

Proceedings and Index of the 69th Annual Convention



Communications Workers of America

Metro Toronto Convention Center

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

July 16-17, 2007

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MONDAY MORNING SESSION

July 16, 2007

The 69th Annual Convention of the Communications Workers of America, AFL-CIO, CLC, meeting at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, July 16-17, 2007, convened at 9:00 a.m., Temporary Co-Chair Lise Lareau, President, CWA Local 30213, presiding.

TEMPORARY CO-CHAIR LISE LAREAU (CWA Local 30213): Okay, everybody, this is your 30-second warning. If you could get into the hall and sit down, we will begin in 30 seconds.

. . . The delegates took their seats . . .

TEMPORARY CO-CHAIR LAREAU: Hello, everybody. We're about to get going. Bonjour. Buenas Dias. Welcome to Toronto. Bienvenue tout le monde. It's great to see you. Come on in and take your seats. There is a lot of business to do today.

First, a little housekeeping while you are sitting down. Please turn off your cell phones or put them on vibrate. Do something that won't make them ring.

I am Lise Lareau, and I am President of the Host Local, the Canadian Media Guild, Local 30213. (Applause) Thank you.

It's nice to see you all again-- this time from up here, which is a lot better, I might say. I am proud to stand before you as a Temporary Co-Chair of this Convention.

As some of you may know, my Local represents about 6,000 media workers across Canada. Nearly half of them work right across the street from where you are right now at the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. This Convention probably has not been located so close to so many of its members at one time. So if you run into any CBC employees-- they are your colleagues, all of them-- out in the streets, please say hello. They are fellow CWA members.

Now, I have the great pleasure to introduce you to the Mayor of my home city. There are three things you need to know about David Miller. He has been Mayor for nearly four years, and for awhile there was a lot of pressure in our city, just like in a lot of other North American cities, to contract out city services. You probably know the story in your own hometowns. Well, David Miller shut that talk down here in Toronto. He shut down the issue of contracting out city work. (Applause)

And he continues to have a respectful relationship with the thousands of municipal employees here.

Two, you may recall that two conventions ago I was here and I was speaking to you about the lockout at the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, much of which took place in that park where we had our barbecue yesterday. While members of my local were locked out for nearly eight weeks the summer and fall of 2005, David Miller refused to be interviewed by the management team that were doing our work during that period. (Applause)

And more than that, he was one of the first high profile guests on the morning radio show that our locked out workers did from a campus radio station, the Campus Lockout Show. He was one of the first big guests on that show, and that gave me a tremendous, tremendous boost. I know it had an impact on all our members, and that's something you just never forget.

Three, when David Miller was running for Mayor in 2003, he marched in the Labour Day Parade, which he's done every year since then, by the way. That in itself is pretty good. But he also declared at that Labour Day Parade that every day should be labour day. (Applause) That's more than pretty good, and we couldn't agree more.

So I ask you to welcome a man who has always shown a true commitment to our values and respect for working people in this city, David Miller, the Mayor of Toronto. (Prolonged applause)

HONORABLE DAVID MILLER (Mayor of Toronto): Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you. I came here to welcome you, but it feels like you are welcoming me to my own city, so thank you very, very much.

Welcome to Toronto. Bienvenue a Toronto, buenas dias, Compadres. Sisters and brothers, it's my very great pleasure to welcome the Communications Workers of America to the City of Toronto, and I wish you much success in your deliberations over the next two days. We are very proud to be a city that supports the rights of working people to organize and that works cooperatively and positively with the labor movement to ensure the success of all families in the City of Toronto. (Applause)

Lise mentioned my leaflet on Labour Day 2003, and I just want to tell a brief story about that because I think it speaks to the values of the people of Toronto and why the people of Toronto are proud to support labor and proud to welcome your Convention here. My leaflet said, "Every day is Labour Day." And every day from Labour Day to the election, which was in November, one of my opponents waved the leaflet around and said, "See, you can't elect David Miller," and every single time he did that, I went up in the polls. (Applause)

I think that speaks to the values of Toronto and Torontonians. People understand here that when the rights of working people to organize are protected, their rights are protected, and they understand here that when labour leads the way in ensuring that people can work with dignity and respect and wages that allow their families to live and work in dignity, that their rights are protected as well, which is what the labour movement has always been about to me.

I do want to acknowledge that I understand the Communications Workers of America represent many, many sectors. I saw the nurses organizing outside. In Toronto, your members are predominantly in the media and communications. We are very proud of that sector of the City of Toronto. We are the national headquarters for the media-- the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Global, CTV, Rodgers, TSN, Sportsnet, *The Post, The Star, The Sun*, and radio stations that are numerous galore. And it's very important to our city that we are a home of creativity for the media outlets, because we are a city that welcomes newcomers from around the world. More than 52 percent of Torontonians, including myself, were not born in this country.

It's a great strength of our city. And the labor movement has been extremely supportive of ensuring that newcomers in this city and people from diverse backgrounds are truly welcomed in Toronto, and that is another value that I share with labor and I know I share with all of you. (Applause)

We are proud of our city in Toronto. Not only are we a welcoming city for newcomers, not only are we a city that thrives on its diversity and supports the right of working people to organize, we are a livable, safe, vibrant, beautiful, waterfront city, and I urge you to take the time between your deliberations to enjoy the many sights of Toronto.

Our diversity has produced restaurants from literally every country in the world. We have a wonderful waterfront within walking distance from this Convention Center and a brand new park, HCO Park. You will see it with the yellow beach umbrellas right down at the waterfront here. And if you have the time, go to the Island of Toronto and you will see a wonderful view of Toronto.

Thank you very much from all of my colleagues on the City Council and the people of Toronto for honoring us with your presence. I wish you successful deliberations today and tomorrow. In Toronto, certainly every day truly is Labour Day.

Thank you very much, and have a great Convention.

. . . The delegates arose and applauded.

TEMPORARY CO-CHAIR LAREAU: Thank you, Mayor Miller.

What he didn't mention, and I will, is that Mayor Miller has to rush to the City Council right now where, if you have been listening to the news in this city, there is a big debate on a tax increase throughout the day, and a vote tonight. So perhaps the Mayor would like to hide out with us here. (Laughter)

Anyway, thanks again, Mayor Miller, for taking the time out of a big day at the Council to be with us. (Applause)

Now, for our invocation this morning I am honored to present Reverend James Evans, a minister of the United Church of Canada. He has a lot in common with us. He is in the middle of an organizing drive, the first in North America, to have clergy join a union. (Applause and Cheers) He is working together with the Canadian Auto Workers on this. We won't hold that against him. (Laughter)

Following Reverend Evans' invocation, please remain standing for the presentation of the Colors and the singing of the national anthems.

Now please join me in welcoming Reverend Evans. (Applause)

REVEREND JAMES EVANS (Pastor, United Church of Canada): Actually, before you rise, could I just ask you to stay seated for a moment because I would like to just take this opportunity to say a couple of words.

First of all, my partner Karen and I are honored to be with you as you begin your important work. As members of the organizing team for what will be North America's first union for clergy, we wholeheartedly support the vital efforts of social trade unions, and especially the Communications Workers of America.

Since launching our union drive for United Church of Canada ministers with the support of the Canadian Auto Workers Union, we have witnessed firsthand the necessity for workers to come together collectively.

We decided to organize after many clergy throughout Canada entrusted us with their experiences of being abused on the job by congregational members and the church hierarchy. Abuses against clergy that continue to happen today include stalking, sexual harassment, physical assault, death threats, breaking and entering into the minister's home, slander, libel, unfair discipline, dismissal and defrocking without cause. Ministers' families are also subjected to abuse.

Our clergy serve in fear. Clergy depression levels are double the national average. Clergy are the highest group of workers to access the Employee Assistance Program. Subjected to unfair treatment, clergy are going on sick leave, taking early retirement, or walking away from the church forever. The people in power positions in our church know these things, yet they have done nothing constructive to ensure safety and justice for all of its employees.

If you think this is an isolated problem for the United Church of Canada, think again. Clergy from major denominations in North America have offered their support and are praying for us to set the precedent. They have asked us to help them form unions. A clergyperson in the United States recently sent us a letter stating that as soon as our union is certified, the minister will be applying to emigrate to Canada. Our American brothers and sisters tell us things are as bad in their religious institutions as they are in ours. And this has to stop.

For solutions, we look to unions. Our brothers and sisters in the United Kingdom, who formed a union for Clergy and Faith Workers in 1994, have proven that unions can help stop the abuse and restore dignity to clergy. (Applause)

The Canadian Auto Workers have shown us what can be achieved when people openly and authentically support one another for the common good of all. Our responsible social trade unions exemplify "ethics in action." They are the social conscience of our time and by example have much to teach to our society and, yes, to our religious institutions. We believe that no matter how almighty your boss may be, you are better off

with a union. (Applause)

Scripture proclaims the wisdom of union. In Psalm 133 we hear, "Behold how good and pleasant it is when brothers and sisters dwell in unity." St. Paul wrote often of the necessity of union. In I Corinthians, for instance, he wrote "I appeal to you brothers and sisters. . .that all of you agree and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and same judgment."

In the Gospel of Luke, Chapter 10, Jesus, in appointing the Apostles to proclaim the Kingdom of God, sent the seventy-two on ahead in twos to do their work of ministry," an appointment that shows us that Jesus believed in the importance of working in solidarity with each other.

And so with the knowledge that God's love is for all who labor, we pray this day for the Spirit of God to be with us as we come together in this time of work and information-sharing and decision-making.

Please stand. Let us pray.

O God of all people and places, we pray for the leadership and membership of the CWA, its delegates and guests. May Your wisdom be with us as we gather for this Convention.

God, we pray for all who labor to provide for themselves, their families and their communities. We pray for all who gain from employment, and we pray that our gain be used responsibly. We pray for those who feel demeaned or unsafe in their work. We pray for all who, no matter how hard they work, have too little to live on.

We pray for those who are unable to work. We pray for all who are unemployed or underemployed. We pray for those who have been removed from their work, laid off, suspended or fired. We pray for those who cannot work because of workplace injuries or health challenges. We pray for those who have retired.

God, may Your spirit of justice move us to continue to be agents of positive change in a world where many people are taken advantage of by the few in power. We pray for all in charge of workers, the company owners, CEOs, managers and supervisors. May they be guided to protect the welfare of workers and share the products of labor equitably.

We pray for those just starting employment, those who are seeking meaningful work in their lives, may they retain their excitement and may they know good work at fair compensation.

God, You have bound us together in this life. Give us grace to understand how our lives depend upon the courage, industry, honesty, and integrity of all who work. May we work in solidarity with each other, and may we support our brothers and sisters in our workplaces, in our communities and throughout the world to bring dignity, respect, wholeness, fairness and justice, to our workplaces and to our society.

As we pray, we are inspired by the prophets who spoke out for the least of these. May we find inspiration in the example of Jesus Christ, the carpenter, teacher, healer, and advocate for social justice.

May we be led by the Spirit that proclaims we do not exist alone; that we are in union with our brothers and sisters, and in our union there is hope for a better world. Amen.

And now be with us, God, as we work through this day and throughout this important Convention. Give us wisdom, keep us vigilant, and show us ways to be together in union, to build a world that ensures safety, justice and dignity for all. Amen.

Please be seated. (Applause)

President Larry, I have one brief thing. On behalf of the CAW and the clergy union organizing team, Karen and I would like to present you with this token of solidarity. (Presentation-Applause)

TEMPORARY CO-CHAIR LAREAU: Thank you, Reverend Evans.

Delegates and guests, please stand up again and remain standing as we prepare for the presentation of the Colors and the singing of the national anthems of the United States, Puerto Rico and Canada.

I am very pleased to introduce the members of Scout Troop 236 of Toronto, who will present our Colors this morning. They are part of the Scouting movement in Canada which, it is important to note, has a very strong human rights policy. Our Scouts here have banned all forms of discrimination, whether among volunteers, leaders or members. They ban discrimination based on gender, race, culture, religious belief, sexual orientation or economic circumstance. We are proud to have them with us today and we are proud to share their belief in diversity and tolerance.

They will be joined by the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada to present the Colors. Jeanette Spoor, Vice President of the Retired Members' Council of CWA Local 1103, will sing the National Anthem of the United States. Luis Quintana, Vice President of TNG-CWA Local 33225, will sing the National Anthem of Puerto Rico. Renee Moreau, a member of my own local, the Canadian Media Guild, will sing the National Anthem of Canada.

At the end, please remain standing until the Scouts and Queen's Own Rifles exit the hall with the Colors.

. . . The Colors were posted, led by the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada and the Scouts of Canada, followed by the singing of the National Anthems of the United States, Puerto Rico and Canada . . . (Applause)

TEMPORARY CO-CHAIR LAREAU: Thank you to all our singers, the Scouts, and the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada. Please give these participants another round of applause before we move on. (Applause and cheers)

Now I am pleased to introduce my union brother from across the border, John Klein, who joins me in serving as Temporary Co-Chair of our Convention. John is President of Local 1168, in Buffalo, New York. (Applause)

TEMPORARY CO-CHAIR JOHN KLEIN (Local 1168): Thank you, Lise. Good morning. I would like to extend a big welcome to all the delegates and guests on behalf of the 4,300 members of my local, Local 1168, and the more than 10,000 CWA members in Western New York. And on behalf of the members and officers of District 1, along with my Canadian Media Guild brothers and sisters, we are all very proud to welcome you to our great union's 69th Annual Convention. (Applause)

I am pleased now to present our next speaker, Ken Georgetti, the President of the Canadian Labour Congress. From the leadership of his Steelworkers Local in his hometown of Trail, in British Columbia, through the presidency of the Canadian Labour Congress, Ken Georgetti has redefined political activism by focusing on reclaiming democratic power for the working families.

Since his first election to the CLC in 1999 as President, the Canadian Labour Movement has made great gains in the struggle to strengthen universal health care, the protection of wages and pensions, and the participation of young workers in unions.

Listen to Ken Georgetti and you will understand why the Canadian Labour Congress and the United States Labor Movement have always been close.

Please join me in welcoming Ken Georgetti. (Applause)

KENNETH V. GEORGETTI (President, Canadian Labour Congress): Thank you. Thank you very much, Brother Klein, for that kind introduction. Let me start by bringing to you greetings on behalf of the officers and the staff of our Canadian Labour Congress and, indeed, on behalf of all unionized workers in Canada.

I would like to thank you for this kind invitation to be with you, and I am happy to be here. I am with

valuable friends and colleagues, like your President, Larry Cohen, who is a remarkable activist and leader. You should be so proud of the work he does on your behalf. (Applause)

It is an honor to be with you because the Communications Workers of America, your union, is such an influential union. In Canada, your union represents a large number of the cultural icons, news-makers and opinion leaders that help shape the identity of this vast and great nation of ours-- in both official languages as well. Your leader, Arnold Amber, sits on our Council. He plays a vital role in providing us time and time again dynamic leadership and involvement.

You know, so much of what we value is brought to us by the women and men who work for wages and are members of this union, and for that our Congress thanks you.

I want to tell you and your Frankophone brothers and sisters that it's really a pleasure for me to be here with you because I do like union Conventions. Ça me fait plaisir d'être avec vous parce que. . . un congrès syndical est toujours un grand moment de décision démocratique. Un moment de décision par des travailleurs et des travailleuses qui se mettent au service de leurs collègues de travail et de leurs familles.

Yes, a union Convention is always a great moment of democracy. We come to convention to advance the values and the interests of the sisters and brothers in our workplaces. We come to conventions though not with abstractions, but with a mandate from people we know well. It is with this democratic grounding that I want to give you a quick report on our political activism on this side of the border.

It's a struggle, yet in many ways it is a success story. And the message of this story fits in one call to action-- one word-- that has grounded your leader Larry Cohen for so long, and that's ORGANIZE. Because in Canada and in the United States, our history books tell us that working people have always done well when their unions are growing, both in numbers and in strength.

In Canada today, I am pleased to tell you that one in every three workers belongs to a trade union. (Applause) We now have the highest density in the G-8 largely, I would argue, because of our militancy. So, it's important to organize as unions, and to organize as a movement. Because the movement extends the reach of every worker into those places where decisions are made that so much affect our everyday lives.

Our political activism is rooted on three simple ideas: First of all, it is that people who work for wages are the majority in this country and the majority in the United States. They constitute the majority of the citizens who are, as I was taught in grade school, the people who actually own our country. The majority of people who vote are working people. We think our politicians need to be better attuned to that reality.

Idea Number Two: The economic and social security issues of people who work for wages should become very seriously vote-determining issues all the time. Elected politicians need to be made to feel that people will vote for them or against them based on the issues that matter at the kitchen table at the end of every month.

Idea Number Three, which is why we are here today, is that the skills and know-how that make us so successful at the bargaining table and in organizing campaigns, we need to translate those skills into our political activism-- during election campaigns, of course, but between election campaigns as well.

Brothers and sisters, these simple ideas have delivered for us, for Canada. They delivered for us recently, and they have delivered for us some 40 years ago.

I was asked to say a few words about a major victory achieved 40 years ago-- in fact, 41 years ago-- our national publicly funded, universal and comprehensive health care system. (Applause) I know that in the United States your union has stepped up its efforts to make affordable health care coverage a right for all citizens, and I know you will do it with determination.

Union activism has brought all Canadians many benefits that were first bargained for and gained through collective agreements one workplace at a time. Universal health care is one of our greatest achievements. It

was a slow and difficult struggle. We fought forces of power and money like we had never seen before. The old-timers in my local remember being called communists for advancing the notion that every citizen should have a right to health care. But today, public opinion research consistently shows that for Canadians it is one of the most important characteristics of this nation.

And you know what? It also happens that our health care system has become a significant competitive advantage, something business doesn't want to talk about, but they see that every day, from right to left, it's accepted across our political spectrum as reflecting our collective solidarity, our determination as Canadians to take care of one another. If you live in this country and you need help, you go and see a doctor or you go to a hospital, and that's it. You will receive care until you are okay and you don't need care anymore. It's over. (Applause)

Now, I am not saying it's perfect. There are still forces out there trying to make a buck off the backs of those who get sick or who are ill. It can still be improved by providing relief against the cost, the prohibitive cost of prescription drugs, in providing home care, and keeping away from the hospitals people who don't need acute care.

Every country has its own social dynamics and needs to find its own course to achieving this fundamental right, and you in the United States, our sisters and brothers, you have our success to count on and our support to rely on. You will succeed, because, just like us, you have learned that we need to engage in politics and political activism on a continuous basis, not just in campaigns at election time.

Our year-round activism delivers. Let me give you two examples. The first one was achieved by Ken Neumann and Leo Gerard from the Steelworkers Union who were the advocates. Unfortunately, a great number of coalminers had to die for this to happen. But in Canada, because of our efforts, if a worker dies or is injured in a preventable injury, a CEO of the company and company supervisors can be charged under our criminal code, tried in court, held responsible, and, if found negligent, go to jail for killing workers. (Applause)

The second example I want to tell you about is our most recent legislative success which just happened. This spring, it has been passed in the House of Parliament and will likely come into effect only in the fall. We have a law now that creates a wage and pension contribution protection scheme that will protect workers if a company goes into bankruptcy without paying their employees' wages or pension contributions. And-- this is really important-- this same law now says that when a company goes into restructuring due to bankruptcy, no judge, no court, no government and no trustee can alter, change or amend a collective agreement without the vote of the union members. (Applause)

You know, we didn't achieve those legislative successes by being nice or by begging or because the politicians necessarily loved us. We achieved these victories the way unions have always achieved results-- by being organized, by being focused, by being consistent, steadfast, pressuring governments to represent the owners of our country. We did it as a movement.

You know, recently the Supreme Court of our country-- in fact, just a month ago or actually two weeks ago-- finally said that it's a charter right under our constitution, a charter right to have rights to collective bargaining in this country. Wal-Mart better pay attention to that ruling. No longer can Wal-Mart shut down stores when we organize those stores. No longer can governments alter our collective agreements. Now it's a constitutional right. (Applause)

And you know what? If this minority government still stands throughout the fall of this year, we will have achieved anti-scab legislation for the first time in our federal statutes. (Applause)

We are moving toward a national child care system, but our government today is holding the clock back on it. But I think the clock is ticking on that government if they are to attuned to working issues. We have succeeded because our members like and trust our unions, because in this country they know that the unions are them. In this country we know that governments and democracies belong to us. We have to take that back, and we have to insist that the people who represent us, whether they are on this stage or whether they are in the House of Commons or in the Cabinet or anywhere else, or in the Congress of the United States, that

they are there to represent the owners of the country, and in our country, that is us! (Applause)

The Canadian Labour Congress decided many years ago that we are an open and democratic organization. We show the faces and have raise the voices of all of our members-- and this is our strength. Years ago, our Congress decided that our governing body should look like our membership, should look like the country's population. You have to make a decision and follow through to make that happen. We have done that.

For over a decade on our Executive Council we have made sure that we have the presence of women, workers of color, aboriginal workers, union retirees and young workers, as well as those with disabilities, a presence with a voice just like the representatives of our affiliates and our federations. (Applause)

And as the President of the Congress, I made a conscious and deliberate effort to change the face of our staff at our Congress, and today our staff reflects the demographics of our population.

I wanted to let you know of our experience because I think when we look like, when we sound like, and when we speak like our members, we are stronger and more credible. Having that strength and showing it, using it, and being organized.

Standing at this Convention, at a meeting in a democratic and open fashion, is what our countries should look like-- just like us.

Congratulations. I bid you well, with every success. And enjoy your stay in Toronto.

. . . The delegates arose and applauded at length . . .

TEMPORARY CO-CHAIR KLEIN: Thank you, President Ken Georgetti.

Now it is my great privilege to introduce the leader and Vice President of District 1, Chris Shelton. (Applause and cheers) Chris Shelton has been part of CWA District 1 for 38 years, since his early days in New York as a member of CWA Local 1101. He was elected Vice President in 2005 and leads our very diverse district of more than 190,000 members in New York, New Jersey, New England and Eastern Canada.

We are proud that every sector of CWA is represented in District 1-- telecom, public service, health care, airlines, manufacturing and education, customer service and media. And we are very fortunate to have a very capable and acceptable leader-- exceptional leader-- in Chris Shelton, who is building our union every day. Some people say that New Yorkers talk big. In Chris' case, big talk is always followed up with even bigger action.

Please join me in welcoming the leader of District 1, CWA Vice President Chris Shelton.

. . . The delegates arose and applauded . . .

VICE PRESIDENT CHRIS SHELTON (District 1): Thank you, John. I went from acceptable to exceptional just like that (snapping his fingers). That's pretty good. (Laughter)

Good morning, sisters and brothers. It's time to wake up. Welcome to District 1. Welcome to the beautiful country of Canada. Welcome to the beautiful city of Toronto. Welcome to the part of District 1 where they have universal health care-- Canada. (Applause)

Welcome to District 1 where we unanimously did not elect George Bush. (Applause and cheers)

Canada did not elect him and every state in District 1 did not elect him, because every state in District 1 is a blue state. (Applause and cheers)

Welcome to District 1 where, as you will hear later and as you have seen at my district conference, we

have a local, Local 1168 where John comes from, that decided they should walk 320 miles in the dead of winter from Buffalo to Albany to protest the non-universal healthcare we have in the rest of District 1. And you'll see a video about that later. (Applause)

I would like to introduce, and I know they are here, three people who made that walk-- Pat Mele-- excuse me, Dawn Mele, Pat Sullivan, and Dianna Butsch. They walked 320 miles in January from Buffalo to Albany. (Applause)

But I digress. I like to talk about District 1. I'm up here actually to introduce our next speaker. He chose me because I am the Vice President of District 1 and you are in District 1. So welcome and let's get on with it.

They gave me Larry's bio to introduce him with, but since Larry Cohen has been my dear, dear friend for very many years, more years than either one of us cares to mention, I figured I would just tell you some of the things that I happen to know about Larry.

Don't worry about it, Larry. (Laughter)

You know, all of you could say the same thing about Larry Cohen-- that he's also your very dear friend, and that you have known him for many years, because Larry Cohen has dedicated his life to you and to the members of CWA. And Larry Cohen has dedicated his life to the Labor Movement. Larry Cohen has not only shared his talents in the United States and in Canada, but all across the world, and the Labor Movement loves Larry Cohen and loves this Union because of it.

You know, Larry Cohen became President of CWA when we were changing more than we had ever changed in history. Larry certainly is not afraid of change. Larry understands that the Labor Movement must change or it will die. We all must change or we will die, and our kids and our grandkids won't have a Union to belong to. (Applause)

Larry Cohen became President of CWA when our Executive Board, your officers, were changing more than they had ever changed in the history of this union. But did Larry sit there and say, "Well, I have a brand new Board. Let me take it slow for a little while"? No. At Larry's first Convention, he decided that we should do something that had never been done in the history of this union nor in a lot of other unions; that we should make CWA "Ready for the Future." We did that with your help at Larry's first Convention. (Applause) And this union truly, by the end of this Convention, will be ready for the future. (Applause)

I could go on and on about my dear friend Larry Cohen, but I am afraid I would embarrass him. So I'll be brief as I usually am. Brothers and sisters, it is time to stand up. Come on, stand up!

. . . The delegates arose and applauded . . .

It's time to make some noise. It's time to make enough noise so they can hear you back in the southern end of District 3. (Applause) Let's make some noise! (Applause and cheers)

Please welcome my dear friend, your dear friend, the man with the will, the man with the vision, the man with the ability, the man who has led us through battles, the man who will continue to lead us through battles, the man who made us ready for the future, the man who is ready for anything, the undisputed President of the Communications Workers of America, the best, the greatest union on the planet Earth, our President-- Larry Cohen!

. . . The delegates arose and applauded, extending a great ovation to CWA President Larry Cohen . . .

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thank you, CWA. Thank you, Chris, for that powerful introduction. Everything we do here is about what we do together. Everything we do here is about teamwork. And, as Chris said, some of us here may be new at what we're doing, but we are ready for the future, we are ready to fight, we are ready to work hard, we are prepared to come out of Toronto more united and stronger, more determined and committed than CWA has ever been before. (Applause)

And I am very proud and honored and privileged to be part of this team, to work every day with Jeff and Barbara as if we were one, because we need to be one and to work as one, and to work with this Executive Board, honestly doing more than they have ever done than any Board before. I will brag about them.

The only way we can do more, whether it is in a local union, in a district, in a sector for CWA, is for more people to do it. And what we bring to you today and our progress in the last year is because of their incredible work. They take on issues that are awesome-- whether it's fixing our budget, whether it's fighting for health care, which we will hear more about from Jeff, whether it's taking on the political structure in the U.S. with an exciting new political program that builds on what we have done in the past, whether it's taking on corporations that seem to redefine greed. Every single day there is nothing that this Board won't take on, and I thank them from the bottom of my heart for everything they do every day.

It is great to be here in Canada and hear from Ken Georgetti, as well as Lise Lareau. Since our last Convention, we implemented a Regional Autonomy Agreement here in Canada. You have all received copies of that. Later this morning at this table with the Steelworkers, in my view the strongest, most powerful union in Canada, we will sign an alliance agreement, and you will hear more from my brother and Steelworker President Leo Gerard about that. (Applause)

And as we heard from Brother Ken Georgetti, the leader of the Canadian Labour Movement, union density, the way I talk about collective bargaining coverage, the percentage of Canadian workers who have a contract they can work with and hope for and fight for, is about one out of every three workers in Canada. It is even higher here in Toronto. (Applause)

And our challenge, which we will dig into more today and tomorrow than ever before, is for each of us, not only while we are here in Toronto, whether it's talking to the CWAers across the street or to each other, and to think about what happened.

Where I grew up in north Philadelphia in the fifties and sixties, the percentage of organized workers, the percentage that had bargaining rights in the two countries was the same; about 35 percent of workers in the private sector alone in the U.S. had bargaining rights. And, as Ken told us, they went on in Canada, though it dropped slightly, but they went on to build universal health care in a very different political culture.

We need to take inspiration not only from Canada, but many countries in the global south who, during that same time, have risen up and are way beyond the seven percent bargaining coverage in the United States, lower than when our so-called bargaining law was passed. Actually, it was a very good law at the time. In 1935, eight percent of U.S. workers had bargaining rights. It was thirty-five percent in the early 1950s, and now it is back to seven percent.

Human beings make that difference. It is our behavior, it's our choices, it's our commitment, it's our determination. And I hope we all think deeply about what we are doing in every local union and every district and every sector, what each of us is doing as a staffer or whoever we are here today, and how we are going to help turn this, continue the turning point in the U.S. and in Canada, continue to march on.

Now, that wasn't my speech, actually. This is the speech. I'm not giving a speech. It's on the website. So anybody who wants to read it-- and I think my 92-year-old father may be the only one who does. I spent a lot of time on it, so hope he'll read it, and maybe my two daughters.

But I think some of us may remember that in years past, early presidents of CWA had what was called a Monday Night Rally, and spoke from their hearts directly to our members and leaders. And this talk will be more like that. That's more, I think, of what we need.

But we also need to think about what we have done in the past year, which is what that talk would have done. Much of that is in this booklet that you all have, "Highlights of the Past Year," what we do well. We did this last year. We are doing it continually now. Because, if we all learn from each other what we do well, like on our CWA Triangle there on the cover, what we do well in organizing, in political action, in bargaining, that's

the single best way we can learn. It's not from some talk from the top table. It's learning from each other. That's how I learned-- being with you. That's how all of us here learn-- being with you, working with you, fighting with you. Every single day, fighting with you; not fighting against each other-- fighting with you against the greatest greed in the history of capitalism. That's what we are fighting against, the greatest greed in the history of capitalism.

Now, we have management with us today, and some of them actually work with us even in the U.S. to solve problems. Some of them are from companies where they respect the rights of workers when they organize and bargain for democratic rights that should be there and are supposed to be there in every country in the world. And we will never forget them. We honor those management people here who believe that.

