judge has ruled.

The USW won an unfair labor practice case against Kennametal Inc., a U.S.-based international tool maker, after the company failed to bargain over a new behavior-based safety program and a new disciplinary policy that focuses on employee behavior as a cause of accidents.

Rather than finding and fixing the root causes of safety hazards, behavior-based safety programs typically shift responsibility for maintaining safe workplaces to individual workers. Such “blame the worker” programs are increasingly prevalent in industries where the USW represents workers, including the paper sector where some employers are currently moving in that direction.

Kennametal announced on Feb. 2, 2010, that it was implementing a corporate-wide Management Based Safety (MBS) program. The next day, Local 5518 at the company’s Lydonville, Vt., plant asked to bargain over the program and the company refused, claiming it was not a mandatory subject of bargaining.

In response, Local 5518 filed unfair labor practice charges with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). NLRB Administrative Law Judge Arthur J. Amchan heard the case and issued his decision earlier this year.

The primary issue in the case was whether Kennametal violated the NLRA by refusing to bargain over implementation of the MBS program, which cut the union out of its traditional role in accident investigations.

Another key issue was the relationship of the safety program to the new discipline policy. The company argued that the two were unrelated while the union argued that the new discipline policy, which was used to suspend and terminate one worker and reprimand and suspend another, was sufficiently related to the MBS program to require bargaining. Amchan agreed.

Union participation

Prior to the implementation of the new program, the union safety committee was actively involved in investigating accidents and working jointly with management in addressing issues.

Changing the investigatory method, as Kennametal did, alters the character of evidence on which an employee’s job security might hinge, the judge found. It is less likely, for example, that production quotas would be considered as an accident cause without the union’s input.

Therefore, the company’s unilateral decision to stop the union’s participation in accident investigations was a bargainable change in the terms and conditions of employment and violated the NLRA, the judge found.

Not only did Kennametal give inadequate notice to the union of its new discipline policy, but it changed its longtime practice of issuing progressive discipline. This unilateral change to past

practice also violated the NLRA, the judge ruled.

Suspending one worker and terminating another under a stricter disciplinary policy that was not negotiated with the union was also an NLRA violation, the judge found.

Company ordered to stop

Amchan ordered the company to stop unilaterally changing terms and conditions of employment including implementation of the new discipline policy for safety violations.

The judge also ruled the company could not implement its safety program in a manner that excludes union participation in accident investigations or leads to the discipline of employees for failing to comply with its unilaterally imposed requirements.

Kennametal was ordered to include the union in accident investigations, to reinstate the fired worker and to make him and the worker who was suspended whole for any lost wages or benefits.

There is a lesson to be learned from the Kennametal case, suggests Leeann Anderson, special assistant to the International President. Local unions should request bargaining over behavior-based safety programs if the employer tries to implement them without first engaging in bargaining.



CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING USW, MEXICAN LABOR LEADERS REPORT REPRESSION

The North American Free Trade Agreement has lowered standards and conditions for workers in both the United States and Mexico, independent Mexican union leaders told Congress.

With International President Leo W. Gerard at their side, independent labor union leaders from Mexico on Sept. 13 told a Congressional caucus that they face ongoing repression from authorities and corporations while the working people they represent are being driven deeper into poverty.

International President Leo W. Gerard said the policy of the Mexican government is to keep workers' wages low as an economic tool. He accused Mexican President Felipe Calderon and his predecessor, Vincente Fox, of doing "everything they could to repress" independent unions that were raising living standards in Mexico.

"The U.S. government must condemn this repression and ensure that taxpayer dollars are not used to bust unions in Mexico," Gerard told the congressional caucus.

Union of Telephone Workers; Marco del Toro, legal counsel for Los Mineros, the mining and metals union allied with the USW; and Sergio Beltrán Reyes, recording secretary for Los Mineros.

The union leaders gave a detailed account of the widening threat to Mexican workers, increasing violent acts against unions and the growing inequality between U.S. workers and their Mexican counterparts.

The decline in real wages in Mexico hurts not only Mexicans but also U.S. workers by encouraging plant relocation and depressing Mexican consumption of U.S. exports, they said. Each testified the North America Free Trade Agreement has lowered the standards and working conditions for workers in both countries.

Independent unions like Los Mineros, the Mexican Union of Telephone Workers and Mexican Electrical Workers Union are aggressively working to



Those attending the congressional briefing included (from left to right) U.S. Rep. Michael Michaud; Francisco Hernández Juárez, general secretary of the Mexican Union of Telephone Workers (STRM); International President Leo W. Gerard; Marco del Toro, legal counsel to Los Mineros; and Sergio Beltrán Reyes, Los Mineros recording secretary.

