

STEEL VOICE



UNITED STEELWORKERS LOCAL 1999

Volume 4, Issue 4.

Indianapolis, IN

October 14, 2011

Years of Discontent Trigger American Autumn

By Leo Gerard

To convey the significance of the Occupy Wall Street movement, NBC News anchor Brian Williams this week quoted the 1960's Buffalo Springfield song, For What It's Worth:

"There is something happening here. What it is ain't exactly clear."

Maybe it's unclear what the Occupy Wall Street movement ultimately will accomplish. But what's happening – for the past three weeks in New York and now in hundreds of towns across North America – is a roiling, inspirational, grassroots expression of anger, disgust and revolution.



Occupy Wall Street protesters in New York City

And, frankly, given what's been going on in the United States since the bank bailout, it's amazing that this uprising didn't precede the Arab Spring. The powers-that-be, from the rich and influential to their coin-operated politicians and corporate-owned media, have mocked and belittled and ignored the protesters, the 99 percenters as they call themselves – everyone but the richest one percent. No matter what the critics say, these young people, with righteous outrage and new age communication, have launched the American Autumn.

the spring of 2009, immediately after the Bush administration pushed through Congress the Troubled Asset Relieve Program (TARP), the \$700 billion in taxpayer money spent to prop up banks that had gambled and lost untold trillions. A Bloomberg News investigation later would show that the United States lent, spent or guaranteed as much as \$12.8 trillion to save the banks. Despite that help, the Wall Street recklessness ruined the American economy, throwing tens of millions out of jobs and homes.

This revolt could have started in

⇒ See AUTUMN, Page 3.

My View

**Bruce Reed, Local Union
Representative**



Brothers and Sisters:

We will start the New Year expecting the republicans in the Indiana house to again bring the fight over “right to work” legislation back to the table. The Governor will in all likelihood support their efforts this session to weaken our Unions, lest we forget, he eliminated the Unions for the state workers on his first full day in office. He clearly is supportive of the chamber of commerce and their efforts to turn Indiana and for that matter, the whole country into right to work states. This is not just an Indiana problem as we all know by now; it’s a country wide fight for our Unions. I read an article in the Indy Star that I want to summarize in my article, the article clearly shows the focus of the chamber of commerce and the chamber in no way is supportive of the working middle class in America.

**Indianapolis Star Headline:
{Tuesday September 6, 2011}**

U. S. Chamber offers plan it says will add 6 million jobs!

Putting a business imprint on the debate over jobs, the U. S. Chamber of Commerce issued an open letter to the White House calling for a series of measures designed to increase employment.

If enacted, the Chamber estimates, the steps could encourage corporations to spend much of the \$ 2 trillion that has accumulated on their balance sheets and generate more than 6 million jobs by 2013.

They identified the creating initiatives as:

1. Offering reduced tax rates to corporations on profits earned overseas.
2. Passing pending trade agreements.
3. Increasing oil and gas exploration.
4. Congressional approval of transportation, aviation, and water resources programs.
5. Facilitating tourism by promoting American travel.
6. Providing regulatory relief for industries, including a moratorium on rules that are deemed to have an economic impact.

As you read this summary of the article in the Indy Star please remember this is the same organization that is supporting the “right to work” legislation being forced down our throats in Indiana, Wisconsin, Ohio, and other states. There are no promises, just a couple of words in the article that says “COULD ENCOURAGE” the corporations to come off some of the \$ 2 TRILLION on their balance sheets. Once again they

are talking trickledown economics; let’s not forget how well that worked under George Bush. Trickle-down economics is how we got to where we are now in America, the wealthy and the Corporations got the tax breaks and they kept the money they did not reinvest it, nothing trickled down.

During the last legislative session we as a Local Union had several members use vacation time, earned days off and some just took off a day or two to spend time at the rallies at the State House. I am anticipating some action by our Union and the State AFL-CIO the next session and am hopeful we can turn out our members to support our efforts.

Local Vice President Linda Bennington continues to be on a medical leave from work. I’m sure you join me in wishing her well; she has been off for quite a while and is missed. While she is off the Local Executive Board has ask Robert James a Carrier employee to serve as the acting Vice President and he has agreed. We all welcome Robert and look forward to working with him on the different local issues we have ongoing.

On a closing note we are in the process of endorsing candidates for the different elected positions and offices in Indiana, Indianapolis and the surrounding counties. We have endorsed John Gregg for Governor, Melina Kennedy for Mayor of Indianapolis, Brett Voorhies for City County Council and Doug White for City County Council please take the time to VOTE and support the candidates we endorse because they have pledged to support us. As the Local endorses more candidates we will make the membership aware. □

⇨AUTUMN, From Page 1.

Poverty and hunger skyrocketed in the richest country in the world. As tax revenue fell, states, towns and school districts slashed essential public services and laid off teach-

Whatever the spark, the American Autumn began three weeks ago in New York City's Zuccotti Park, formerly Liberty Square. Late in September, some of the one per-centers sipped Champaign on an

by bankster recklessness by laying off 30,000 workers.

