

STEEL VOICE



UNITED STEELWORKERS LOCAL 1999

Volume 2. Issue 1.

Indianapolis, IN

January 23, 2009

Obama: Follow the Philosophical Footsteps of Abraham

Symbols of the 16th president of the United States surround the 44th. And they did so from the beginning.

Barack Obama, formerly a Senator from Illinois, announced his plan to run for president on Abraham Lincoln's birthday from the steps of the Old State Capitol in Springfield, the site of Lincoln's "House Divided" speech, which launched Lincoln's own campaign for the Senate.

Once elected, Obama assembled a "team of rivals" cabinet, as Lincoln did, including as his secretary of state, his chief challenger for the Democratic nomination, New York Senator Hillary Clinton, just as Lincoln selected for state his foremost contender for the Republican nomination, New York Senator William Seward.

Before the inauguration, Obama will pause for reflection and a con-



President Barack Obama at his inauguration as the 44th President of the United States on Tuesday.

cert at the Lincoln Memorial, where a somber statue sits beside the inscribed words of the Gettysburg Address. He'll attend a luncheon featuring Lincoln's favorite foods. Finally, Obama will place his right hand on the same Bible that Lincoln did when he took the oath of office on March 4, 1861.

Symbols cannot, however, convey the depth of connection between their presidencies. It is crucial for working Americans that the 44th

President appreciate that mere imagery such as Lincoln luncheons and concerts is insufficient. What the union needs now is for Obama to follow the philosophical footsteps of Abraham.

When Lincoln took office, most of the country was in the midst of a deep recession caused by the Panic of 1857. "It struck after a period of prosperity accompanied by higher prices, speculation and increas-

My View

Bruce Reed, Local Union Representative



Brothers and Sisters:

The national elections are over! We can watch a game or show on TV without having someone running for a political office telling us what they are going to do for us if they are elected. As everyone knows we have elected Barack Obama to be our next President; it is now time for us to make sure the president holds to what he said he would do. We are all aware of the seriousness of the economy and the effect it has on our jobs. It's my opinion the first thing the President must deal with is the economy and the jobs crisis in America. This is not a secret; all of us most likely feel the same way. I believe that every one of us has a family member who has lost their job or been laid-off due to the current economy caused by the failed trickledown economics policy of the Bush administration. This month (January) International Union President Leo Gerard was interviewed on Bill Moyers Journal and represented our concerns and intentions for

the future very specifically, I hope many of us were able to see it. Leo discussed the current crisis the big three auto makers are dealing with, the global agenda in America, the manufacturing base and the effect they have on us in America. He talked about government subsidies that some foreign countries provide to keep manufacturing stable in their own Countries and the effect that has on our own steel manufacturing. He showed concern about the national debt and that if we do not mandate change in the next four years the trade deficit the United States will have a deficit of a trillion dollars within 4 years. The trade deficit now is between 700 and 800 billion dollars, the United States cannot continue down the same path, with our debt at approximately five trillion we are paying 600 billion dollars a year in interest.

President Gerard represented our concerns well during his interview, but it will be up to all of us, Steelworkers, our family members, neighbors, friends, co-workers and all Americans to help fix the problems the working class is facing now. We must support our Union leadership in their attempts to make sure our best interest as working class Americans are recognized and dealt with properly. We as Steelworkers worked to get President elect Obama elected because he believes in the working class and understands the problems we have been dealing with, he has pledged to work to fix our issues and we must hold him to his pledge.

We were not successful in getting Jill Long Thompson elected as Governor of Indiana. We need to watch closely as Governor Mitch serves his second term. He has

promised change from his acceptance speech and the kind of change he usually brings is hardly ever good for the working men and women of our state. He talks of new jobs but we still are losing more jobs than almost any other state in the Country. He has went about fixing the state as a business but left behind the people that make the state, even asking state employees to give up their promised pay raises.

This economic failure is affecting our Local Union as you know by lay-offs and short work weeks at most all of our units. The Local is trying to help a little by having a food bank set up at the hall, and once a week having a food pick up for laid off workers in the Local. If you wish to donate nonperishable food or money to buy food for the bank please contact the hall. □

Are You Living Beyond Your Means?



Debt and credit problems can happen at anytime to anyone. Union Plus offers a solution for union members, the Union Plus Credit Counseling Program. Certified counselors can help you and your family. Benefits include:

- Free Counseling
- Free Budget Plan
- Written Action Plan



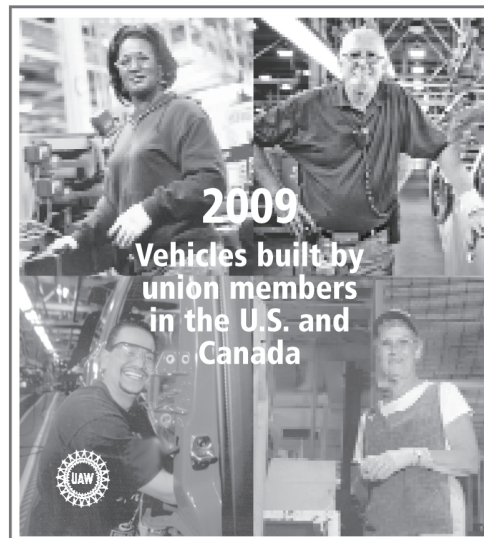
For information
1-877-833-1745

or visit
**UnionPlus.org/
CreditCounseling**

WEB

DRIVE UNION

A guide to 2009 cars, trucks, SUVs and vans made by union members



UAW cars

Buick Lucerne
 Cadillac CTS
 Cadillac DTS
 Cadillac STS
 Cadillac XLR
 Chevrolet Cobalt
 Chevrolet Corvette
 Chevrolet Malibu/Hybrid
 Chrysler Sebring Convertible
 Chrysler Sebring Sedan
 Dodge Avenger
 Dodge Caliber
 Dodge Viper
 Ford Focus
 Ford Mustang
 Ford Taurus
 Lincoln MKS
 Mazda6
 Mercury Sable
 Mitsubishi Eclipse
 Mitsubishi Eclipse Spyder
 Mitsubishi Galant
 Pontiac G5
 Pontiac G6
 Pontiac Solstice
 Pontiac Vibe
 Saturn Aura/Hybrid
 Saturn Sky
 Toyota Corolla*