But every year that we have come together, on the whole in the U.S. the management behavior has gotten worse and worse. And you know it because you live it and you face it every single day. But we are here to put them on notice, those who have in their hearts only, "What's my next trick; who's my next union-busting lawyer that I'm going to hire?" To the management that are here from those companies, we welcome you here because we want you to hear not only my message, but we want you to experience what it's like to be an incredibly democratic union that comes together each year and looks at its future, and marches out of here more determined than ever to fight for that future, no matter how hard we have to fight. (Applause)

As I said, there really are great stories in here. I'm not going to start ticking them off because then I leave out others. But amazing stories of bargaining, amazing stories of incredible political action, not just in District 1 in blue states-- I hate to call them red states because I wear red ties, we wear red shirts, so I hate to give them our colors-- but in Republican states.

Those stories, as much as any, create the potential to build on the turning point that so many in this room created and are continuing to build on since the November elections in 2006. It is your work, and the work of other working families and our allies, our civil rights movement, our environmental movement, our allies who believe like we do that it's time to bring every American home from Iraq (applause); that it's time to bring every one of our children home; that it's time to bring every one of our children home from Iraq. (Applause) It's time to bring every one of our children home from Iraq. (Applause and cheers) We have allies on many fronts, allies that will stand with us; allies that will fight for the kind of country we want to have.

. . . The delegates arose and applauded at length . . .

Last year, as Chris said, we adopted "Ready for the Future." It wasn't a one-shot deal and then toss it. There were eleven key points in it. They were in the speech also. And we all know that last year we adopted ten of them unanimously, and we've debated the eleventh one, the Strategic Industry Fund, since the beginning of this year. It took us months to get going. We had a procedure that was important. But we have launched in just six months nine Strategic Industry Funds. Jeff will talk more about the Health Care SIF that our Board Committee, chaired by Vice President Hill, is working on. And that one will be by far the most ambitious.

As Ken Georgetti challenged us, as John and Local 1168 marchers challenged their fellow citizens in New York, it's a disgrace what's happened to health care in the United States. But we are not here to be angry. We are here to figure out how we solve problems, how we go into offense, not just defense.

Who is tired here of every time you go to the bargaining table it's defense? How much further are they going to push us back? Who is tired of playing defense? We are playing offense. That's what the Strategic Industry Fund is about. We are playing offense on health care. We are playing offence on fighting for our jobs, on fighting for workers' rights to organize and bargain. We are playing offense. (Applause)

So, nine of those were launched. Most importantly, 20,000 stewards this year alone have gone through some type of Stewards Army training. We set a goal of 25,000 in the first year. We are a little bit short. And our goal in "Ready for the Future" is 50,000 stewards in our Stewards Army. Who is here from a local that's got a Stewards Army in your local on the march? Stand up for the Stewards Army in your local. Every steward who has done Stewards Army training stand up.

. . . The delegates arose and applauded at length . . .

PRESIDENT COHEN: And all of you who are not standing, who's prepared to join in the health care fight for all, stand up for health care and build the Stewards Army in your local. No more going backwards at the bargaining table. Health care for all Stewards Army! (Applause) Health care for all Stewards Army! Health care for all! (Prolonged applause)

Now, last year in working together on this, it wasn't just what we passed that said, you know, we threw it open. We worked for a year and opened a sheet of paper to build this together. And in many ways that's as important as the Stewards Army, it's as important as all the other points that are in here, the Strategic Industry Fund. It's really about how do we work together.

Many of us wear wristbands. We will talk about this one later. You see what's on the outside, but it's what's on the inside in many ways that matters. In the case of CWA, what's on the inside is that we are committed to, more than ever-- and hopefully everyone felt last year no matter what side you were on with some of those questions-- we are committed to being the most open, democratic organization that anyone can imagine, and we will work harder at that every single day. We won't rest on what we have done. We will work harder on that every single day. (Applause)

Unity doesn't fall from the sky like the rain. In a local union where your Executive Board and this Convention have gotten together, we had to work at unity. And as you know, last year we had a record number of roll call votes, divisions of the house. But that showed that we were prepared to trust each other. Even if we had differences, we could figure out how to work through them. And we marched out, regardless of which way we voted on those issues, more united and more convinced that participating matters. It's not a movie. It's not a show. It's not my show. It's a show of strength. It's a show of unity. It's a show of commitment. It's a show of determination that CWA is on the march.

Now, this year our unity will be tested again as we debate changes in our Executive Board. But think of it this way: A proposal that will be in front of us today for the first time in the 69 years of this union would have local leaders as full members of the Executive Board. Most other unions have many, if not a majority of their Board, composed of local union leaders. But we don't really care about that. What we care about is what is our future.

From my point of view-- and we will hear from Barbara who chaired the Executive Board Diversity at length on this-- in many ways the most important part of what we are considering is to dig deeper. We don't need to be this formal, two-level union. But with the challenges we face, particularly in the U.S., we need to dig deeper. We need to build on unity more than ever. And, trust me, from the bottom of my heart, I will be honored if this Convention decides that local union leaders will be on this Executive Board with us as equals. I will be honored to be there with local leaders on the Executive Board as equals. (Applause)

Some might ask, "Why did we begin a process to consider local leaders on the Board focused on diversity?" Well, first, that's what we agreed to do last year. That's Point 10 in "Ready for the Future." Point 10 says clearly that we will-- not "we may"-- we will bring specific proposals on Executive Board Diversity to this Convention, and other changes in the Executive Board will be dealt with over the next four years. So that's, first of all, what we agreed to do, and it was unanimous that we would bring a proposal.

Second, as we will hear later from the Constitution Committee, this is the only proposal that was put in front of them. And I happen to believe it's a good proposal in many ways, but it's the only proposal that was put in front of the Constitution Committee. (Applause)

Now, some have said to me-- and I meant what I said two or three minutes ago about the way we talk to each other, the way we listen to each other are the most important things we do. It is far more important than any verbal test here. It's far more important than any change we will make, because this unity that doesn't fall like the rain, we test it each time we bring on change. Change is not an easy thing.

So, I would ask everyone today as we look at these changes in our Constitution to build, at least in my opinion, a greater partnership with local unions, that we respect every member here, regardless of how she or he sees this or where they are from, or what kind of a local it is, sector or district. That's a tradition we don't break in CWA. We honor every delegate here as the same. It doesn't matter where they came from, what they look like, what they stand for even, because we all stand for CWA. (Applause)

As I said, Barbara will talk more about this, but before I move on I just want to say this: Some have said to me, in listening to them, "This looks like we are trying to be politically correct." Trust me, I am not interested in our union being politically correct. (Applause) And who is going to decide what politically correct is?

I am interested in our union doing the right thing; doing the right thing to begin the process of electing local leaders to our Board and to better reflect the makeup of our union so that our unity is stronger, not only here, but among all of our members, so that when our members, whether they are people of color or women or younger or older or straight or gay, whatever they happen to be, when they look at our leadership, when they listen to our leadership, when they talk to our leadership, that they deeply believe that they are talking to a union that in every single imaginable way represents them. That's the kind of CWA that we want. (Applause)

Now, why does this unity mean so much more now than in any other year when CWAers gathered at the other 68 Annual Conventions? Let's go back to November of 2006. Well, let's go back to when we met last year. How many of us imagined when we met together last year that, because of the work that we and other working families would do, we would now have Nancy Pelosi as the Speaker of the House? (Applause) How many imagined that? That was almost beyond our imagination.

You know there have been 52 other Speakers of the House, and it is widely reported that she was the first woman. You know what? For working families in the United States, she is the best Speaker ever. (Applause) The best Speaker ever. It's not a close call. (Applause)

And they had a plan, she and the other leaders in the House, of what they would do the first 100 hours. I am not going to tick them all off. There are 8 items passed. A new minimum wage. There hasn't been a minimum wage increase in the United States in ten years. Imagine that. If you are working at the minimum wage, no increase in ten years.

But for us, I would say for all working families, the most important thing that she did, with our close friend from California in District 9-- and you should be incredibly proud of George Miller and Nancy Pelosi (applause)- is that they brought to the floor of the House of Representatives, as they committed to do within the first 100 days, and in early March in a landslide vote in the House they passed the Employee Free Choice Act. They passed the Employee Free Choice Act by a wide margin. (Applause)

And when they did that, Nancy Pelosi, Speaker Pelosi, left her podium and went onto the floor-- almost unprecedented for a Speaker. And she said, "I'm taking the floor today to speak to the Employee Free Choice Act. Because what we see across the United States is a horrible squeeze on the middle class."

We all feel it. You feel it in every local. Our jobs are under attack. Health care is under attack. Our bargaining rights are under attack. A squeeze on the middle class.

She said that, "As Speaker, I want to say that in my opinion passing this bill will do more to help working families change that themselves than anything else we do." And that day the House voted 241 to 185-- not a close call-- for the Employee Free Choice Act. (Applause)

And then we marched on to the Senate. And we knew that Senate rules provide that when a bill stands alone it cannot get to the floor without 60 votes-- not 51, which would be majority; in any other parliamentary body in the world 51 would do it. We knew that we didn't have 60 votes, even if we turned out every possible vote conceivable.

Why did we march on to the Senate not only knowing that, but before it even got to the Senate, you know, like 55 times, sort of like what the Mayor told us today, the President of the United States said, "I'm going to

veto the bill. I'm going to veto the bill. I'm going to veto the bill." Of course he's going to veto the bill. As President, has he done one single thing at any time since he has been there for working families?

. . . Cries of "No" . . .

So why was it possible then to bring that on, when so many of you did this work that allowed us just a few weeks ago to get 51 votes, a majority of the U.S. Senate, to stand up and say, "We are voting YES, we are voting for the Employee Free Choice Act. Even though we know we don't have 60 votes to cut off debate to end the filibuster, we are proud to stand on our feet in the United States Senate and say to every corporation, every corporation, 'We are putting you on notice that a majority of the U.S. joins with the majority in the House of Representatives not just on this bill, but to say that greed will be stopped in the United States, working families will have rights again in the United States,'" and 51 U.S. Senators were proud to get up and to stand up and to put those companies on notice!

. . . The delegates arose and applauded at length . . .

That work was done by CWA local after CWA local. I could read off those names by memory, but I won't. The list is enormous. Easily ten of those Senators got bombarded by these companies. "You won't get our money the next time. We are going to support the opponent the next time. We have unlimited resources to throw into political campaigns," they said, to people like Mary Landrieu in Louisiana, to use one example, who is running again in '08 and undoubtedly will have a close race.

To stick on that example, CWA staffer Mike Fahrenholdt, Local President Judy Bruno, and, most importantly, Cingular Wireless workers who had health care because they now had a union, who had pay progressions because they now had a union.

Sure, they have challenges at that customer service center. They said to Mary Landrieu, "As working women without card-check, we wouldn't have had this union here in Louisiana that made those things possible for our families. As working women, we wouldn't have a union on the job except that the company we work for," which is all too rare, "was prepared to accept recognition because the majority of us joined. Please, Senator, stay with us. We will be there in the elections. We will build a broader political base in states like Louisiana."

Amazingly, Mary Landrieu was there that day, and she stood up with the other 50 Senators and voted YES on the Employee Free Choice Act. That kind of work in state after state-- I could call them all out here.

And so what comes next? Why the drama? Are we just celebrating the fact that we can say, as important as it is, to all the companies that terrorize workers-- and that's what it is when they try to join a union. And management and some people from those companies are here today as well, and I hope they think about this deeply when they hire law firms like Jones-Day at \$500 an hour, not only to make sure that they can break the law and get away with it, but that they can also bust through every grievance we file.

Those teams of lawyers from Jones-Day, it's not enough that they have hundreds of lawyers of their own. They are there to tell them, "Don't worry about what you agreed to when you bargained. That's when the union still had some power. We will take them to court before they can arbitrate anything. If they win in arbitration, we will go to court again. And by the time they get through all that, those people won't even be around anymore."

We all know who hires Jones-Day. I won't even call out their names. Others hire Morgan, Lewis, Bokius or Jackson, Lewis. You go into their offices and they are beautiful. They have sculptures and modern art. These people are proud to take on the frontline fight while their management is back in their palaces. That's why those law firms exist. But they are not the real enemies at all for us. Yes, we hate them. I'll call them pigs right here. (Applause)

You know what they used to say when I grew up in north Philadelphia, "Today's pigs, tomorrow's bacon." (Applause)

But as I said, and I have to work on this every day, anger really doesn't do it. (Laughter) It's what we do together here.

Every one of those corporate leaders knows that 51 votes was a signal. Why? Because how did the minimum wage just get raised? It will be raised in two weeks. We will celebrate the first increase in the minimum wage in ten years. It was attached to an appropriations bill that the President wanted-- this President, believe it or not. Unfortunately, it was an appropriations bill to continue to send our kids and brothers and sisters and friends to Iraq.

But nonetheless, there are no secrets about how bills get passed when they face a filibuster in the Senate. When there is majority support, you attach them to another bill that's not subject to filibuster, most frequently an appropriations bill.

Why am I spending all this time on this? Because I am absolutely convinced that, for those of us in the U.S., what we do in the next three or four months is the next critical step. Step one was last year's election. Step two, Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Labor Chairman George Miller and the bill passing. Step three, Harry Reid, Dick Durbin get that bill on the floor and we get 51 Senators to vote yes. Step four, we have an election coming up for a new President of the United States. (Applause)

Many of you were at the Legislative Conference and many of the contenders were there and spoke from their hearts about the political movement we need to build. They have all written us notes. Barbara will read excerpts from them, because they all sound somewhat similar, to be honest.

So what do we do? Well, previously we would have said, "We work hard, we elect more people to the Senate who will say they will support this kind of legislation, as well as universal health care and also a new trade policy. We're building a political movement around all three issues." But what each of us needs to leave here believing in our hearts is that, without a labor movement, who will fight for universal health care? Without a labor movement, who will fight for American jobs and a new trade policy? Without a labor movement, who will be there where we work to bargain?

Employee Free Choice is not about someone else, as important as that would be, joining our union. The Employee Free Choice Act is about the future of our bargaining in every company here, small or large. How many people will be with us at that company? At Verizon alone this year, over a thousand workers would be in our union. DSL tech support workers in California, an overwhelming majority signed up until the crush came on them.

The Verizon Business techs in the Northeast, the former MCI, overwhelmingly joined our union in partnership with IBEW, and still a majority is there. We don't have a labor law. We have a corporate law in America now. (Applause) But this is our chance to change it, and that's what we have to think about. We have to think about what we do now in these next months, think about what it will be like on that day. That day can come. It's up to us and what we do.

Let's assume it's March or April of 2009 and we have elected a President, like many of these contenders, who believes in that law and believes in bringing bargaining rights, and believes that the middle class is being squeezed, and believes that working people can change this if they have their own rights-- not just Congress passing bills, but with our own rights, we can change this world.

Let's imagine what it would feel like to wake up that morning in March, realizing that this is the day the President is going to sign that law. Some of us-- and in my case I grew up in a neighborhood where people remembered when that happened in 1935. The vacations we took and all the other things that happened were largely built on that sacrifice and struggle when the Wagner Act was passed, the first National Labor Relations Act.

This is why these corporations-- and again, there are some here that come from management who are neutral on this. That's all we ask. A million workers a year in the United States got bargaining rights, or more

than a million in 1935, and more than a million in 1936, and in 1937 another million in 1938, another million in 1939. And every year many of them started their own unions, including the CWA. The CWA didn't exist before that.

That's how it went from 8 percent to 35. It didn't fall out of the sky like rain. So if we can imagine what it would be like to wake up to that, and when that occurs then our bargaining changes, we are not on defense being smashed and pushed back-- can we hold onto retiree benefits, health care? Can we hold onto the jobs we have? Can we hold onto the middle class standard of living, for those of us lucky enough to have it?

When that kind of surge occurs, we are moving forward again. "You guys had your day. You had your billion dollars. Now it's our day. We are on the march." That's the kind of day we are going to live again. Everyone in this room is going to remember today and remember that day in March or April, what it was like.

. . . The delegates arose and applauded at length . . .

So now, more work comes in and some said to me, "Well, we made all those calls. We only got 51 votes." Now you all see where we are going here. We have all these contenders. Some folks here vote in the Republican Party. Many of our members vote in the Republican Party. Most of our members, in the primaries, if they vote, vote in the Democratic primaries. Jeff will pick up on this as well, but the key is what we do now with them.

I have a couple of hats here. I'll start with this one. This is a union hat, made right nearby in Buffalo, New York, by CWA Local 14177. (Applause) I know you didn't all plug the Phillys. I grew up in Philadelphia, as I said. (Applause) There are a couple of Phillys fans here. They gave me a Phillys hat.

What does that have to do with it? Well, we've got some very good contenders that come from states like New Mexico and Illinois and New York, and people make up their minds based on all kinds of things-- she shook my hand; he gave me a hug.

Brothers and sisters, we have a job to do. I don't care where they come from. That's easy for me to say. There aren't any from Philadelphia. (Laughter) I don't care where they come from. It's what they stand for. We need to ask each one of them now-- and you will be with them and I will be with our members in Iowa, a key state, in just a few weeks with these contenders-- but it's what they stand for.

It's not going to be good enough to have a President that will say, "I'll sign the Employee Free Choice Act when it comes to my desk." It won't come to their desk. We are going to say it right now. I am not going to tell you stuff. We can't get 60 votes for this in 2009 in the Senate of the United States. It's numerically impossible with who's up for election. We are going to work hard. We can get as high as 57. We can't get 60.

Think about our road map, that minimum wage bill, about putting the Employee Free Choice Act in an appropriations bill. And most importantly, we need a President who will tell us now-- and this is where you all come in-- we have got to ask them, while they are running-- now, not later; now, when they need our support-- a very simple question: "Will you stand up for working families? And tell us now that you will lead this fight, that we will lead the fight to bring back bargaining and organizing rights in the United States-- not just sign the bill-- but that you will fight. And if you will lead the fight, we will lead the fight to get you elected the next President of the United States." That's what we need to do when we march out of here.

Whether you live in Iowa, New Hampshire, Nevada or South Carolina or Florida or New Jersey, we are going to need you to get up, stand up, and say to every one of those contenders, "I don't care where you come from. We are union. We are CWA. We are going to lead the fight to pass the Employee Free Choice Act, and we want a President that will lead that fight with us."

We can do it! We have a majority in the House. We have a majority in the Senate. We can do it.

. . . The delegates arose and applauded at length . . .

That might have been longer than the one I wrote. (Laughter) All of us face adversity sooner or later in life-- relentless battles with cancer, the deaths of loved ones and family members in Iraq, and worst, the casualties. Later today or tomorrow, we will hear from one of our own, a true son of the CWA, who has devoted a lifetime to CWA and its members, the Senior Vice President on our Board.

As many of you know, District 2 Vice President Pete Catucci is battling a devastating disease, ALS, and the delegates from District 2, in part in Pete's honor, will ask us to consider a resolution calling on the U.S. Congress to extend the use of frozen embryonic stem cells that will never be live tissue so that we can fight diseases like ALS.

. . . The delegates arose and extended a warm greeting and prolonged applause in recognition of Vice President Catucci . . .

PRESIDENT COHEN: I thank Pete for sharing his story and for carrying on this fight, just as he has fought for his union all his life.

As a union leader, despite huge challenges, we always have the chance to make a difference-- with every grievance, with every contract, but especially now with an historic opportunity to energize our movement and keep it focused.

Over these two days, we will look at ourselves as we debate a historic change in our governance structure, electing local leaders to our boards, and improving diversity. Just as important, each of us needs to aim higher, imagining that we can play a major role in building a political movement, enacting legislation like the Employee Free Choice Act, universal health care, a progressive trade policy that fights for our jobs.

These are the issues that unite us; public issues at the hearts of economic justice, not private issues that the right wing would use to divide us based on where we were born, where we worship, or who we love. I deeply believe that we, CWA, can help lead this movement across North America as we did in the U.S. elections in 2006, and contribute our fair share to the renewal of the global labor movement.

As we move along through our lives, we will look back on this meeting in Toronto as historic, when CWA stepped out, when CWA stepped up and said, "It's our time!" We know how to do it. We will build our movement. We will dig deeper. We are on the march. Thank you very much.

. . . The delegates arose and applauded at length . . .

TEMPORARY CO-CHAIR LAREAU: And now, as is our tradition, I am going to formally hand the gavel to President Cohen to continue the convention. It is a pleasure for me to do so.

. . . President Cohen received the gavel and assumed the Chair . . .

PRESIDENT COHEN: I want to thank John and Lise, and I think more than ever their leadership here this morning symbolizes our future: two countries with one commitment; that we are on the march; that we are union; that we are CWA. Thank you both so much. (Applause)

I will take a breath for a second. I would like to ask the Credentials Committee to please come to the platform. While the committee is coming to the platform, let me describe the use of the microphones, how you get recognized, speak, make motions or ask questions. You have heard this; it will be quick.

Microphone No. 1, which used to be in front of me but it's over here, is labeled "Motions." It's for delegates to make motions. The telephone associated with this microphone is connected directly to our parliamentarians. I will ask the parliamentarians to wave. They are blocked from view, but you know where they are. When I call their names, they can stand please.

. . . As each parliamentarian was introduced, the delegates responded with a single clap of recognition . . .

Richard Rosenblatt, District 7 Counsel and Printing Sector Counsel-- and our tradition with introductions is one clap, right-- from Colorado; Peter Mitchell, Managing General Counsel, Washington D.C.; and Patricia Shea, Headquarters Counsel, Washington, D.C.

We have a bar code reader-- I don't have one up here but you all do. Please swipe your badge before picking up the phone. This will allow those on the platform on the other end of the phone to see your name and local. When you pick up the phone, you are to advise the parliamentarians of the motion you wish to make. They will give you a preliminary parliamentary ruling.

If your motion is in order, the Chair will be advised, and you will be recognized. But if you disagree with a preliminary ruling, advise the parliamentarians. They will then bring that disagreement to the attention of the Chair, the Chair will then make a ruling, after which, if there is still disagreement, the matter can be placed before the Convention to determine whether or not the ruling is proper by voting on whether or not to sustain the Chair.

There is a microphone designated as the "Privilege" microphone, No. 2. Use it to raise a point of order, or raise a point of personal privilege. It, too, is connected to the parliamentarians.

Microphone No. 3 is the "For" microphone. Use it to be recognized to speak for any motion or issue before the Convention. As you all know, that can switch around, depending on what's going on.

Microphone No. 4 is the "Against." Use it to speak against whatever issue or motion is before the Convention.

At the back of the hall, Microphone No. 5 is designated "Questions." Use it for the purpose of asking questions, to clarify an issue before the Convention, or to get information. We rotate these microphones under our rules.

The maker of a motion may speak for their motion from Microphone No. 1. Under our rules, there is a five-minute limit on any speech. There is a red light here on the platform which will give you a four-minute warning, also a small red light at the microphone telephones. That's how you'll know.

The Chair will also endeavor to tap the gavel lightly-- that wasn't so light but anyway I don't do too many things lightly-- at four minutes to indicate to you that you have one more minute to speak, and then the microphone will be turned off.

The Chair will rotate between the "For" microphone, the "Against" microphone and "Questions" microphone in that order. The rotation continues until at least two people have had an opportunity to speak for and against, after which a motion to close debate is in order.

As you go to the "For" and "Against" and "Questions" mikes, swipe your badge, lift the telephone, and give the person who answers your name and local number and state or province. You will be recognized in the order called for under our rules. Start off with your name and local number.

Let me introduce the people who will be handling the phones and answering as you call from Microphones No. 3, 4, and 5. They advise the Chair to recognize you. They are seated on my left, and are: Steven Miller, CWA, Representative, District 1; Nancy Biagini, CWA Representative, District 9; Judy Graves, CWA Representative, District 6; Debbie Hayes, CWA Representative, District 1; Jim Byrne, CWA Representative, District 13, Chair.

Five-minute Rule: The staff who will be keeping track on the five-minute rule are: Ruth Barrett, CWA Representative, District 1; Velvet Hawthorne, CWA Representative, District 3.

During the course of our Convention, a verbatim record is kept. The record is carefully prepared by our editing group. A complete set of Convention proceedings will be sent to you electronically. You will have thirty days to review the record and report any errors you may wish to have corrected. The folks doing that work

are: Paul Bouchard, CWA Representative, District 1; Kris Raab, Research Economist, CWA Headquarters; Carrie Biggs-Adams, Executive Secretary-Contracts Committee, TNG-CWA; Donna Dolan, CWA Representative, District 1, Chair.

Finally, each day, we have two delegates come from the floor to help us with who is to be recognized and to be sure that we follow procedures as provided in the Constitution, and to help me with close votes. For that purpose today, we have two delegates, and I will introduce them at this time: Dolores Lucero-Garcia, President, Local 9421; Jane N. Howald, President, Local 14177.

Now it is my pleasure to introduce the Credentials Committee. The same welcome, please.

. . . As the members of the Credentials Committee were introduced, as follows, the delegates responded with a single clap of recognition . . .

Patty Chronic, President, CWA Local 1022; Vikki Marshall-Thurston, Executive Vice President Local 1037; Mark Balsamo, City Vice President, 2100; Lois Breece, President, Local 22021; Ellis Ryan, President, Local 3140; Kim Sadler, President, Local 3511; Holly Sorey, Local 4202; Marcius Scaggs, President, Local 4216; Gerardo Alonzo, President, Local 6110; Yolanda Reid, Secretary-Treasurer, Local 6139; Dennis Nielson, Local 7032; Jeanne Stewart, President Local 7803; Pam Foucher, Vice President, Local 9417; Jim Frederickson, President, Local 9419; Theresa Senich, Secretary-Treasurer, Local 13500; Carl Mayers, President, Local 52031; Leroy Jackson, Jr., President, Local 59053.

I recognize the Chair of the Credentials Committee, Marge Krueger, Administrative Director to Vice President of District 13

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIR MARGE KRUEGER (District 13): First let me introduce my two co-chairs, Don Rice, Staff Representative from District 1, and Betty Witte, the Administrative Director of District 3. (Applause)

President Cohen, Delegates and Guests: I am pleased to announce on behalf of the Credentials Committee that the Committee has registered over 1,808 delegates, alternates and guests to this 69th CWA Annual Convention.

The Committee appreciates the assistance rendered by the Secretary-Treasurer's office, especially the help of the Information Systems and Membership Dues Department. With the help of the two departments mentioned, we are continuing to improve service to our delegates, alternates and guests.

The Committee also wishes to thank the staff who were assigned to the committee for their able assistance, and we especially appreciate the cooperation and assistance of the delegates over the last three days as the committee has worked to complete its assignment.

Since our last Convention, new locals have been added to our ranks. These locals are 1333, 7055, 21091, 21092, 23093, 24094, 27095, 27096, 29097, 29098, 29099. Let us welcome these locals. (Applause)

We shall be reporting on credentials in the following categories: Category 1, those credentials properly executed and received on time. Category 2, Credentials properly executed, but late. Category 3, Improperly Executed. Category 4A, Proxy Credentials Properly Executed, but late. Category 4B, Proxy Credentials Improperly Executed. Category 5, Unusual Circumstances.

Category 1, there are 1,226 credentials properly executed and on time. The Committee moves that these delegates be seated.

PRESIDENT COHEN: All those in favor of adopting the Committee's report please signify by raising your hand. All those opposed by a like sign. The report is adopted.

CHAIR KRUEGER: There are no Category 2 credentials.

There are no Category 3 credentials.

There are no Category 4A or Category 4B Credentials.

There are no Category 5 credentials.

The Credentials Committee will be in session each day one-half hour prior to the opening of the Convention for the convenience of the delegates and alternates, in registering late arrivals, replacing lost badges and handling other problems. Guests will continue to be registered immediately prior to and during each session for the remainder of the Convention.

Those delegates other than Category 1, who have not been seated by the action of this Convention, may present themselves to the committee and obtain their proper badges. Other delegates who may have arrived late will also be served by the Committee shortly at the registration counters in the lobby.

Mr. President and delegates, this completes the committee's report at this time. Thank you. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: I want to thank the Credentials Committee for their hard work. It is a tremendous amount of work. That's why there are this many. They did a terrific job. Thank you very much. (Applause)

I would like to ask the Resolutions and Rules Committees to come to the platform.

While they are coming to the platform, I just want to mention that normally our procedure calls for us to report resolutions in numerical order, but it may be necessary to rearrange that order, so please bear with us when they come up. It won't necessarily be in the order of the resolutions in the book.

Now, we will wait a second here. Here they come, and you'll see a lot of them.

. . . As the members of the Resolutions Committee were introduced, as follows, the delegates responded with a single clap of recognition . . .

Denise Burns, President, CWA Local 2107, Chair; Pamela Rogers, President CWA Local 4998; Sylvia Sauseda, Secretary-Treasurer, CWA Local 6143; Brent Duvall, President, CWA Local 7603; Charlie Braico, Vice President, NABET-CWA Local 54041.

I recognize Denise Burns, Chair.

DELEGATE DENISE BURNS (Chair, Local 2107, Resolutions and Rules Committee): Thank you, Mr. President.

The Resolutions and Rules Committee met in the City of Toronto, Ontario, beginning on July 12, 2007, for the purpose of reviewing and considering any proposed amendments to the Permanent Rules Governing Conduct of CWA Conventions, which can be found printed in your CWA Constitution beginning on page 24 and ending on page 27.

There were no proposed amendments received by the committee. It is the opinion of the Committee that the Permanent Rules adequately assure the democratic functioning of the Union's Convention.

Therefore, the Resolutions and Rules Committee of the 69th Annual CWA Convention recommends no changes be made in the Permanent Rules.

Hours of the Convention

Rule VI (Hours of the Convention) of the Permanent Rules Governing Conduct of CWA Conventions provides that the hours of the Convention, recesses and other arrangements relating to the Convention shall be established by resolutions or motion by each Convention.

BE IT RESOLVED: That the regular sessions of the 69th Annual CWA Convention shall be as follows:

On Monday, July 16, 2007, the Convention shall be called to order at 9 a.m. The Convention will be in recess for one and one-half hours beginning at approximately 12 noon and shall continue until the business of the day has been concluded, subject to a half hour recess at 5 p.m., if necessary.

On Tuesday, July 17, 2007, the Convention shall reconvene at 8:30 a.m. The Convention will be in recess for one and one-half hours beginning at approximately 12 noon and shall continue until all business has been concluded.