This is a bank that engaged in the habitual, anti-capitalistic Wall Street practice of rewarding poor executive performance by giving

**Occupy Indianapolis Protesters at the Indiana State House**

ers, librarians, firefighters and police officers.

Maybe it just took this long for the middle class to grasp all the horrible effects of the Wall Street gambling and to realize that a government held hostage by country club conservatives bent on cutting public services just made matters worse. Maybe young people looked at unrestrained war spending, Pell Grant slashing and voter disenfranchising and decided they were fed up and not going to take foreclosure of their futures anymore.

upscale restaurant balcony as they looked down on the protesters in the streets below. This week, as protests spread, wealthy risk-takers at the Chicago Board of Trade put signs in the windows of their ritzy offices bragging, "We are the 1 percent." They don't get it.

Nor does Bank of America. Here's a bank bailed out by taxpayers that just announced it would begin imposing a new fee – \$5 a month, \$60 a year – on debit card users. This bank also just announced that it would worsen the recession caused

its CEO Brian T. Moynihan a \$9 million bonus immediately after the institution he runs lost \$2.2 billion in 2010. Moynihan responded to criticism of the \$5 fee by saying customers – and ultimately taxpayers — must line his pockets and that of shareholders, regardless of how badly he runs the bank or how stupidly he gambles with its money. That's because, he asserted, the bank has a "right to make a profit." No matter what.

⇨See OCCUPY, Page 4.

Robert James Appointed VP

Robert James a Carrier employee has been appointed by the Local Union Executive Board to be the acting Vice President while Linda Bennington is on medical leave.

Robert is currently a Union Steward on the night shift at Carrier and served on their 2011 negotiating committee. Robert has been a Steelworker for 13 years and will bring good leadership and organizational skills to the Board.

Linda was in the hall for a few minutes and seems to be in good spirits; we all wish Linda good health and hope all is well with her in the future.

As we see the fight over the “right to work” legislation looming in



the near future, we look forward to Robert's help and opinions in carrying the battle to the legislators. I know all of our members will join

us in welcoming Robert and look to support him as we have supported Linda in the past. □

←OCCUPY, From Page 3.

The media and country club conservatives belittled the protesters. Here's what Herman Cain, a Tea Partier seeking the GOP nomination for president, said:

“Don't blame Wall Street, don't blame the big banks if you don't have a job or you're not rich. Blame yourself!”

He continued:

“It's not a person's fault because they succeeded. It's a person's fault if they failed. And so this is why I don't understand these demonstrations and what it is that they're looking for.”

He called the protesters “anti-cap-

italist,” although it was the banks that sought a socialist bailout from the government when they got themselves in trouble.

Cain didn't blame banksters for unemployment, even though it was Wall Street gambling that took down the economy. He blames the teachers and police officers thrown out of work by local governments that are cash-strapped as a result of the recession — caused by Wall Street recklessness.

Cain and the media keep saying they don't understand what the protesters want. They just don't get it.

A specific list of demands is unnecessary. What the 99 percenters want is obvious. They want the American dream restored. Good public education for everyone. Equity in oppor-

tunity. Shared sacrifice so that the rich pay a tax rate at least equal to that charged the middle class. An end to poverty and unemployment in the richest country in the world.

In the Buffalo Springfield song, For What It's Worth, lyrics talk of 1960's youths criticized for their protests:

“Young people speaking their minds Getting so much resistance from behind.”

This time protesters will get backing. The members of my union, the United Steelworkers, get it. Members of the unions of the AFL-CIO and Change to Win federations get it.

We're here to support the young people of the American Autumn. □

Stand Up And Fight Back

Chuck Jones, President

Some of the members have been inquiring about the Local Vice President Linda Bennington. I want to give you a current update on her status, Linda is pending retirement at this time. The executive board has appointed Robert James as acting Local Vice President. I want to wish Linda good health and prosperity. I will be writing an article in the news letter about Linda in the near future. I also would like to thank Robert on accepting this challenging position and look forward to working with him.

I want to thank the membership for allowing me to represent you at the USW Constitutional Convention. The elected delegates were Vicky Burrus, Robert James, Allen Johnson, Bruce Reed, Peggy Scotten, and Dwight Turner.

Attending the USW Constitutional Convention is a very honorable achievement. You are elected to represent the membership. It should never be taken lightly. Some of those in attendance to the Convention were Nancy Pelosi - Minority Leader of the US House of Representatives, Pat Bauer - Democrat Minority Leader of Indiana House of Representatives, Bernie Sanders - US Senator for Vermont, Ed Schultz - MSNBC Personality, Danny Glover - Labor Activist / Actor. As always the USW Constitutional Convention was very educational and informative.

Today, this country is going through

a major financial and economic crisis. We need labor friendly representatives at the state and national level. We need to vote and encourage others to vote for the candidates that are going to help the working class people of this country. USW Local 1999 has two members that



are currently seeking office for City County Council. Brett Voorhies and Doug White. Please help them in their efforts to be elected.

Over the course of more than a century, the labor movement has played a profound role in shaping how Americans live and work.