UAW vans

Chevrolet Express
 Dodge Caravan
 Ford Econoline
 GMC Savana

UAW trucks

Chevrolet Colorado
 Chevrolet Silverado*
 Dodge Dakota
 Dodge Ram Pickup
 Ford F Series*
 Ford Ranger
 GMC Canyon
 GMC Sierra*
 Mazda B-Series
 Toyota Tacoma*

UAW SUVs/CUVs

Buick Enclave
 Cadillac Escalade/Hybrid
 Cadillac Escalade ESV
 Cadillac SRX
 Chevrolet Suburban*
 Chevrolet Tahoe*/Hybrid
 Chevrolet Traverse
 Chrysler Aspen/Hybrid
 Dodge Durango/Hybrid
 Dodge Nitro
 Ford Escape/Hybrid
 Ford Expedition
 Ford Explorer
 Ford Explorer Sport Trac
 Ford Taurus X
 GMC Acadia
 GMC Yukon*/Hybrid
 H2 Hummer
 H3 Hummer
 Jeep Commander
 Jeep Compass
 Jeep Grand Cherokee
 Jeep Liberty
 Jeep Patriot
 Jeep Wrangler
 Lincoln Navigator
 Mazda Tribute/Hybrid
 Mercury Mariner/Hybrid
 Mercury Mountaineer
 Mitsubishi Endeavor
 Saturn Outlook

CAW trucks

Chevrolet Silverado*/Hybrid
 GMC Sierra*/Hybrid

CAW cars

Buick Lacrosse
 Chevrolet Camaro
 Chevrolet Impala
 Chrysler 300
 Dodge Challenger
 Dodge Charger
 Ford Crown Victoria
 Lincoln Town Car
 Mercury Grand Marquis

CAW vans

Chrysler Town & Country
 Dodge Caravan
 Volkswagen Routan

CAW SUVs/CUVs

Chevrolet Equinox
 Ford Edge
 Ford Flex
 Lincoln MKT
 Lincoln MKX
 Pontiac Torrent
 Suzuki XL7

IUE SUVs/CUVs

Chevrolet Trailblazer
 GMC Envoy

All these vehicles are made in the United States or Canada by members of the United Auto Workers (UAW), Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) or International Union of Electrical Workers-Communications Workers of America (IUE).

Because of the integration of U.S. and Canadian vehicle production, all these vehicles include significant UAW-made content and

support the jobs of UAW members.

However, those marked with an asterisk (*) are sourced from the United States and another country.

When purchasing one of these models, check the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN). A VIN beginning with 1, 4 or 5 identifies a U.S.-made vehicle; 2 identifies a Canadian-made vehicle.

Not all vehicles made in the United States or Canada are built

by union-represented workers. The Toyota Corolla, for example, is made in the United States by UAW members, but the Canadian model is made in a nonunion plant and other models are imported from a third country.

To order copies of the 2009 union vehicle buying guide, contact the UAW Purchasing Department, 8000 E. Jefferson Ave., Detroit, MI 48214, (313) 926-5221.

Good-Bye, Good Riddance - The Eight Years Of George W. Bush

By Mark Gruenberg, PAI Staff Writer

WASHINGTON (PAI)--At last year's United Auto Workers legislative conference, union President Ron Gettelfinger was asked what the election of then-presumed GOP presidential nominee John McCain would be like for workers and unions.

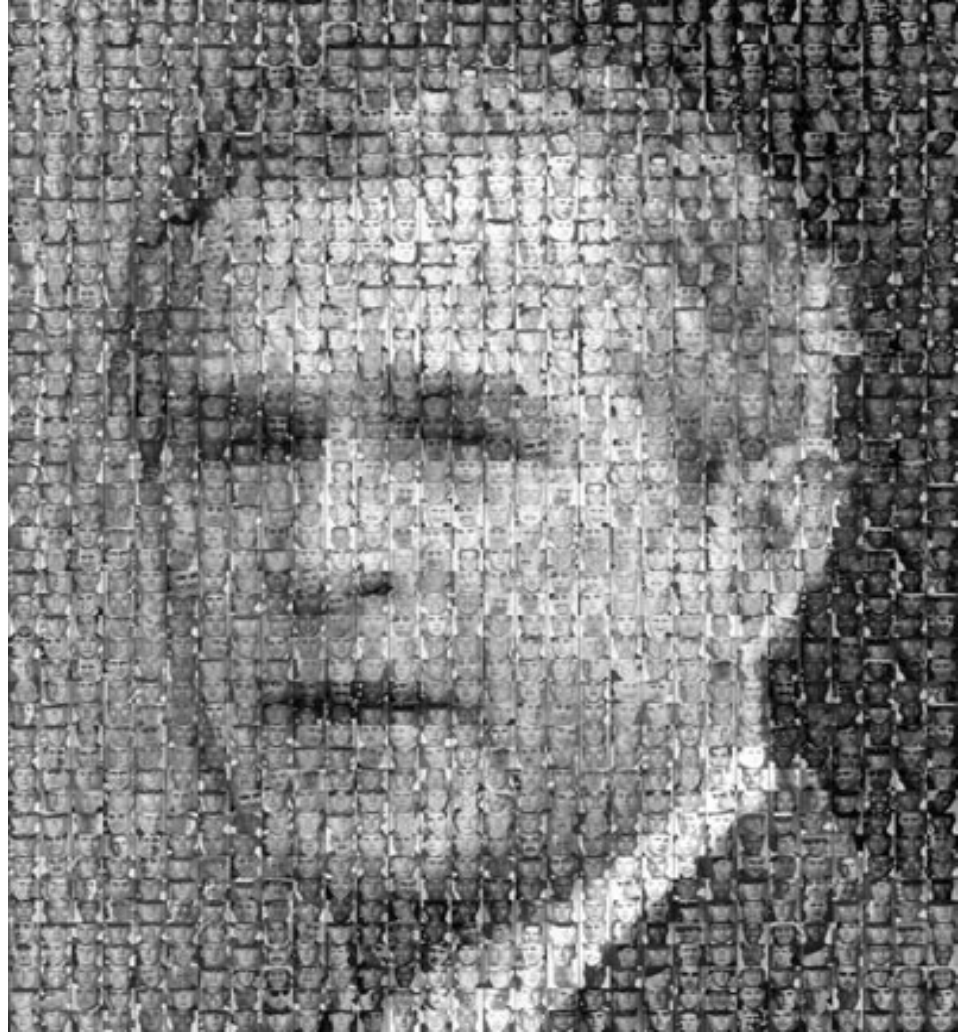
His reply: McCain would be the worst possible person in the White House for workers, "except for George W. Bush."