"More than 15 years ago, we were told that NAFTA would create a thriving middle class in Mexico," said U.S. Rep. Mike Michaud (D-Maine), a former paper worker and USW member who sponsored the briefing on behalf of the Congressional Labor Caucus and the International Worker Rights Caucus.

"Economists and government officials said that the agreement would lead to growing trade surpluses and that hundreds of thousands of jobs would be gained," Michaud added. "As our friends from Mexico can attest, NAFTA did not bring those benefits. Instead, workers' rights are being violated on a regular basis, and both the U.S. and Mexico are worse off for it."

"It is to our advantage to help Mexican workers expose the kind of oppression and persecution they face every day. And it is important to workers in America that Mexican workers get an opportunity to raise their standard of living."

The USW, in a policy resolution passed at the 2011 Constitutional Convention, pledged to build a global solidarity movement to stand up for economic and social justice, and to educate members about the ways in which violations of labor rights and declining living standards in other countries affect USW workplaces and communities.

Mexican union leaders who spoke at the event included Francisco Hernández Juárez, general secretary of the Mexican

improve wages and health and safety standards, particularly in Mexico's dangerous mines and steel mills.

"We are going through very difficult times and are on the receiving end of a high level of aggression and anti-unionism by the Mexican government and business leaders," said Juárez, who cited attacks on Los Mineros and its elected leader, Napoleon Gomez, and labor law changes that threaten to reverse workers' rights.

"The Mexican government, through its spokespeople, has been trying to sell the idea that they defend labor and human rights. We'd like to show how they do not."

Summer Union Camp

Leah Kinney, center, daughter of USW member Ken Kinney of Fulton, Mo., spent a week this summer learning about the labor movement at a union camp for teens in Poplar Bluff, Mo.

Lesly Hall, left, president of USW Local 713 in New London, Mo., and a Woman of Steel activist, is one of the adult leaders at the Romeo Corbeil-Giles Beauregard Summer Union Camp. Also shown are Sam White of the American Federation of Teachers and University of Missouri (MU) labor educator Paul Rainsberger.

The camp been in operation for 14 years and is sponsored by the OPEIU, the MU Labor Education Department and the Missouri AFL-CIO.



Photo by Jamaal Craig

Back to School with USW Help

Steelworkers this year provided school supplies to nearly 800 elementary students from Aliquippa, a former steel town in western Pennsylvania.

Volunteers from the USW Civil and Human Rights Department distributed donated items, from pencils to book bags, to students from kindergarten through sixth grade. The event, now in its fourth year, is much anticipated by students and teachers alike.

Shown distributing school supplies are (standing) USW Civil and Human Rights Director Amanda Green Hawkins and Dwan Walker, the mayor-elect of Aliquippa.

Reinstate TAA Funding

The USW is urging Congress to reinstate funding for the enhanced Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program that helps retrain workers who have lost jobs because of trade agreements.

Services were slashed in February when Republicans in the U.S. House of Representatives voted to block a bill that would extend the program begun in 2009.

Up to 170,000 Americans could be affected, from laid-off steelworkers who lost work to China to office workers whose jobs were outsourced to India.

The Department of Labor will retain the program with reduced funding for one more year. If Congress does not reinstate funding, tax-paying workers will lose a program that helps American workers be competitive in a global economy.

Convention Photo

The panoramic 2011 Convention photograph is available for purchase from the photographer. Cost of the unmounted color photo, which measures approximately 10 x 50 inches, is \$75 plus \$7.50 shipping and handling. Orders can be made by mail, phone or Internet. Visa, MasterCard and checks accepted.

Tracking Work Hours Made Easy

A timesheet to help workers independently track their hours and the wages they are owed is now available from the U.S. Department of Labor as an application for smart phones.

Users can track regular work hours, break time and any overtime hours for one or more employers. Glossary, contact information and materials about wage laws are accessible through links to the Web pages of the department's Wage and Hour Division.

For workers without a smartphone, the Wage and Hour Division has a printable work hours calendar in English and Spanish to track rate of pay, work start and stop times, and arrival and departure times.

Both the app and the calendar can be downloaded from the Wage and Hour Division's home Web page at <http://www.dol.gov/whd>.

To order, contact:

Hank deLespinasse Studios Inc.

P.O. Box 93261

Las Vegas, NV 89193

Or phone: 702-361-4872

The website address is: www.callmehank.com



No Vote on Trade Pacts Urged

The USW has mailed a letter to every member of Congress urging they vigorously oppose free trade agreements with South Korea, Panama and Colombia.

The letter said the proposed trade deals would “undermine our economic recovery, further decimate American manufacturing and jobs and deepen the economic insecurity.”

The detailed, five-page letter signed by International President Leo W. Gerard outlined the flaws for American workers in each of the proposed FTAs. It also cites trade deals that have caused the United States to lose 6 million manufacturing jobs in the last decade.