Who will rule in the workplace?

On that single question rests all the others: Who's going to get the biggest slice of the economic pie? Who will give the orders? What will conditions in the factory or on the job site be like? How many hours will workers put in, and how much will they be paid? Who will make deci-

sions about the pace of production? Who will have health insurance and other benefits, and who will not?

Some employers have taken the position that managers, as representatives of business owners, should have all the power. They should be able to hire and fire workers at will, for any reason or no reason. They should pay only the wages dictated by supply and demand. They should set the hours, pace and conditions of work for maximum productivity. If workers don't like the terms of their employment, they're free to quit and seek another job elsewhere.

Unions have always had a very different attitude of the workplace, one rooted in the belief that labor is not a mere commodity. Work is not merely something to be bought or sold, unions

argue, it is a critical—perhaps the critical aspect of the human life. As such, workers should have some say in the conditions under which we labor and should be paid enough to allow us to live in comfort and dignity. We should have a safety net in case we are injured or laid off or become sick. And we should not be left eating cat food when we become too old to work anymore. As workers, to organize in our own self-interest, should be a fundamental human right.

NOW IT IS TIME TO STAND UP AND FIGHT BACK !!!!!!! □

DISTRICT 7

Robert James

Hughitt
Turner

Chuck
Jones

John
Dunbar

Agins

David
"10/11/11"

Paul
"10/11/11"

STAND UP AND GO BACK!

Local 1999

Gregg
"10/11/11"

Allen
"10/11/11"

Heckie
"10/11/11"

Wayne "CRASH" Dale

Mark
"10/11/11"

Feel The Union Power

By Peggy Scotten

Greetings Union Brothers and Sisters,

I wanted to take a minute to thank you for sending me to our International Convention in Las Vegas! I also wanted to share with you what I learned at the convention which was AWESOME!!! WOW!! Our union is STRONG!!! I felt the POWER!! I was so impressed with the convention there were 3,000 union members there!! There were 336 resolutions submitted and we voted on 28 resolutions.

The Convention was motivating and empowering!! I know as everyday people we don't realize the importance of being political but with Right To Work (RTW) showing up in our government I know I want to have some power to protect my job, my way of life..

I was so surprised to find out about Steelworkers union organizing in Mexico, Thailand, Brazil, Colombia... we are organizing everywhere!! We met the leaders from these countries . I started to realize when our government let our jobs leave our county STEELWORKERS went to those countries and began organizing them. Organizing them will make the World market a fair trade place, our union won't lay our jobs down they are fighting for them and us. We have won major accomplishments. The Politician's know the power we as a union have and want us out of their way.

The theme of the convention was STAND UP AND FIGHT BACK. In Ohio the republicans were able

to put RTW on the table and got it passed, they said you could overturn the bill with 1 million signatures on a petition and they didn't expect the people could do it but they did (1.3 million!!) And now the workers and steelworkers are marching in Ohio to have that bill overturned!

Ed Shultz is one of the leaders that



will be there to support us. Who is Ed Shultz, he is an organizer for the working people and one of two that were honored for their efforts by our union at the convention, he had a TV show on Monday nights that educates people as to what the government is doing here in America

We listened to speakers Nancy Pelosi the Democratic Leader in the US House of Representatives, Danny Glover the Actor, Ed Schultz commentator; President Obama spoke by video. What they all had to say was Fight Back! Vote!!!! Tell ev-

eryone to vote and let their voice be heard!! Stand Up and Fight Back!!!

We were told about Napoleon Gomez organizing Steel Workers in Mexico. Just like in the early days of the unions here. Gomez was put in prison without charges for two years!! Since being released Gomez was given permission to leave to attend the convention with us but was taken off the plane 10 minutes before the flight took off and told he could not enter our country (his wife and children were allowed). Gomez spoke with us via satellite and told of his struggles trying to protect his family and make life better in his county.

There are a lot of things we take for granted that our Parents and Grandparents fought for. We have to get out there and do what needs to be done for our kids and grandkids!! We don't want to lose Middle Class America!! We can fight the politicians and win! We have Strength when we stand together!! In Las Vegas or downtown Indianapolis being involved with our union has given me opportunities to protect my family. Seeing our union in action has empowered me!! Please take a minute to go to the USW web-site (www.usw.org) and watch some of those videos...your union dollars are not being wasted; they are protecting workers and their rights, jobs and families.

Feel the Power Get Involved!!!

Thank you all!!

Peggy



Postal Unions Take Case To The Public

WASHINGTON (PAI)—With rallies in all but eight of the nation's 435 congressional districts, the nation's postal unions took their case for saving the U.S. Postal Service to the general public on Sept. 27.

Chanting "Save Our Service!" and "Tell the Hill: Pass the bill!" the workers made the case that congressional action can close USPS deficits, and urged the rest of the country to join their crusade.

They got sympathetic hearings, honking horns of agreement and backing from other unions. In just D.C. alone, members of AFSCME, TWU and the Newspaper Guild showed up to carry signs and chant along with members of the Letter Carriers and the Postal Workers. The Mail Handlers/Laborers joined the rallies elsewhere.