Gettelfinger wasn't wrong. A review of the departing Republican ruler's 8-year reign shows his consistent depth and breadth of hatred of workers and unions.

"The legacy of Bush, when it comes to workers, will be one of inaction and neglect," says AFL-CIO Safety and Health Director Peg Seminario, who has been in the federation's department, including running it, starting during the Carter administration 32 years ago. She's being polite.

Bush's anti-worker war started almost the day he entered the White House. He ordered cuts in construction workers' wages by banning a project labor agreement for the multi-billion-dollar Woodrow Wilson Bridge, and all other federally funded projects.

His crusade continued through actions such as ruling millions of workers ineligible for overtime pay and appointing National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) members who voted in Sept. 2006 that between 8 million and 34 million workers could be classified as supervisors. They would not be protected by la-



bor law, weak as it is, at all.

And Bush's hostility to workers and unions extended through his last days in the Oval Office, when he conditioned aid to ailing General Motors and Chrysler on a prompt 50%-plus cut in UAW members' pay at the two automakers. UAW is resisting.

Through it all, Bush has been consistent in trying to destroy unions and wreck workers' living standards. Federal data show he's succeeded, at least in the latter goal: Median income in the U.S. in his reign was flat or declining for all but the top 5% of the country. Though

the first Bush recession officially ended in Nov. 2001, it never really stopped for workers. The second, and worse, Bush crash started just over a year ago.

But his aim to destroy unions failed. We're still here. Nevertheless, Bush's anti-worker and anti-union actions are so many and varied it is often easy to lose sight of the forest for the trees. Yet his "forest," making the U.S. union-free, was always there.

Evidence: Bush, then Texas governor and already pondering a run for the White House, ordered the writ-

Best of Times, Worst of Times

Chuck Jones, President

“It was the best of times. It was the worst of times.” Literally.

After two years of campaigning, the election was over. It was a night that made history. And a night that few people will ever forget. As exciting as it is, the road ahead is going to be very hard.

Our economy is in dire straits. There are 11.1 million people currently unemployed. We have the highest unemployment rate since 1983 and with all Three Big auto makers sitting on the edge of bankruptcy our future is clouded.

With a new administration in the White House we may finally have a chance to have our issues heard. These are not just Steelworker issues; these are policies and laws that affect all working men and women in this country.



Organized Labor as a whole must insist that U.S. Trade Laws are enforced. Environmental standards must be upheld and workers rights must be recognized. We need to work to get Tax Laws revised so incentives that are given to corporations to move overseas are eliminated completely. Government contracts should be denied to any corporation that moves overseas. We need laws that say anything manufactured for

Homeland Security or our Military must be made in America.

With a new administration in the White House, our fight for Fair Trade Policies may be somewhat easier but it's still going to be quite a while before we see much change in the economy.

Everyone is feeling the pinch, some more than others. We are officially in recession and all of our Units are experiencing layoffs due to the downfall of the economy. During these hard times we have been handing out food to our laid off members. We need donations in order to continue. Anyone interested in making a donation (either food or money) please call the Union Hall at 639-1479. Please help those who are in need. □

Bush From Page 4.

ing of the 1998 Texas Republican platform – a document with a statement virtually calling for outlawing unions. He has never changed that stand.

Once in the presidency thanks to a Supreme Court ruling, Bush didn't hesitate in carrying that goal out, waging constant war on workers. There are so many anti-worker Bush actions that listing them all here is impossible, but lowlights include:

- The biggest Bush anti-union push was in the federal government, where he outlawed unions at Justice Department agencies, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, the

Transportation Security Administration's airport screeners and, most notably at the Defense and Homeland Security departments. Almost 1 million workers, mostly at DOD and DHS, were stripped of rights.

Bush justified his federal union bans on the fake grounds that unionization threatens “national security.” He made clear he wanted to ban unions in the rest of the government, too. AFGE President John Gage warned Bush would not stop, but would move on to killing unions at the state and local levels, and then in the private sector.

To stop Bush, AFGE and other government worker unions took him to

court, and lobbied the Democratic-run 110th Congress. Federal judges tossed the DHS union ban, which covered 135,000 workers, and severely circumscribed his anti-union scheme at DOD, which covered 700,000 civilian workers. Last year, Congress cut off the money for DHS' plan. Bush's DOD personnel system comes up for renewal in 2009.

- Bush strongly opposed collective bargaining rights for first responders – police, Fire Fighters and EMTs – even after 343 unionized New York Fire Fighters and their priest, trying to rescue others, were among the 3,000 killed by the Sept.

Senator Richard Shelby Hates My Dad

I have a confession. My father is an autoworker. I know that some people will recoil in disgust upon learning that fact, but it gets worse—he's a retired UAW autoworker and he and my mother live on a pension and have retiree health care benefits that supplement Medicare. In other words, he is public enemy #1 to Sens. Richard Shelby, Bob Corker and Jim DeMint.

According to these senators, my dad and his cadre of active and retired UAW-represented autoworkers are responsible for this country's economic downturn. In the color-coded chart of America's enemies, they are right below Al Qaeda and moving up fast.