Respectfully submitted, Denise Burns, President, CWA Local 2107, Chair; Pamela Rogers, President, CWA Local 4998; Sylvia Sauseda, Secretary-Treasurer, CWA Local 6143; Brent Duvall, President, CWA Local 7603; Charlie Braico, Vice President, NABET-CWA Local 54041.

I move the adoption of the report of the Resolutions and Rules Committee to the Annual Convention.

PRESIDENT COHEN: The motion has been made. It does not require a second. All those in favor of the motion please indicate by raising your hand. Those opposed by a like sign. It has been adopted. Thank you, Chair.

As I mentioned, we have a special treat in that the President of the United Steelworkers is here with us, in part to talk about our new alliance here in Canada. But in every sense of the word, Leo Gerard is our brother.

Steelworkers across Canada and the United States are our sisters and brothers, whether we are standing with them as we did at Goodyear stores across the country in December to say that the fight at Goodyear to gut retirees' healthcare was not just a Steelworkers fight, it was a CWA fight, it was a labor movement fight. We were proud to be there in front of those stores as long as it took to win that fight. And they won that fight. (Applause)

Whether it's the Employee Free Choice Act, the mobilization across the USA, they are there with us like no other union is there with us. And that is because of this brother, this President, who grew up four hours from here in Sudbury. His father was a miner and organizer. He knew what a picket line was and from the time he was, I don't know, probably crawling, he was on those picket lines; he was out there organizing with his father.

He comes from the heart of the Canadian Labour Movement, but he is not just from the heart of the Canadian Labour Movement; he is from our hearts, too. Just last week, along with Vice President Jim Short in Pittsburgh with hundreds of CWAers and Steelworkers, Leo headed the launch of a new Jobs for Justice Chapter in Pittsburgh that would say not only to the steel industry, to Verizon, to Comcast, to the newspapers and all the other employers in the Pittsburgh area, "You won't get us one at a time. We understand Jobs with Justice. We are all there for somebody else's fight, so we can all keep winning."

The new Steelworkers are not only the largest, or one of the largest, unions in Canada but in the United States as well. They are on the front lines of the fight to have a trade policy again in the United States. All we have now is markets.

But most importantly, in my opinion, more than anyone else outside our union, this brother, Leo Gerard, lives every day as if he is inside our union, because inside his heart are the same values and commitments that motivate us every day. And with his passion and his commitment, a million steelworkers in two countries are on the march.

I bring to you Leo Gerard, President of the United Steelworkers.

. . . The delegates arose and applauded at length . . .

LEO GERARD (President, United Steelworkers Union): I was glad that Larry had some folks come up from your Credentials Committee and your Resolutions Committee. I was afraid I would have to speak right after him. (Laughter) Then, listening to the introduction, it made me feel proud. I was wishing my mom and dad were here. My dad would have been extremely proud as a union organizer, and my mom might have believed half that crap he said about me. (Laughter)

I do want to say it's a pleasure, and I do want to say that Larry is absolutely right: Both personally and institutionally, we share a common set of values. We share a common understanding that no one is going to give us anything, particularly in the kind of global economy that the corporatists are building around us, and that we need to fight. Because we need to remember, we need to remember that this Labor Movement was not given to working people.

Less than 15 minutes from my office in Pittsburgh, I can go to a pumphouse on the river and see where Carnegie and Frick hired the Pinkertons and shot workers who wanted to have a union. Within 15 minutes of our office in East Chicago, I can ride through a place where there was a Memorial Day massacre where 12 workers were shot, some of them in the back. I can go to the Youngstown Museum in Youngstown, Ohio, and see the street where, on the same day hundreds of miles away, workers were shot in Youngstown wanting to form a union.

Look around at each other. I don't want to embarrass anybody, but we are not spring chickens in this room. And this fight, this fight that Larry talked about and that I'm going to talk about, sisters and brothers, this fight is not for us. This fight is for the kind of America, the kind of Canada that our generation is going to pass on to our kids and grandkids.

I want my grandson to have at least as equal a shot in life as I did. If there is no Labor Movement, he won't have that shot. I want my granddaughter to grow up and not have to worry that if she gets sick she will have to sell her house, or that if she loses her job she'll have no other job to go to.

This is the kind of economy that the right- wingers and the corporatists and the globalists are building for us in our two countries. This is the kind of economy they want to build in Colombia and in Brazil. And the only thing standing between them and success is us!

I share the passion that Larry has for saying that the Employee Free Choice Act, the fight for a worker to organize, is not about membership accumulation. It's not about making the Steelworkers bigger or the CWA bigger. It's about empowering workers that can have the right, through collective bargaining and collective action, to improve the quality of their lives and to pass on a better life to the next generation. That's what this is about. (Applause) That's what this is about.

I know you are going to have resolutions and you are going to talk about healthcare. I want to talk about it a little bit, too, and I also want to talk about trade. I want to put it in a snapshot. Right now in America, we are looking at going into the 30th year-- 30th year in a row-- of escalating trade deficits. This year in America, America's accumulated trade debts to the rest of the world will be in excess of \$4 trillion. Last year in America, America's current deficit, depending on which economist is counting, is somewhere between \$680 billion and \$800 billion.

Does anybody in this room know what a billion is? Can anybody fathom a billion? I can't. But I can give you a way to think about it. Look at your watch. A billion seconds ago it was 1959. A billion minutes ago, Christ was likely on earth. A billion hours ago, hours ago, we lived in caves. So when someone tells you, "Well, the deficit was only \$800 billion," you can have some measure of what that is.

If we don't change the trade policy of America during the first term of the next President, following the

trend line of the last 30 years America will hit \$1 trillion of deficit per year. People will call us all kinds of names for saying what I'm going to say. The fact of the matter is, sisters and brothers, no economy on earth can survive that hard fact.

If you get in a room with Bob Rubin, the Secretary of the Treasury who helped bring us this trade agenda, he would say, "Yes, there will have to be some adjustments; we'll have to devalue our currency and we'll have to do other things, and we'll have to accept a lower standard of living for awhile." People like you and me will scratch our heads and try to figure out how long "awhile" is. Is "awhile" the last 30 years? If you push him harder and harder and harder, he will eventually confess that, yes, it will probably take a generation or a generation and a half to adjust.

I am not prepared to do that. I am not prepared to stand idly by. I won't let those café latte-drinking, coupon-clipping, pocket-picking, Lexus-driving bastards rob us of our future.

. . . The delegates arose and applauded and cheered . . .

We have a historic opportunity. We have a historic opportunity to energize ourselves, to energize our members, energize our communities and our families and our allies, to create hundreds of jobs with justice coalitions, to bring everybody into the mix and reclaim our future.

We can reclaim our future by making sure that every presidential candidate says they will lead the fight for a better America, lead the fight by telling us that they will lead the fight to improve collective bargaining by giving workers in America a chance to join a union, just as easy as it is to join the Republican Party or the Democratic Party. If I can sign a card to join the party, I should be able to sign a card to join the union. (Applause)

We have a chance now with Nancy Pelosi. I was so proud a couple of Fridays ago when Nancy got up in the House and said, "There will be no trade deal with a Colombia that assassinates trade unionists, there will be no trade deal in Korea where we are going to give away our manufacturing future, and there will be no fast track for this lying, cheating President." (Applause)

In fact, we have a tremendous opportunity with Bush to stay the course. He is staying the course that way. How many of you saw this? There were polls last week. They have been bouncing back and forth between 28 percent and 26 percent in some polls. Last week, I saw a poll where George Bush was at 28 percent in the polls. Let me tell you a hard fact. Richard Nixon left office at 31 percent. Don't forget that. An honorable man would throw in the towel, but honor is not on his agenda.

Let me tell you another fact that some of you may not realize. I think some of these folks are one and the same, by the way. Thirty-two percent of Americans polled still believe that Elvis is alive and hiding somewhere. (Laughter) So if you think about this, 28 percent for Bush, 32 percent for Elvis. Some of them are the same folks. (Laughter and applause)

We can reclaim the future. We can reclaim an agenda. I am proud to work with Larry at the AFL-CIO. I had a former President who used to say to me, "I don't worry about you keeping a secret. I just worry about who you're going to tell." Now, I want to tell you a secret that I want you to keep in this room. Larry and I, in fact, conspire together to make sure we get our agenda done. And our agenda is simple: the right to join a union; a good trade policy with good jobs for all; and health care for everyone in America. (Applause)

If we accomplish those three things, as a result of the '08 election, an election that will give us a Democratic President that says, "I'm willing to lead the fight for these things," we'll have a bigger majority in the House and a bigger majority in the Senate.

Like Larry said, think of waking up the day after the election with a Democratic President who said they were going to lead the charge for that. Or think of waking up the day after the election and losing again by a couple of hundred votes and getting some moron like that guy on "Law and Order." What's his name? Fred Thompson. He was a pimp for the corporate elite of Washington for twenty years and now he is pretending to

be an outsider. He won't fool us.

Think of the difference. It will only come from your hard work. It will only come from unions like the Steelworkers and the CWA and other unions who are prepared to engage their members in the fight.

Let me raise two more things and then I will turn it over. I have a unique accent. It is not necessarily from Pittsburgh, although I've been there 14 years and I can say "you'uns." (Laughter) I talk a little bit like Marge. My accent is actually a cross between French Canadian and "Pittsburghese." So, I know about healthcare in our two countries.

I know that on the eve of my moving to the U.S., my wife had some problems. We moved in the end of February of that year, '93, but the summer of 1992 she ended up with some fairly serious problems. Between Labor Day of '02 and the end of February '03, my wife saw her family doctor at least five times, saw three different specialists to make sure that the diagnosis was right, got in for the procedure she needed, got treated, recovered, and drove with me to Pittsburgh on the day that I started my new job.

Our bill was zero and the amount of time that she spent in line was about two and a half hours because the doctor was late because he was spending a little bit more time with the patients that he was seeing. He was always running behind schedule because he wasn't on a clock.

Healthcare in the U.S., if you put it beside my issue on trade, if you put it beside the issue on Employee Free Choice, healthcare in the U.S. is now 16 percent of GDP. If you extrapolate that, if we do nothing, as Bush and his gang would like to do, if you extrapolate healthcare, sometime during the first term of the next President, healthcare in the United States will hit 20 percent of GDP.

No society on earth has ever done that and survived. If it goes that way, more and more people will fall out of the system, and more and more companies will throw healthcare off the agenda where there is no collective bargaining. More of us will go to the collective bargaining table and fight for our very survival. We will be forced in many cases to choose between our jobs and healthcare. In the richest country on earth, at its richest moment in time, that should not be happening.

Bush is wasting more money in Iraq and has wasted more money in Iraq pursuing his stupid oil agenda than if we had provided healthcare for all for the last four years. (Applause)

So I am proud of the historical relationship between our two unions. I am proud that we share a common set of values. I am proud that we share a common vision for the future. I am proud that we are not afraid to fight for that vision. I am proud to say to you that it takes courage, it takes leadership and it takes perseverance. Nothing ever gets given to working people.

Think about the kind of world we would have if Gandhi had not walked across India for freedom, and when he got beaten down, if he wouldn't have gotten up and walked some more.

Think about what would have been the outcome if, when they threw Nelson Mandela in jail, he would have given up and his people would have given up. What kind of world would we have?

Think of what would have happened if, when they told Rosa Parks to get to the back of the bus, she had done that instead of saying, "Hell, no."

Think about the kind of world we would have if Martin Luther King had not had the leadership, courage and perseverance to take hundreds and thousands of people and walk across the bridge. What kind of world would we have had?

Think about what kind of world we would have had when they threw Lech Walesa out of his shipyard and he was on his face in the mud, if he had said, "Oh, my God, I think I'll write a letter." He got up and, with leadership and courage and perseverance, he built a movement that knocked down a wall.

Think about what would have happened in Brazil when Lula da Silva, as the leader of the Metal Workers Union said, "We want free, independent trade unions and we want democracy to replace fascism," and they threw his ass in jail. He didn't say, "I'm going to write a letter." He built a movement, he built a labor party, and today Lula da Silva is President of Brazil. (Applause)

Our fight for collective bargaining, our fight for workers' ability to join a union, our fight for healthcare for all, our fight for a decent trade policy that creates good jobs that supports families, not jobs that make us compete against other workers who have no rights.

Sisters and brothers, those fights are small compared to the fights I just talked about. If we link our arms, if we set our values where they are and not let anyone move them, if we determine we are going to do whatever it takes, whatever it takes to win, then some day we will sit on rocking chairs on porches and our kids will come and visit and they will have good jobs, they will have unions and they will have healthcare. And we can say our time on earth served a purpose. (Applause)

You will do that, and we will be with you. We will do it together. Together we can march, together we can fight, and together we can-- and will-- win because our cause is right.

. . . The delegates arose and applauded at length . . .

I want to just for thirty seconds introduce my friend and colleague and partner, Ken Neumann, who is the National Director of our union in Canada. He and Arnold have been working closely together, as have Larry and I, and today we are proud that we are going to officially create an alliance of our two unions in Canada, so that we can bring political and economic justice to Canadian workers as well.

So Ken, thirty seconds. (Applause)

KEN NEUMANN (National Director, USW Canada): Thank you very much, Leo and Larry. Thank you for the opportunity to come and say a few words. Sitting here this morning and seeing the installation of your President, Larry, and our President, Leo Gerard, I can tell you that we should all be proud because they are the trade union leaders of North America and basically the world. The kind of work they do on behalf of our members on both sides of the border, I know I am proud and I know that you as members of CWA should be proud as well.

I just want to say a few words in regard to the relationship that we have with your union and Canada, and the leadership that Lise and Arnold have provided-- most recently, the lockout. It's for that reason that we want to take that relationship one step further in regard to signing the strategic alliance.

If there's anyone who understands the relationship of strategic alliances, it's the Steelworkers. I can tell you we have, through the leadership of Leo Gerard, strategic alliances right around the world. We have them in Australia, Brazil, we have them in the U.K., we have some here in Canada. More recently, with the most recent struggle, we understand what strategic alliances are all about. We have to link arms around the world if we are going to take on the global capitalists who don't really care about workers, the communities that we live in.

So it's an honor for me to stand here today with our friends to be able to sign a strategic alliance with the CWA in the Canadian Region, to basically move our agenda forward here in Canada, and talk about the many issues that we can work on together to make sure that we continue to move the Labor Movement agenda ahead.

So with that, it's a great privilege and I look forward to signing this alliance document. Thank you. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thanks, Ken. It's a privilege to introduce our Canadian Director, Arnold Amber, a producer and reporter for years and years, active in our union, and now with us as a Director of our 8,000 members in Canada-- Arnold Amber, Canadian Director.

CANADIAN DIRECTOR ARNOLD AMBER: It was very difficult for me to want to sign this strategic alliance with the largest union in Canada. After all, what could we benefit from their 257,000 members? (Laughter) The other question you might be asking us is, what can we help them with?

Well, folks, I saw it this morning, because the three gentlemen from Steel came to our Convention this morning and met me downstairs as I was ushering the Mayor of Toronto onto the convention floor, and Leo started working on him. And by the time we reached this hall, Leo had struck an arrangement where fellows in Steel will meet with people from the Mayor's office on an extremely progressive idea, which the Mayor kept referring to as "brilliant," which will not only be of benefit to workers in Canada and the Steelworkers Union, but also to the fight against global warming.

I watched it all. It only took a minute or two. I said, "Look how lucky Leo Gerard is to be in an alliance with our little union up here." We get him to meet the people he really knows how to meet. And from our point of view, I watched an incredible operator operate in a very, very short time span.

So, it seems to me that even before we sign these documents they are happening. We can help them and I know deep in my heart that they can help us. At the same time, we are giving up nothing in terms of what we stand for in Canada. We stand for a progressive union. They are a progressive union. We stand for fighting the good battle on the political level, and they stand for that. We fight on protecting all our members across the country. They stand for that.

This is a match made in heaven from our point of view. As a matter of fact, I am so overwhelmed by it all, that I am beginning to feel the need-- and my friends in the Guild will understand this-- the incredible need to go out and buy a union jacket. (Laughter) Thank you.

. . . The delegates arose and applauded as they signed the Strategic Alliance Agreement . . .

PRESIDENT COHEN: Would the National Women's Committee please come to the platform. It is a pleasure to introduce the National Women's committee.

. . . As the members of the National Women's Committee were introduced, the delegates responded with a single clap of recognition . . .

Kathleen Hernandez, Vice President, CWA Local 1031; Linda Miller, President, CWA Local 2001; Vonda Hardy, President, CWA Local 3640; Tami Drollinger, President, CWA Local 4371; Jacqueline Fields, President, CWA Local 6505; Susan McAllister, Secretary-Treasurer, CWA Local 7704; Gayle Crawley, Vice President, CWA Local 9410; Mary Lou Schaffer, President, CWA Local 13550. I now recognize the Committee for their report.

. . . The members of the National Women's Committee proceeded to read the various sections of the report, as follows: . . .

DELEGATE KATHLEEN HERNANDEZ (Local 1031):

REPORT OF THE CWA NATIONAL WOMEN'S COMMITTEE

The CWA National Women's Committee met in Washington, D.C., March 21-23, 2007, prior to the 2007 CWA National Women's Conference. The theme of the National Women's Conference, held March 23-25, was "CWA Women On the Move: Stepping Up and Stepping Out." It was attended by approximately 190 delegates, staff and Executive Board members.

The Conference speakers included President Larry Cohen, Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Easterling, Executive Vice President Jeff Rechenbach, District 2 Vice President Peter G. Catucci, District 7 Vice President Annie Hill, Newspaper Guild President Linda Foley, AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson, and Councilwoman Valerie Ervin of Montgomery County, Maryland.

Workshops were led by Elisa Riordan, District 1 Area Director, on Domestic Violence; Mary O'Melveny, CWA General Counsel, on Sexual Harassment in the Workplace; Ilana Goldman, President of the Women's Campaign Forum on How to Run for Public Office, Deb Briceland-Betts, AARP, on Retirement Planning for Women; Officer Luis Hurtado, Montgomery County, Maryland, Department of Police, Community Outreach Section, on Identity Theft & Personal Safety.

Delegates were entertained with a special presentation by Doreen Griffin, a member of CWA Local 1033, who portrayed Rosa Parks. The presentation was titled "She's Got A Ticket to Ride" and told the story of Rosa Parks' refusal to give up her seat on the bus. It was a reminder that her example remains an inspiration to freedom-loving people everywhere.

The conference ended with District meetings. The District Women's Committee representative, the District coordinators and Vice Presidents who were present at the Conference discussed continuing plans for activities in their respective districts.

The Committee thanks all those who participated in the conference and helped make it a success. The Committee gives a special thanks to Gwend Johnson and Leslie Jackson of the Human and Civil Rights and Fair Practices Departments for their help in coordinating this conference.

The Committee would also like to thank the following members whose terms are ending this year: Linda Miller, District 2; Tami Drollinger, District 4; and Jackie Fields, District 6.

I would like to take a moment to add my personal comments about the diversity proposal. My name is Kathleen Hernandez. I'm a woman, a single mother, an Hispanic. I am educated and I am the Vice President of my local. I have to think twice before I take on leadership positions because of my role as a single parent. The plight of working families also falls on my shoulders. As a result, women like me often do not run for positions or are not considered. The diversity proposal will help bring new perspective to a Local's point of view, and opportunities to those who may not have the traditional passion for the Executive Board. I urge you to support this proposal. (Applause)

Support for the CWA Diversity Committee Proposal

The primary mission of CWA's National Women's Committee is to raise issues of special concern to women and to develop programs and strategies to make these issues a priority in the workplace, the community and, most importantly, our union.

The CWA National Women's Committee has identified various issues in past years which reflect the difficulties women are up against in society and the workplace. The Women's Committee feels that it is time to bridge the gap and raise awareness to allow women the same opportunities as our union brothers.

We are excited and enthusiastic that CWA is leading other unions in taking this issue to the forefront and taking steps to resolve diversity issues which will result in the leaders of CWA reflecting the diversity of our membership. Our members are composed of varying diverse ethnicities and gender and we feel strongly that adding their voices to the leadership of CWA is the only way to move forward. The union movement is strong and will become stronger as we support diversity in leadership roles today.

ACTION: The CWA National Women's Committee urges all CWA members to support and vote to approve the proposal of the CWA Committee on Executive Board Diversity so that CWA will move forward and continue to be the leader among unions today. We support the AFL-CIO Resolution No. 2, "A Diverse Movement Calls for Diverse Leadership." Let us all stand together as one union, diverse and strong. (Applause)

Domestic Violence

On March 13, 2007, we lost a dear friend and an ex-US Airways co-worker, Jana Rowell. Jana was hired in 1986, took the early out in 2005, and went to work for Allen Tate Realty. Jana was a beautiful soul. In her

prime at 41, she had everything going for her-- a successful career, two beautiful children, and a wealth of friends and support. She lost her life due to domestic violence. We will never forget that tragic day.

The estimated 5.3 million cases of domestic violence occurring among U.S. women 18 and older each year result in nearly two million injuries and more than one million deaths. This equates to eight million days of work, equivalent to more than 32,000 full-time jobs. On average, more than three women are murdered by their husbands or boyfriends in the United States every day.

It has been proven that 50-70 percent of men who abuse women also abuse children. A Child's Tears (ACT) (www.achildstears.org) is a website devoted to the effects of domestic violence on children. Between 3.3 and 10 million children witness acts of domestic violence every year. ACT has created an anonymous forum for those touched by domestic violence, and is giving them the opportunity to speak out about their situations and past experiences. It offers victims a place to come together and talk with others who understand.

Any hurtful or unwanted behavior perpetrated upon an individual by a partner is domestic violence. It also includes murder, negligent homicide, justifiable homicide, kidnapping, rape, assault or intimidation where the victim-offender relationship is based on marriage, family ties, a romantic relationship or a former marriage.

Domestic violence also includes battered men-- the hidden side of domestic violence. Approximately 835,000 men are battered each year. There are many reasons why we don't know more about domestic abuse and violence against men. First of all, the incidence of domestic violence reported by men appears to be so low that it is hard to get reliable estimates. In addition, it has taken years of advocacy and support to encourage women to report domestic violence. Virtually nothing has been done to encourage men to report abuse. The idea that men could be victims of domestic abuse and violence is so unthinkable that many men will not even attempt to report the situation.

Recognizing the signs of domestic violence starts with awareness. Locals in District 1 and District 4 have joint union-management training, awareness and education programs on domestic violence. Local 9509, a leader, has a grassroots program started by men dedicated to teaching male youth within our CWA families and surrounding communities that domestic violence is wrong.

ACTION: The CWA Women's Committee urges every delegate here today and every CWA member to speak out against domestic violence. Reach out to support someone who you believe is a victim. We need to become more involved and strengthen the grassroots movement on domestic violence. It is at this time, that the CWA Women's Committee is recommending that "We Stand Up, We Unite, We Educate and We Promote Awareness" to all our brothers and sisters. (Applause)

Stop Drive-Through Mastectomies

U.S. Senators Mary Landrieu (D-LA) and Olympia Snowe (R-ME), together with Congresswoman Rosa L. DeLauro (D-CT), renewed their support for breast cancer patients by reintroducing The Breast Cancer Patient Protection ACT in the 110th Congress.

The bipartisan Breast Cancer Patient Protection Act would end the practice of "drive-through" mastectomies, where women are sometimes forced to leave the hospital just hours following their physically and emotionally difficult surgeries, even if they and their doctors feel they are not ready to go home.

This Act would ensure a minimum hospital stay of 48 hours for any woman following a mastectomy. It does not mandate a 48-hour hospital stay nor does it set 48 hours as a maximum amount of time a woman can stay in the hospital. It simply ensures that any decision in favor of a shorter or longer hospital stay will be made by the patient and her doctor.

ACTION: The CWA National Women's Committee encourages all members to sign the online petition in support of the Breast Cancer Patient Protection Act at www.lifetimetv.com/breastcancer. The committee is also asking members to contact their representatives and senators to support this critical legislation.

Work and Family Bill of Rights

Families face a shortfall of time and money for care. A majority of America's children have no one at home full-time to care for them, while others, including the elderly and people with disabilities, increasingly need care. Jobs divide employees into those with high pay and benefits, but long hours and little time for family or leisure, and those with low wages, few benefits, insufficient flexibility and limited financial resources to care for their families. We can and should do better. Working families have fundamental rights to financially sustain and care for themselves and their families.

These rights include:

1. The right to annual paid family, medical and personal leave for full and part-time employees. Minimum standards for leave are:

a) 2 weeks of employee-funded paid personal leave for all employees to be taken at the time of their choosing.

b) 7 days of employee-funded sick time for personal or family illness.

c) 12 weeks of paid leave for parents of newborn, adoptive and foster children, and for the serious illness of the employee, a child, a parent or other relative, spouse or partner.

d) 16 hours of employer-funded leave to be taken in small increments for doctor's appointments, parent-teacher meetings, and other necessities.

2. The right to negotiated flexibility over work hours and place of work:

a) The ability to shift between full-time and reduced hours as family and personal circumstances change.

b) Equal pay rates and at least pro-rated benefits for reduced-hour employees.

c) No mandatory overtime.

d) Flexible schedules and place to work, mutually agreed upon by employees and employers.

3. The right to quality, affordable child and elder care.

4. The right to a minimum wage set at a living wage level and indexed to inflation.

5. The right to adequate health insurance for all.

These rights shall apply to all regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, age, place of birth, religion, sexual orientation, or marital, family or disability status.

ACTION: We as union members have taken many of our benefits for granted because of the contracts that cover us. We need to mobilize our locals to incorporate work and family legislation in our stewards' training and contract bargaining, and to use our committees and membership meetings to bring information to the membership about ways we can help advance working family issues. We need to ask ourselves, "How do we represent the member who wants a job promotion when she or he is being discriminated against by an employer for providing care for a sick family member or elderly parent?"

By broadening education on work and family issues, we can work together to help working families enjoy their family lives. (Applause)

Equal Pay for Women

While we continue to support equal pay, on average women still earn less than men regardless of their occupation, age or education. The majority of women still work in traditionally female jobs-- teaching, nursing, health care, clerical, and administrative sales and services. Women's jobs and economic prospects for the future are mixed at best. While women increasingly are likely to enter the paid labor force, they also are likely to continue to be represented in lower-status occupations, and that is just not good enough.

In 2005, women continued to earn only 77 cents on the dollar compared to their male counterparts. To match men's earnings for 2005, women would have had to work an extra hour for four months. In recognition of the inequity, Equal Pay Day was celebrated on April 24, 2007.

In 2000, the federal government established the Pay Equity Task Force to make recommendations for an effective pay equity law. The task force recognized that pay equity was a "fundamental human right." Their recommendations, released in May 2004, encouraged the adoption of a proactive pay equity law.

The Task Force acknowledges that employers have the responsibility to correct discriminatory wage disparities. It assigns an important role to unions where workers are represented, and mandates the creation of pay equity committees to prepare and monitor all pay equity plans in all workplaces, unionized or not.

The CWA National Women's Committee supports the Task Force report of 2004. We need to work hard to support legislation to implement its recommendations. Employer organizations have mounted a powerful lobby to delay the introduction of this needed equality legislation.

ACTION: The CWA National Women's Committee encourages CWA local leaders to acknowledge the continued problems associated with pay equity by supporting current legislation introduced by Senator Hillary Clinton (D-NY) on March 6, 2007, S.766, Paycheck Fairness Act of 2007. In addition, CWA local leaders should educate their members about training and education programs available to them, which have been bargained for by CWA, including CWA/NETT. (Applause)

Health Care - Women and Children

The 2004 Working Women's Survey established that "secure, affordable health care" is the number one concern of working women. This was demonstrated in all age and ethnic groups as well as in all geographical regions of the United States. Approximately 45 million people in the United States are without health insurance; one quarter of those are children. Eight out of ten of the uninsured are full-time workers and their dependent.

The rising cost of health care to employees and their employers is of great concern. Workers with collective bargaining agreements are more likely to have health insurance coverage. We all know that it is a very tough fight to contain the costs that employers seek to pass on to our brothers and sisters during negotiations and how difficult a union campaign for representation and obtaining a contract can be.

In order to obtain secure, affordable health care that covers dependents, we need to look at our collective bargaining agreements and beyond. We need to support a health care system that will provide universal coverage and comprehensive benefits, is affordable for all, is financed fairly with employer contributions and has a quality delivery system.

In the past few years, many states have sponsored health insurance initiatives that provide health care for children. Other states have instituted different forms of expanded access to health care. While a national health insurance program would meet many of the goals identified, there remains great resistance by insurance companies, employers and some of the public.

ACTION: The CWA National Women's Committee encourages CWA members and leaders to:

- 1) Work together with other groups/coalitions to support legislation (state and federal) to provide affordable health care.
- 2) Elect leaders who support health care and will challenge the insurance industry and employers and will fight to enact legislation.
- 3) Actively support and endorse state programs that provide affordable health care for our children.

An injury to one is an injury to all, no one should be without health care! (Applause)

Help Donate a Free Mammogram

The Breast Cancer Site is having trouble getting enough people to click on its site daily to meet its quota of donating at least one free mammogram a day to an underprivileged woman. It takes less than a minute to go to the site and click on "donating a mammogram" for free. This doesn't cost you anything. Corporate sponsors/advertisers use the number of daily visits to donate mammograms in exchange for advertising.

ACTION: The CWA Women's Committee strongly recommends that each delegate at this Convention help donate a free mammogram a day, through www.thebreastcancersite.com. Please support the site sponsors that make The Breast Cancer Site possible. They will pay for the mammograms your daily click makes possible. Please alert your local members to this program and ask them to tell at least ten family members and friends about this website.

The National Labor College (NLC)

The National Labor College (NLC) is located on a beautiful 47-acre campus in Silver Spring, Maryland. It began with the vision of George Meany that labor should establish its own college -- a national center that would provide continuous labor education for all union activists.

The American labor movement has, since its inception, placed a high value on educational opportunity. The National Labor College embodies this concept by providing working individuals with a place to realize their aspirations for higher education in a format which emphasizes both academic excellence and the realities of career and family.