The object of the rallies was to convince Congress that USPS should not have to prepay 75 years of future retirees' health care costs between now and 2017 and that it should be

more. Jewett, the branch's safety and health officer, is a sorter now, thanks to two bad knees. But younger workers, with less seniority and protection, could also be let go, he warns.



Postal workers rally on September 27, 2011

allowed to draw on the tens of billions of excess dollars piled up in its pension funds. Those two measures alone would close the budget "deficit" the service faces.

Instead, the Postmaster General wants to "solve" the problem by closing 3,700 post offices, killing Saturday service, letting 100,000 workers go by attrition and convincing Congress to override the USPS union contracts and let him fire 120,000 more.

James Jewett, an NALC Branch 142 member who's been with the Postal Service since 1966, says many targets for retirement or USPS buyouts would be older "modified employees" like him who cannot tote full bags of mail any

more. Jewett, the branch's safety and health officer, is a sorter now, thanks to two bad knees. But younger workers, with less seniority and protection, could also be let go, he warns.

"If we got that money back, we'd be in the black," he said, referring to the overpaid pension cash and the \$5.5 billion USPS must shell out every Sept. 30 for the prepaid retiree health care. Indeed, an NALC fact sheet reports the USPS, despite the worst recession since the Great Depression, turned a \$611 million profit on what it traditionally does – deliver-

ing the mail – in the last four fiscal years.

But that profit turned into red ink because of the yearly health care payments. "We haven't used a dime of taxpayer money," Jewett points out. "If they give us our money back, we'll be the only government agency in the black."

The Democratic Obama administration, in its plan to close the nation's budget deficit, is silent on USPS' schemes to solve the deficit problem, except for a months-long delay in the \$5.5 billion health care payment while Congress solves the problem. A 2006 postal "reform" bill enacted by the GOP-run Congress at the behest of GOP President George W. Bush produced the red ink. Signs at the demos carried the message that Congress created the problem and Congress can solve it. □



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Unit 00 Rexnord

The company has hired an additional twenty employees. The grievance load is fairly low and work seems to be good at this time with overtime available.

Unit 05 Indiana Box

We just negotiated a new four year Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Royal Group, owners of Indiana Box. The agreement was overwhelmingly voted in at the ratification meeting.

The Greenfield plant forms corrugated boxes and has added a new Bobst Die Cutter to the plant that created new jobs.

Unit 07 Carrier

Dear Brothers and Sisters

Starting October 31st we will be down to one shift of production. This will affect approximately 250 employees who will be on layoff. This is expected to last the rest of 2011. Hopefully orders will pick up in January 2012 and we recall our work force that was idled.

One bright spot is our 7127 furnace. Orders remain strong as the product is being phased out. The high demand has kept the department working overtime. However, by the end of 2011 this furnace along with the 7125 ICP furnace will stop pro-

duction.

For employees who go on medical leave you have five business days to get it returned to the Medical Department. Please follow up with the department and make sure everything is correct and in order. If the paperwork is faxed call and make sure they have received it. The number is 317-481-5717.

Open Enrollment is open until October 14th. If you need to change your medical, prescription, dental, or supplemental life insurance, now is the time. Please see your union official for details.

Don't forget to vote November 8th.

In Solidarity
George Gann
Unit 07 President

Unit 09 Quemetco

Brothers and Sisters,

Things are going well for us here at Quemetco. The price of lead has dropped to below 90¢ per pound. This is the lowest it has been since July 2010. Work is very steady with plenty of overtime. The company plans to shut down both our furnaces for rebuild at the end of the month..

The company has been hiring new employees for the Environmental Department (Baghouse). This is in preparation for the new Wet Electrostatic Precipitator (WESP) that will be coming online late this year or early next year. This is a \$20 million dollar investment that will fur-

ther reduce our emissions from the plant.

We just had a third step meeting last week. We had a job bidding and a discipline grievance that were heard. We settled a scheduling grievance that was appealed to arbitration. This resulted in two days back pay being paid to the grievant. We currently are awaiting a decision from the arbitrator on another job bidding grievance. The hearing for that arbitration was held on July 27.

Several members of Local 1999 including myself were at the statehouse on October 6 for the public testimony on "Right to Work". There were around 500 activists there to voice their opposition to this legislation. Most of them were Steelworkers with UFCW, IBEW, Laborers, UAW, and Teamsters as well as others.

The "Right to Work" legislation will be one of the first issues our state legislators will take up when they start their next session in January. Their plan is to push it through quickly so that we will not have time to mount any kind of opposition to it in the form of protests. It is important that you contact your representatives in the months ahead to tell them to oppose "Right to Work" because it will only hurt workers in Indiana.

I am very encouraged to see the Occupy Wall Street protests. I believe that people are finally fed up with the way corporations are controlling the government. Most of our congressmen are bought and paid for by these corporations. I don't see Wall Street or the big banks suffering like the rest of America from the recession that they created.