My dad is despised by the right and the left. Right-wing Republican senators rail against my dad on the Senate floor because he's lazy, overpaid and coddled. For some on the left, their view of class consciousness compels them to speak out against anyone who has middle-class existence without the rigors of a college degree. My dad also is detested by the rich and the poor. Rich people don't like my dad because if workers earn good wages and benefits, it somehow diminishes their own affluence. Many poor people don't like my dad because they have dead-end, low-wage jobs, nonunion jobs with no benefits. It's America's version of class warfare, where you hate other workers that have more than you but idolize their bosses..

Since I've already established that my father is the scourge of "right-thinking" Americans—high school educated, union member, blue-collar job and now retired with a pen-

sion and health care benefits. But let me tell you a little more about him. My dad grew up in Hamtramck, Mich., a Polish enclave surrounded by the city of Detroit. His mother was born in Poland and his father was second generation German-Polish. My dad graduated from Hamtramck High School in 1955 and, like nearly everyone of his



David R. Radtke

classmates, went into the military. After two uneventful years in the peacetime Army, he returned home and married my mother. He got a job servicing office machines and my mom worked at the phone company.

None of their friends or relatives went to college. None. They all got blue-collar union jobs in factories or driving trucks or working for the government.

After a few years, me and my sister were born and my mom quit her job. My dad got into a tool-and-die apprenticeship program in a small factory and served a four-year apprenticeship. He also joined the UAW and my parents bought a

three-bedroom, 1,300-square-foot brick ranch in Warren, Mich.

After getting his journeyman's card, my dad got a job at Chrysler. He worked at various plants in Metro Detroit as a tool-and-die maker. I remember he was laid off a few times and went on strike once. When my sister and I were in grade school, he was often on the afternoon or midnight shift, so he would wake up for an hour or so in the morning to see us before school.

At some point, my parents bought a small, empty lot for \$1,500 on a little lake in northern Michigan. My dad and his cousins built a little two-room cabin. Other than two weeks at Disney World, we spent every vacation at that cabin.

I vividly remember the tension and unease in our house when Chrysler was in deep financial trouble in the late 1970s. After Congress gave Chrysler a loan (which it paid back early, with interest) we had a gold Plymouth Volare—with a bumper sticker that said: THANKS, AMERICA.

When I was six years old, I had a serious medical problem that required two surgeries, extended stays in the hospital and many, many doctor visits and tests. Because my dad had UAW-negotiated health care, our family was not financially devastated.

Later, my dad transferred to an office job with Chrysler's parts division where he continued to use his knowledge of tooling and parts. It also was a UAW-repre-

Auto Advantage



Check out the **exclusive deals** and **discounts** available to union members



Cars and trucks are major investments—and often major headaches—for working families. Now you can **cut your costs** and **ease the stress** with union member benefits designed to meet ALL of your vehicle needs. You'll get great customer service, reliable cost-comparisons and **special savings**. Check out the **exclusive deals** available to union members.



Visit www.UnionPlus.org/Auto

Web 08

Dad From Page 6.

sented job, but it was 9-to-5, so he saw my sister and I every day.

Just weeks before I was to head off to college, my dad had a heart attack shoveling snow.. He was hospitalized for a short time and was off work for a couple months.. Because of the UAW contract, his medical treatment was fully covered and he received sick pay. The UAW contract also guaranteed that he could return to his job when he recovered. Because of these benefits, I didn't have to drop out of college and get a job. Instead, I was able to continue my education with my parents' help and student loans.

When my dad retired after nearly 30 years at Chrysler, he retired with a union-negotiated pension and retiree

health care benefits that supplement Medicare. My parents still live in the same three-bedroom brick house in Warren and spend a lot of their time with their five grandchildren.

Other than the short time my dad was off after the heart attack, he never missed a day of work. He raised a family and now he and my mother have a comfortable life.

But dad's not alone. Most of my parents' friends live much the same life. They are now in their 70s and they have modest, secure lives.. They have lived what I was taught to be the promise of this country. Each generation progresses from the previous. Every person who works has financial security, decent health care and a dignified retirement. I learned this lesson in the public schools I at-

tended and have heard it in speeches made by many politicians.

So, when did it become acceptable to be against that ideal? How can U.S. senators stand on the Senate floor and denounce millions of Americans like my dad? Workers who spent their lives raising families, paying taxes, adding to their communities and laboring in good union jobs for a middle-class life—the vaunted American Dream. Well, it's not acceptable and it is those senators who should be denounced

David R. Radtke is a partner in the Michigan law firm of Klimist, McKnight, Sale, McClow & Canzano and a member of the AFL-CIO Lawyers Coordinating Committee. □

Union Plus—helping union families get ahead.

Scholarships

Helping union families realize their dreams

Going back to school? Sending your children to college? Learn more about the scholarship opportunities available to you as a union member. Union Plus supports working families by providing these scholarships to help you focus on your studies instead of your tuition bill.



UNION PLUS SCHOLARSHIP

- Awards ranging from **\$500 to \$4,000** are available to students attending two-year and four-year colleges, recognized technical or trade schools, and graduate schools
- **Current and retired** union members, their spouses and dependent children **are eligible**
- Applications are **available in September**. To apply, just download an application at UnionPlus.org/Scholarship and **return it by January 31**.

UNION LEADERS OF THE FUTURE SCHOLARSHIP

- **Helping more women** and people of color pursue union career goals and **enhance leadership skills**
- Annual awards **up to \$3,000 to cover the cost** of continuing education or training
- To be **applied toward the completion** of an accredited degree, coursework or seminar at an **accredited** educational institution
- Applications are available in **January**. To apply, just download an application at UnionPlus.org/Scholarship and return it by **May 31**

UNION PLUS NATIONAL LABOR COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP

- A total of **\$25,000** is awarded each to year to help union members attend the world's only university dedicated to **labor education**
- Take classes at your own pace and schedule with a **unique program** tailor-made for full-time working men and women
- Please **contact Tracie Sumner** in the Office of Student Finance at the National Labor College at **301-628-4253** or email tsumner@nlc.edu for more information



For details about all the scholarship opportunities available to union members, visit

www.UnionPlus.org/Scholarship

Bush From Page 5.