At the National Labor College you can take classes that enable you to be an integral part of building your union. Those same union-building classes can start you on the path to finishing the bachelor's degree you have always yearned to complete. Start by contacting www.nlc.edu.

ACTION: The Committee recommends that our CWA women look into this program to help further your education.

DELEGATE MARY LOU SCHAFFER (Local 13550): Personally, diversity has touched me in different areas in my career. I have previously been in operator services, working as an overseas operator. Working with other operators across the globe can really open your eyes in relation to how people communicate.

Our CWA local union pushed for diversity training back in the late '80s, which is exactly what we needed. I realize how communication can be difficult when you are speaking to different cultures, dialects, diversities, and language barriers. Our union is made up of people of various ethnic backgrounds. I believe we need to recognize members and create a diverse union which has the ability to accept challenges and face issues head on.

We as a whole need to recognize what each member can give to the CWA movement, and join the AFL-CIO in building the groundwork to build a better union for tomorrow. Please join me in support of the Diversity Committee proposal for the good of CWA unions' and members' solidarity across the board. (Applause)

At this time, I would also like to welcome the following new Women's Committee Members: District 1,

Kathleen Hernandez; District 3, Vonda Hardy, and District 9, Gayle Crawley.

The National CWA Women's Committee submits this report for your support, education, information and action. We need your help to continue to support of women's issues in CWA, the labor movement, and our community.

President Cohen, we ask that you accept our report.

PRESIDENT COHEN: We accept your report. We applaud you for your wonderful work and your leadership.

At this time, I also want to recognize on Microphone No. 2, the Privilege microphone, Delegate Williams from Local 3204.

DELEGATE SHEILA WILLIAMS (Local 3204): I rise to thank the National Committee of Women for an excellent job and for addressing all of the issues that affect women daily. And I also thank you for a great conference that we held in March in Washington, D.C. Thank you. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thank you, Sheila.

I see someone wishing to speak at the "For" mike. There is not actually a resolution in front of us, so we will consider it the "Privilege" mike for this.

DELEGATE VICKI DiPAOLO (Local 9400): I rise in support of the report given by the Women's Committee. It was thorough and I hope that everyone here takes the actions recommended by the Committee.

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thank you. Again, thanks to the National Women's Committee for their leadership.

At this time, I would call on Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Easterling for some announcements prior to the recess. Barbara?

SECRETARY-TREASURER EASTERLING: Before I give you the announcements that we have, I want to read the letter we received from Nancy Pelosi.

"Dear President Cohen:

"It is my honor to greet you and the members of the Communications Workers of America on the occasion of your 69th Annual Convention. Earlier this year, the "New Directions" Congress embarked upon an aggressive agenda to affirmatively address our toughest challenges: working together to defend our country, restore accountability, strengthen and preserve our families, and grow our economy.

"An important element of growing the economy includes preserving the right of workers to join a union. Under your leadership, CWA was an early and committed partner in support of the House-passed Employee Free Choice Act guaranteeing workers the right to form a union. Your support was very important to our victory. Unions contribute to America's economic prosperity and global competitiveness. Millions of non-union workers enjoy better working conditions and wages because of the vigilance of union members.

"Thank you for standing with all workers in support of an increase in the minimum wage, the first in a decade. This increase becomes the law of the land on July 24th. Your Speed Matters initiative puts forth a goal that I share in assuring that all Americans have access to broadband access and affordability as a key component of the Democratic innovation agenda.

"First we must ensure the ability in the reports on broadband speed and price, and then we must develop a national broadband access map in order to target federal resources to reach our rural and underserved communities. These steps will be the first of many Democrats will take to ensure the United States has a

telecommunications infrastructure to bridge the digital divide.

“Thank you again for your continued support. I look forward to working with you to achieve our shared goals.

“Best regards,

“s/Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House” (Applause)

Now for the announcements: In addition to the bus schedule that you have, we have a revised schedule that should be at your places.

. . . Convention and hotel announcements by Secretary-Treasurer Easterling . . .

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thanks, Barbara. We are in recess until 1:30 p.m. Please be back in your seats at 1:30 p.m. Enjoy your lunch.

. . . Thereupon, the Convention recessed at 12:00 noon . . .

MONDAY AFTERNOON SESSION

The Convention reconvened at 1:30 p.m., CWA President Larry Cohen presiding.

PRESIDENT COHEN: Good afternoon. We're back. Fighting back.

Speaking of fighting back, we heard from Temporary Chair John Klein, and we heard from Chris Shelton, District 1 Vice President, and we met the marchers. We now get to see the marchers in a short video marching across New York, January 2nd to January 21st, supported all along the way by CWAers in every city between Buffalo and Albany. Chris and I were there with them at the end, first at Local 1118, and then on the coldest day of the year, four degrees, a wind chill of minus 25, and we marched the last leg.

So, without further introduction, please play the video.

. . . The delegates were shown a video of CWAers marching over 300 miles between Buffalo and Albany to protest the closing of New York area hospitals . . . (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: We are on the march.

Now it's a pleasure to introduce the hardworking National Committee on Equity.

. . . As the members of the Equity Committee were introduced, as follows, the delegates responded with a single clap of recognition . . .

PRESIDENT COHEN: Denise Hawley, Business Agent, CWA Local 1105; Daisy Brown, President, CWA Local 2300; Norman Daniels, President, CWA Local 3121; Pam Wynn, President, CWA Local 4309; Michele Luce, member, CWA Local 6215; Yoko Kuramoto-Eidsmoe, President, TNG-CWA Local 37082; Lupe Mercado, Executive Vice President, CWA Local 9421; Simone Harris, member, CWA Local 13101.

Also seated with the committee are Jetty Wells, Executive Vice President, Local 4009, and Keith Robinson, Steward, Local 6310, the Committee on Equity representatives who served on the Executive Board Diversity Committee.

I call on the committee for their report.

. . . The various members of the Committee took turns reading the report, as follows: . . .

REPORT OF THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON EQUITY

The National Committee on Equity recognizes that each year brings new opportunity to share with you the National Committee on Equity's Mission Statement:

The Mission of the National Committee on Equity is to develop and promote the CWA Civil Rights program. Our vision is to build a union where members of all cultures, religions, sexual orientations, gender, disabilities, ages and nationalities feel welcomed, respected and heard; and where the leadership reflects the diversity of our membership.

The duties and responsibilities of the National Committee on Equity are to:

1. Provide guidance and information to the districts and locals on the CWA Civil Rights program.
2. Keep the national CWA Executive Board apprised of civil rights issues that affect our members and communities, and when necessary, offer a course of action.
3. Research, report and make recommendations or give direction to the convention delegates on current civil rights issues.

The National Committee on Equity convention report lays the foundation of the CWA Civil Rights agenda for the upcoming year. Local Committees on Equity are encouraged to use the report as a working document to move the Civil Rights agenda in the districts.

SUPPORT. . .EXECUTIVE BOARD DIVERSITY PROPOSAL

At the 2004 National Civil Rights and Equity conference in Jacksonville, Florida, then Executive Vice President Larry Cohen, while addressing the participants, asked us to “Get Up, Stand Up, Stand Up for your Rights! Get Up, Stand Up, Don’t Give Up the Fight!” (Lyrics from a 1973 song by the legendary Bob Marley.) Today, President Larry Cohen along with the CWA Committee on Executive Board Diversity, under the leadership of Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Easterling, are standing up. They are standing up for change and are asking that the delegates support the proposal to add four at-large diversity board members to the CWA Executive Board. The proposal calls for at least three members to be persons of color (African-American, Asian, Latino, et cetera) and at least two should be women.

Delegate June L. Haskin, CWA Local 4309, made a motion calling for minorities and women representation on the Executive Board. Delegate Haskin argued that “the rhythm of the times dictates that we should update our structure keeping with our tradition as being a progressive union.”

In 1983, in response to a recommendation to the National Committee on the Future, convention delegates made recommendations to add a fourth Executive Vice President. This position was created with hope and expectation that a woman would be elected.

Delegate Marie Ford, Local 1180, speaks on the motion: “We as minorities and women are very much a part of the CWA family, and I think it is time that this Union recognized us and have us fully participate in the functioning of the Union, which includes a person at the decision-making level having input into what happens in this Union. . .Let us please give minorities and women a full partnership.”

Despite decades of progress, CWA has not met its goal: a leadership that reflects the membership. While some effort has been made to achieve this goal, it has been stopped by a “plexiglas ceiling” that did not allow minorities opportunities to move into national leadership levels of CWA.

Today, however, the National Committee on Equity applauds the CWA Diversity Committee for all of the hard work that has been put into addressing a 34-year-old problem. The National Committee on Equity believes that inclusion is not just a civil right but a CWA right. (Applause)

Join us in supporting the Diversity Committee proposal to add diversity seats to the CWA Executive Board. This Committee believes that this is a progressive step in the right direction. (Applause)

Respect, Equality, Dignity

As union members, we must say 'No' to racism. Racism is attitudes, practices, and other factors that demean and disadvantage people because of their race, ethnicity or color. Racial and ethnic slurs and jokes are but a few examples of racism. Stereotyping, when applied to people, refers to forming an instant and permanent picture of a group of people, usually based on false or incomplete information.

Discrimination usually results from prejudice or stereotypes. No one should have to suffer such abuse. We all should believe and support the ideal that no person should be targeted and held up for public ridicule, scorned or shamed because of his/her race or gender.

How many times, while growing up, did you hear the old idiom, “Sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never hurt me”? Words spoken as sexual and/or racial slurs do hurt, like the attack by Don Imus on the Rutgers University Women’s Basketball Team. All African American women-- all women-- who heard his remarks directly or on replays felt the hurt. What has been tolerated in the past from celebrities, rap artists, radio personalities and even the person next door is no longer acceptable. We must not let the self-esteem of

these young women be crippled by this immoral act as they aspire to reach beyond sports to become doctors, attorneys, political activists and journalists.

Sponsorship and funding of our public air waves comes mainly from corporate advertising, because corporations have the "big bucks." The Fortune 100 Corporations (including AT&T and Verizon) understand the value of diversity. Diversity means all that come to the table should be treated fairly and equitably.

Today, to blatantly offend one or more groups will likely result in offending individuals or communities who have the power to affect advertising. The last thing advertisers want to do is to offend its consumer base, as we saw in the mass exodus of advertisers in the Imus incident. Both CBS and MSNBC had announced that Imus would be suspended for two weeks for his offenses until business, who were hearing from consumers, began canceling their sponsorship and advertising from his program.

We must appeal to our leaders in Congress-- first, urging them to expand FCC jurisdiction over obscene, indecent and profane material to cover wireless, cable and the internet. Second, we must resist advertising by corporations that includes and supports obscene, indecent and profane lyrics and images. Third, we must adequately fund the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission so that it protects and preserves fair employment practices.

Freedom and equality sometimes come with a very high price tag. In order to preserve our freedom, we must speak out about what offends us and create new standards of decency free of gratuitous race and gender exploitation. This can be accomplished by voting with our dollars and with our ballots. The firing of Don Imus and the recent suspension of other "shock jocks" is the beginning of such accountability. Groups like the NAACP, the National Congress of Women, and the National Organization for Women have been fighting these issues for many years. We must step up the pressure to maintain respect, dignity, decency and equity as declared by the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights. (Applause)

Eliminating Health Care Disparities

It has been said that we live in the best country in the world. That might be true, but we are far behind many other countries in providing health care for all citizens. We can say that without our Union, CWA, we would not have the health care benefits that we currently enjoy. For many citizens of the United States, especially minorities, access to health care is either non-existent or unacceptable.

Recent studies have shown that despite steady improvements in the overall health of U.S. citizens, racial and ethnic minorities experience a lower quality of health services and are less likely to receive routine medical procedures. Minorities have higher rates of morbidity and mortality than non-minorities. Disparities in health care exist even when controlling for gender, condition, age and socio-economic status.

The 1998 Presidential Initiative on Race and Health was the first national commitment to eliminate health disparities between majority and minority population groups. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, racial and ethnic minority populations will increase to 40 percent of the U.S. population by the year 2030. Keeping this in mind, a stronger commitment to better understanding the health disparities and to the development of new diagnostics, treatment and preventative strategies is a sound investment for our country.

We must discern where the disparities exist, define the scope of the problem and identify and evaluate new interventions to reduce and eliminate them. The sources of these disparities are many, complex and rooted in an inequitable health care system. One contributing factor is the lack of access to health care by minority population groups. Since the 1998 Presidential Initiative, very little has been done to improve the health care system. The disparities in the health care system need the attention of everyone involved, including health care practitioners, administrators, governmental policy makers and consumers.

The need for health care reform for all is a very important issue. CWA has always been a leader in health care for our members. We must support legislation and coalition partners that will help keep this issue on the front burner in our country. We need to make sure that we not only get health care reform but also "health

care that performs" for everyone. (Applause)

Genocide in Darfur

Darfur is a region of far western Sudan. Sudan, Africa's largest country in land area, is dominated by the Nile and its tributaries, with mountains rising along its Red Sea coast and along the western border with Chad. Sudan's name in Arabic means "land of the blacks."

Since its independence from Britain in 1956, a north-south war has controlled Sudan's history pitting Arab Muslims in the northern desert against black Christians and animists in the southern wetlands. The country is further divided with hundreds of black, Arab, and non-Arab ethnicities, tribes, and languages.

The Darfur conflict is a complex crisis in the western region of Sudan. Since early 2003, Sudanese government forces and ethnic militias called "Janjaweed" have engaged in an armed conflict with rebel groups of the Sudanese Liberation Army/Movement and the Justice and Equality Movement. As part of its operations against the rebels, government forces have waged a systematic campaign of "ethnic cleansing" against the civilian population who are members of the same ethnic groups as the rebels.

The conflict has been described as both "ethnic cleansing" and "genocide" by the mass media. It is estimated that as many as 450,000 people are dead from the violence and disease. The International Rescue Committee has reported that thousands of women and girls were raped and sexually assaulted. Raped women are considered unclean and are ostracized. To further increase the humiliation to these women and their families, they are raped in public places.

In April 2004, a cease fire agreement between the Sudanese government and rebel groups was established for a period of 60 days while they worked towards lasting peace. However, the agreement was constantly violated by all sides of the conflict. Currently there are no forces in Darfur to protect civilians and their communities from the ongoing violence.

The long-term problem in Darfur is the Sudanese government and its pursuit of policies that target civilians. Today there is an urgent need for greater numbers of international forces in Darfur. An international force that can stop attacks on the civilian population and provide checks and balances on the Sudanese government to end their policies and practices through sanctions and other measures is desperately needed.

President Bush has threatened to use sanctions if the situation in Darfur does not improve. Those sanctions would include restrictions of trade and dollar transactions with the Sudanese government and 29 Sudanese businesses.

It is unacceptable to have dealings with countries that have no respect for women or human rights. It is time now for us to take a stand and end all monetary ties with the Sudanese government until it restores the rights of millions of people to live in dignity and respect.

The National Committee on Equity urges CWA members as trade unionists and labor leaders to help bring U.S. labor's attention to the problems of Darfur. The Committee further urges all U.S. companies to refuse to trade or conduct business with Sudan until the genocide ceases. We call on our government to fully support the work of the International Criminal Court to indict the perpetrators of this genocide. It is time for justice, and only justice can bring peace. Together we can make a difference in the lives of millions of people who desperately need our help. (Applause)

DELEGATE MICHELE LUCE (Local 6215): Good afternoon, Toronto. I was prepared today to give you a talk about affirmative action, about the still pressing need for affirmative action, and to warn you about a gentleman named Ward Connerly who was traveling state to state in the United States trying to overturn affirmative action through state referendum.

But the Bush court-- or the Roberts' court-- has seen fit to throw out *Brown vs. the Board of Education*, effectively nullifying education for all and equal education, and going backward to separate, but equal, and

making Ward Connerly a success story.

So, I will instead this afternoon tell you about affirmative action as it has pertained to my family and to me personally. In the 1880s, Chris Flood and Kathy Beard-Flood sailed from Kilkenny, Ireland, and they gave birth to my grandfather, Michael Christopher Flood, here in Toronto. He grew up, he learned the construction trade, he became a wire lather and worked on tall buildings.

He worked in San Francisco after the fire of 1906. He made his way to Worcester, Mass., and met his bride, Helga Steele. They then proceeded to New York City and raised two boys. The sort of discrimination that my granddad then experienced was "No Irish need apply."

But did he ever dream that in 1959 his future daughter-in-law would be told by an army captain in Aberdeen, Texas, "I know you're doing your job, and very well, and your boss' job, and very well. But you will never attain that grade in civil service because, and only because, you're a woman."

That was in 1959. Fortunately, in 1960 we elected one John Fitzgerald Kennedy, and in 1961 he did a good thing with an Executive Order. He created the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and my mother went from GS-3, to 5, to 7, to 9, and in 1982 retired as a GS-11, civil service for the United States Army. (Applause)

I know that our people, our troops in Vietnam, were very glad that there was a competent and well-placed woman there, or a hard-working individual to get their Bell helicopter parts there to them when they needed them until they could come home.

Neither did granddad ever dream that his future granddaughter would need something called the 1973 Rehabilitation Act in order to obtain a job.

The state commission for the blind in Texas had been trying to tell Southwestern Bell for years that anybody, including a blind person, could say, "What number did you dial, please? Thank you." (Applause)

But it took federal law, and in 1976 I was hired on in Houston, Local 6222 (applause) and then proceeded on to Dallas. I know that Southwestern Bell has benefited from my work ethic, which comes from my gene pool, and I feel that my union, both the Houston local and the Dallas local of which I am now a member, have obviously benefited or I wouldn't be sitting here today.

You are about to have something in front of you that is sort of an affirmative action proposal. It just might work, eh? (Laughter and applause) If not us, who? If not now, when? Thank you very much. (Applause)

From the "Union Difference" to Making a Difference

The civil-rights and labor leader A. Philip Randolph once said, "The essence of trade unionism is social uplift. The labor movement has been the haven for the dispossessed, the despised, the neglected, the downtrodden, and the poor."

Unions have helped our society make great strides toward equality and uplift, but we are not there yet. In 2006, the average U.S. union member made \$833 a week; non-union workers made \$642. Union-represented workers also are far more likely to have benefits that other workers do not.

While this "union difference" is often rightly touted as a measure of the successes of the labor movement, it is also an indication of how far we have yet to go. There are still many millions of workers who are being left behind, and those left behind are disproportionately women and people of color whose incomes continue to lag behind those of their white brothers.

Race and gender are not comfortable topics, so our enemies try to make us believe that even discussing them is a way of expressing separatism. It is essential for us to address these issues in order to ensure fair and decent compensation and conditions for all workers.

As a movement we must say to all workers that, regardless of our differences, we are as one when fighting against injustice. Often, that means engaging in battles that do not affect each of us individually in the same way, because, "When you take on one of us, you take on all of us." (Applause)

We must have the courage to face the ghosts of a sometimes ugly past and be unafraid of the discomfort of tackling these issues in the present in order to build a future in which we will someday have the luxury to be truly "color-blind."

Here's how we can make a difference:

1) Choose organizing targets in shops that employ a higher percentage of minorities, women and low-wage workers. Such an effort would show that the modern labor movement is serious about correcting societal inequities.

From a strategic perspective, such campaigns are also much more likely to succeed. A 2005 study found that 77 percent of African Americans and 71 percent of Latinos would be likely to vote for union representation, compared to just 53 percent of the general workforce. Support for unions also is strong among low-wage workers. 79 percent of those whose annual household incomes are lower than \$30,000 agree that "labor unions are necessary to protect the working person." Just 57 percent of those whose incomes exceed \$75,000 agree.

2. Work for increases in the minimum wage and universal health care. Most union contracts provide compensation and benefits above basic levels. This fight is about what we demand for our friends and families and communities. This is about the kind of society that we as union members choose to live in and work to achieve.

3. Support the Fair Pay Act of 2007 and the Paycheck Fairness Act of 2007. The Fair Pay Act would prohibit discrimination on the basis of gender, race, and national origin for equivalent jobs.

4. Support the international workers' movement and give to the Eduardo Diaz Worker-to-Worker program. The issues of outsourcing and immigration will remain problematic for workers around the world until we address the poverty and power imbalances that our brothers and sisters in other countries face. If workers join together in common cause, our corporate masters will no longer be able to pit groups of workers against each other.

In a recent article, Black Agenda Report executive editor Glen Ford acknowledges that labor's enemies are powerful and determined. But, he points out, "these self-serving oligarchs. . . have a great weakness. They are numerically few, and rely on the rest of society to form the basis of the over privileged lives they lead. When society fights back, the rich are in trouble."

Fairness is a union value. And I support the diversity proposal which will help CWA continue in this important work. (Applause)

A Diverse Nation calls for Diverse Leadership

Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton, Bill Richardson-- the field of minority and female candidates for President has never been so strong. But the question remains: Despite the presence of an African-American, a woman and a Latino, will America in 2008 elect yet another male President of northern European descent?

Meanwhile, indicators of change are encouraging. A 2005 poll by Siena Research Institute/Hearst Newspaper showed 81 percent of respondents would vote for a female candidate. A CBS News/*New York Times* poll found that nearly all Americans say that they would support a woman from their own party. Both Democratic and Republican pollsters have noted similar sentiments.

Nonetheless, the fact remains that from its inception, the Presidency has always been an exclusive club.

This club was made up of males of northern European origin, with the majority of them of Protestant faith. All but one (James Buchanan) were married and only Ronald Reagan was divorced.

In addition to their gender, racial, ethnic and religious homogeneity, Presidents have come from only a few states. They have shifted from the East to the South and West as we migrated; however, for more than 40 years, with the exception of Gerald Ford (Nebraska born, grew up in Michigan), all Presidents have come from Southern or Western States. More than half of the Presidents, 23 out of 42, were born in one of four states: Virginia (eight); Ohio (seven), Massachusetts (four), and New York (four).

The question that we as union members must ask ourselves today is: Are we ready to change these patterns? There is no excuse for our country to not have a President who is a woman or a person of color. (Applause) Active participation in government is one of the principles upon which this country was founded. Please make an effort to hear about the 2008 Presidential candidates and vote. The first step to change is action!

Recuerden herida a uno es herida a todos. Basta con discriminacion porque sí, se puede! (Applause)

Minority Leadership Institute -
One Week Internship is a Plus!

In 2005 the National Committee on Equity presented a proposal to incorporate a one-week internship as part of the agenda for the Minority Leadership Institute (MLI). The Minority Leadership Institute is a three-week intensive study program that is designed to increase the involvement of minorities at all levels of the union. Ten local union candidates are chosen each year, from each District and two from our sector units, to participate in a 21-day study program. The participants receive rigorous training in leadership development, labor economics, labor law, organizing and other topics. In 2006 the study program was reduced to two weeks and the final week of this elaborate agenda is now dedicated to a district internship.

The one-week internship was recommended by the National Committee on Equity and adopted by the National Executive Board and delegates to help provide a mentoring system for participants returning from the training. Each district was assigned a mentor for each MLI participant. Each participant scheduled one week of training to work alongside her or his mentor at the District level. The foundation of the teaching was to focus on organizing and political action.

Most participants completed their district level training within four months of attending the program in September 2006. Graduates were able to provide assistance with political campaigns, organizing and other duties as assigned. Several were instrumental in getting labor friendly candidates elected in the 2006 elections. Their assistance enabled the Democrats to take control of Congress. Graduates also assisted in organizing campaigns. One of the campaigns, led by an MLI graduate, added a new unit to the CWA family, Diamond State Youth Inc., of Wilmington, Delaware, and increased our membership, essential to the future of CWA. Truly these graduates, with the assistance of the one-week internship, now understand all three parts of the CWA Triangle and its importance.

The National Committee on Equity recognizes and understands the importance of a minority presence within the CWA footprint. The MLI program has assisted in this mission. Maintaining and organizing a continuous agenda that now includes the one-week internship will not only assist us in this mission but afford each participant the opportunity to receive hands-on teaching, a powerful tool for learning. (Applause)

President Cohen, you have heard the committee report. We move for the adoption of the report.

PRESIDENT COHEN: The report is received. It actually does not need adoption because it is your report. The report is received. We all appreciate it, and before we move on and hear from Jetty and Keith, I recognize Delegate Green, at the Privilege mike.

DELEGATE FREDDIE GREEN (Local 3410): I rise to thank the Committee on Equity for its excellent report, and to thank them again for all the hard work and diligence they put into this report. I hope that we will

all take time out to read it, and if you didn't read it yet, I am sure you heard it from them. They have worked hard on it. So again, thank you. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thank you, Freddie.

And now we will hear from Jetty Wells and Keith Robinson, who are the Committee's representatives to the Committee on Executive Board Diversity. Jetty?

DELEGATE JETTY L. WELLS (Local 4009): Brothers and sisters, my name is Jetty Wells. I have been a member of this great union for some 38 years. Out of those 38 years, I have had to struggle and fight most of them to get to the position that I hold today in my local, which is Executive Vice President. I am disappointed to be addressing this great union about the diversity issue with the delegates of this union still all these years later. I served on the Diversity Committee because it is a subject very close and important to me and, I believe, an issue that's critical to our union.

My question is, when it comes to selecting union leaders at other levels in our union, why not me or any other member who has worked in the union-- on the picket line or organizing to help this union to grow its membership, those who have worked long hours on the campaign trails for state and national leaders, and continue to put in long hours representing our CWA members.

My story is no different than any other hard-working member. The exception is the color of my skin. I am left out of that equation, because I don't fit the typical mold. That sends a clear message to me and many of my brothers and sisters that it's okay for me to pay dues; it's okay for me to walk the picket lines; it's okay to spend endless hours organizing and campaigning for legislation and important issues; but that I am not good enough for anything else in the union. Again, that's an attitude with no place in our great union. (Applause)

Throughout our union, we have had two African Americans on our Executive Board-- not at the same time, mind you. We can all have our own theory as to why that is, but I have to tell you it makes me feel less a part of this union. It makes me feel like an outsider. I say to you, CWA is missing out on a valuable, untapped resource of people if you continue to ignore this issue. It will not go away. It will continue to surface time and time again, and eventually we will be looked upon as a union that does not believe in equality for all.

Some have said the diversity proposal is divisive. I think the exact opposite. From where I sit, it is unifying. It is bringing all of our voices to the Executive Board.

Let's take this opportunity to move forward in a positive manner. I urge each of you to consider this diversity proposal and vote "yes," keeping in mind-- if not now, when? (Applause)

BROTHER KEITH ROBINSON (Local 6310): Good afternoon, brothers and sisters.

Our union, The Communications Workers of America, has always been a leader in the labor movement. We have had a history of originating innovative solutions that tackle tough issues created by the changing dynamics of Corporate America. You, the delegates of this distinguished Convention, have the opportunity to transform the landscape of labor before you. We have an opportunity to stand out from other unions across the country and be recognized as the most progressive union in the labor movement.

Being an activist in the community and a member of several labor constituency groups, I have had discussions regarding the differences between CWA and other unions. Let me tell you, there is much to talk about. However, after many conversations with many people concerning CWA efforts to provide opportunities to minorities for advancement within the national union's leadership, it makes me proud to know that CWA is an inspiration to other unions and is continually given recognition for our diversity programs.

Now, this moment, is the time to take the next step at showing labor organizations around the nation that once again CWA has a vision to change the faces of labor for leadership and beyond. The diversity proposal, which is to add four at-large diversity seats, gives substance to the works and programs we've talked about for so long.

I have always been a big baseball fan. I'm a bigger World Series Champion St. Louis Cardinals fan. I would like to use a baseball analogy to sum up my support statement. I don't know if we all here today remember Los Angeles Dodgers Executive, Branch Rickey. Wesley Branch Rickey was an innovative Major League Baseball executive best known for a few things: breaking baseball's color barrier by signing the first African-American player, Jackie Robinson, and later drafting the first Hispanic superstar, Roberto Clemente, and creating the framework for the modern minor league farm system. He took a chance on minority and now 40-some years later, history speaks for itself.

CWA now has been given the opportunity to become an MVP of the labor movement. We have always stepped up to the plate when challenged and came up with the big hit, no matter what the situation. CWA has an opportunity at this moment to be a part of a bigger game than baseball.

Take this opportunity and believe that minorities and women can transform leadership. Support the Diversity Proposal today. If not now, when? (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: I thank the Committee on Equity and Keith and Jetty for their service to our union. Thank you. (Applause)

Now, it is my pleasure to introduce my brother and our Executive Vice President, Jeff Rechenbach. We all, many of us, have worked with Jeff for years, one of the youngest presidents ever elected as president of a large local. He was a staff rep in District 4, then Vice President of District 4. In the last two years, for me he has been more than a brother, more than a friend, more than an advisor.

As I said earlier, most of what we do, we do together. Almost everything that I do I do with Jeff. Jeff came up with the notion of "Ready for the Future," starting with a blank sheet of paper. Using our imagination, nothing could hold us back. Jeff now heads up our National Telecom Office, one of the ten points or eleven points from Ready for the Future, and in just a few months, has helped us bring together more than ever ten telecom VPs, working together, not only on policy issues and bargaining issues and organizing issues, but virtually reinventing together what our 300,000 telecom members can make of our future.

He heads up our departments of politics, legislation and human rights and the work that we will do, the critical work to continue to be on the march for political change in the USA.

I could go on, but more importantly, it's my pleasure now to introduce our Executive Vice President.

. . . The delegates arose and applauded at length . . .

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT JEFF RECHENBACH: Thank you. Thank you, Larry, for that wonderful introduction. You will be comforted to know that we do go to separate apartments at night. (Laughter) We do spend a lot of time together, though.

And thanks to all of you for that warm welcome. I am pleased and honored to be able to stand before the Convention of our union and share just a few thoughts this afternoon. But before I do that, I have to tell you what an incredible experience it has been to be able to work with Larry Cohen, Barbara Easterling, and the entire Executive Board over the past two years. And some of those Executive Board members, as you have heard in the past, are exceptional. (Laughter) I'll let you figure out who's who.

Larry, in particular, has been absolutely relentless in his pursuit of justice for our members and for workers in general. He has, in less than two years, become the leading voice for the right to collective bargaining and respect for labor in general in our nation's capital.