“Promises made by administrations past and present touting the benefits of free trade have simply not materialized for America’s manufacturing workers,” Gerard said.



Photo by Buriil Smith, Local 9231

Local Donates to Japanese Relief

USW Local 9231 and 9231-01 members in New Carlisle, Ind., observed a moment of silence for workers at sister locations in Japan that were devastated by natural disasters this year.

The local represents workers at I/N Tek and I/N Kote, joint ventures between Nippon Steel Corp. (NSC) and ArcelorMittal, formerly Inland Steel.

The local’s Women of Steel committee raised \$10,000 in relief aid to assist steelworkers at Nippon’s Kamaishi Works, which was hit hard by an earthquake and tsunami that killed thousands of people and left many homeless.

Most of the money was raised through raffles and a bake sale held on Safety Day/Workers’ Memorial Day in April, and is being used in Japan to provide transportation for displaced workers and their families.

Local President Todd Kegley (standing right) said the local has a longstanding good relationship with NSC and the Japan Steelworkers Union.

Tariffs Continue on Stainless Imports from Japan, Korea and Taiwan

After a sunset review, the United States is continuing tariffs on certain stainless steel products from Japan, Korea and Taiwan and eliminating them on stainless products from Germany, Italy and Mexico.

The U.S. International Trade Commission (ITC) ruled this summer that revoking existing countervailing duty orders on stainless steel sheet and strip from Korea and existing antidumping orders on stainless products from Japan, Korea and Taiwan would likely injure the domestic industry.

The ITC also determined that revoking antidumping orders on imports of these products from Germany, Italy and Mexico would not likely lead to recurrence of injury to the U.S. industry.

Countervailing duties are intended to offset the effect of subsidies granted by an exporting country to its exporters and bring the price of the imported product up to market price. Antidumping duties are assessed on imported goods that are sold at less than fair value.

Under current law, antidumping or countervailing duty orders must be revoked after five years unless the government determines that doing so would likely to lead to recurrence of injury within a reasonably foreseeable time.

International Vice President Tom Conway, who chairs the negotiating committee with the stainless producers, said the union and industry were disappointed in the revocations and would review the written decisions of individual ITC commissioners to determine whether to appeal.

The USW represents more than 1,000 workers who produce stainless sheet and strip at Allegheny Ludlum facilities in Pennsylvania, Indiana, Connecticut, Massachusetts and Ohio, plus workers at AK Steel’s Mansfield Works in Ohio.

Boston Taxi Drivers Call for Reforms

Representatives of the United Steelworkers/Boston Taxi Drivers Association on Aug. 11 appeared before Boston City Council’s Committee on Public Safety to support establishment of a civilian commission to create and modify regulations for cabs.

A civilian commission would give a voice to the drivers, owners and the public served by city cabs, said Donna Blythe-Shaw, a USW staff representative for the association. All licensed cab drivers in the city of Boston are eligible to join.

Unions Call for Aid Investigation

International President Leo W. Gerard and Larry Cohen, president of the Communications Workers of America, have called for an investigation into the alleged misuse of U.S. government aid in Colombia.

The labor leaders asked the House Select Intelligence Committee to investigate press reports that the government of Colombia may have misused U.S. government aid to investigate and undermine the activities of labor leaders and union activists in that South American country.

Gerard noted that Congress is being asked to consider a trade agreement this fall with Colombia, which has the worst record of any country in the world with regard to violence against union leaders and activists.

BlueGreen, Apollo Alliance Merge

The USW-supported BlueGreen Alliance and the Apollo Alliance have joined forces to strengthen and unify the movement to build a clean energy economy and create good jobs in the United States.

The merged organization will operate as the BlueGreen Alliance, a national partnership of labor unions and environmental organizations launched in 2006 by the USW and the Sierra Club.

International President Leo W. Gerard, who has ties to both organizations, said the merged group will focus on creating good jobs that protect the environment. Both groups have labor unions and environmental organizations as members.

Rescue Team Takes First Place

A mine rescue team from Local 15320 at Tata Chemicals in Green River, Wyo., won first place in the field competition at this year's Southern Mine Rescue Competition in New Iberia, La.

The team, Tata Chemicals Black, was up against 13 other expertly-trained mine rescue teams in the competition, which was judged by the federal Mine Safety and Health Administration.

Local 15320 represents workers at Tata Chemicals North America in Green River, which mines and processes trona ore, a mineral that contains soda ash. The facility includes an underground mine and a refining plant.



Photo by Steve Dietz

Fenton Halts Glass Production

The Fenton Art Glass Co. announced in July that it would wind down production of its collectible and giftware glass products made by USW members in Williamstown, W.Va.