11, 2001 terrorist attacks. Bush's GOP killed the collective bargaining rights bill on Capitol Hill. The measure is expected to pass the more pro-labor Democratic-run 111th Congress.

- Bush's Office of Management and Budget yanked a contract signed between the National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA) and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) in the closing days of the Clinton administration. After six years of bargaining, and some progress according to NATCA, the Bush FAA declared an "impasse" and imposed its final offer: Cuts for the most-senior controllers, a wage freeze for the rest and worsened working conditions. Controllers are retiring in droves, and the 14,000-person FAA controller workforce is now 2,000+ short, NATCA reports.

- At the behest of another Right Winger, then-Gov. James Gilmore, R-Va., Bush banned the project labor agreements, which let unions reach construction peace – and decent wages for workers – on all federal projects, starting in late Jan. 2001.

- The PLA ban wasn't the only time Bush tried to cut construction workers' wages. He also ordered a waiver of the Davis-Bacon Act and its prevailing wage requirements, for the massive multi-billion-dollar reconstruction needed for New Orleans and the rest of the Gulf Coast after Hurricane Katrina.

Pressure from the AFL-CIO Building Trades Department and moderate Republicans forced him to rescind that ban, but union construction

workers lost jobs, including dozens of IBEW members who were fired in favor of non-union imports.

- Bush also suspended wage documentation rules for Katrina contractors, many of whom were politically connected and got work without competitive bidding. He dropped enforcement of job safety and health rules, despite widespread worker exposure to toxic hazards in the hurricane-smashed area. And Interfaith Worker Justice reported that 47% of the Katrina recovery workers had missed paychecks.

- After eight years of inaction – and one labor lawsuit – Bush's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) finally had to issue a job safety rule ordering firms to buy and provide personal protective equipment, such as steel-tipped shoes, safety aprons, goggles and helmets, to workers who need protection against hazards.

- The biggest category of occupational injuries is in ergonomics. The very first law Bush signed in 2001 – which he, big business and the GOP pushed – killed an OSHA rule designed to cut down on the hundreds of thousands of yearly ergonomic, or repetitive motion, injuries. Then, to add to the insult, the Bush OSHA told business they didn't even have to count the number of ergonomic injuries any more.

The Bush-named 3-person GOP majority on the NLRB spent much of its tenure throwing workers out from under labor law protection. In a series of rulings, everyone from newspaper part-time correspondents to nurses to teaching assistants to you name them was ruled ineligible

for labor law's safeguards, as weak as they are.

The rulings also prevent those workers from unionizing.

The biggest decisions: The Sept. 2006 "nurses as supervisors" Oakwood ruling, reclassifying nurses and a wide range of other low-level workers as supervisors and deprived of labor rights, strictly for managing others as little as 15% of the time, or for having a few tenets of being a supervisor. Oakwood alone could throw between 8 million (says the Economic Policy Institute) and 34 million (according to the NLRB's dissenters) workers out from under labor law protection.

The GOP-named majority of the Supreme Court made things worse, by saying undocumented workers were not entitled to labor law remedies such as back pay, even where their employers broke the law in mistreating them. That same High Court bloc also ruled that workers suffering pay discrimination by sex or race could not sue employers after their first 180 days on the job. Congress plans to overturn that ruling.

- Bush's NLRB majority took no official position on the Employee Free Choice Act. It would help level the playing field between workers and bosses in organizing and bargaining. NLRB dissenter Wilma Liebman, however, made clear at congressional hearings that employers abuse the agency's processes to thwart organizing drives.

But while the NLRB didn't take a stand on card-check and EFCA, it did – over Liebman's objections –

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

Final Rule—What It Means to You

On January 16, 2009, the first comprehensive overhaul of the U.S. Department of Labor’s Family Medical Leave Act took effect. Responding to two years of comments by employers, industry groups, employee representatives, and litigation pursued around FMLA issues, the final rule incorporates hundreds of changes, clarifications, modifications, and updates—some of which may be challenging to employers and confusing to employees.

Rule” in the Federal Register. The final rule contains modifications, clarifications, and adjustments to the current rules and contains appendices with eligibility notices and



What is the FMLA Final Rule?

On November 17, 2008, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) capped a two-year public comment period and published “The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993; Final

certification forms for employers, employees, and caregivers.

When does it take effect?

The final rule will take effect on January 16, 2009.

Are there new FMLA posting requirements?

Employers will be required to provide employees with:

- A general notice about FMLA (through a poster, an employee handbook, and upon hire)
- An eligibility notice
- A rights and responsibilities notice
- A designation notice

What are employee obligations to provide notice to the employer under FMLA?

- An employee needing FMLA leave must follow the employer’s usual and customary call-in procedures

See FMLA, Page 11.

Bush From Page 9.

make it easier for dissenting workers, who are often covertly aided by management, to get union decertification votes. The majority ruled that even simple cards, with few safeguards, were good enough for a decert. And Bush’s NLRB sided with the Chamber of Commerce against California’s neutrality law, which barred use of state funds for or against organizing drives. The High Court tossed that, too.

- Bush loves the anti-worker GOP-passed Taft-Hartley Act. He invoked it several times on the side of the nation’s airlines to prevent unionists from helping themselves during disputes over wages, benefits and working conditions. He got a Taft-Hartley injunction against the International Longshore and Warehouse Union when West Coast port managers locked it out in a contract dispute. The managers wanted

troops, too.

- Bush imposed tariffs on dumped imported steel in the run-up to the 2004 election and phased them out afterwards, despite Steel Worker protests and documentation of dumping from 15 countries. Subsidized foreign imports “contributed to plant closings, bankruptcies, and lost jobs and benefits for thousands of Steel Workers,” union Vice President Tim Conway said.