Our offices are connected, so I hear him daily going toe-to-toe with leaders of industry, government, and academia, moving them to the recognition that the survival of the middle class in our nation is dependent entirely on the growth of the labor movement.

What can I say about my fellow Ohioan, Barbara Easterling? You haven't been at a meeting or event of any kind in Washington, D.C. until you have been to one with Barbara. She brings an instant electricity to any room, and it is a riot to watch one Senator, Congressman, and National Union President after another coming over to pay homage, virtually genuflecting in front of her. Yes, it's true. (Applause)

Barbara is more than the best Secretary-Treasurer in the labor movement; she is the face of CWA on Capitol Hill, and we are so very fortunate to have her on our team.

How many of you were at this year's Legislative Political Conference? Let me see hands. A pretty fair amount. Those that missed it, you missed a great experience. You should make it a point to be at next year's conference. You will work hard there, but you will also get a wealth of insight and information.

Now, those of you who were there might remember that I proposed a little contest. No, it wasn't a Seinfeld-type contest. This contest was to see who could come closest to predicting the date that President Bush would commute or pardon Scooter Libby. Well, a dozen of you missed it by less than 30 days, but one of you missed it by only one day, predicting that Scooter Libby-- and doesn't it break your heart that a guy with a nickname of Scooter isn't going to the joint? (Laughter)

Really, I guess it's no surprise to learn that the President would commute a sentence, given how much trouble he has completing them. (Laughter and applause)

But I digress. One of our CWA delegates predicted that Scooter Libby would be taken care of by George Bush on July 1st of this year, just one day before it actually happened-- Beth Siau of Local 3411 in Shreveport, Louisiana. Beth, congratulations. (Applause) Is Beth here?

As a reward, I've got an autographed copy of Louisiana native James Carville's book, "Buck Up, Suck Up, and Come Back When You Foul Up." (Laughter)

What did you think I was going to say? There are families here.

At any rate, I have an autographed copy of that book for Beth. Beth, nice work. Come up to the podium later this afternoon and I will give you your prize.

Our Legislative/Political Conference this year was a stepping off point for a new and dynamic direction that our union will take. No longer can we be content to sit on the sidelines and simply hope for the best. No longer can we relax and know that someone else is doing the work of knocking on doors or making phone calls. And no longer can we tolerate excuses for why we cannot, as leaders of our union, go out and ask CWA members to contribute to COPE.

You have heard President Cohen, with more eloquence and passion than I can possibly muster, describe the life-and-death struggle that we are in as a movement. As you heard Larry tell you this morning that back when our grandparents and great-grandparents fought for the passage of the Wagner Act-- which was signed into law, by the way, 72 years ago this month-- a higher percentage of Americans belonged to unions than do today.

Think about that: a larger percentage of the private sector workforce was in unions in 1935 than in 2007, and that was in the intervening years, with the passage of the law designed to promote collective bargaining.

Lawmakers back then realized that the growth of the middle class was completely dependent on the growth of collective bargaining and that workers had to be protected from corporate abuse in their exercise of that right.

The Employee Free Choice Act is quite simply our last, best hope. Now, I know Larry has started calling it the "Miller Act," after its primary co-sponsor. But I can tell you firsthand, and without reservation, that this legislation would still be sitting in the Congressional "to do" box if not for the drive and determination of our President, Larry Cohen. (Applause)

When this Act is passed and signed into law, it may be referred to as the Employee Free Choice Act or it may be the Miller Act or even the Kennedy-Miller Act; but for all of us in the CWA, it will be known as the "Cohen Act."

But we have miles to go before we sleep on this one. Larry has already outlined some of the broader efforts in that strategy. Let me share with you this morning-- this afternoon, for those of you who weren't paying attention to the schedule. I was thinking it was going to be morning, now it's afternoon. To those of you who went to lunch early thinking you were going to miss my speech-- tough. (Laughter)

Let me share with you a plan to help us build our political power. As with everything we do as a union, building political power begins and ends, not with Larry, not with Barbara, not with our district, sector, and division vice presidents, but with each and every one of you, our members. Together we have to educate and engage our members to get them to make that difference for you. It won't come easy, but it can be done.

You have heard already about the exciting alliance for our Canadian members with the Steelworkers and the political implications that that will have for our members here in Canada. Now I want to lay out for you a four-point program that I hope will activate our stewards and members south of the border-- the Canadian border, that is-- as never before in the legislative, political arena.

First, we will go directly to our members and ask them what they think of the candidates for President of the United States. As a part of that process, many of you have been asked to pose a question that you would like the candidates to answer. The very best five or six of those questions will be sent to all of the candidates, asking them to respond.

And actually, another way you can help us with that program right now, as we put the question of the Employee Free Choice Act to the presidential candidates. On the tables in front of you this morning were three postcards, just waiting for you to fill them out.

Let me read you the resolved in it.

"Dear-- whatever presidential candidate you want to put in that line-- we are witnessing the destruction of the American middle class as the rights of workers to bargain collectively are being eroded on a daily basis. The Employee Free Choice Act would restore fairness to our broken system. We were excited that EFCA received overwhelming support in this House and 51 votes in the Senate.

"As a potential supporter of your presidential campaign, I would like to know not just whether you will sign this bill, but exactly what leadership effort you would take to get that legislation to your desk for that all-important signature in order to avoid a filibuster in the Senate.

"The Communications Workers of America will be posting those responses from each presidential candidate on our website."

I want you to select three presidential candidates that you would like to put this question to. Don't forget, as Larry mentioned earlier, 25 percent of our members still vote Republican so feel free to toss one their way as well. But fill this out for three presidential candidates and we will collect those, and that question will be put to those candidates. It will not be just, "Will you sign this into law," but "what will you do, what will you, John Edwards, Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama, what will you do as President of the United States to make sure that it gets through the Congress and to your desk? How will you beat the filibuster that Corporate America is sure to finance?"

We must hold their feet to the fire on this issue. (Applause) We will collect all those cards and have them delivered to each candidate with a cover letter from the Executive Board asking them for a response. Every candidate will have to put it on the line for our members. And those responses, or their lack thereof, along with the responses to the best questions that you asked in the video questionnaire that is circulating in the back, will be posted on our website for our members to see. And then, in a historic first, our members will be polled

to see who they would like to see as the next President of the United States.

We hope to accomplish two things by this: first, getting our members to learn more about the issues; and second, to hear what they are thinking. This should be interactive. This should be two ways. We should be putting information out. We should be getting information back from them.

The second part of the plan involves getting some of our members-- some of you, hopefully-- to run as delegates to the political conventions. We want to be part of that decision-making process, and that means having leaders like yourselves at the table. A program is being developed to assist you with the process of running as a delegate from your state.

Then at the grassroots level, we are looking to identify 50 states or congressional districts where we can make a difference. In each of those states or districts we want to find at least fifty CWA members or their families who will be willing to donate a minimum of ten hours of their time over the next sixteen months to help turn this country around.

Fifty districts times fifty activist volunteers means 2,500 activists. That may sound like a tall order but, frankly, I think it is modest when you consider we are a union well over half a million strong. It is a goal that we can reach quickly and expand before the November 2008 elections. There is a pledge card inside of your kit that I am asking all of you to take back to your locals and solicit your members to sign up.

The fourth and final part of the program relates to what former California politician Jessie Unruh called the "Mother's Milk of Politics-- Money." We will never be able to compete dollar-for-dollar with the big-money interests in this nation. That's especially true when you realize that the wealthiest one percent of Americans control 20 percent of the wealth of this nation, while the poorest 20 percent of Americans control 3.4 percent of the wealth in this nation.

Competing against that kind of money is difficult, but not impossible. But it means that we have to connect with more CWA members every single day and convince them of just how serious this crisis we are in today is.

And so, we are launching "\$8 in '08," asking our U.S. members-- I know you Canadians would gladly give to change the political climate in the U.S., but that is against the law. So we are asking U.S. members to give \$8 a month, or \$2 a week, to help our cause. We were going to call it \$2 a week in '08, but "\$8 in '08" sounded better.

We all know we should do this work because it is the right thing to do. But to give a little added incentive, the local in each district, each sector and each division with the best performance in getting its members to sign up on our \$8 in '08 program will get to be part of a photo op with the CWA-endorsed candidate for President at our 2008 Legislative Conference or Convention.

We will be asking every CWA member to contribute \$8 a month to help us win the fight for collective bargaining rights, to win the battle for fair trade and good jobs, to protect our pensions and the pensions of our retirees, and to overhaul a broken healthcare system.

Which leads me to my last topic, healthcare. As a union leader, you didn't have to go to see Michael Moore's "Sicko" to know that our nation's healthcare is a mess. At every single negotiations we have been involved in over the past ten years, either the healthcare of our members or the healthcare of our retirees has been the major point of conflict. We missed an opportunity in the early '90s to deal with this issue. Well, shame on us if we miss that opportunity in 2009. (Applause)

But the work we will need to do cannot wait to begin then. It must start now, and that is why President Cohen has asked Vice President Annie Hill to head up an Executive Board Task Force to look into the creation of a Strategic Industry Fund project to educate our members and shape the debate over healthcare in our nation.

Based on this early success of our Strategic Industry Funds at Verizon, where we stopped a line giveaway in Virginia by activists throughout that state coming together and pressuring the Governor to veto a giveaway bill that Verizon sponsored, where politicians across the country have sent letters to Seidenberg protesting the treatment of workers and their lack of respect for workers' rights to organize, where 6,000 stewards have been trained in the Stewards Army so far.

Or at General Electric where the message went out that "Green should not be mean." And the "Screw That Bulb" campaign helped to secure a contract at General Electric.

At our "Speed Matters" campaign, where 110,000 Americans have already taken the Speed Matters speed test, and it has gotten us attention in every single newspaper in this country-- radio, television and the front page of the *US Today*. (Applause)

Based on the early success of those initiatives, Annie and her committee-- which included Vice President Jim Clark, Linda Foley, Jimmy Gurganus, Ralph Maly, and Brooks Sunkett, with incredible staff support from Louise Novotny-- have come up with a program that will train 100 activists to build a groundswell of momentum for reform of our system. With those 100, we will target the 100 key congressional districts or states, in the case of Senate targets, who will be the key decision makers in the fight over health care reform.

Once again, we will be calling upon our Steward's Army to engage and carry the fight for us. But as any general will tell you, an army fights on its stomach. You have to feed them, and the food for our Steward's Army is education. An informed, educated and motivated activist is our best help for winning this fight. So, as with each of our previous SIFs, training of activists will be a key, critical ingredient.

On your table is a fact sheet developed as part of the new CWA health care education campaign. Read it over and then stop by the National Union booth to check out CWA's new health care website. The website will become health care central with information our health care activists need to meet with Members of Congress and to keep on top of the debate over reform.

And the opposition on this one will be fierce. Less than a week ago, in my hometown, President Bush told an audience at the Cleveland Clinic that the problem with America's health care system is you. He told that audience, "You are not good consumers. You sue too many doctors. You don't take the time to choose the right health care plan, and you don't take care of yourselves. And frankly, you are just not good savers."

The real problem is that policymakers like the President are insulated from the concerns of how to pay for their health care either through wealth or through their positions. His answer to the health care crisis in this nation is incredible. It is a tax-free Health Savings Accounts. If you had the kind of money to put away to pay for your health care you would not be concerned whether or not it was tax free or not. (Applause) This is clearly not a man who has ever had to live paycheck-to-paycheck in his life.

Well, let's be candid here as well. The facts are all of us in this room have done a remarkable job of insulating our members from wildly escalating health care costs. And despite that insulation, we are going to need all of them clamoring, each and every one of them asking, demanding reform as loudly as the uninsured and underinsured of our nation.

And I was not going to touch on this, because I knew Larry was going to talk about it this morning, and I know it will be the focus of Barbara's talk in a few minutes. But this discussion of health care does remind me of the failed attempt to achieve national health care in the early 1990s.

You will recall the opposition beat back this attempt, not with a single issue, but by dividing Americans over a variety of issues and scare tactics-- whether it was the choice of doctors, "You are not going to be able to pick who your physician is," or waiting periods for your surgery-- "They wait months in Canada to get surgery"-- and we heard that lie put to rest this morning-- or whether it is just the whole notion of the socialized medicine-- "Oh, the government can't run a program like that. It would be horrible." It was the death of a thousand cuts.

Well, we risk the same kind of death here to the diversity proposal if we are not careful. There may be something in that proposal that each of you may wish to change. But what we cannot change is the fact that this is an issue whose time has come.

We heard Michelle Luse, and we heard from Jetty, we heard Keith ask, a few minutes ago, "If not now, when?" So in the debate we share later on this afternoon, I know you will enter into it with the future in mind, and we will not let this opportunity pass us by. (Applause)

Let me close this afternoon by reminding all of us of the common thread that brings us to this hall. It is not the office we hold. It is not the desire to see Toronto, as beautiful a city as it is. It is much deeper than that.

Think back for a moment to that first day that you got involved with the union. There was something that happened-- or did not happen, as the case may be-- something that happened that caused you to say, caused each one of us to say, "That's not right. That's not fair." And instead of looking the other way, which would have been the easy thing to do, you decided to get involved. You believed that you could make a difference, and the spark was ignited.

The same is true of all of us in this room. It doesn't matter where you are sitting today, on this podium, on the floor, or even most of you in the guest area. We are all in this because we believe change is possible. We believe we can make a positive difference in the lives of other people.

And while we may not always agree on the best way to make that difference, we will always agree that the ultimate goal is to build our union and to make life better for our members and our neighbors.

Thank you for that commitment, and thank you for allowing me to take your time this afternoon.

. . . The delegates arose and applauded . . .

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thanks, Jeff, for all you do, and for that outstanding outline of the scope of the work that lies ahead of all of us. It's simple work for everybody-- these three cards, please fill those out, and they can be dropped off on the way out tonight in boxes at the entrance.

Obviously we want you to do all three because, as Jeff said, we can have a joint letter signed by our board to the candidates, and each one of your cards will look very special. You can all figure out the math.

It is now my pleasure to introduce the best Secretary-Treasurer ever. It is going to be hard for me to top Jeff's introduction of her, and that wasn't even an introduction.

I could go on about many different aspects of what Barbara has done just in the last two years alone, and this year alone. When we talk about Ready for the Future, one of the goals was to double the retiree membership. We will talk more about this tomorrow, but within three years we have almost doubled the RMC membership this year with an increase of 10,000. That program is headed up by Barbara Easterling. (Applause)

One of the other RFF 10 points was to grab hold of our budgeting and focus on our strategic goals. We all know that a year and a half ago we had a \$27 million deficit in the general fund. Working together with this SPBC as well as the planning and budgeting committee, three-quarters of that deficit is gone. (Applause) Yes, we should applaud.

Instead of running behind \$300,000 a month, we are running ahead \$100,000 a month to retire the rest of that debt. (Applause) That's Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Easterling.

She is, in fact, known around the world. She has headed up Union Network International's 14 million union members around the world, and the Women's Committee of Unity for several years.

I have been with her, and she doesn't just light up Congress; she lights up women around the world. But

in some ways, as we say to each one of us, it's not what we have done, it's what are we about to do. And her willingness and eagerness and commitment to take on this issue of Executive Board Diversity, to chair this Committee, to speak to local leaders from one end of this union to the other, whether they supported it or didn't, with this kind of passion and this kind of commitment, that every one of us can make a difference.

I am not sure there is another Secretary-Treasurer or officer of this union who would have stepped up. So, please welcome her now as she steps up, our Secretary-Treasurer, Barbara J. Easterling.

. . . The delegates arose and applauded at length . . .

SECRETARY-TREASURER BARBARA EASTERLING: Thank you. Boy, if we keep this up, my head is not going to fit in this hall. Thank you so much.

Every day, you know, in the life of a union is very important. Because everyday the collective union should be striving to do just what Jeff said: make life better for workers and their families; striving to make a difference by bringing the countless benefits of trade unionism to the unorganized; by standing strong in collective bargaining and standing up to the anti-union forces that are constantly trying to tear us down; by working to build a political and legislative action movement that is driven by an agenda that gives working families a real voice in their government.

We are part of the greatest movement for social justice in history. Every day is important. But some days are more important than others, and today is one of those days.

In so many ways, today is about change-- positive change. John F. Kennedy once said, and I quote, "Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or the present are certain to miss the future."

If you stop and think about it, nothing is really permanent but change. And through the years, change and the ability to make change an ally has been synonymous with CWA. Back in 1981, CWA became the first union in North America to establish a Committee on the Future, to reexamine every aspect of how we operate from top to bottom. I was there.

Two years later, in 1983, the delegates to a special CWA Convention in Philadelphia approved the recommendations of the Committee on the Future. And, once again, I was privileged to be there.

The change that came about because of the Committee on the Future has stood the test of time. It set the stage for our transformation from a so-called "telephone union" to the Union for the Information Age. And as we broadened the CWA family to include public employees, the International Typographical Union, NABET, The Newspaper Guild, the IUE, the Association of Flight Attendants and many more, we made those changes. Through the years, I have been fortunate to play a role in all these transformations, and all of those changes, and it's always been for the best.

Two years ago, Convention delegates voted to create "CWA: Ready for the Future," our committee to develop a strategic plan to build bargaining power long into the future. "CWA: Ready for the Future" was designed to extend our union's 25-year-old tradition of reexamination, reevaluation and out-of-the-box strategic planning into the new century.

And once again, with so many of you, I was there two years ago in Chicago when we approved the creation of the Ready for the Future Committee and the development of a strategic plan.

Then last year in Las Vegas, Convention delegates had the foresight to enact Resolution No. 1, putting in place the policy recommendations of the Ready for the Future Committee to strengthen our bargaining power and sustain our leadership for our members well into the 21st Century. I was there, along with most of you.

One of the most important parts of the Ready for the Future resolution was its pledge, and I quote, "to bring to the 2007 Convention a proposal on Executive Board structure that includes specific proposals on increasing Board diversity." That is just what we have done.

And that brings us to today, and the important business we have before us. I can say that, because over the past year I have been privileged to chair the Committee on Executive Board Diversity, and during this time I have had the pleasure to serve with an outstanding cast of very dedicated committee members which included District 3 Vice President Noah Savant; District 7 Vice President Annie Hill; Public, Healthcare and Education Workers Vice President Brooks Sunkett; Women's Committee members Susie McAllister, Secretary-Treasurer of Local 7704; Mary Lou Schaffer, President of Local 13550; and Committee on Equity members Keith Robinson, Local 6310, and Jetty Wells, Executive Vice President of Local 4009.

Our committee sought ideas and input from every level of CWA. We e-mailed a survey to all locals seeking ideas and suggestions that could be incorporated into our final review. Subsequently, we reviewed everything, and I do mean everything. We read every survey response. We discussed them at length.

Additionally, we took up specific issues that affect diversity within the union movement, including the barriers women and minorities face in moving up within the union structure and in winning elections to the Executive Board.

We took a hard look at the current demographics of the CWA membership and staff. We looked at the size and makeup of other international union executive boards, as well as that of the AFL-CIO. We spent hundreds of hours examining, researching, discussing and contemplating how best to accomplish the charge you gave us: to develop workable ways to increase diversity on the CWA Executive Board. I believe, I truly believe that our committee has done that.

Let me hasten to add that we know, of course, this proposal is not perfect because nothing is really perfect, just like democracy which isn't always perfect. We have still provided you with a finished product. It's always going to be a work in progress, which at its best is the greatest vehicle for progress the world has ever known, just like the union movement.

But I do speak for every member of this committee, and I speak for the entire CWA Executive Board when I say to you that we truly believe the recommendations we have put forth for your consideration will increase diversity at the highest levels of CWA and will simultaneously add the voices of local leaders to our Executive Board for the first time in our history. (Applause)

We truly believe that these proposals represent the cornerstone of CWA's foundation for the future.

So, where does all of this work leave us? Well, it leaves us right here, in Toronto, on this Convention floor, on these six microphones. Our work is about to be in your hands, or perhaps more accurately in your hearts. If we have the courage to take this step, I believe we will in turn make CWA an even more dynamic and energetic union, and therein a stronger voice for justice in the workplace.

And I want to ask each of you to summon that courage, to go the extra mile today, and approve the proposal that is about to be presented to increase diversity on the CWA Executive Board. Sisters and brothers, it's the right thing to do, and it's the right time to do it. Because, if not now, when?

Even simple equity demands that we shatter glass ceilings wherever they exist and that we go the extra mile to ensure that our governing body does indeed reflect our membership. And believe me, believe me, I know a little bit about those glass ceilings. In so many ways, the issue before us today is really a matter of morality, of fairness, of justice, of democracy.

Diversity is equally important for practical reasons. The broader the perspectives we bring to the Executive Board room, the smarter the decisions we will make. And the more our leaders reflect our members, the more responsive we will be to their needs. The greater the range of backgrounds and experiences we use to guide our union, the swifter we will move toward our destination.

So if you hear nothing else from me today, hear this: Diversity is the highest level of our leadership. It is the right thing to do, the smart thing to do. It is the only thing to do. For CWA, it's time to take this next step.

The fight for equity and justice is what the organized labor movement is all about. And the principle that everyone should have an equal opportunity to advance themselves and their families; that everyone should have the same rights and responsibilities; that everyone should have a very strong voice in the workplace and in society and in their union; that everyone should have the same power to shape their own destiny.

And that means everyone. It means women and men equally, whites and people of color equally, straights and gays equally, long-time citizens and recent immigrants equally, Christians, Jews and Muslims equally, the young and old equally.

In other words, we want a tolerant society with zero tolerance for discrimination. That is what we're all about. That is what we stand for, and that is who we are. (Applause)

But we have to be honest with ourselves, because we haven't always practiced what we preached. And that is why we've worked to bring a diversity proposal to you, to this Convention, that will make the CWA Executive Board look more like us, like all of us.

I have been an active member in CWA for many years. I have personally seen and served with all four CWA Presidents. I attended my first Convention when Joe Beirne was president. I moved from Ohio to Washington, D.C., to serve in Glenn Watts' administration. And of course, I have been privileged to serve as your Secretary-Treasurer since 1992, first with President Morty Bahr and now with President Larry Cohen and alongside of Executive Vice President Jeff Rechenbach. I guess you could say that I am sort of a bridge across multiple CWA generations.

But when I went to work for Ohio Bell Telephone and then joined the union, it changed my life forever. I could never have imagined what that union card would mean to a kid from Akron, Ohio, and the doors it would open and the opportunities it would present.

But even with everything that I have been blessed to experience by virtue of CWA and the labor movement, there were times when doors weren't always open to me, when those glass ceilings came into clear view.

And try as hard as you might, you never quite forget those times when the door was shut or not fully open because of the color of your skin, or because of your gender, or because of your religion, or because of your socioeconomic status.

There are a lot of people in this hall who know what I'm talking about, because you've been there. And I think-- I know-- that's why our committee has worked so hard over the past year to bring a set of proposals to you that will help ensure that those leadership doors are always wide open for all CWA members all the time.

I truly believe that our actions today can take CWA to a new level of serving and representing our members, all of our members.

These changes are long overdue, and I believe they are sound. I believe they have been developed with a real sense of purpose. But, most of all, I believe these changes, and the diversity they will bring to our leadership ranks, will help CWA make an even greater difference in the lives of our members and workers everywhere.

That is our mission. That is what matters most, making a difference, making life better. We must never forget which side we are on, because we are on the right side. Our extremist, anti-union opponents are on the wrong side. And at the end of the day, we will win, just like we did last November when we took a monumental step toward building a national movement that can bring lasting change to Washington and once again give workers a real voice.

We proved that together, in solidarity, and you and I can do it again. We've still got a lot of work ahead of us. But by standing strong, and having the courage to step out, we are going to succeed. Here in Toronto, we

have the opportunity to begin an exciting new chapter in CWA's proud history.

You've heard the famous lines of the poet Robert Frost about two roads diverging into a wood and how the choice of the road less traveled made all the difference? That seems especially appropriate today. What will our "road from here" look like? Which road will we take? Which course will we choose?

We have a great opportunity before us today, an opportunity to make history, an opportunity to once again make a difference. I tell you, now is the time. And if not now, when? If not now, why? If not us, who? It's time. It's time to make a difference. It's time to support the diversity proposal. No delays, no amendments. Just "yes" for courage, fairness and our future. Vote for the diversity proposal. Thank you.

. . . The delegates arose and applauded at length . . .

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thank you, Barbara.

Now it is now a pleasure to introduce our incredible hard-working Constitution Committee.

. . . As the members of the Constitution Committee were introduced, as follows, the delegates responded with a single clap of recognition . . .

Leroy Baylor, President, CWA Local 1079, Chair; Peggy Griffith, Secretary, CWA Local 4302; Steven Flores, Vice President, CWA Local 6222; Kent Anderson, President, CWA Local 7704; Walter "Bud" Speakman, President, CWA Local 13101.

The Constitution Committee will be presenting its report in two segments. First, the Committee will be reporting out the proposed Diversity amendment, and we will be debating that proposed amendment. If the amendment passes, we will call the Resolutions Committee forward to report out the Diversity resolution, Resolution No. 1, and we will then debate that resolution. This will enable delegates to fully debate and resolve all of the issues and action items involving the diversity proposal. The Constitution Committee will return to the podium to present the balance of their report.

I introduce again the Chair of the Committee, Leroy Baylor.

DELEGATE LEROY BAYLOR (Local 1079, Chair, Constitution Committee): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and good afternoon CWA.

Would the delegates please turn to page 1 of the Report of the Constitution Committee to the 69th Annual Convention, and I will read the preamble.

The Constitution Committee met in the city of Washington, D.C., beginning May 15, 2007, for the purpose of reviewing and considering proposed amendments to the CWA Constitution.

The Constitution provides under Article XVI, Section 2 that the Constitution Committee is "charged with the duty of considering and reporting to the Convention and to the Executive Board on proposals to change this Constitution." Article XXVIII, Sections 2 and 3, provide that amendments submitted to the Locals sixty (60) days in advance of the Convention will require a majority vote of the Delegates present to be enacted. All other amendments to the Constitution proposed at the Convention shall require a three-fourths (3/4) vote of those voting to effectuate such proposed amendments but in no event shall the three-fourths (3/4) vote of those voting thereupon be less than a majority vote of the approved delegates at the Convention.

The Constitution Committee held meetings in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, beginning July 13, 2007, to consider additional proposals received after the preliminary report was issued on May 21, 2007. No additional proposals were received. It should be noted that during the period of time between the issuance of the Preliminary Report of the Constitution Committee and the issuance of this report, Proposal 5 of the Preliminary Report submitted by Lois Kirkup, President of Local 30205, was withdrawn.

The Committee has made itself available to any and all wishing to appear before the Committee.

This report sets forth all proposed amendments that have been received by the Committee to date. A ~~strikeout~~ denotes deletion of language; boldface type denotes insertion of new language. Each proposal in this Preliminary Report will require a majority vote of the delegates at the Convention to be enacted.

Also, the entire Committee will participate in the reading of this report. Only the recommended proposal will be read, beginning with Kent Anderson, President of Local 7704.

DELEGATE KENT ANDERSON (Local 7704): AMEND ARTICLE VIII (Conventions), Section 7 (Powers of Convention), subsection (f) to read as follows:

(f) Determine the number of Executive Vice Presidents **and/or At-Large Executive Board Members.**

AMEND ARTICLE IX (Executive Board), Section 1 by adding a new subsection (e) to read as follows:

(e) Four At-Large Diversity Executive Board Members. The four At-Large Diversity Executive Board Members shall represent four separate geographical areas within CWA as follows:

(1) At-Large Diversity Executive Board Seat (Northwest Region): Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Ontario, Quebec, London and Frankfurt.

(2) At-Large Diversity Executive Board Seat (Southeast Region): Alabama, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia.

(3) At-Large Diversity Executive Board Seat (Central Region): Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio, Oklahoma, Texas, Wisconsin.

(4) At-Large Diversity Executive Board Seat (Western Region): Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Nevada, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, Wyoming, Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Saskatchewan, Yukon Territory, Hong Kong and Narita, Tokyo.

AMEND ARTICLE XII (Officers and Their Duties) by adding a new Section 13:

13. At-Large Diversity Executive Board Members.

Beginning thirty (30) days after the conclusion of the 2007 Annual Convention, four At-Large Diversity Executive Board Member seats shall be created. The four At-Large Diversity Executive Board Members shall:

(a) Act under the direction of the President and perform such duties as may be assigned by the President or the Executive Board;

(b) Be responsible, under the direction and with the assistance of other members of the Executive Board, for matters of common concern and interest affecting diversity at all levels within the union;

(c) Attend meetings of the CWA Executive Board, in person or by telephone call, as may be scheduled by the President or the Executive Board;

(d) Evaluate, in conjunction with other members of the Executive Board as assigned by the President, the membership balance within each geographical region represented by the four At-Large Diversity Executive Board seats; and

(e) No full-time, permanent employee of the Union shall be eligible to run for or hold office as an At-Large Executive Board Member. At-Large Executive Board Members shall not be employees of the Union and shall receive no salary or other compensation from the Union for service as an At-Large Executive Board Member. At-Large Executive Board Members shall receive reimbursement for lost-time wages and expenses associated with attending Board meetings and performing other Board responsibilities as assigned by the President.

AMEND ARTICLE XV (Elections), Section 2 (Vice Presidents) to read as follows:

Adding a new Section 2(c):

(c) Beginning with the election of 2008, each At-Large Diversity Executive Board Member shall be elected by secret ballot of the delegates to the Convention following nominations made from the floor of the Convention. Beginning with the elections held in 2008, the term of office for At-Large Diversity Executive Board Members shall be three years. No candidate shall be permitted to run for more than one of the four At-Large Diversity Executive Board seats. A candidate for an At-Large Diversity Executive Board seat must hold their membership within the region represented by that seat.

~~(e)~~**(d)** The term of office of Vice President shall be three years as of 1996 or until their successors have been duly elected and qualified except for the election of 1992 which shall be extended one year to the regular elections at the 1996 Convention.