I would like to encourage everyone who lives in Indianapolis to support Melina Kennedy for Mayor on November 8. And for those living in City-County Council District 6 please support our Brother Steelworker Brett Voorhies.

In Solidarity,
Kelly Ray Hugunin
Unit 09 President

Unit 10 Sumco

We have just completed an election for three of the spots on our negotiating committee. Our Collective Bargaining Agreement expires in December. We began preparing for negotiations in September and will be ready when negotiations start. Our grievance load is very light and the company has hired a few new employees.

Unit 13 Diamond Chain

Brothers and Sisters,

What does it mean to be a Union member? Have you ever stopped and thought about what it would be like without a Union at Diamond Chain? I found some interesting statistics while doing some research.

* There are 22 states that have adopted the union busting "right to work" laws. These laws make it harder to organize a union and make it easier to get rid of an existing one.
* Only 14% of nonunion workers in the United States have a guaranteed pension. Whereas 68 % of union workers have a guaranteed pension.

* 97% of union workers have health insurance benefits. Only 85% of nonunion workers have those benefits.

* Union workers wages are approximately 30% higher than nonunion wages based on national statistics.

* Workplace fatalities are 50% higher in nonunion shops.

Workers are more productive if they have a say so to improving their jobs. Being in a Union has improved the quality of life for me and my family since becoming a member of the United Steelworkers in 1998. It has given me a purpose, a reason to show up to work. I have met a lot of interesting people since becoming active in my union. I have formed some very good friendships through the programs that I have taken part in. I also think it has made me a better person. I recommend to all members to ask any of the union reps in the building about some of the schools that you can go to.

As I am writing this letter, I am getting ready to leave for Linden Hall in Pittsburgh, PA for a leadership training conference. I was given the opportunity by our staff rep and district director to attend this special scholarship program. It is a 4 year program, meaning I will attend for another week per year for the next 3 years after this one. The opportunities that are out there are almost endless. All you need to do is take a little interest, show some support and ask one of our representatives in the plant, what can I do to become active in my Union?

Working in a nonunion facility is not something that I want to do. But, unfortunately, that is what is coming down the pipe if we don't stand up against this miss named legislation.

It doesn't give you any "rights" and provides no "work" as the name implies. Here are some more statistics. Indiana has approximately 279,000 union members. That equates to about 10.9% of the total workforce in the state. In 1989, when they started tracking these numbers, there was about 21% of Indiana's workforce that were union. The unemployment rate was only about 5% as well. In 2000, about 15.4% of the workforce was union. It has steadily gone down over the last 20 years. Also, in 2010, CEO pay went up 23%. What happened to our pay? That's right, it went down. Why is that? Because too many companies put the profit before the people. They say the economy is rebounding but companies are not hiring like they should be, because it eats into the profits. This country was built on opportunity and equality. That is how we got great! If we are going to turn it around, we are going to have to start focusing on those types of values.

I am proud to be a union member. I am proud to say that I am a Steelworker. I encourage everyone to take an active part in supporting your union. I am glad that I did, and I am sure you will be too.

In Solidarity,
Mike Hensley
Unit 13 President

Unit 15 Quaker (Pepsico)

Quaker makes and bottles Gatorade. The plant is starting up a new cold

⇒ See QUAKER, Page 12.

⇨QUAKER, From Page 11.

fill line; this will create about seven new jobs at the plant. The company is currently building additional warehouse space for the line as well. The grievance load is average and there is quite a bit of overtime being worked.

Unit 17 Mid America Extrusion

Brothers and Sisters,

Business is steady here at Mid America Extrusions. We shipped 654,869 pounds of aluminum in July and 688,867 pounds in August. We have hired one person.

We have one grievance that was settled at the second step and we also have one grievance going to the third step. I would like to remind everybody to get out and vote.

In Solidarity,
Howard W. Davis
Unit 17 President

Unit 21 Colors

The company specializes in anodizing aluminum "coloring". We recently had two arbitrations dealing with discharges, the first in several years. The company employs about 28 workers.

Unit 27 Air System Components

The grievance load is light, we had a change in the HR department and most issues are being resolved or worked out. The company is hiring a few new employees from time to time.

Unit 28 Vertellus

The company makes and ships many different types of chemicals, much of which is in food products. There is overtime available in all of the departments.

Unit 31 BP Products

The oil conference is coming up and the master negotiations will be in 2012. The plant does not have any current grievances filed.

Unit 32 Cenveo

We were recently bought out by a company called Cenveo, we were Meadwestvaco. We are covered by an agreement that covers multiple locations and are working through a couple of issues due to the buyout.



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11 Facts You Need To Know About The Nation's Biggest Banks

By Pat Garofalo

Economic Policy Editor, Center for American Progress Action Fund, ThinkProgress.org

The Occupy Wall Street protests that began in New York City more than three weeks ago have now spread across the country. The choice of Wall Street as the focal point for the protests — as even Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke said — makes sense due to the big bank malfeasance that led to the Great Recession.