- The Bush Labor Department office that administers the Landrum-Griffin Act, which mandates disclosure of union finances, imposed onerous new rules on both unions and individual unionists. The rules greatly expanded forms unions must fill out and details they must disclose, including exact figures on spending on everything from staffers’ paychecks to boxes of paper clips, plus how unionists spend their

time.

Besides the disclosures, which are far more specific than those required of corporations and their executives, the new rules cost unions untold hours of time and approximately \$1 billion yearly, the AFL-CIO estimated. Their real harm? They detract time and money from what unions are supposed to do: Organize and represent workers.

But after Bush’s long anti-worker anti-union war, unions are alive. “Can we survive four more years of this?” asked then-AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson before the 2004 election, when Bush won a new term, over labor-backed Democrat John F. Kerry. The answer, even after eight years of war, is “yes.”

Press Associates, Inc. (PAI)

Unit 00 Rexnord

As of the time of this news letter, we went from roughly 60 on lay off down to 40. With the economy bad almost everywhere we were not immune to the downfall.

Our grievance level has been low due to the excellent jobs of the dept. stewards, chief stewards and our comm. People are working on issues and getting them resolved. We still have some serious issues outstanding and run into stuff daily but without their hard work it would be a lot worse.

I also want to thank Bruce, Chuck and Jim for all of their help and support that they have given me and our people at Rexnord.

I want to mention too that I personally appreciate all of the help from our people to help those on layoff. All help has been great! We have one individual who has not only donated lots of non perishable food items on several occasions but also donated a lot of frozen meat. To all that gave I say thank you. In these situations we need to put aside our differences and help those who need it, and I know after 14 and a half years there at the bearing plant we have the most kind, giving, caring people that anyone in my position would be proud to represent. Let us continue to pray and have the hope that God will see us through these tough times.

In Solidarity,
Brian Bousom
Unit 00 President

Unit 09 Quemetco

Things are going very well at Quemetco at this time. We are very fortunate in the fact that our work has remained steady. We have not experienced the slow down that has resulted in lay offs that most of the other units in the Local have seen.

We will be entering the final year of our contract at the beginning of March. We will need to start preparing for contract negotiations soon. Unless the economy rebounds between now and then I believe this will be a rough time for negotiations.

It is time now to put the pressure on our elected officials to help out the working families in this country. We worked hard to elect President Obama and the new Congress and the dividends for the working people of this country should be great. As for Indiana our Governor and Legislature are not as worker friendly, but never the less we will continue to lobby them on the our issues.

Any one who can make a donation of food or money to help out the members of the Local who are on lay off, I encourage you to do so. Donations can be dropped off at the Union Hall at 218 South Addison St. or given to myself and I will drop them off at the hall for you.

In Solidarity,
Kelly Ray Hugunin
Unit 09 President

FMLA From Page 10.

for reporting an absence, except in unusual circumstances.

- Employees must make a “reasonable effort” to avoid disruption of an employer’s operations.
- Employers must handle FMLA leave requests in a manner consistent with other leave policies.
- The final rule extends the time for employers to provide notice of eligibility or ineligibility from two business days to five. Electronic posting is permitted provided the notice is “conspicuous” and employees have access to computers where the notice is posted. Employers are “expected to responsively answer questions” from employees about FMLA leave.

What is Military Family Leave?

There are two new leave entitlements for covered military service members and their spouse, child, parent, or next of kin: Military Caregiver Leave and Qualifying Exigency Leave.

Military Caregiver Leave—also known as Covered Servicemember Leave

- Entitles family members of covered service members to take up to 26 workweeks of leave in a “single 12-month period” to care for a covered service member with a serious illness or injury incurred in the line of duty while on active duty.
- This entitlement is a special provision that extends FMLA job-protected leave beyond the normal 12 weeks of FMLA leave.

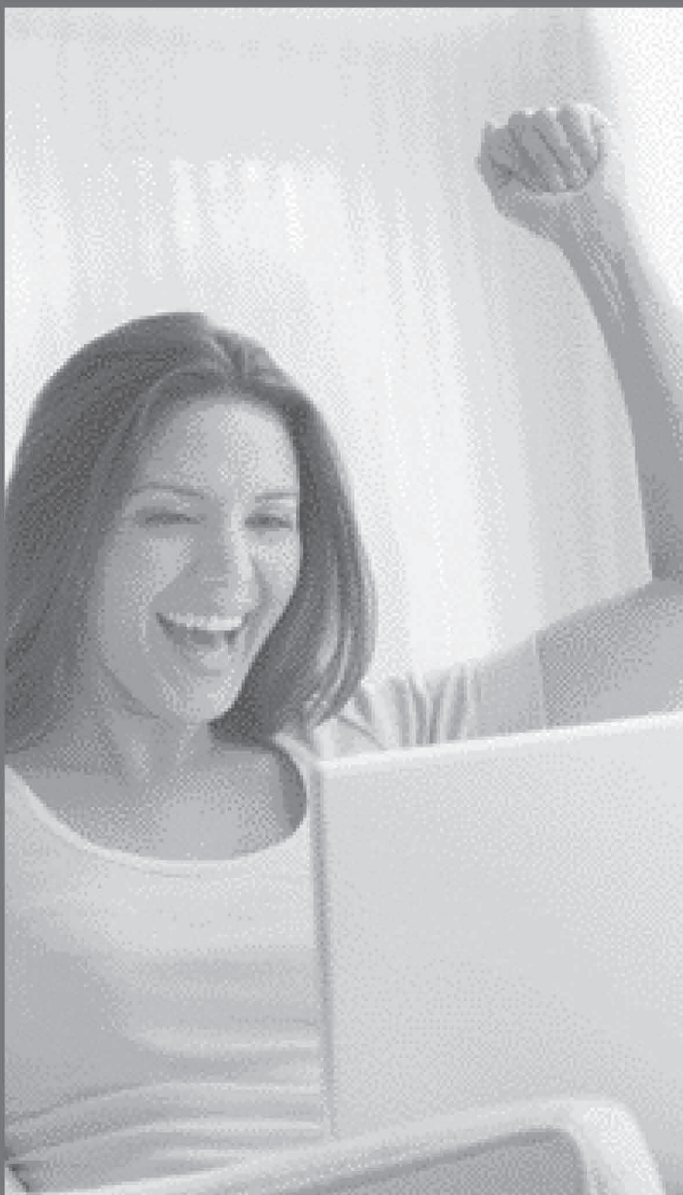
Qualifying Exigency Leave—helps families of members of the National Guard and Reserves manage their affairs while the member is on active duty in support of a contingency operation.