~~(d)~~**(e)** In the event a vacancy occurs in the Office of Vice President **or At-Large Diversity Executive Board Member** for any reason, an election shall be held at the next regular Convention for the purpose of electing a Vice President **or At-Large Diversity Executive Board Member** to fill the unexpired term.

AMEND ARTICLE XV (Elections), Section 5 (Order of Nomination and Election of Officers of the Union) by adding a new subsection (e).

(e) At-Large Diversity Executive Board Members. The nomination for At-Large Diversity Executive Board Member seats shall be conducted separately. A majority vote shall be required for election to each At-Large seat. If no candidate receives a majority vote for an At-Large Diversity seat on the first ballot, a run-off election shall be conducted and the two nominees receiving the greatest number of votes on the first ballot for that individual seat shall be the nominees on the second ballot for that individual seat.

AMEND ARTICLE XXI (Recall Petition Against Persons Holding Elective Office in the Union), Section 1 (Petition for recall of Union Officers and Executive Board Members) to read as follows:

A petition for recall of an officer of the Union or any member of the Executive Board, **including At-Large Diversity Executive Board Members:**

AMEND ARTICLE XXII (Referendum and Recall), Section 6 to read as follows:

Any officer or member of the Executive Board, **including any At-Large Diversity Executive Board Member**, may be recalled by two-thirds (2/3) of those voting at the Convention or in a general referendum if two-thirds (2/3) of the votes cast in such a referendum favor recall.

(Submitted by the Committee on Executive Board Diversity and the CWA Executive Board)

This proposal would establish four at-large diversity positions on the CWA Executive Board and amend the Constitution in related areas such as duties of officers, elections and recall procedures.

At the 2006 Convention in Las Vegas, the Constitution Committee did not recommend adoption of a proposal to create a Vice-President of Equity and Fair Practices. The proposal submitted this year addresses many of the concerns with the previous proposal and is a result of the mandate in the Ready for the Future

Resolution adopted by the delegates at the 2006 Convention requiring that “specific proposals on increasing Board diversity” be brought to the 2007 Convention.

The Committee on Executive Board Diversity was formed to research and develop this proposal. The Committee was composed of four Executive Board members, two representatives from the National Committee on Equity and two representatives from the National Women’s Committee. The committee spent months reviewing options and legal considerations and reaching out to locals. The Committee members, Barbara Easterling, Secretary-Treasurer and Chair, Brooks Sunkett, Vice President - Public, Healthcare & Education Workers, Annie Hill, Vice President District 7, Noah Savant, Vice President District 3, Jetty Wells, Executive Vice President Local 4009 (National Committee on Equity Representative), Susie McAllister, Secretary Treasurer Local 7704 (National Women’s Committee Representative) and Mary Lou Schaffer, President Local 13550 (National Women’s Committee Representative) addressed the issues with total diligence and we commend them.

The CWA Executive Board adopted the proposal to increase Executive Board diversity on March 23, 2007.

The four At-Large Diversity Executive Board seats will increase the representation of women and persons of color on the Board bringing an additional perspective to Board deliberations which we believe can only further strengthen CWA. The Ready for the Future Resolution talks of “right-sizing the Board” and we believe that adding these four at-large members is a step in the right direction. For those concerned with the added expense of these new positions, the committee wishes to point out that the at-large members will not be Vice Presidents. The position of Vice President at a minimum cost of approximately \$400,000 per year (when you add an Assistant, Secretary and office) whereas the approximate total annual cost for all four Diversity Board Members is \$25,000.

We believe the time is right to make this historic change which will strengthen our union and comply with the AFL-CIO resolution “A Diverse Movement Calls for a Diverse Leadership” adopted at the 2005 AFL-CIO convention.

The Constitution Committee believes that this proposal is a start in the right direction to address diversity on the Executive Board.

The Committee recommends adoption of this proposal. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: Before I recognize the first speaker, I just want to repeat again what we are doing. So that’s Resolution No 1, what you just heard from the Constitution Committee. When we are finished debate and consideration of the Constitution Committee’s Resolution No. 1, those amendments, and if it’s adopted, we will then call the Resolutions Committee and deal with Resolution No. 1, which is about implementation.

So it is in two parts. The Constitutional Amendment, is in one part. The implementation, which is not constitutional, is a resolution. I hope that clarifies that. If not, we will keep at that as well.

On Microphone No. 3, Delegate Andrews.

DELEGATE WALTER D. ANDREWS (Local 3204, CWA Minority Caucus President): Delegates, guests, brothers and sisters, I rise in support of the Constitutional Committee amendment. As you can see from the delegates standing with me, the time is now! (Applause and cheers)

To diversify is not to omit existing resources but to add value to what is already in place. To close your mind to diversity is to deny ourselves the possibilities of innovation, growth and advancement in our great Labor Movement.

For 365 days a year we fight for equality and fairness in our work places. How can we demand something from the companies that we represent these things, and not be willing to practice what we preach in this great union? (Applause)

We MUST diversify and move into full and committed action. Thank you, and I urge support of the amendment. Thank you. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: On Microphone No. 5, Delegate Blackburn.

DELEGATE DAVID BLACKBURN (Local 7050): In the Constitution it states, under Article XV, Section 3, "Officers of a Local shall be at least President, Vice President, and Secretary-Treasurer or Secretary and Treasurer. Beginning with Local elections in 1987. . . no member shall be permitted to hold more than one such office."

My question is, if you are a local officer and you are elected to this position, should this pass, can you hold both positions and, if so, why?

PRESIDENT COHEN: I'll turn to the Chair first. Or do you want me to answer it? Go ahead.

CHAIR BAYLOR: I believe the local officer would be eligible.

DELEGATE BLACKBURN: Why?

PRESIDENT COHEN: Do you want to repeat that once more?

CHAIR BAYLOR: I believe the local officer would be eligible to hold the seat.

PRESIDENT COHEN: That is my understanding as well. The answer is yes. That's the entire point here. It can be a local officer, and be on the Executive Board of the CWA.

DELEGATE BLACKBURN: Am I entitled to a second question?

PRESIDENT COHEN: Yes, sir.

DELEGATE BLACKBURN: Thank you. We know we have had a lot of discussion about now is the time, and I don't disagree. It's time for a change. But in the proposal to amend Article XII(e), it states, "No full-time, permanent employee of the Union shall be eligible to run for or hold office as an At-Large Executive Board Member. At-Large Executive Board Members shall not be employees of the Union and shall receive no salary or other compensation from the Union for service as an At-Large Executive Board Member. At-Large Executive Board Members shall receive reimbursement for lost-time wages and expenses associated with attending Board meetings and performing other Board responsibilities as assigned by the President."

Well, we have dues-paying CWA members that fall under this category, and I'm not sure why, if they are a member in good standing, they are being excluded from this position. So my question is, why? (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: We are having some trouble hearing you, I'm sorry. Could you just, the question part of that, could you repeat that so we can get right to the question part?

DELEGATE BLACKBURN: Sure. I just want to know why, under the new amendment on Article XII(e), dues-paying members that are permanent employees of the union are being excluded from running for the At-Large position.

PRESIDENT COHEN: I understand. Do you want to answer that? The Committee can answer, or whatever you prefer, Mr. Chair.

CHAIR BAYLOR: Correct me if I'm wrong, but are you referring to staff?

PRESIDENT COHEN: Yes. The question is about staff. That's what he was asking.

CHAIR BAYLOR: Well, the intent of the proposal was to have local involvement on the Executive Board. We stood in Las Vegas last year and asked that the Executive Board reflect the rank-and-file, and it was the Committee's opinion, as well as the Executive Board and the Committee on Diversity, that there was no better way to do that than to implement four local activists onto the Executive Board. (Applause)

DELEGATE BLACKBURN: Thank you.

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thank you. On Microphone No. 3, Delegate Cummings.

DELEGATE CLAUDE CUMMINGS JR. (Local 6222): President Cohen, Executive Board, Alternates, Guests to the 69th Annual CWA Convention, and I would be remiss if I didn't thank God for giving me this opportunity in my lifetime to speak on such an important issue to this great union of ours.

I rise today in support of the Constitution Committee's recommendation to increase diversity on the CWA Executive Board. Throughout the history of CWA there have been meetings, discussions and challenges to our leadership to develop some type of way to improve the upward mobility of minorities or ensure that we move in a direction to make sure our leadership reflects our membership, with little or no success.

Finally, delegates, we have before us the chance, the opportunity, the power to make it happen ourselves. All we need to do is vote to support the Committee's recommendation.

Is it perfect? No. Is it a fix-all? No. But what we have here is an opportunity to finally move our union in the right direction on the issue of diversity in our leadership, to move CWA toward a more inclusive Executive Board that will bring new voices and new ideas on issues that affect us on a daily basis from a rank-and-file perspective.

Other unions around the country are aware of this issue of diversity we are addressing today on our Executive Board, and I guarantee you they are anxiously waiting to see how we fare because they are facing the same issue of diversity in their different unions.

This is the time for CWA, the great union that we are, the great leader in the Labor Movement that we are, to send a message to all unions that we are concerned about diversity, we do want inclusion in our leadership and we are truly "many faces, one union," and we do want an Executive Board that reflects our membership. (Applause)

Let's step out front on this issue and have other unions follow us on this important issue, as we do successfully on so many other issues we take on across this great country of ours.

Delegates, this is our time to make history. Let's embrace it. Shame on us, shame on us if we don't. (Applause)

I want to close by reading the final paragraph from the 2005 AFL-CIO Executive Council Resolution entitled, "A Diverse Movement Calls for Diverse Leadership." I quote:

"America's union movement must stand as a model of full inclusion. We cannot ask more of a broader society than we are willing to do ourselves. We cannot build a better future for working families without the full strength brought by brothers and sisters of every description. In our hiring, organizing, representation, outreach and leadership, the union movement must embody our goal of equal welcome and equal opportunity for all." End quote.

Delegates, it is truly time to have diversity at the table. As I take my seat, I would ask all of you prior to casting your vote to ask yourself the question, we have given leadership many opportunities to make changes with little or no success. So if not now, while we have the power in our hands to make a difference, then when?

I urge you to support the Diversity Committee's recommendation. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: Delegate Green.

DELEGATE FREDDIE GREEN (Local 3410): I would like to call the question. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: The question has been called. It is not debatable. It requires a two-thirds vote. All those in favor of calling the question indicate by raising their hands.

Down hands. Opposed by a like sign. The question is called. On the Privilege mike.

DELEGATE DAVID M. SKOTARCZYK (Local 4050): I had a question on the intent of this, so before we vote on it, I would like to ask my question.

PRESIDENT COHEN: The problem, Dave--

DELEGATE SKOTARCZYK: There is a conflict--

PRESIDENT COHEN: Hold on a minute. It is a Privilege you are at. It's just to explain what just occurred. Because there has been no speaker at the Against mike, we will be rotating back and forth.

The motion to call the question is in order, and if we were not to poll the delegates on calling the question, we would be in violation of our own rulings. For that reason--

DELEGATE SKOTARCZYK: Okay, that's--

PRESIDENT COHEN: For that reason we rotate, as we said earlier today, and rotation went to Mike No. 1, so that rotation was in order. Otherwise, we would be rotating back and forth between 3 and 5 and never getting to 1. So we go from 3 to 1, and the question was called; it required a two-thirds vote. The question has now been called. Understood?

DELEGATE SKOTARCZYK: I understand that. Does that mean I don't get to ask the question before there is a vote?

PRESIDENT COHEN: That's what it means, yes, sir. (Laughter)

DELEGATE SKOTARCZYK: Pardon?

PRESIDENT COHEN: Yes, sir, that's what it means.

DELEGATE SKOTARCZYK: Even though I feel, and I'd like an explanation, that if this is passed we will have two articles in our Constitution of conflict.

PRESIDENT COHEN: Okay. The question has been called. Thank you, delegate. The question has been called. We are now voting on the Constitution Committee's Recommendation 1. On the question, all those in favor of adopting Resolution No. 1 of the Constitution Committee Report indicate by raising their hands.

Down hands. Opposed by a like sign. It is adopted. (Cheers and whistles)

I now call the Resolutions Committee. The Constitution Committee will be back.

Let me make an announcement first. If any delegate has a copy of their remarks, please drop them off at the stage. It will make the court reporter's job a bit easier. Thank you.

I now recognize the Resolutions Committee.

DELEGATE DENISE BURNS (Local 2107, Chair, Resolutions and Rules Committee): Thank you, Mr. President.

The Resolutions and Rules Committee met in the City of Toronto, Canada beginning July 12th. The committee received twelve resolutions and we will be reporting out on eight resolutions. Seven resolutions are in your packet, and one is proposed in a supplemental report which should be on your tables.

Would the delegates please turn to page 3 of the Resolutions report and look at Resolution 69A-07-1.

RESOLUTION 69A-07-1

Implementing Non-Constitutional Recommendations of the Proposal on Executive Board Diversity

The CWA Committee on Executive Board Diversity has issued a proposal to increase the diversity on the CWA Executive Board. The Committee's proposal was adopted and recommended by the CWA Executive Board, the CWA Committee on Equity and the CWA Women's Committee.

This Convention has adopted the necessary amendments to the CWA Constitution to add four At-Large Diversity Executive Board Members to the CWA Executive Board with the goal of having at least three people of color and at least two women. The first elections for the At-Large Diversity Executive Board seats will not take place until 2008.

The proposal to increase Executive Board diversity includes additional recommendations that did not require constitutional amendments.

RESOLVED: The CWA Executive Board shall appoint one At-Large Diversity Board Member from each geographic region following the 2007 Convention from nominations to be submitted by the National Committee on Equity, the National Women's Committee, and the CWA Minority Caucus.

RESOLVED: The National Committee on Equity, the National Women's Committee and the Minority Caucus shall provide to the CWA Executive Board a minimum of six and a maximum of ten nominations for each of the four geographic regions by September 1, 2007. Nominations must be representative of the ethnic diversity of the union and include Sector nominees. Each nomination will contain a short bio.

RESOLVED: Members interested in being nominated for these At-Large positions should contact the National Women's Committee and/or the National Committee on Equity.

RESOLVED: The CWA Executive Board shall act on the nominations at its first scheduled board meeting following the CWA Convention and shall be guided by the proposals' recommended goal of having at least three people of color and at least two women in the At-Large Diversity seats to more closely match the diversity of the union's membership.

RESOLVED: An Executive Board Diversity Committee shall be established which will be composed of the four At-Large Diversity Board Members, together with other board members to be appointed by the CWA President. This Committee will track diversity of membership and interact with the National Committee on Equity, the National Women's Committee, and the Minority Caucus to review a broad range of issues relating to diversity concerns. In addition, this Committee will conduct an annual review of the membership represented by each geographic region and determine whether the membership numbers remain roughly equal within each region. If the regional membership numbers are no longer roughly equal, the Executive Board Diversity Committee shall make a recommendation to the Executive Board on the make-up of the regions. Any changes in the composition of the regions will require a constitutional amendment.

RESOLVED: If a vacancy occurs in an At-Large Diversity Board seat, the CWA President will request nominations from the National Committee on Equity and the National Women's Committee. The CWA Executive Board will appoint someone from these nominations to fill the vacant seat until the next Convention, guided by the Committee's recommended goal of having at least three people of color and at least two women

in the At-Large Diversity Board seats to more closely match the diversity of the union's membership.

Mr. President, the Resolutions Committee moves the adoption of Resolution 69A-07-1 entitled, "Implementing Non-Constitutional Recommendations of the Proposal on Executive Board Diversity."

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thank you.

On Microphone No. 3, Delegate Wade.

DELEGATE CAROLYN C. WADE (Local 1040): Thank you, Mr. President.

My brothers and sisters-- and I call you my brothers and sisters from the perspective of unionism and equality-- I rise in support of this long overdue resolution addressing diversity within the leadership of our union.

First, allow me to express my profound gratitude to you, Mr. President, and to the CWA Executive Board Diversity Committee for having the tenacity, the diligence, the boldness and much foresight in bringing forth these recommended changes to our union.

The resolution before us does not present itself as perfect, but it is a perfect beginning. We do not operate from the perspective of perfection. We just strive toward that end. You see, we don't have a perfect union, neither do we have perfect leadership, nor perfect fellowship. We have been working for 69 or more years to perfect this union and to preserve its democracy. We are not there yet.

This resolution in no way will take us where we wish to end, but it is a bold start. I liken this resolution to the building of a house. A house is not built from its completion down, but begins with a foundation. There has been much diversification in our union since its inception in the 1940's. We have come a long way. But I believe that if we pass this resolution, it does not yet appear what we can become.

The eyes of the world are on us. Let us show the world of unions what real democracy is about. Let the world see that CWA is the premier union that leads the way, as our leadership reflects the fellowship. I urge you to vote yes on this resolution. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: Microphone No. 5, Delegate Piercy.

DELEGATE LANELL PIERCY (Local 4252): My question is, why can the Diversity Committee recommend appointments for 2007?

PRESIDENT COHEN: Could you repeat that question, Lanell?

DELEGATE PIERCY: Why did the committee recommend appointments for 2007?

PRESIDENT COHEN: All right. Would the Chair of the Committee like to answer that or refer it to the Diversity Committee?

CHAIR BURNS: I would like to refer it to the Diversity Committee.

PRESIDENT COHEN: We will do it together.

There are two issues. The first one was, if not now, when? Why wait? I think the Committee felt that it was important to send a signal here that we were prepared to move forward. (Applause)

And secondly, it was to prepare the way. This is something obviously different and new, and it was to get it off on the right start.

Does that speak for the Committee?

SECRETARY-TREASURER EASTERLING: Right, that's absolutely correct.

PRESIDENT COHEN: You are entitled to a second question.

DELEGATE PIERCY: I am not sure if it's a question, but maybe it is a question. Why don't we just have the elections now instead of putting them off and having appointments? I mean no disrespect, and I know this is going to sound very disrespectful, but what assurances do we have that these appointments are going to be a fair process? I don't mean that disrespectfully. I mean, I think if-- and I would agree with you, now is the time-- but if we are going to do it, let's go full-tilt boogie. Let's have the elections now. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: Do you want to answer? Go ahead.

SECRETARY-TREASURER EASTERLING: We really did discuss this quite a bit, but we felt that we had no idea how long the adoption of the constitutional amendment of the resolutions would take and whether there would be time. And for many people, people may not even have thought that they would like to run or could run or should run or whatever until we adopted it.

We didn't want to do anything that would not allow everybody to have an opportunity to indicate that they are interested in the position. Therefore, we thought that using the COE or the Women's Committee and the Minority Caucus, anybody that was interested in running for this position could submit their names and that we would select from that.

That's only for a year. It's actually probably less than a year-- nine months-- and then anyone that's got their heart set on running would then have some time to do something about it, to build up a constituency, to build up some momentum to get elected. But doing it here we would be dealing with something that there was no time, and we didn't really think that was fair to everybody. So we did, the committee did what they thought was the fairest thing.

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thank you.

On Microphone No. 3, Delegate Rocha.

DELEGATE LOUIE ROCHA (Local 9423): Sisters and brothers, hermanos y hermanas, mes colegas, I rise in support of the resolution.

Unions are part of society and our communities and are not immune to the biases and prejudices that exist in them. We have come a long way in regards to equality, but we still have some more work to do to correct the impact of institutionalized racism. Our societies have taken bold action in the past to bring women and minorities to the decision-making table. This is just, and this is the thing to do.

I am a third generation union member and my grandparents would not even dream of running for office in their national union. My parents, also union members, were kept in the back of the room. At the pace change comes in the Labor Movement, it could be another century before the diversity on the National Executive Board reflects our membership. This would be way too long.

Diversity can and does make us stronger. CWA can lead the way for all of us-- women, men, whites and people of color. This proposal is for our members now and our future members.

Also, sisters and brothers, this proposal is not an attack on whites or on our unity, but it is a call for justice. Minorities and women have been and still are disenfranchised from national leadership positions. Our class, the working class, still unites us. Our class, the working class, still unites us!

Lastly, we need more grassroots and progressive politics, and local leaders can bring this to the table. (Applause) This resolution is also for locals to have additional voices on this board.

Sisters and brothers, do not fear or loathe this proposal. When you vote, look into your heart. When you vote, remember your mother, your sisters and daughters. When you vote, think of the minorities in your local and district. When you vote, think of our labor principle, "An injury to one of us is an injury to all."

Today, sisters and brothers, let's tell the Labor Movement that here racism has ended. And in recognition of my brothers and sisters in Canada, I'm going to try some French. Ici le racisme est interdit. Thank you. Merci beaucoup. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: Merci beaucoup.

On Microphone No. 1, Delegate Green.

DELEGATE FREDDIE GREEN (Local 3410): I call the question. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: The question has been called. It is not debatable. It requires a two-thirds vote.

All those in favor of ending debate, indicate by raising your hands. Down hands. Opposed by a like sign. The question has been called.

We are now voting on Resolution 1, "Implementing Non-Constitutional Recommendations of the Proposal on Executive Board Diversity." All those in favor of the resolution indicate by raising your hands.

Down hands. Opposed by a like sign. It is adopted. (Cheers and whistles)

PRESIDENT COHEN: As the delegates take their seats, I want to advise you that the next resolution we are going to consider is Resolution 8, before the Resolutions Committee leaves, which is entitled-- and it's a supplemental-- "RMC and CWA: Working Together and Building Our Power." It came directly from this weekend's meetings of the Retired Members Council, and we committed to them that we would bring this before the Resolutions Committee.

CHAIR BURNS: Thank you, Mr. President.

The Chair recognizes Charlie Braico.

DELEGATE CHARLIE BRAICO (Local 54041): Thank you, Madame Chair.

Would the delegates please open the Supplemental Resolutions Report and take a look at Resolution 69A-07-8 entitled "RMC and CWA: Working Together and Building Our Power."

RESOLUTION 69A-07-8

RMC and CWA: Working Together and Building our Power

The CWA Executive Board and the Retired Members' Council Executive Board are committed to working together to ensure growth of both organizations. Our shared goal is to increase the political, organizing and bargaining power of both organizations while respecting and maintaining the autonomy of each.

RMC board members, as delegates to the CWA Convention, have an important voice in determining the direction of our union. To accomplish our shared goals, we must continue to strengthen the bridge between CWA and the RMC at all levels.

At the 2006 Convention, as part of the Ready for the Future strategic plan, delegates took action to strengthen and expand the connection of retirees to their union. The Executive Board and RMC Board adopted a program offering a Lifetime Membership in the RMC for a one-time payment of \$25; this program was rolled out to some 127,000 CWA retirees through a mailed brochure and follow-up telephone contact. As a result, more than 10,000 new members have joined the RMC since our last convention, bringing total

membership to nearly 39,000. New members continue to join every month.

CWA provides full administrative support for RMC operations and funding to help sustain and carry out the mission of the RMC. CWA also encourages local unions to organize RMC chapters and to consider paying the one-time lifetime membership fee for their retired members.

CWA has created a new website: www.CWAretirees.com with the latest information important to retirees and is building a database of retiree activists who will receive electronic bulletins on key issues and union mobilization. All CWA websites are encouraged to link to the RMC site.

CWA recognizes the importance and the critical role that retired members play in our union. As directed by the Ready for the Future plan, CWA will continue to vigorously support the RMC, while maintaining full respect, independence and autonomy of both organizations.

RESOLVED: That the RMC will develop an action plan with specific goals to work with locals to organize new chapters, increase membership and build active participation in CWA campaigns.

RESOLVED: That the Executive Boards of CWA and the Retired Members' Council will meet annually in joint session in conjunction with the Legislative-Political Conference and the CWA Convention.

RESOLVED: That the Executive Boards of CWA and the Retired Members' Council will, by the 2008 CWA Convention, determine additional ways to work more closely together, including continuing direct representation from the RMC to the CWA Executive Board.

RESOLVED: That the Executive Committees of the CWA and the Retired Member's Council will meet jointly as needed.

Mr. President, the Resolutions Committee moves the adoption of Resolution 69A-07-8, "RMC and CWA: Working Together and Building Our Power."

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thank you. (Applause)

On Microphone No. 3, CWA-RMC Chair, James Starr.

BROTHER JAMES STARR (Chair, CWA-RMC): To the members of the Executive Board and delegates that I have never been prouder of -- It is a privilege to be the Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer of the Retired Members Council. And let me make it clear, as a student of A. Philip Randolph and the late, great friend of mine, Ed Creegan from District 1, I think if both of these men were here today, they would be elated at what you have done.

However, let me be germane. The CWA Constitution gives much greater democracy and more autonomy to our Retired Members Council than any other union gives to its retiree organizations, and no other union is even close to what the CWA provides in its Constitution for the democratic autonomy of our council.

We really appreciate what Larry, Barbara and Jeff did Saturday, even though they caused our meeting to run extraordinarily long. They took an enormous amount of their valuable time preceding the Convention by spending time participating in our CWA retiree annual meeting. I shouldn't say just attending; they participated and answered questions from the least member there, which was probably me, to the greatest one, and we really appreciate that, Mr. President. (Applause)

On Saturday, July 15th, 2007, at our Retired Members Council annual meeting, the delegates approved this resolution-- and, I hasten to add, after considerable, lengthy discussion with the Executive Committee of the union. Our retirees gave their input. We were heard. Changes were made. We got what we needed for the time being.

Therefore, I urge every delegate here to support the retirees of the Communications Workers of America

and adopt this resolution. Thank you, kindly. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thank you.

Microphone No. 3, Lorraine Miller, RMC President, District 7.

SISTER LORRAINE MILLER (President, CWA-RMC, District 7): Thank you.

I rise in support of this very important resolution, 69A-07-8. We have been charged with organizing 50,000 CWA Retired Council members by 2009. Our Retired Council members now total 39,000. We have made great strides in reaching our goal because of the support of the national CWA, but we still have a long way to go. And again, thanks to CWA for their support, and also, District 7 V.P., my district, Annie Hill, and our locals in District 7 for their support by sponsoring Retired chapters.

As I say, we still have a long way to go, but with the provisions of this resolution, we can reach our goal of 50,000 members. This is just a start, as we have hundreds of thousands of retirees who do not belong to the RMC Council. We need an army of retirees. In the coming year, we have one of the most important elections ever. We must elect a veto-proof Senate and maintain the majority in the House, and, of course, a worker-friendly President.

There are contracts to be negotiated. All retirees need to be working side-by-side with our locals to help preserve our benefits and to be active in work stoppages if need be. There is strength in numbers and we can make a difference.

The provisions of this resolution will help give retirees a vehicle to achieve our goals. With the wisdom of CWA and the CWA-RMC, we can help preserve and protect our health care and other benefits that we were promised that we have worked so hard to achieve. All present and future retirees deserve to live with dignity in their retirement.

Again, please support this resolution. Thank you very much. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: At Microphone No. 3, Bobby Brown.

BROTHER BOBBY BROWN (Vice Chair of RMC, District 6): I have been paying union dues for 57 years, and I rise in support of this. (Applause)

I go back to every President that has been here, and I hope to go for the next 57 years. But I paid my union dues-- that's two and a quarter hours per month-- like you do, and I will do that until the day they shovel dirt into my face.

LBJ came and met with us. I am sure all of you know who LBJ is. There it is-- Larry, Barbara and Jeff, if you didn't know. (Laughter)

The retirees have built this great union back when CWA had no money. I started to work and back when I first went to work I made \$23 a week, my dues were 50 cents. We built this union, again, on our own time with very little money. (Applause)

And the retiree officers on the E-Board or anything else, they still do not receive any money and are not asking for any money on this thing. I would ask for your support of this resolution, by all means, by everyone here. And I never get up and speak without putting you delegates to work. Okay. I want you to repeat after me, each and every one of you: The RMC is about--

THE DELEGATES: The RMC is about--

BROTHER BROWN: --serious business.

THE DELEGATES: --serious business.

BROTHER BROWN: Pass this thing!

THE DELEGATES: Pass this thing!

PRESIDENT COHEN: Since no other delegate is wishing to speak, the question is called. We are voting on Resolution 8, "RMC-CWA: Working Together and Building Our Power." All those in favor of the motion, indicate by raising your hands. Down hands. Opposed by a like sign. It is adopted. (Applause and cheers)

I now call the Constitution Committee, but would ask the Resolutions Committee to stand by.

SECRETARY-TREASURER EASTERLING: I asked Larry, while the Committee is coming up, if I could share something with you. While I was sitting over here before the votes were taken, Linda Chavez-Thompson from the AFL-CIO sent me an e-mail about some business, and I e-mailed her quickly back, saying, "Can't talk to you right now. We are voting on the diversity proposal."

She immediately e-mailed me back, "We can talk about diversity until we are blue in the face. However, when it comes to getting the job done and doing what really matters, it's unions like CWA that show what labor can do to make us a diverse and committed movement." I thought that was pretty prophetic. I'll let her know we adopted it. Thank you. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: I recognize the Chair of the Constitution Committee.

CHAIR BAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

If the delegates would turn to page 8 of the Constitution Committee report, I will read the last line, "It has been a privilege for the members of the Constitution Committee to serve you, and we appreciate the cooperation given us by one and all."

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thank you.

I believe we have a question. Microphone No. 5, Delegate Williams.

DELEGATE J.D. WILLIAMS (Local 6215): Fellow Delegates, President Cohen: I have two questions concerning the Constitution Committee's report. I would like to begin by thanking you, Jeff Rechenbach, and the Telecom Vice Presidents for the resolution contained in the Constitution Committee's report at the bottom of page 7. That resolution goes a long way toward addressing many of the problems experienced by all of the officers who submitted the changes that the Constitution Committee chose not to recommend.

My first question is, in Article XVII, Section 3(a), what is your interpretation of the words "consulted" as contained in that language?

PRESIDENT COHEN: I will read the section just so folks know what we are doing here. This is Article XVII, which is collective bargaining, Section 3, bargaining committees, paragraph (a). And that sentence that word is in reads as follows:

"The Bargaining Committee for a unit, for its full term of office, shall be consulted in the negotiation of all agreements entered into between the employer and the Union that amends or augments the agreed upon contract."

My interpretation of that is that the bargaining committee will receive, review and clarify, prior to signing anything we do.

DELEGATE WILLIAMS: President Cohen, my second question is: Can a bargaining unit bargain an agreement that applies to other bargaining units without those other bargaining units being involved?