While the Dodd-Frank financial reform law did a lot to ensure that a repeat of the 2008 financial crisis won't occur — through regulation of derivatives, a new consumer protection agency, and new powers for the government to dismantle failing banks — the biggest banks still have a firm grip on the financial system, even more so than before the 2008 financial crisis. Here are eleven facts that you need to know about the nation's biggest banks:

– **Bank profits are highest since before the recession...:** According to the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp., bank profits in the first quarter of this year were “the best for the industry since the \$36.8 billion earned in the second quarter of 2007.” JP Morgan Chase is currently pulling in record profits.

– **...even as the banks plan thousands of layoffs:** Banks, including Bank of America, Barclays, Goldman Sachs, and Credit Suisse, are planning to lay off tens of thousands of workers.

– **Banks make nearly one-third of total corporate profits:** The financial sector accounts for about 30 percent of total corporate profits, which is actually down from before the financial crisis, when they made closer to 40 percent.

– **Since 2008, the biggest banks have gotten bigger:** Due to the failure of small competitors and mergers facilitated during the 2008 crisis, the nation's biggest banks — including Bank of America, JP Morgan Chase, and Wells Fargo — are now bigger than they were pre-recession. Pre-crisis, the four biggest banks held 32 percent of total deposits; now they hold nearly 40 percent.

– **The four biggest banks issue 50 percent of mortgages and 66 percent of credit cards:** Bank of America, JP Morgan Chase, Wells Fargo and Citigroup issue one out of every two mortgages and nearly two out of every three credit cards in America.

– **The 10 biggest banks hold 60 percent of bank assets:** In the 1980's, the 10 biggest banks controlled 22 percent of total bank assets. Today, they control 60 percent.

– **The six biggest banks hold assets equal to 63 percent of the country's GDP:** In 1995, the six biggest banks in the country held assets equal to about 17 percent of the country's Gross Domestic Product. Now their assets equal 63 per-

cent of GDP.

– **The five biggest banks hold 95 percent of derivatives:** Nearly the entire market in derivatives — the credit instruments that helped blow up some of the nation's biggest banks as well as mega-insurer AIG — is dominated by just five firms: JP Morgan Chase, Goldman Sachs, Bank of America, Citibank, and Wells Fargo.

– **Banks cost households nearly \$20 trillion in wealth:** Almost \$20 trillion in wealth was destroyed by the Great Recession, and total family wealth is still down “\$12.8 trillion (in 2011 dollars) from June 2007 — its last peak.”

– **Big banks don't lend to small businesses:** The New Rules Project notes that the country's 20 biggest banks “devote only 18 percent of their commercial loan portfolios to small business.”

– **Big banks paid 5,000 bonuses of at least \$1 million in 2008:** According to the New York Attorney General's office, “nine of the financial firms that were among the largest recipients of federal bailout money paid about 5,000 of their traders and bankers bonuses of more than \$1 million apiece for 2008.”

In the last few decades, regulations on the biggest banks have been systematically eliminated, while those

⇒ See BANKS, Page 17.

Boeing Documents Reveal Firm Made Uneconomic Move To S.C. To Punish Union

By Mark Gruenberg

SEATTLE (PAI)—Internal Boeing Co. documents, including board meeting minutes and PowerPoint presentations for top executives reveal the giant aircraft manufacturer deliberately made an uneconomic move to South Carolina strictly to punish its union, the Machinists.

The documents, obtained by IAM District Lodge 751, which represents 26,000 Boeing workers in the Puget Sound and the Pacific Northwest, were released at a Sept. 23 press conference during the International Labor Communications Association convention in Seattle.

They buttress the federal labor law-breaking complaint against Boeing – a complaint based on public statements by the company CEO Jim Albaugh and other officers. NLRB charges Boeing opened its second 787 Dreamliner production line in anti-union South Carolina strictly to punish IAM for exercising its legal rights to protect its members, notably including its right to strike.

But even before Albaugh's public statements that Boeing moved production to North Charleston, S.C., because of its rocky relations with IAM – including company-forced strikes – the internal documents show union punishment as an objective.

The fourth item in "rationale" for the Boeing board's Oct. 19, 2009 decision to move reads: "Creates a non-union non-competitive labor choice" while it "lowers labor costs

and avoids current hostage situation." That proves IAM's point, Kelliher said.

"When they (Boeing) use anti-union bias to decide who gets work, that's against the law, and has been for 76 years," she stated.

The Boeing case has landed before a National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) administrative law judge after the board's acting general counsel filed a complaint several months ago charging the profitable aircraft maker moved to the Palmetto State strictly to retaliate against IAM. The case is in early hearings and motions.

Meanwhile, Boeing – which Kelliher says realizes it has a legally weak case – mounted a public relations/political offensive to force Congress to strip the NLRB of any power to prosecute or punish any firm, not just Boeing, that moves strictly to break its workers' rights. Under labor law, that's illegal.

The firm convinced the ruling House GOP to pass that legislation by a party-line vote last month. The Democratic-run Senate Appropriations Committee rejected it on Sept. 22 on a 14-14 tie.

The Boeing documents make clear the firm actually earns less money by producing the Dreamliner in North Charleston than it would have by producing it in present unionized plants in Washington state.