Company President George Fenton said the market for pressed and blown glassware has diminished, making it impossible to sustain overhead costs. He praised USW-represented workers for their efforts in trying to keep glassmaking operations going.

The family-owned business, featured in USW@Work in 2009, was founded in 1905 as a decorating company and produced its first glass products in 1906.

Local 508 President Truda Mendenhall called the closure a loss for the Fenton family "and every worker here who has worked so hard to try to make this factory continue on.

"It's also a loss for the glass industry because we make glass and do techniques to glass that you will not find anywhere else in the world," she said.

We Are One in Granite City

International Vice President Fred Redmond addressed a "We Are One" rally at the Tri-Cities Labor Temple in Granite City, Ill., home to USW Locals 1899 and 68. Members of SOAR and dozens of other unions came to the USW-sponsored event, called to show support for America's middle class, to stand up for workers' rights and protect promises made to senior citizens.



USW Photo by Scott Weaver

Alcoa Workers Worldwide Meet

Alcoa workers from all over the world came to Pittsburgh in September for an international conference to exchange experiences and develop plans for bargaining and organizing collaboration and coordination. Unions from Australia, Brazil, Canada, Iceland, Norway, Suriname, the United Kingdom and the United States participated in the two-day meeting. Also present were representatives from global union federations headquartered in Switzerland.

United Way



Leo W. Gerard
International President

September 2011

Dear Sisters and Brothers:

Over the past three years, we've all seen how interconnected we are. When people are unemployed and more families are financially unstable, the impact is felt throughout the community – and even throughout a region – as money tightens up everywhere. Those who depend on human services often will have our own sisters and brothers amongst their ranks.

For more than four decades the USW has taken great pride in its partnership with the United Way. Even in times of economic distress, our members have joined forces with others to advance the common good and to enable people with opportunities to have full lives. As a result, we are making great strides in reaching our shared goals to improve education, health and financial stability -- the building blocks for a good quality of life.

Whether or not I know a child on the other side of town, it matters to me whether that child grows up to be a contributing member of the community. We all have a stake in that and a responsibility to do our part. Please join me in supporting the 2011 United Way campaign. By doing so, you are helping create opportunities for a good life for all.

Together we can help those in real need now, while we work to turn America around. Thank you.

In solidarity,

Leo W. Gerard
International President

Have You Moved?

Notify your local union financial secretary, or clip out this form with your old address label and send your new address to:

USW@Work

USW Membership Department,
3340 Perimeter Hill Drive, Nashville, TN 37211

Name _____

New Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Local 878L Honored for Rapid Response Achievement

The members of Local 878L at Goodyear's tire plant in Union City, Tenn., received the first-ever Rapid Response Lifetime Achievement Award at the 2011 USW Convention in Las Vegas.

The award, announced by Secretary-Treasurer Stan Johnson, honors the local for consistently leading participation in the Rapid Response program.

The award was bittersweet, Johnson told delegates, because Goodyear is closing the Union City plant, idling 1,800

members who are "as good as any activists this union has ever seen. They always produced."

Local 878L President Ricky Waggoner accepted the award and told the Convention, "I will die a Steelworker. There have been some tears shed in the past few weeks, not all of it because the plant is closing down. We are going to miss you. That is what we are crying over. We love you."

Other Rapid Response awards are listed on this page.



Lifetime Achievement Award

Local 878L

Ricky Waggoner, President
Johnny Dyer, Rapid Response Coordinator

Top District

District 9

Dan Flippo, Director
Greg England, Rapid Response Coordinator

Top District

District 10

John DeFazio, Director
Bob McAuliffe, Rapid Response Coordinator

Spirit of the Fight Awards

Local 5965

Terry Newton, President
Brenda Sanders, Rapid Response Coordinator

Local 1123

Joe Hoagland, President
Keith Strobel, Rapid Response Coordinator

Local 831L

Danny Barber, President
Mark Powers, Rapid Response Coordinator

Local 602

Michael Martin, President and Rapid Response Coordinator

Local 1188

Stephan Donnell, President
Emery Deabay, Rapid Response Coordinator

Local 715

Jim Wetzel, President
Charlie Odier, Rapid Response Coordinator

Local 474

Dave Celaya, President
Zack Monsma, Rapid Response Coordinator

Local 9440

Jim Staley, President and Rapid Response Coordinator

Local 2599

Jerry Green, President
Jerry Green and George Ehret, Congressional District Coordinators

Local 7655

William Jones, President
Wilmar Buckley, Rapid Response Coordinator

Local 8183

Bernie Hall, President and Congressional District Coordinator
John Jeffers and Tim Yeater, Rapid Response Coordinators

Local 207L

Rod Nelson, President
Rob Greer, Rapid Response Coordinator