PRESIDENT COHEN: No.

DELEGATE WILLIAMS: Thank you.

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thank you.

Thank you, Committee, for your excellent work.

Now I will recall the Resolutions Committee. We are going to pick up here with Resolution 3, "Creating a Canadian Region."

Just to plan ahead, after Resolution 3, we will take up Resolutions 5, 6 and 7.

CHAIR BURNS: Thank you, Mr. President. The Chair recognizes Sylvia Sauseda.

DELEGATE SYLVIA SAUSEDA (Local 6143): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Would the delegates please turn to page 6 of the Resolutions Committee report and look at Resolution 69-07-3 entitled, "Creating a Canadian Region."

RESOLUTION 69A-07-3

Creating a Canadian Region

In July 2006, an autonomous Canadian Region was established under terms of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between officers and representatives of the Communications Workers of America (CWA), The Newspaper Guild-CWA (TNG-CWA Sector) and Communications Workers of America/Syndicat des Communications d'Amerique (CWA/SCA Canada).

The agreement recognizes that the underlying principle of building a truly international union must be a solid partnership. Such a partnership will have the potential to build global alliances to confront multinational corporations and to better serve union members.

At the same time, the agreement acknowledges that different labor laws and practices make uniform structures and procedures impractical. Thus, the MOU gives the Canadian Region the authority to make all governance, policy and operational decisions affecting the Canadian members in accordance with the CWA Constitution. The parties are committed to giving the time, goodwill, experience and care required to build a strong and lasting partnership.

RESOLVED: In accordance with the intent of the harmonious agreement between representatives of CWA, TNG and CWA/SCA Canada, members will be removed from CWA Districts 1 and 7 and included in the Canadian Region established in the July 2006 Memorandum of Understanding.

Mr. Chairman, the Resolutions Committee moves the adoption of Resolution 69-07-3 entitled "Creating a Canadian Region."

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thank you. Merci beaucoup.

Microphone No. 3, Delegate Edmonds.

DELEGATE SCOTT EDMONDS (Local 30213): This resolution puts into play something that started a year ago when the Canadian Region was created. It gave us the financial and governance authority to help develop our region. This brings us together now as one group to help make that into a reality.

Right now we are divided between Districts 1 and 7, and for us that doesn't make geographic and political

sense because we are not divided as a country or as a union in Canada. We are one union. We get together as one group, make our decisions together, and believe that that's how we should relate to the CWA, as a country, as a union, as part of the CWA within that country.

For that very reason, we have actually changed the name of it to CWA-SCA Canada. The SCA is, of course, the French translation of CWA in our union-- Syndicate des Communications d'Amerique. We changed that. We added the R. But we believe this is the kind of change that's needed to help us relate in a stronger and more positive way within the CWA. We are all very proud to be CWA members.

My local itself represents people at that building across the street, the CBC, and two years ago when an employer thought it was going to crush those workers, the CWA was instrumental in standing up with us and ensuring that that employer had to take another look at the situation. (Applause)

So we know what it means to be members of the CWA. Our union in Canada is not just Newspaper Guild members, though. We inherited Printing Sector members when we joined more than a decade ago. We have IUE members now in our union in Canada, and we hope to add more.

You heard that one out of three workers in Canada belongs to a union. We are part of a movement that wants to make that two out of three, if we can. (Applause) We think that there is no place better to make this change as well than right here in Toronto, in Canada, at a Convention where we are proud that a step was just taken to make this a more diverse union.

We want to take the step to make it a little more truly an international union, and we hope that you join us in supporting that. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thank you.

We have one more, okay. Microphone No. 3, Delegate Lise Lareau.

DELEGATE LISE LAREAU (Local 30213): This really, as Scott said, is about putting in place what really exists now. We function as a group in this country under the Canadian Region, and we just want to make it work that way on paper. With all respect to Chris Shelton earlier today where he was expressing solidarity with Canada within District 1, we really don't function that way in reality.

So what you would do today is vote in favor of how we as Canadians work within this union. What you would be doing today is moving us much more forward than where we are now, and you would be respecting the union principles that we all agree with, which is when there is enough political will to do something like this, it's time for the body to recognize that will.

And I think you recognized it last year in a different way. This is the year to do it in a more progressive way, less divisive, and I think this is the time to do it right. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: Seeing no other delegate wishing to speak, this Resolution 3 is in order creating a Canadian Region.

All those in favor of the motion, indicate by raising your hands. Down hands. Opposed by a like sign. It is adopted. (Applause)

I'm sorry. That's fine, but I need to call on Microphone No. 1, the Motions mike, and again recognize Delegate Green.

DELEGATE FREDDIE GREEN (Local 3410): Mr. Chairman, I move that the Resolutions Committee only read the Resolveds on the remaining resolutions.

PRESIDENT COHEN: All right.

. . . The motion was duly seconded . . .

PRESIDENT COHEN: It's been seconded from the floor.

No one wishes to speak on it. So this would mean, on the remaining resolutions, the Resolveds would be read and the rest of the body of the resolutions you would read. The committee will only read the Resolveds.

All those in favor of that motion, please indicate by raising your hands. Down hands. Opposed by a like sign. It is adopted.

I recognize the Committee Chair.

CHAIR BURNS: Thank you, Mr. President.

The Chair recognizes Sylvia Sauseda.

DELEGATE SYLVIA SAUSEDA (Local 6143): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Would the delegates please turn to page 8 of the Resolutions report and look at Resolution 69A-07-5 entitled "Building a Political Movement." [The entire text of the resolutions is included for the record]

Resolution 69A-07-5

Building a Political Movement

The movement to rebuild our nation and restore respect for working Americans is growing exponentially. In November 2006, the American people established a new mandate for our government, and CWA-supported and pro-worker candidates took over the House of Representatives and Senate.

CWA members, along with their brothers and sisters in unions across the country, came together for a common purpose. We had a new agenda-- a people's agenda, a workers' agenda-- that carried the day. Our determination to obtain healthcare, jobs and retirement security gave voice to millions of average Americans who over the past six years under the Bush administration had seen their concerns ignored by a government that catered to the rich, promoted corporate greed and looted a balanced budget to finance a war that our brave men and women in uniform continue to endure.

The new Speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi-- the first woman to ever hold that position-- immediately set in motion plans to put the needs of workers on the front burner. The Speaker, along with House Education and Labor Committee Chairman George Miller, pledged to pass the Employee Free Choice Act in the first 100 days of this Congress, and they kept that promise. Passage of the Employee Free Choice Act in March 2007 brought renewed optimism to America's union movement. That victory was followed by a majority of the U.S. Senate, 51 senators, voting for the Employee Free Choice Act on June 26. By making restoration of workers' rights a top priority we have sent a strong message to our elected officials that we expect real results for working families.

Now, we must move forward and build on this success. We must continue in our efforts to elect more worker friendly candidates in the House of Representatives and enable us to achieve a filibuster-proof Senate. We must elect a President who not only will pledge to sign the Employee Free Choice Act but will be committed to lead the fight for its passage.

To accomplish this, we must continue to develop and expand our union's political education and activist structure so that we can meet these goals.

RESOLVED: That CWA-COPE contributions increase from \$3 million to \$5 million annually by 2009, as called for by the 68th CWA Convention in CWA's "Ready for the Future" resolution. Our new initiative, "\$8 in '08," which asks members to contribute at least \$8 a month to COPE, can help us reach our goals.

RESOLVED: That CWA provide updated resources and training materials on CWA-COPE.

RESOLVED: That CWA actively train and assist members to run as delegates to the 2008 Democratic and Republican National Conventions.

RESOLVED: That all levels of our union actively engage and participate in the AFL-CIO Working Families Vote 2008 campaign and that all CWA elected officers contribute to CWA-COPE.

RESOLVED: That we challenge ourselves to build a political movement led by activist members of CWA's Stewards Army who will ensure that our key issues-- jobs, health care, retirement security, collective bargaining and organizing rights-- will be addressed.

Mr. President, the Resolutions Committee moves the adoption of Resolution 69A-07-5, "Building a Political Movement."

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thank you. At Microphone No. 3, Delegate Jones.

DELEGATE DIANE JONES (Local 4309): Brothers and sisters, I rise in support of this resolution to build a political movement by strengthening our financial resources.

Our employers have the financial resources to lobby and elect lawmakers who will serve them and other special interest groups. We cannot match these corporate giants dollar-for-dollar, but we can pool our resources to get the attention of legislators who are sympathetic to working people and their families.

When CWA workers come together to support COPE, we can make a difference; our voices can be heard through our elected representatives at every level of government. Eight dollars per person per month is a small contribution to such a monumental endeavor. We continue to ask for a seat at the table, but we must position ourselves to BE seated. We must support COPE and CWA's political agenda to educate and train our members to be ready to take our rightful places. Each and every elected official must lead by example.

I urge you all to support this resolution and to actively ask members to become COPE contributors. Thank you. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thank you, delegate.

At Microphone 1, Delegate Courtney.

DELEGATE MARCUS COURTNEY (Local 37083): I have a motion to amend this resolution to read as follows: "RESOLVED, That CWA, in the 2008 election, help lead the effort to strongly encourage both political parties and all candidates to adopt a fair trade and jobs agenda."

PRESIDENT COHEN: You may speak on your amendment, but we need a second, right?

. . . Cries of "Support" . . .

PRESIDENT COHEN: Okay.

DELEGATE COURTNEY: Thank you, Mr. President.

My brothers and sisters, I just wanted to make a motion to recognize in the resolution before us and to talk about the importance of Fair Trade in building a political movement. We all know that in this country, since the passage of NAFTA, millions of jobs have been destroyed or not created because our politicians, both Democrats and Republicans, have betrayed the working people of this country in order to send jobs overseas and create a race to the bottom. It is wrong! We need to stand up for fair trade, not free trade! (Applause)

It is not just manufacturing jobs. Our local represents and is trying to build a united movement among hi-tech professionals and workers. *Business Week* magazine reported this year that 1.1 million hi-tech jobs have been lost in this country in the last four years-- 1.1 million jobs.

Our leading hi-tech companies such as Microsoft, IBM, Dell Computers, HP and Compac, are all aggressively sending America's best-paid, best-skilled, middle class jobs overseas in the name of the race to the bottom. They are doing it because they are supporting free trade agreements that are not creating jobs in this country, but are destroying jobs.

We need to elect candidates and a President of the United States who is going to stand up and not destroy jobs for America's middle class, but will create millions of good, high-paying jobs. Thank you, Mr. President. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: We had delegates wishing to speak on the main motion. Is there anyone wishing to speak on the amendment that is now before us?

No, okay. We are voting then on the amendment to add-- and Marcus, I think I have this right based on the card. We want to add on-- and we will take his language in case this is not exactly right-- "That CWA, in the 2008 election, help lead the effort to strongly encourage both political parties and all candidates to adopt a fair trade and jobs agenda."

We are voting on that amendment to add that onto Resolution 5. All those in favor of that amendment please indicate by raising your hands.

Down hands. Opposed by like sign. It is amended. (Applause)

At the "Against" mike we have Delegate Grogan. Microphone 4-- I'm sorry, Sandy. I made a mistake here.

DELEGATE SANDRA GROGAN (Local 6301): That's my name.

PRESIDENT COHEN: You will be speaking, but I didn't go in the proper order. I assumed I should go to Mike 1, but I need to go to 3 and then 4 and then 5. We have someone at each mike. If you could wait a couple of minutes, if that's okay, I have to go back to Microphone 3, which is Delegate Matthews. I apologize.

DELEGATE FRANK MATTHEWS (Local 4321): Brothers and sisters, I rise in support of Resolution 69A-07-5.

In 2006, great things were done in Ohio because of District 4's ability to use COPE dollars to get a full-time mobilizer off the job, working full-time with the Ohio locals. This mobilizer provided updated materials, coordinated labor walks, phone banks and rallies. Because of all this and more, in Ohio we were able to take back the governorship, numerous Ohio House and Senate seats, a U.S. Senate seat, and a Congressional seat in Eastern Ohio that six months prior to the election was considered unwinnable.

We must keep this movement going. The elections of 2008 will soon be upon us. As great as our effort was in 2006, 2008 will require even more work, more funding, and more fight than anything we have ever done. This resolution provides the organization, the game plan and funding to help us achieve Labor's goals in 2008.

Let me tell you about the benefits also of a stewards mobilizer army. The benefit of such an army was realized recently in Ohio. As a recent CWA-supported piece of legislation on video franchising went through the Senate and House, 13 total hearings took place. CWA had no fewer and usually more than 18 red-shirted members at each hearing and vote.

For those that are familiar with the "Godfather" movies, in *Godfather II* there is a courtroom scene in which the uncle of a witness is brought in. He sits in the back of the courtroom, says nothing, but his being there

changed the trial and its outcome.

When this bill passed, the bill's sponsor walked up to me and said, "Thanks for the CWA's involvement." Then he jokingly said, "The CWA was like the uncle in "Godfather II" in the back of the courtroom. Anytime the Senators looked up, there were all those darn red shirts. (Applause)

For those who know mobilization, 18 members at 13 meetings-- and each meeting was usually four hours long-- over a six-week window may seem daunting. Success was achieved by 10 different Ohio locals coming together and making available over 65 members who became our army. The 65 members were rotated in and out throughout the hearings.

Not only did the bill pass, we witnessed over 65 members who had never been involved in politics gain mobilization and political experience. With experience comes confidence. On the day of the final vote, several voiced the same thought to me: "When is our next fight, Frank?"

Resolution 69A-07-5 addresses the funding, organization, training and building of a political movement. I urge all to support this resolution. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: Microphone 4, Delegate Grogan.

DELEGATE GROGAN: It's not that I'm against raising more money for COPE. In our local, we are already over 20 percent of our membership. But our members, a lot of them on union-negotiated contracts, don't make \$8 an hour. So it seems like Triple Quorum, Platinum Quorum, Quorum, all these tax dollar amounts are really highly unequal. It is not fair when you have people who make \$7.60 an hour and you have other people who make \$30 an hour.

So that's what I'm against, is asking people who don't even make \$8 an hour to pay \$8 a month.

PRESIDENT COHEN: Microphone No. 5, Delegate Bullock.

DELEGATE CRAIG A. BULLOCK (Local 7906): Thank you, Mr. President. My question is: Will the updated resources and materials associated with Resolution 69A-07-5 be inclusive of all political parties?

PRESIDENT COHEN: Does the Chair want to answer this, or I could ask Executive Vice President Rechenbach? V.P. Rechenbach, do you want to answer? Is that what you want, Denise?

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT RECHENBACH: I think you've noticed in a lot of the material we put out that we specifically want to reach out to Republican members as well and have them hold up to workers, their co-workers, and Republican candidates, the set of standards and issues that workers on the job care about.

So the materials we are putting together are non-partisan, except in the sense that they are very partisan when it comes to workers' issues. They are not Democratic or Republican.

You are entitled to a second question.

PRESIDENT COHEN: Yes, you are. Do you have a second question, sir?

DELEGATE BULLOCK: Well, at first it sounded like they were going to be non-partisan, and then you kind of said they were partisan. I did not understand that part.

PRESIDENT COHEN: It is non-partisan. Is that your second question? I guess it was. Non-partisan definitely, absolutely, non-partisan.

DELEGATE BULLOCK: Thank you, Mr. President. That will help us in our local with a split political party affiliation.

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thank you.

I have another one here. At Microphone No. 3, Delegate-- I'm having trouble reading this name-- Macias.

DELEGATE KAREN MACIAS (Local 9573): Good afternoon, President Cohen, Executive Board, Delegates and Guests. I rise before you to speak in behalf of Resolution 69A-07-5, "Building a Political Movement."

The rebuilding of our nation is critical for our working families. Restoring respect not only for every American, but for our union brothers and sisters who pro-actively support candidates that share our views in the political arena.

We must urge and encourage our members to contribute to COPE in order to compete with the dollars that big business contributes. CWA members have a stake in electing officials and we must educate and actively engage our efforts in making sure those officials represent working families' issues. We must challenge our members to assist us in building a political movement that will preserve and ensure our key issues are addressed.

I encourage all of you to support "\$8 in '08." (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: Microphone No. 1, Delegate Moughan.

DELEGATE COLLEEN M. MOUGHAN (Local 4309): I would like to call the question.

. . . The motion was duly seconded . . .

PRESIDENT COHEN: The question has been called. It is not debatable. It requires a two-thirds vote.

All those in favor of calling the question please indicate by raising your hands. Down hands. Opposed by a like sign. The question has been called.

You are now voting on Resolution 5, "Building a Political Movement." All those in favor of the motion as amended please indicate by raising your hands. Down hands. Opposed by a like sign. It is adopted. (Applause)

CHAIR BURNS: Thank you, Mr. President. The Chair recognizes Brent Duvall.

DELEGATE BRENT DUVALL (Local 7603): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Would the delegates please turn to page 9 of the Resolutions Report and look at Resolution No. 69A-07-6, entitled "Fair Postal Rates for Small and Medium Periodicals."

RESOLUTION 69A-07-6

Fair Postal Rates for Small and Medium Periodicals

A recent decision by the U.S. Postal Board of Governors will foist a backbreaking increase in periodical postal rates on small and medium sized publications throughout America.

The rate increase was devised by Time-Warner, one of the largest publishers in America, as a way of shifting its own postal burden onto the backs of smaller publications.

This unfair policy will not only force smaller publications to bear a larger share of the July 15th postal rate increase, it will force them to invest heavily in new technology, a cost they can ill afford because of their limited size and resources. Many have already spent large amounts of money in technology upgrades to help keep their mailing costs down, an expense that will now be totally wasted.

Our nation's founding fathers understood the press as a political institution needing to be supported through favorable postal rates. President George Washington spoke out for free postage for newspapers through the mail, and Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton conceded incentives were necessary to spawn a viable press.

For 215 years, postal policies encouraged small and medium sized publications and divergent ideas to sprout and flourish because the postal system was based on policies of public service and democratic values.

The Newspaper Guild and the Communications Workers of America have stood in the forefront of efforts to protect and encourage a thriving free press. Our democracy cannot afford to lose the many small voices that represent the diversity of America, which encourage the free exchange of ideas and make our democracy the envy of the world.

RESOLVED: That the Communications Workers of America stand against the postal rate increase designed to help large publications. Ultimately, it could force thousands of medium to small publications, including labor newspapers and magazines, into extinction.

RESOLVED: That every CWA local urge their members of Congress to roll back the periodical postal rate increases that took effect July 15th.

Mr. President, the Resolutions Committee moves the adoption of Resolution 69A-07-6, "Fair Postal Rates for Small and Medium Periodicals."

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thank you.

At Microphone No. 3, Delegate Winton.

DELEGATE TONY WINTON (Local 31222): Thank you.

Brothers and Sisters, I will be brief. As Shakespeare said, "Brevity is the soul of wit." This is about newspapers getting into the hands of our brothers and sisters all across the country.

I come from a local where we have members in the news media in all 50 states. We rely on postage stamps to get news about our contracts, about bargaining, and about everything else. You know, getting things through the mail is very important.

This decision by the Postal Board of Governors really is tilted in favor of big business, big publications, and it could make it harder for a lot of people to do newsletters that are so important in keeping your members informed.

I would point out that there is value, even in this electronic age where units seem to be everything and it's web this and web that, and that a newsletter in the hands of your members is seen not just by your members, but seen by everyone in the family. It is something that has permanency and has durability.

I rise in support of this resolution because the union newsletter is something that we need to support. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: Microphone No. 1, Delegate Kermish.

DELEGATE LISA KERMISH (Local 9119): I rise with a suggested amendment. In the text of the resolution, in paragraph 4, I would like to replace the phrase "our nation's founding fathers," with the phrase "our nation's founders."

I think that this is in keeping with the spirit of inclusivity at this Convention. (Applause)

. . . The motion was duly seconded . . .

PRESIDENT COHEN: There is a second. You may speak on your motion, or is that it?

DELEGATE KERMISH: I think that is sufficient. Thank you.

PRESIDENT COHEN: All right. Anyone else wishing to speak on that amendment? No?

All right, all those in favor of that amendment, to just strike the word "fathers," and say "founders," please indicate by raising your hand. Down hands. Opposed by a like sign. The amendment is adopted.

Microphone No. 3, Delegate O'Meara.

DELEGATE WILLIAM O'MEARA (Local 31003): Good afternoon. I rise in favor of this resolution.

Our local represents small publishers, including *The Nation* magazine. That was the publication that first brought this issue to our attention. Those small publishers might well be put out of business if these unfair postal rates are not reversed. As you may know, they favor large, wealthy publishers who can afford to pre-sort their publications, and they get a break. But the smaller publications cannot do that and are going to be paying a higher rate.

By the way, our local represents workers at Time, Incorporated, a division of Time-Warner, the company, as the resolution says, that devised this unfair method of payment. And the people we represent put out *Time* magazine, *Fortune* magazine, and *People* magazine, some of the most popular magazines in this country. They are trying to bust our union there right now. Our members voted unanimously to reject the company's last and best final offer that called for merit only pay increases and only guaranteed a one percent raise over 50 months of a contract.

We would not be able to properly represent our members there, and they are the ones that are going to get the benefit of these unfair postal rates. It is outrageous. Please vote in favor of this resolution. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: No other delegate wishes to speak on the resolution. We will vote on the main motion as amended, Resolution 6, Fair Postal Rates for Small and Medium Periodicals.

All those in favor of the resolution as amended, please indicate by raising your hand. Down hands. Those opposed by a like sign. It is adopted as amended.

I recognize the Chair.

CHAIR BURNS: Thank you, Mr. President.

The Chair recognizes Pamela Rogers.

DELEGATE PAMELA ROGERS (Local 4998): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Would the delegates please turn to Page 10 of the Resolutions Report and look at Resolution 69A-07-7, entitled "Genocide In Darfur."

RESOLUTION 69A-07-7

Genocide in Darfur

Darfur is a region of far western Sudan. Since early 2003, Sudanese government forces and ethnic militia called "Janjaweed" have engaged in an armed conflict with rebel groups called the Sudanese Liberation Army and the Justice and Equality Movement. As part of its operations against the rebels, government forces have waged a systematic campaign of "ethnic cleansing" against the civilian population who are members of the

same ethnic groups as the rebels.

The conflict has been described as both "ethnic cleansing" and "genocide" by the mass media. It is estimated that as many as 450,000 people are dead from the violence and disease. The International Rescue Committee has reported that hundreds of women and girls were raped and sexually assaulted. Raped women are considered unclean and are ostracized. To further humiliate them and their families, women are raped in public places.

In April 2004, a 60-day cease fire agreement between the Sudanese government and rebel groups was established while they worked towards lasting peace. However, the agreement was constantly violated by both sides. Currently there are no forces in Darfur to protect civilians and their communities from the ongoing violence.

The long-term problem in Darfur is the Sudanese government and its pursuit to adopt policies that target civilians. Today, the most urgent need is for larger international forces in Darfur. An international force can stop attacks on the civilian population and provide checks and balances on the Sudanese government to end their policies and practices through sanctions and other measures.

RESOLVED: That the Communications Workers of America shall help bring worldwide attention to this crisis in humanity and help bring U.S. labor's attention to the problems of Darfur.

RESOLVED: That CWA shall call on Congress and the President to use sanctions if the situation does not improve in Darfur. Those sanctions would include restrictions of trade and dollar transactions with the Sudanese government and businesses that support that government.

RESOLVED: That CWA call upon our government to fully support the International Criminal Court to indict the perpetrators of this genocide. It is time for justice. Only justice can bring peace. Together we can make a difference in the lives of millions of people who desperately need our help.

Mr. President, the Resolutions Committee moves to adopt Resolution 69A-07-7, entitled Genocide In Darfur."

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thank you.

At Microphone No. 3, Delegate Wynn.

DELEGATE PAMELA G. WYNN (Local 4309): Sisters and brothers, I stand before you to ask your support for Resolution 69A-07-7, "Genocide In Darfur." It is now time for labor to stand up for the people of Darfur who have been killed, violated and died of diseases. It is now time for labor to insist that our government stop all trade with a country that has no regard for human life.

It is now time for President Bush to put trade and monetary sanctions on the country of Darfur and not just talk about it. We cannot just sit around while thousands of human lives are lost and destroyed by a government that adopts policies that target civilians. We must call on our government to support the work of the International Criminal Court to indict and punish the perpetrators of this genocide.

We have to remember, brothers and sisters, that an injury to one is still an injury to all. I urge all of us to support this resolution and stop the genocide. Thank you. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: Microphone No. 3, Delegate Roeder.

DELEGATE RAE ROEDER (Local 1033): I rise in support of this Resolution No. 7, in opposition to the genocide in Darfur caused by Janjaweed. In the state of New Jersey, they have sanctioned the use of pension money as far as it being invested in Darfur and in the Sudan.

Not only do we have to sanction them, but we have to remove their right to take our money so that

Janjaweed has no money to support that genocide. Therefore, I ask that we vote in favor of this resolution. No trade, no money. Let's stop the Janjaweed. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: Microphone No. 1, Delegate Saxberg.

DELEGATE BARBARA SAXBERG (Local 30213): I would like to propose a friendly amendment to the motion: "Be it resolved, that CWA-SCA Canada call upon the government and Parliament of Canada and its provinces and the Canadian Labour Movement to take the same action." (Applause)

. . . The motion was duly seconded . . .

PRESIDENT COHEN: It has been seconded. You may speak on your motion.

DELEGATE SAXBERG: It is pretty straightforward. Actually, we simply want to recognize that we are an international union; that in Canada trade is also conducted; and that we support the resolution.

PRESIDENT COHEN: Is there anyone else that wishes to speak on the amendment?

No other speakers on the amendment. We are voting on the amendment to add that in to include Canada in the resolved.

All those in favor of that amendment please indicate by raising your hand. Down hands. Opposed by like sign. It is adopted. (Applause)

Back to the main motion. At Microphone No. 3, Delegate Rocha.

DELEGATE LOUIE ROCHA (Local 9423): Sisters and brothers, I rise in support of the resolution "Genocide in Darfur." Throughout the course of human history, there's been too many periods of horrific crimes committed against humanity, and all too often countries around the world were silent or ambivalent towards the tragedies. Organized labor has a moral obligation to not ignore this dire situation. Just as labor joined other great social causes, our voices must be added to end this criminal assault on the people of Darfur.

Sudan, where Darfur is located, is the largest country in Africa. Unfortunately, they do not have a lot of oil or else this tragedy may have been addressed a lot quicker.

Sisters and brothers, 2.5 million workers, farmers-- people-- have fled their homeland and hundreds of thousands are dead, many in the most unimaginable ways. Many Darfurian children are malnourished and starving to death. The CWA cannot be silent as this calculated campaign of displacement, starvation, rape and mass slaughter takes place under our watch.

The Bush Administration has recognized these atrocities but must do more. All countries must do more. We must call on Congress and the President of the United States to use sanctions to force change now.

For more information check out these websites: www.sudandivestment.org and www.africanholocaust.net. Please go home and look these websites up so you can get more information and involved. It is inexcusable that more is not done to end the genocide in Darfur. Not one more day, not one more death. End genocide now. End genocide now. End genocide now! (Applause and cheers)

PRESIDENT COHEN: No other delegate has asked for the floor; therefore, debate is closed. We are voting on the main motion as amended to include Canada, Resolution 7 on Darfur.

All those in favor of the main motion as amended indicate by raising you hands. Down hands. Opposed by like sign. It is adopted. (Applause)

The other two resolutions, for statistical reasons, we need to wait until tomorrow. So we are now going to see what I thought was a wonderful video prepared by our Canadian members on health care. Can we roll

that video? Hopefully it's ready to roll.

. . . A video on the Canadian healthcare system was shown pointing out the disparities between it and the United States where 45 million people have no health insurance . . . (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: Let's thank our members of the Canadian Media Guild for preparing that video. (Applause) And we will have that video on our website so you can download it and, hopefully, show it and build the movement to change this.

At this time I call on our Secretary-Treasurer, Barbara Easterling.

SECRETARY-TREASURER EASTERLING: I did not want to show you what I have, but I have to because I promised I would do it if we won the diversity issue.

The other night, we had dinner together, the staff that is here from the Secretary-Treasurer's office, and Carmine Turchi was with us. He was giving on-the-job training to Billy Bates, who has replaced him. He gave me this gift to open. And when I opened it, it was a painting he had had commissioned. (Displaying the painting)

And there it is. That is me, the "Guardian Angel of Diversity," if you can believe it. (Laughter) I have shown it. I have done my part now.

All right, we have a telephone-- it is a Nokia that was found, and I guess you can call me on it, and I will know it is yours.

We also found a small ring with small diamonds in it. But I am willing to give it up. (Laughter) Oh, it fits my little finger. We understand it was found in the delegates' seating area. If you can tell me the number of diamonds on this ring, it's yours. (Laughter)

As a reminder, any materials left on the desks or on your tables will stay there. It will be there tomorrow. If it is on the floor it will be tossed.

Somebody asked me to report that there were four winners in the Future Link Raffle: John Rogers, Local 4302; Yolanda Warren, District 6; Diane Jones, Local 4309, and Peggy Chadwick-Ledwon, Local 1133.

Tomorrow the delegates will be allowed to enter the hall beginning at 8:00 tomorrow morning. The buses, as you saw, will be departing at 5:30. The reason we decided that is because the Districts are having elections, so we are running those buses from 5:30 to 8:30 tonight.

The slide show that you saw as you came back in after lunch, that show is now on the CWA website.

The postcards that you were asked to fill out, there will be two boxes at the exits of the hall to collect the postcards you have addressed to the presidential candidates.

Also, we have the Milwaukee Local that represents Community Newspapers, Incorporated. They have petitions they would like all of us to sign. So they will be at the exits when you come in and when you leave, and they will ask you to sign those.

Finally, let me read a letter from Hillary Clinton.

. . . Portions of the letter were read, the complete text of which is included for the record . . .