"Boeing proprietary" documents include other damning statements about creating the second Dreamliner line in Charleston. Listed among the "pro's" of that move are "creates a competitive labor choice and a counterbalance to Union leverage."

Listed among the "con's" of opening the second line in North Charleston, are "cost \$1.5B in cash and reduces earnings on 1/3 of backlog" of orders for the Dreamliner. Also among the factors against North Charleston were supply chain complexity, inexperienced management and workforce and even "potential work-to-rule issues, strike and tanker support."

The list for producing the Dreamliner at two assembly lines, not just one, in Everett, Wash., contained many more "pro" factors: An "experienced workforce on the 787," a dedicated production line for the plane's successor model, "lowest cost of implementation, centralized management focus" and a "simplified supply chain."

"Con's" at Everett were "perpetuate an unbalanced relationship with IAM and out-of-market economics, South Carolina delegation relationship" and "no diversification of final assembly and delivery capability."

Put that all together, the Boeing unionists said, and the only real reason Boeing moved Dreamliner pro-

⇒ See BOEING, Page 17.

Unionists Lobby VS. Trade Pacts

By Mark Gruenberg

READING, Pa. (PAI)—When Steelworker Vonie Long of Coatsville, Pa., wants to send his area's two GOP congressmen a message about the harm so-called "free trade" pacts do to workers, he points to Reading – specifically to the vacant lots where homes used to stand and the weed-overgrown parking areas of shuttered factories.



That's the past impact of trade treaties, he tells Reps. Joe Pitts and Jim Gerlach.

Whether that message from Long, a member of Steelworkers Local 1165, fellow Pennsylvania Steelworker Bill Herbert of Local 5652, or Edison Fraser of Machinists Local Lodge 846 in Baltimore and Larry Young of Machinists District Lodge 74 in Norfolk, Va., will get through to their representatives will be tested this month.

That's because the four workers, and hundreds of other unionists, fanned out on Capitol Hill Oct. 4 to lobby lawmakers against so-called U.S. "free trade" pacts with South Korea, Panama and Colombia. And tens of thousands of other union members are jamming phone lines and sending e-mails to Congress, protesting the pacts.

Unions, led by Steelworkers President Leo Gerard and Machinists President Tom Buffenbarger, launched their ultimate effort against the pacts after Democratic President Barack Obama sent legislation implementing them to Capitol Hill the day before. The pacts themselves will not come up this month, but those laws will.

Under trade law, solons can't change Obama's legislation, but can only vote the bills up or down, by simple majorities. The pacts and the legislation lack worker rights in their texts. They also do little to protect U.S. workers against foreign imports, Gerard and Buffenbarger told a sun-splashed press conference before lobbying began Oct. 4.

"Almost 20 years ago, we stood on this spot to urge Congress to stop NAFTA," the job-destroying U.S.-Canada-Mexico "free trade" pact that's the model for the Korean, Colombian and Panamanian pacts, Buffenbarger said. "We warned it would ruin communities and drive the nation's economy into the abyss – and look what happened."

But lawmakers then "listened to the Alice in Wonderland tales of the CEO's" promising jobs and trade surpluses, and passed NAFTA, he said. Now, they're poised to repeat that performance, unless labor stops them.

It has good reason to do so, Gerard added, and not just because the Korean pact alone would cost 159,000 U.S. workers their jobs. The Panama pact would reward a nation that's a haven for tax evasion, and Colombia has had more assassina-

tions of unionists campaigning for their rights – a total approaching 2,600 over the last 25 years – than the rest of the world combined.

"If 51 CEO's were murdered in Colombia last year" – the number of unionists killed – "do you think we'd be discussing this pact today?" Gerard asked. Another 22 have been murdered so far this year. "I'm an organizer and if I go to Colombia, I could be killed," adds Baltimore's Fraser, who's also his lodge's president.

"I'd tell" Missouri GOP Sen. Roy Blunt "to 'open up your eyes,'" says Bill Rudy of IAM District Lodge 142 in Kansas City. "Leo said it's hard to understand how trade unionists can be murdered" in Colombia "and the government there can stand idly by."

Still, the unionists face uphill odds in battling against the three trade pacts and the implementing legislation. The GOP is solidly behind them and Obama, echoing the corporate line that exports under the pacts create jobs, pushes them, too. Some Democrats support the pacts as well. A move to insert labor rights in the Colombian bill lost 24-12 in the GOP-run House Ways and Means Committee on Oct. 5.

Obama, the GOP and business are a powerful combination to oppose. Unionists have another explanation for why they face such odds, despite the job destruction of NAFTA and the jobs-destroying forecast of the

⇒ See **TRADE**, Page 17.

Overtime Case In Washington State Shows Courts Importance For Workers

By Mark Gruenberg

OLYMPIA, Wash. (PAI)—Social workers toil long hours, seeing clients, handling cases, mediating family disputes, sometimes going to court to rescue kids. And in Washington state, they've been working overtime doing that – and not getting paid for it.

That's not right, the U.S. Labor Department (DOL) says.