- Makes the normal 12 workweeks

TurboTax[®] Federal and State Edition

Union Plus TurboTax saves you up to 15% off regular prices.

Get your refund **FAST** when you e-file & direct deposit your TurboTax[®] return.



- ✓ **Help & Advice** available online 24/7.
- ✓ **Audit Support Center** download included.
- ✓ **Refund** in as few as 8 days with e-file and direct deposit.

Get your union discount at:

UnionPlus.org/Taxes



FMLA From Page 11.

of FMLA job-protected leave available to employees with a covered military member serving in the National Guard or Reserves to use for “any qualifying exigency” arising out of the fact that a covered military member is on active duty or called to active duty status in support of a contingency operation.

• The definition of a qualifying exigency includes:

- Short-notice deployment
- Military events and related activities
- Childcare and school activities
- Financial and legal arrangements
- Counseling
- Rest and recuperation
- Post-deployment activities
- Additional activities not encompassed in the other categories, but agreed to by the employer and employee
- Exigency leave applies to members of the National Guard, active Reservists, and retired members of the Regular Army or Reserves. It does not apply to employees who have a family member on active duty in the Regular Armed Forces.
- The final rule defines “next of kin” as the nearest blood relative, other than the covered service member’s spouse, parent, son, or daughter, in the following order of priority:
 - Blood relatives with legal custody of the service member
 - Brothers and sisters
 - Grandparents
 - Aunts and uncles
 - First cousins
- The covered service member may specifically designate in writing another blood relative as his or her nearest blood relative for purposes of military caregiver leave. In those cases, only that designated next of kin may take FMLA leave to care for the covered service member.

How is intermittent leave determined?

An employer must grant FMLA leave in its smallest payroll increment, i.e., the shortest period of time that the employer’s payroll system uses to account for absences or use of leave, provided it is one hour or less.

Does the final rule address medical certification?

- The final rule recognizes the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and the applicability of the HIPAA privacy rule to communication between employers and employees’ health care providers.
- The employer’s representative contacting the employee’s health care provider must be a health care provider, human resource professional, a leave administrator, or a management official. In no case may it be the employee’s direct supervisor.
- Employers may not ask health care providers for additional information beyond that required by the certification form.
- Health care providers may, but are not required to provide a diagnosis of the patient’s health condition as part of the certification.
- If an employer deems a medical certification to be incomplete or insufficient, the employer must specify in writing what information is lacking, and give the employee seven calendar days to cure the deficiency.
- Employers may request a new medical certification each leave year for medical conditions that last longer than one year, and may request recertification of an ongoing condition every six months.
- For fitness-for-duty certification, an employer may require that the

certification specifically address the employee’s ability to perform the essential functions of the employee’s job; and, where reasonable job safety concerns exist, an employer may require a fitness-for-duty certification before an employee may return to work when the employee takes intermittent leave.

What exactly is “light duty”?

- Time spent performing light duty work does not count against an employee’s FMLA leave entitlement.
- The employee’s right to restoration is suspended during the period of time the employee performs light duty (or until the end of the applicable 12-month FMLA leave year).
- If an employee is voluntarily performing a light duty assignment, the employee is not on FMLA leave.

Does the definition of a “serious condition” change?

- A serious health condition involves more than three consecutive, full calendar days of incapacity plus “two visits to a health care provider.”
- The two visits must occur within 30 days of the beginning of the period of incapacity.
- The first visit to the health care provider must take place within seven days of the first day of incapacity.
- “Periodic visits” for chronic serious health conditions are defined as at least two visits to a health care provider per year.

What about substitution of paid leave?

- FMLA leave is unpaid. However, employees may take, or employers may require employees to take, any accrued paid vacation, personal, family or medical or sick leave, as offered by their employer, concurrent

Obama From Page 1.

ing powers accruing to the nation's banks," New York Times reporter Steven R. Weisman, wrote in his book, "The Great Tax Wars." It resulted, he wrote, in a run on the banks, selling on Wall Street, falling prices, declining trade and the federal government saddled with deficits and debts. The U.S. economic slump, uncontrolled by Lincoln's predecessor in the White House, spread internationally.

Then, four weeks after Lincoln took the oath of office, the Civil War began with shots fired on April 12, 1861 at Fort Sumter, S.C.

Similarly, Obama has the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan to manage. His predecessor has bequeathed him the most serious recession since the Great Depression and the largest federal debt ever created in a presidency. Risky speculation and deregulation caused last year's financial bank failures that, in turn, pulled down the rest of the economy, as in 1857.

Lincoln is celebrated for preserving the union and freeing the slaves. But that would not have been possible without his economic accomplishments. It is the philosophy at the base of those achievements that must be the prototype for change in America now.



While waging war, Lincoln also passed the Homestead Act giving land to those who would build houses on their plots and become family farmers; the Land Grant Colleges

Act, promoting advanced farming methods, scientific research and access to higher education for the working classes; the Pacific Railway Act for construction of the first transcontinental railroad, and higher charges on imports to protect American industry and American workers.

The connection among these diverse laws is a respect for American workers and a belief that government should grant each American the opportunity to improve his lot by dint of hard work. Lincoln expressed this in a message to a Special Session of Congress in 1861: "This is essentially a people's contest . . . It is a struggle for maintaining in the world that form and substance of government whose leading object is to elevate the condition of men – to lift artificial weights from all shoulders – to clear the paths of laudable pursuit for all – to afford all an unfettered start, and a fair chance, in the race of life."

See Obama, Page 15.