In a case that shows DOL is sternly eyeing how states treat their workers in an era of budget cuts, the feds sued the Washington Department of Social and Health Services for refusing to pay overtime to social workers in its Children's Administration.

The state argued its requirements for those jobs are high enough that all workers meet the law's exemption from overtime for "learned professionals." A lower federal court agreed. The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals didn't. The judges ruled in August that workers did not take "a prolonged course of specialized intellectual instruction" – as doctors do, for example – to be exempt from overtime under department regulations.

"For the 'learned professional' exemption to apply, the knowledge required to perform the duties of a position must come from advanced specialized intellectual instruction rather than practical experience," the appellate judges said.

Exemptions from overtime pay "are

construed narrowly against employers and are to be withheld except as to persons plainly and unmistakably within their terms and spirit, and the employer has the burden of showing a particular exemption applies," the judges added. The state agency

DOL said its "first responder" exception shows they're not.

The U.S. Supreme Court accepted no obvious labor cases for the first months of its new term, so workers again find their fates in the hands



United States Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco, California

failed that test, so it should pay the overtime.

The Washington state social workers aren't the only group whom courts ruled eligible for overtime. On Aug. 5, the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Manhattan declared 4,000 New York City police sergeants, who legally fought for overtime for a decade, can get it. The city argued the sergeants are supervisors, ineligible for overtime.

of lower courts nationwide, as the social workers and sergeants did in winning overtime pay. Other notable cases:

Must the Labor Department prove workers' asbestos exposure breaks federal safety limits case-by-case to punish a company? The 3rd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Philadelphia said "no." In a case involv-

⇒ See COURTS, Page 17.

⇌COURTS, From Page 16.

ing replacing an old asbestos-laced pipe at Conoco's Baytown refinery in Linden, N.J., the judges said on Aug. 16 DOL only has to prove there could be too much exposure to the cancer-causing substance for any company to break the law. It restored Conoco's violations to the "serious" category, and restored the fine for nine violations to \$16,875. The Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission wanted DOL to prove asbestos violations case-by-case, and company-by-company. It had cut Conoco's fine to \$3,150.

Can Los Angeles prevent new owners of large groceries from summarily firing all their workers when they take over? In 2005, the L.A. City Council passed an ordinance that said "yes." The California Grocers Association challenged it. On July 18, the California Court of Appeals backed the city – and the workers' right to keep their jobs. The grocers argued the ordinance violated state authority over food safety and federal labor law, too. The California court threw both of those arguments out.

⇌BOEING, From Page 14.

duction to North Charleston was to retaliate against IAM. "The documents show they were so eager to punish the union that they would pick the option" for producing the plane "with the highest risk," just "to accomplish that," Kelliher said. □

L.A.'s law "regulates, for certain grocery stores during ownership transitions, how a new owner may select its workforce. It does not speak to how employees must conduct themselves to ensure sanitation, how food should be handled or transported, how grocery stores should be designed or cleaned, or any of the various other topics for which the Retail Food Code sets out exclusive state standards," the judges said. The L.A. ordinance "regulates employment, not food safety," they concluded.

Hotel construction aided by taxpayer subsidies is public construction, subject to prevailing wage laws. This San Diego case is similar to a federal Labor Department rule that covers thousands of construction workers nationwide. Many new economic developments are built with public subsidies, but construction is in the hands of private developers and the completed projects are turned over to private companies.

Hensel Phelps Construction Co. challenged the city's prevailing wage rule when it won the right

⇌TRADE, From Page 15.

Korean pact and the others: Money.

"If you look at their PAC (campaign finance) dollars – from Monsanto, American Airlines and others – it's called special interests," Rudy said. Herbert agreed.

"U.S. corporations are taking our jobs here and going there to maximize their profits. And then they put people out of work here and wonder why we have economic destruction?" Herbert added. □

to build a new hotel in the Port of San Diego. The city's port authority, joined by the Carpenters and the state Building Trades Council, argued that because the port subsidized the construction via \$26.5 million in tax forgiveness, the contractor must pay prevailing wages. "Construction done under contract that was paid for whole or in part out of public funds constituted a public work covered by the prevailing wage law," the California Court of Appeals said in August.

Workers must get paid for the time they spend putting on protective gear, or taking it off. The Supreme Court said so several years ago, but Tyson Foods didn't believe that. It didn't pay, until the United Food and Commercial Workers sued. In a Sept. 19 settlement in U.S. District Court in Georgia, Tyson agreed to pay \$32 million in back wages to 17,000 Tyson poultry workers in 41 plants in 12 states for time involved with the protective gear. That's not chicken feed. "Every American deserves to get paid for the work they do," said UFCW President Joe Hansen. "We're changing the way meatpackers do business and making them pay thousands of workers correctly." □

⇌BANKS, From Page 13.

banks engineered more and more ways to both rip off customers and turn ever-more complex trading instruments into ever-higher profits. It makes perfect sense, then, that a movement calling for an economy that works for everyone would center its efforts on an industry that exemplifies the opposite. □

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



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