FMLA From Page 13.

rently with any FMLA leave. This is called "substitution of paid leave."

- All forms of paid leave offered by an employer will be treated the same, regardless of the type of leave substituted (including generic "paid time off").
- An employee electing to use any type of paid leave concurrently with FMLA leave must follow the same terms and conditions of the employer's policy that apply to other employees for the use of such leave.
- The employee is always entitled to unpaid FMLA leave if he or she does not meet the employer's conditions for taking paid leave and the employer may waive any procedur-

al requirements for the taking of any type of paid leave.

Do FMLA recipients qualify for attendance awards?

The final rule changes the treatment of incentive bonuses and awards (such as perfect attendance awards) to allow employers to deny a bonus or award to an employee who does not qualify because of taking FMLA leave as long as it treats employees taking non-FMLA leave in an identical way.

When may employees waive FMLA rights?

Employees may waive FMLA rights retroactively (any rights or claims

arising in the past) but not prospectively (any rights or claims arising in the future).

Have the courts been involved?

The final rule includes a number of technical regulatory changes to reflect current law. It also removes categorical penalty provisions and clarifies that where an employee suffers individualized harm because the employer failed to follow the notification rules, the employer may be liable.

The information contained in this article highlights only a few of the major changes made by the U.S. Department of Labor in the revised FMLA regulations. □

Obama From Page 14.

Lincoln saw himself as a person who had benefited from America's ability to give her citizens opportunity. The son of uneducated farmers, he had only a year of formal education. He'd worked as a riverboat pilot, country store clerk, blacksmith, surveyor and postmaster. But he'd also read and studied and worked himself to the position of a reasonably wealthy small town lawyer and got elected as a lawmaker, and ultimately, president.

He also wrote, very early on, in a letter to the editor of the Sangamon Journal in New Salem, Ill., in 1836, "I go for all sharing the privileges of government who assist in bearing its burdens."

In recent times, soldiers and workers have borne the burdens of government while the privileges accrued to the wealthy. The rich got Bush's big tax breaks. Banks got deregulated. And big corporations escaped enforcement of federal environmental and safety regulations.

Last year financial banks and a major insurance company failed and got rescued by the federal government after Wall Street wise-guys risked untold hundreds of billions in crazy schemes. Those salvages are all on the taxpayers' dime. The failures led to the stock market diving, which shriveled worker's 401K retirement accounts and pension funds. They also froze credit, which ultimately contributed to 2.6 million layoffs, the highest level in six decades, as companies couldn't get money they needed to operate. Of those, 791,000 were manufacturing jobs. As workers lost their jobs, or feared it, they stopped spending. So even less money circulated in the

economy. The recession was on.

This is Obama's crisis. And this is where he should look to Lincoln. The 16th President saw the value in "Buy American." Many historians believe Lincoln's higher fees on imports enriched the federal treasury, which was crucial to pay for the war, and promoted American industry, particularly the steel industry, which forged the rails for his transcontinental railroad. Those industries Lincoln promoted made America strong and employed Americans and new immigrants.

Lincoln's railroads accomplished two goals. They created jobs during their construction and connected the



country afterward. Those connections made commerce cheaper and American industry more competitive internationally.

Lincoln's new colleges and homesteads provided opportunity to Americans while making the country agriculturally self-sufficient and scientifically advanced.

Obama has spoken of similar goals

– to improve schools and lower college costs, for example.

That's good as far as it goes. But this country was not built on sub-prime mortgages and credit default swaps. And it cannot sustain itself with an economy based on risky trading of Wall Street paper or consuming on credit. It must be productive. It must make things.

Obama's administration, like Lincoln's, must support industry and manufacturing and the jobs they create.

Doris Kearns Goodwin, author of the Lincoln biography, "Team of Rivals," said after speaking to Obama

about it, "There's no better mentor for a president to look to than Lincoln's leadership . . . Somehow, Lincoln has gotten into his heart and mind, and that can only be for the good."

Working people across America have hope it will be good for them.

By Leo Gerard, USW President □

STEEL VOICE

Kelly Ray Hugunin
Editor

USW Local 1999
218 South Addison
Street
Indianapolis, Indiana
46222

Phone: 317-639-1479
Fax: 317-639-1138
E-Mail:
local1999usw@att.net

STEEL VOICE is an official publication of the United Steelworkers, Local 1999, AFL-CIO, CLC.



Proud member of the
United Steelworkers
Press Association

Submissions from members
are always welcome.

To submit
Mail to: 218 South Addison
St. Indianapolis, IN 46222
Phone: 317-639-1479
Email: hugunin@tds.net



January 20, 2009 ★ Inauguration Day

The Legacy of George W. Bush

**When Bush took
Office, January 2001** **Today**

| | | |
|---|----------------|-----------------|
| Unemployment Rate | 4.2% | 7.2% |
| National Debt | \$5.7 trillion | \$10.6 trillion |
| Manufacturing Jobs¹ | 17.2 million | 13.0 million |
| Americans without Health Care Coverage | 40 million | 46 million |
| Employers Offering Some Type of Insurance Coverage² | 69% | 63% |
| Annual Premium Cost for Family Coverage³ | \$6,230 | \$12,680 |
| Americans in Poverty⁴ | 31.6 million | 37.3 million |
| U.S. Trade Deficit⁵ | \$362 billion | \$688 billion |
| Cost of College⁶ | | |
| Public | \$3,766 | \$6,585 |
| Private | \$17,377 | \$25,143 |

¹ U.S. Dept. of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment, Hours, and Earnings from the Current Employment Statistics Survey, Manufacturing Employment, 2000 & 2008.*

² Kaiser Family Foundation, *Employer Health Benefits, 2008 Annual Survey.*

³ Kaiser Family Foundation, *Employer Health Benefits Surveys.*

⁴ U.S. Census Bureau, most recent available data is for 2007.

⁵ U.S. Census Bureau, data is from a 12-month period of December-November for both timeframes.

⁶ College Board, *Trends in College Pricing*, data is for tuition and fees only.