"Dear Friends:

"It gives me great pleasure to send greetings to all of the delegates attending the 69th Annual Convention of the Communications Workers of America (CWA). In addition to President Larry Cohen, Secretary-Treasurer

Barbara J. Easterling, Executive Vice President Jeff Rechenbach, and all of the members of the CWA executive board, I would like to extend a special greeting to your CWA Canadian brothers and sisters. This is a great year to celebrate your convention in Toronto and the shared democratic principles of our two nations.

"The theme you selected for this year's convention could not be more appropriate. Together we are on the move both in Washington and in your respective communities across the country. With eighteen months until the November 2008 presidential and congressional elections, we are setting the stage to position the next president to take our legislative agenda one step farther.

"As a long time friend and supporter of CWA, I was pleased to have had the opportunity this past March to address your Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C. As I mentioned then, CWA continues to serve as a leader and conscience for working men and women across the country and all over the world. Over the years, you and I have worked together on a number of issues. I am especially pleased about the significant legislative milestones we have accomplished in the new 110th Congress.

"Despite a filibuster, the vote on the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA) demonstrated that a clear majority of Senators support the right of workers to form a union when a majority of them sign cards seeking union recognition. CWA's card check campaign with a progressive, forward thinking Cingular Wireless clearly demonstrates that labor and management can work together and that card check can succeed for all parties involved. As President of the United States, you can be assured that when the EFCA comes across my desk, I will sign it into law.

"The American workforce is second to none in producing high quality goods and services in this global market. Our nation continues to enjoy economic growth because workers like you come to work every day and take tremendous pride in the goods and services you provide. My Administration will make the growth of the American workforce a key priority by protecting the rights of workers to organize and bargain collectively, strengthening the defined benefit pension system, and investing in job creation and worker training. And let me state unequivocally that as President I will end the tax breaks that still exist in the tax code for outsourcing jobs and will fight for trade agreements with enforceable labor and environmental standards.

"As our key service and manufacturing industries move forward in this century, we know that they will require a new broadband-telecommunications policy that will again make the United States the leader in internet penetration. It is no secret that the United States, this country that invented the internet, has fallen from first to sixteenth in terms of Internet penetration. The Internet is a vital communication tool that is driving American industry and growing exponentially as a central means of global business communication. From telecommunications to distance learning, from farming to public safety, our government must engage in a very real debate and evaluation of the value of high-speed broadband use in order to keep American industry from falling further behind. The United States Congress must pass contemporary, updated telecommunications reform that will provide state of the art universal access to all Americans. CWA, through its Speed Matters research initiative, is taking the lead in helping federal, state and local legislatures enact smart telecommunications policy regarding expansion of broadband technology and services that will propel their communities into the modern age.

"Universal health care is another pressing issue which your members and my campaign share a common concern. As you well know, I have fought tirelessly for universal health care and have the scars to prove it. As Senator, I have worked to extend coverage to the nearly nine million uninsured children and to end discrimination by insurance companies against people with mental health and substance abuse problems. As President, I will ensure that every single American has quality, affordable health coverage by lowering costs, improving quality, and insuring everyone.

"I want to thank you again for all you do on behalf of all Americans. My campaign is about fighting for the rights of working families and fulfilling the promise that tomorrow will be better than today. As President, I will fight with the labor movement to promote the economic growth of the American workforce as we usher in a modern progressive era of shared prosperity. We will need the strength of your "Stewards Army" to motivate every American to go to the polls 2008.

"Please accept my best wishes as you deliberate those important institutional policy matters that will serve to make our nation's workforce and your union stronger. I am honored to continue fighting on your behalf and for all working families in New York and throughout this great nation. Together, we can bring about change and achieve great success in November 2008.

"Sincerely yours,"

s/Hillary Rodham Clinton, U.S. Senator (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: All right, we are in recess until 8:30 a.m. Enjoy the evening. I appreciate your good work today.

. . . The Convention recessed at 4:55 o'clock, p.m. . . .

TUESDAY MORNING SESSION

July 17, 2007

The Convention reconvened at 8:30 a.m., CWA President Larry Cohen presiding.

PRESIDENT COHEN: Good morning. It helps to turn on the microphone. (Laughter)

For purposes of an invocation, it is my honor to introduce Father Thomas Rosica. Father Rosica grew up in Rochester. He worked for years here in Canada and around the world. He is well-known to Catholics and the media on a worldwide basis following his leadership as the National Director of World Youth Day 2002.

A Basilican father and noted scripture scholar, Father Rosica was ordained a priest in 1986. He now leads Salt and Light Television, yet another connection to our union, a rich experience in the church at the national and international levels.

Prior to his work on World Youth Day 2002, he was a director and pastor of the Newman Center Catholic Mission at the University of Toronto. He lectures at the faculty on theology at the University of St. Michaels College in Toronto, and is also a weekly columnist for the *Toronto Sun*.

It is a great pleasure to introduce Father Thomas Rosica. (Applause)

FATHER THOMAS ROSICA (CEO, Salt and Light Catholic Media Foundation & Television Network): Good morning. You have heard of the book called “Jesus, CEO,” and here is the “Priest, CEO.” My mother told me over the weekend, “We wanted you to be a priest, not a businessman.” But I happen to run Canada’s Catholic Television Network. It is a privilege to be with you today at this Convention in the city that I love, and to lead the morning reflection for you.

Here in this room, we are all involved in the work of communication of sorts-- of words, of connecting human beings, of being ambassadors to other people across the face of the earth. Essentially our role is to give meaning to life.

This morning I would like to speak to you about one of the greatest communicators who walked the face of this earth, and particularly this very earth, the place where you are right now, only five years ago during a great and historic event of World Youth Day 2002, the greatest event and the largest event that ever hit this country.

I want to speak to you about the Polish man who was born with the name Karol Wojtyla, who you all knew as Pope John II, who I knew as my religious leader and also a good friend.

While Pope John II did leave behind a spiritual testament, his Last Will, that was read to the cardinals and later shared with the world after his death in 2005, his last major formal document was, interestingly enough, an Apostolic letter entitled “The Rapid Development,” released on January 24, 2005, several months before he died. It was addressed to, and I quote, “those responsible for communications,” and contains an important message to every media mogul, copy editor, reporter, writer, broadcaster, web master and blogger, communications worker, whether they were Roman Catholic or not.

A “spirituality of communication” is one of the major contributions of the letter that is none other than John Paul II’s “Testament on Social Communications.” I think all of you would recognize some aspect of your work in this very important text which, by the way, can be found on the Vatican’s website.

It is not a coincidence that the last document of this great Pope should be on the theme of communications, for if any church leader ever embodied and exemplified the great communicator, it was John Paul II.

The contents of this remarkable document were somewhat eclipsed by the late Pope’s final suffering and

death on the world's stage, and then the election of his successor, Benedict XVI. In "The Rapid Development," John Paul was concise in reviewing the Christian view of history. He wrote: "Salvation History recounts and documents the communication of God with man, a communication which uses all forms and ways of communication."

He then noted that history's greatest communicator, the man from Galilee that we know as Jesus, used a variety of techniques: "He explains the Scriptures, expresses himself in parables, stories, dialogues within the intimacy of the home. He speaks in the squares, along the streets, on the shores of the lake and on the mountaintops. A personal encounter with this man, Jesus, does not leave anyone indifferent."

John Paul II also stated that, "The media provides a providential opportunity to reach people everywhere, overcoming barriers of time, of space, and of language; presenting the content of faith in the most varied ways imaginable; and offering to all who search the possibility of entering into dialogue with the mystery of God, revealed fully for us Christians as the person, Jesus Christ."

The Pope said that communicators, both within and outside the church, must apply in their own lives those values and behavior that they are called to teach others. The communicator is not only one who practices his work, but someone who lives his work or her work.

As a communicator, the person transmits a world view and, therefore, becomes a witness. Communications and the media become instruments at the service of peace, at the service of the development of human society.

But he also gave a warning in this important letter. He said, "Many people, in fact, believe that humanity must learn to live in a climate governed by the absence of meaning, by the provisional and by the fleeting."

Throughout his nearly 27-year as Pope, as Pontificate, John Paul II taught us that communication is power. He told us to use that power wisely. Prudently get our message out and it will have a shot at bearing fruit, despite obstacles. And let me tell you, if anyone knew about obstacles, John Paul II did, having lived long and prospered, despite being faced from the very beginning with the tyranny of Nazism and then Communism.

As the curtain was about to fall for the last time for the Great Communicator John Paul II in early April 2005, two years ago, the athlete was immobilized, the distinctive, booming voice silenced, and the hand that produced voluminous encyclicals no longer able to write. Yet nothing made him waver, even the debilitating sickness hidden under the glazed Parkinsonian mask, and ultimately his inability to speak and move. In fact, the most powerful message, I believe, that he preached was when the words and actions failed. It was then, in the passion of Karol Wojtyla, that the world saw what authentic communication was all about.

The forces he partially unleashed against authoritarian regimes during his lifetime were only side-effects of the way the man who began life as Karol Wojtyla viewed humanity. At the beginning of the third millennium, we have economic globalization, and we speak just about that. But this must be accompanied by a moral globalization.

Whether or not you share John Paul II's and my church's motivating beliefs, you can certainly acknowledge that John Paul II was the most impressive attempt so far made by any single human being to spell out what moral globalization might mean, starting with a lived practice of universal solidarity, charity, and hope. And he did this by communicating his message boldly and respectfully wherever he went.

He taught us that there is much more to the Church and the papacy than preaching, speaking, writing, greeting people and traveling, although he certainly did enough of all of that. I teased him once in one of our meetings with him and said, "I'd love to have your Air Miles."

He communicated through spontaneous, symbolic actions that were often much more eloquent than some of his speeches, homilies and encyclicals, especially his final moments on the world stage. Those actions were powerful symbols.

Let me leave this thought with you before I conclude with a prayer. The word “symbol” comes from the Greek word “symbolein,” which means “to bring together.” It’s the opposite of the Greek word “diabolein,” which means “to break apart; to divide,” the origin of our word “diabolical.” Symbolic actions help to bring people together in peace and in love. Up to the moment of his death and even afterwards, Pope John Paul II brought people together in peace and in love. This was communication at the service of truth.

The most moving experience of my life was to have been at his funeral in Rome and to cover it for the CBC, our national network here in this country, and to see that that day the world came together like it had never been together before.

We had in this man a brilliant teacher, a communicator, a model of goodness and humanity, and if he were around today he would have gladly accepted an invitation to speak to a group like this.

He was-- and I love the title that oftentimes those of us who knew him gave to him-- the “Pontifex Massmediaticus,” the Mass Media Bridge Builder. He began his historic service to the world with words that would become the refrain for the next 27 years and will continue to echo through the corridors of history. He said, “Do not be afraid.” Would that many of us in the church and in the media world and in our professions and our unions take these words to heart. Think of the walls that would come tumbling down and imagine the bridges that would be built.

And so I pray for you today, in light of the life and example of a great communicator, Karol Wojtyla, known to us as John Paul II.

May You be praised, Lord, for the communicators and the communications workers, writers, artists, directors, and all those whose gifts light up theater and cinema and provide audiences with heightened awareness of the human condition.

May You be praised, Lord, for all those who labor painstakingly with words and technology, especially in our newspapers, journals, magazines, institutions, those who try to communicate with us the mystery, the truth and the beauty of human life.

We thank You, Lord God, for the unending Pentecost of Your creative Holy Spirit which enables Your sons and daughters to catch fire from Your own words, truth, beauty and goodness.

Help all of the communicators, the Communications Workers of the Americas gathered here, to be deeply convinced of the great vocation You give them-- to build bridges, not walls; to make their words become flesh, so that the blind may see, the deaf hear, the poor have the good news proclaimed to them by all who rejoice in their God-given talents and their gift of splendid creativity.

May the Servant of God, John Paul II, teach you and help you not to be afraid. Amen. (Applause)

SECRETARY-TREASURER EASTERLING: Good morning. I asked Larry for a little bit of time to talk about something that we are involved in and have gotten you involved in a little bit, but I want a lot more participation from the locals.

One of my favorite sayings is that we serve those we represent, and we represent those that have no one to represent them. That is the issue that I am talking to you about this morning. You have in your places a paper that looks like this. It’s this color. We made sure you wouldn’t be able to miss it. It’s called the Milkshake Man Fund, and it was started by the Milkshake Man. He is a person, he has a face, and I am going to show him to you in a little bit at the end of my remarks. I did send an e-mail out to the locals about it, but sometimes we receive too many e-mails, so maybe you missed it. I asked that you contribute, each local contribute \$25 to the Milkshake Fund.

I met this guy. His name is Jim Mayer. He is a Vietnam Veteran who lost both legs in that war, and he was working for the VA Outreach Department, but he went to Walter Reed Hospital.

I know all of you have seen the photos and read the stories about Walter Reed Hospital. He went there and met with the soldiers as they came back from Iraq and Afghanistan. Many of those military personnel were unable to talk to the hospital staff, to their own families, and he was able to initiate a conversation with them by simply going around and asking them, you know, "Would you like a milkshake today, and what flavor would you like?" He said he had never had a "no" back, and then he would get the milkshake, which enabled him to sit down and begin conversations with them. His work has been remarkable and it's been out of his own pocket.

He retired from the VA, and you are going to see a film in a little bit about that retirement party. It was the patients and staff who honored him for what he has been doing.

And although my e-mail has resulted in us raising \$4,000, \$1,000 of that came from the El Paso Local. They have a hospital there. It's the second largest in the United States for the military, and they have two bases. So I guess they see a lot more than we do and it moved them a great deal. I am not asking for \$1,000, only \$25 from each local, because if that's what we do and we have 1,000 locals, we have got \$25,000.

I took some time last week to sit with him and we talked for probably an hour and a half. He was overwhelmed when I gave him that check-- just overwhelmed. He said, "You just can't understand because usually somebody will give me \$5 and tell me, you know, buy a couple milkshakes with that. So this is just overwhelming."

I told him, "Well, we are not micromanaging the fund. We think you are capable of doing that. You might find a wounded soldier that might need something a little bit more than a milkshake, and now you will be able to do that for him."

He, of course, is very determined that we are going to get our money's worth, so he told me, first of all, that he has joined the Wounded Warriors organization, and that's what is on the back of the sheet, and you can also go to their website and see what else they are doing.

He also told me that-- and we should be very much aware of this-- if we are not seeing the young people coming back from Iraq and Afghanistan, then our members who are parents or grandparents are. They are individuals, he said, that need a lot of attention. Regardless of what they tell us, they need a lot of attention, and he feels that in that regard, the Wounded Warriors are there to help them. And we must be, as local officers, aware of what their needs are.

Next year they will be in here, the Wounded Warriors, they'll be here in a booth and you will be able to visit with them. He also told me that there is a disabled veteran that works at the Department of Labor that does a great deal of work. He said he's a wonderful guy, and he is going to have him come over and visit with me. I told him that would be great, because that would be the first wonderful person we ever met at the Department of Labor. (Laughter)

Actually, when the guy from the Department of Labor sent me an e-mail, he said in there-- and those of us that have been around a long time will be surprised-- one of the first things he said, "I remember the CWA from when you used to raise money to give free telephone calls to the servicemen at Christmas," and that was a project we did a great deal.

So that's the program. I just think that we ought to be part of it. I was telling Larry what I had started to do, and he is very supportive of it. And he was telling me that he thought that we should always remember something. We see photos and we see TV shots of the soldiers being brought back on stretchers or in coffins, but the guy that's on the stretcher looks in his mirror and he sees that missing limb every day. (Applause)

. . . A news segment was shown of the very inspiring work of Jim Mayer, "The Milkshake Man," in honor of his retirement from the VA, and his ongoing work for returning war veterans . . . (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: Barbara wanted me to add that with each milkshake or gift that he gives, there will be a card and the back of it will say, "Presented with the help of the Communications Workers of America."

Now I would like to ask the Finance Committee-- oh, they are here, great. The Finance Committee is on the platform. I will introduce them to you.

. . . As each member of the Finance Committee was introduced, as follows, the delegates responded with a single clap of recognition . . .

Corky Cammarata, Chair, President CWA Local 7400; Mike Bennard, President, CWA Local 3806; Nancy Hall, Secretary, CWA Local 6215; Giovanni Gomez, President, IUE-CWA Local 81475; and Barbara Easterling, Secretary-Treasurer.

I recognize the Chair.

DELEGATE CORKY CAMMARATA (Local 7400, Chair, Finance Committee): Thank you, President Cohen.

Delegates, you have our report in your packets. We will dispense with the reading of the entire report and read the letter in the front dated May 27, 2007.

Dear Sisters and Brothers:

Your Finance Committee met in Washington, D.C., on May 23, 24, and 25, 2007 to review and recommend the 2007-2008 budget. The Committee reviewed the Strategic Planning and Budget Committee Report adopted by the Executive Board, along with other supporting documentation.

Every requested book, record, or report of the Union was made available to us. The Committee reviewed the audit report prepared for the fiscal year ending May 31, 2006 by the certified public accounting firm of Calibre CPA Group. The Auditors conducted their examinations in accordance with generally accepted accounting standards. In the accountants' opinion, the financial statements reviewed fairly represent, in all material respects, the financial position of the Communications Workers of America as of May 31, 2006.

Past convention actions direct Finance Committees to review the expenditures of each administrative unit and require any unit(s) overspent at the end of the previous budget year to give a detailed explanation to the Committee. This year's Committee concurred with the 1998 Committee guideline recommendation not to ask for written explanations from any administrative head that was one percent or less overspent.

Therefore, your Committee directed those administrative heads who exceeded their 2005-2006 budgets by more than one percent to provide a detailed written explanation documenting the reasons why they exceeded their budget. When received and reviewed, the Committee, as empowered by convention action, may recommend that these administrative heads make an accounting to the Convention.

Financial stability requires a continuing effort on CWA's part to organize both internally and externally. Fiscal responsibility must become daily practice. The Committee recognizes the burden that National and Local leadership face exercising cost containment while providing necessary service to our membership.

This Finance Committee is recommending the 2007-2008 budget as one showing appropriate fiscal restraint with a continuing high level of representation and organizing commitment. The Committee applauds the work and efforts of this year's Strategic Planning and Budget Committee and wishes to compliment all administrative units that managed to stay within the confines of last year's budget recommendations.

The 2007-2008 Finance Committee extends our thanks, on behalf of the membership, to President Larry Cohen, Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Easterling, Executive Vice President Jeffrey Rechenbach, Eileen Brackens and associated CWA staff for their time, expertise and effort in aiding us in the development and preparation of this year's report.

This budget report was compiled through examination of line item requests for 2007-2008, through

interviews with department personnel and review of the demands and needs of all line items. The Committee wishes to thank all the leaders and staff in all Districts, National Units and Headquarters of our great union for their efforts in achieving the 2007-2008 budget. We as a committee therefore respectfully request and urge delegate approval.

In Solidarity.

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thank you. It has been moved and seconded.

At the "Questions" mike, Delegate Henning.

DELEGATE WILLIAM HENNING (Local 1180): Could you tell us, on Page 3, where we have the notice for the salaries of elected officials, that the committee recommends a salary increase. Could you tell us the amount or the percentage?

PRESIDENT COHEN: Let's see if we know the answer.

. . . Brief conference at the dais . . .

PRESIDENT COHEN: It has not been calculated but here is how it will be calculated. We take the five largest bargaining units in CWA and average the percentage increases, and that percentage is applied to the officers' salaries.

DELEGATE HENNING: May I have a second question?

PRESIDENT COHEN: Yes.

DELEGATE HENNING: What are the current salaries then of our elected officers?

PRESIDENT COHEN: Is that in here somewhere?

. . . Brief conference at the dais . . .

PRESIDENT COHEN: I am reminded by my colleagues here that last year the percentage was not applied, even though it was approved here, because of our financial situation.

Here are the salaries. You can all write them down: President, \$174,994; Secretary-Treasurer, \$156,695; Executive Vice President, \$144,681; Vice Presidents, \$136,649. I think that's it.

DELEGATE HENNING: Thank you.

PRESIDENT COHEN: There is no one else seeking to speak, no other delegate seeking to speak. Therefore, the question is called.

All those in favor of adopting the report as presented indicate by raising your hands. Down hands. Those opposed by a like sign. It's adopted.

Our thanks to the Finance Committee. It may seem simple here but they do hours and hours of work to prepare this. We appreciate you. (Applause)

I would like to ask the Defense Fund Oversight Committee to come to the platform. Here they are. Please welcome the Defense Fund Oversight Committee to the platform.

. . . As the members of the Defense/Members' Relief Fund Oversight Committee were introduced, as follows, the delegates responded with a single clap of recognition . . .

Arthur Cheliotas, President, Local 1180, Chair; Terry Daly, Treasurer, Local 1101; John Wills, Secretary-Treasurer, Local 2202; Mark Ledford, member, Local 3802; Ed Phillips, President, Local 4340; James Allen, Executive Vice President, Local 6215; Dawn Schnickels-Johnson, Treasurer, Local 7200, Vice Chair; Joan Gifford, member, Local 9505; Sandy Kmetyk, President, Local 13500; John Lewis, member, IUE-CWA Local 83761; and Barbara Easterling, Secretary-Treasurer.

I recognize the Chair of the Committee.

DELEGATE ARTHUR CHELIOTES (Local 1180, Chair, Defense/Members' Relief Fund Oversight Committee): To begin the report, I will turn it over to the representative from District 1, Terry Daly.

. . . The members of the Defense/Members' Relief Fund Oversight Committee proceeded to read the report of the committee as follows . . .

DELEGATE TERRY DALY (District 1):

Report of the Defense/Members' Relief Fund Oversight
Committee to the 69th Annual CWA Convention

The Defense/Members' Relief Fund Oversight Committee met on November 12-15, 2006, and April 15-17, 2007, in Washington, DC. We met again in Toronto prior to the Convention. The Committee reviewed the activities associated with the Members' Relief Fund and the Defense Fund. We examined receipts, disbursements, investments and the administrative policies associated with these two funds.

INVESTMENTS

In Washington, D.C., we reviewed the report from "Monitoring and Evaluation Services, Inc. - Investment Consultants" for the year ending December 31, 2006. In Toronto, we reviewed the report ending March 31, 2007. This firm is responsible for advising and verifying that fund investments are made in accordance with guidelines established by the President and Secretary-Treasurer. We were furnished with information regarding the specific amounts invested, the interest rates and returns and the duration of each of these investments.

Since our last report, which covered the period ending March 31, 2006, the fund investments, including mortgages held by the fund, have earned 7.49% for the year ending March 31, 2007. The Committee recommends that the current mortgage rate of 7.73% be continued.

To continue the report, I will turn it over to my colleague from District 2, John Wills.

MEMBERS' RELIEF FUND

The balance of the MRF as of March 31, 2007, is **\$415,053,841.47**.

Mortgage loans held by the MRF as of March 31, 2007 are:

<u>Local</u>	<u>Amount</u>
1033	223,494.13
1107	193,322.07
1109	164,325.51
1118	229,152.99
1133	548,062.76
2101	316,007.56
2222	193,435.82
3112	84,153.85
3314	58,047.51

<u>Local</u>	<u>Amount</u>
3406	110,245.13
84775	57,519.28
4008	160,654.16
4123	1,014,816.46
4340	130,462.44
4501	300.38
6229	219,257.61
6310	386,458.77
6450	822,781.43
7019	82,959.11
7704	221,816.54
7708	179,801.62
7803	54,780.03
9415	1,167,761.16
9423	136,449.61
9503	275,035.65
9509	106,852.97
39521	<u>27,690.78</u>

TOTAL LOCAL MORTGAGE LOANS **\$7,165,645.33**

MEMBERS' RELIEF FUND EXPENDITURES
April 1, 2006 - March 31, 2007

STRIKE RELATED:

LOCAL 14535 - TOLEDO BLADE	\$110,300.00
LOCAL 34179 - SHEBOYGAN NEWSPAPER GUILD	3,000.00
LOCAL 39117 - HAWAII NEWSPAPER GUILD	8,600.00
LOCAL 59053 - NAT'L CAPTIONING INSTITUTE	55,300.00
LOCAL 59054 - KGTV	11,500.00
LOCAL 81331 - CALDWELL MFG	6,400.00
SPRINT-NEXTEL	(108,602.17)
VERIZON INFORMATION SERVICES	<u>42,400.00</u>

TOTAL **\$128,897.83**

CONVENTION ACTION:

HURRICANE KATRINA **\$154,283.60**

The committee recommends that this appropriation end on December 31, 2007.

DEFENSE FUND

The balance of the Defense Fund as of March 31, 2007 is: **\$10,638,706.10.**

DEFENSE FUND EXPENDITURES

April 1, 2006 - March 31, 2007

STRIKE RELATED:

<u>Bargaining Unit</u>	<u>Spent</u>
SPRINT - NEXTEL STRIKE	\$12,402.36
LOCAL 34011 - YOUNGSTOWN NEWSPAPER GUILD	7,511.61
LOCAL 30213 - CANADIAN MEDIA GUILD	(66,889.00)
VIS STRIKE	247.38
LOCAL 30248 - COBOURG DAILY STAR	<u>(745.10)</u>
TOTAL	(\$47,472.75)

VICTIMS OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING:

<u>Bargaining Unit</u>	<u>Spent</u>
LOCAL 39117 - HAWAII NEWSPAPER GUILD	\$5,885.65
LOCAL 59054 - KGTV	<u>4,517.78</u>
TOTAL	\$10,403.43

Allocations and expenditures which were approved by the Executive Board and the Committee:

NON-STRIKE RELATED:

<u>Local</u>	<u>Allocated</u>	<u>Spent</u>
DELPHI CORP. MOBILIZATION	\$0.00	**\$112,128.15
LOCAL 1096 - IAPE	98,000.00	98,000.00
LOCAL 1400 - STOP VERIZON SALE IN NNE	42,150.00	15,000.00
LOCAL 14535 - THE TOLEDO BLADE	170,000.00	99,769.33
LOCAL 31245 - THE BOSTON GLOBE	100,000.00	100,000.00
LOCAL 38218 - YORK DAILY RECORD	0.00	**25,484.00
LOCAL 51021 - WRGB - TV	0.00	**37,604.05
LOCAL 52031 - WJLA NEWS CHANNEL 8	74,713.00	15,604.05
LOCAL 59054 - KGTV	95,600.00	89,829.39
LOCAL 9413 - CC COMMUNICATIONS	0.00	**1,138.80
BRESNAN CABLE	15,103.00	3,013.90
CITY OF MEMPHIS	5,000.00	5,000.00
NJ PUBLIC WORKERS CAMPAIGN	1,738,417.00	1,311,572.70
PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE	164,600.00	49,175.00
SPEED MATTERS	350,000.00	90,155.98
STOP DEREGULATION IN NY STATE	188,000.00	163,014.74
STOP SPRINT - NEXTEL DEAL	400,000.00	46,439.08
STOP VERIZON VIDEO FRANCHISING	885,788.00	278,111.25
SUPPORT FOR UNION CINGULAR WIRELESS & CABLE	0.00	**257,463.25
WESTERN NY HEALTH CARE WORKERS	<u>262,000.00</u>	<u>196,873.92</u>
TOTAL	\$4,589,371.00	\$2,995,378.21

(**Prior year's allocation)

STRATEGIC INDUSTRY FUND

The balance of the Strategic Industry Fund as of March 31, 2007 is: **\$11,270.76**

STRATEGIC INDUSTRY FUND INCOME:

A total of \$3,030,385.50 is due to the SIF, but not yet posted.

	Telecom	Media	Health Care	Manufacturing	TOTAL	Grand
District #	Income	Income	Income	Income	Income	Total
1	506,145.49	72,804.72	28,076.91	59,843.44	666,870.56	3,150,767.19
2	214,294.23	15,915.84	925.32	12,361.83	243,497.22	974,289.29
3	263,876.23	9,503.26	94.09	34,527.80	308,001.38	2,010,258.61
4	319,859.65	27,583.02	16,558.05	94,939.82	458,940.54	2,189,603.37
6	458,271.81	6,804.66	-	11,151.04	476,227.51	1,824,104.83
7	269,662.50	17,752.28	65.01	8,968.25	296,448.04	1,302,204.16
9	405,979.68	34,186.16	6,777.45	15,755.05	462,698.34	1,950,770.81
13	138,363.89	10,305.89	489.08	17,456.35	166,615.21	714,237.44
CAN 14	-	2,570.58	-	-	2,570.58	184,434.56
Total	2,576,453.48	197,426.41	52,985.91	255,003.58	3,081,869.38	14,300,670.26

STRATEGIC INDUSTRY FUND EXPENDITURES

September 1, 2006 - March 31, 2007

<u>Project</u>	<u>Allocated</u>	<u>Expenses</u>
VERIZON	\$2,462,500.00	\$302,898.32
SPEED MATTERS	3,975,000.00	95,477.87
FUTURE NEWS JOBS	64,000.00	0.00
GENERAL ELECTRIC	360,500.00	0.00
MEDIA NEWS	190,100.00	0.00
ALCATEL LUCENT TOTAL	<u>550,000.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
TOTAL	\$7,602,100.00	398,375.19

PROJECT EVALUATIONS

VERIZON

We have trained over 5,000 CWA members at Verizon, passed a "Say in Pay" resolution at the Verizon stockholders meeting, and got the company back on its heels on the FairPoint land line sale in New Hampshire, Vermont and Maine. Perhaps more importantly, our campaign against the FairPoint sale has kept the company from moving to sell in other parts of the country. This was our goal with these campaigns: offense in addition to defense!

SPEED MATTERS

We have a bill introduced by Senator Daniel Inouye which contains many of our key policy components including new definition of high speed broadband and roll out incentives. The bill mentions unions as one of the groups eligible to receive grants for mapping and other activities. In addition, the publication of our Fifty State Report on Internet speeds has been hugely successful. Speed Matters is getting lots of free media

attention including a very long front page article in USA Today, and hundreds of radio stories and news stories in papers across the country. Again, offense in addition to defense!

CWA STRATEGIC INDUSTRY FUND (SIF) RULES

The Defense/Members Relief Fund Oversight Committee met and reviewed the rules governing the Strategic Industry Fund. Recommendations and changes were submitted to the Executive Board for final approval and adopted as written.

The adopted rules follow:

CWA Strategic Industry Fund (SIF) Rules

Note: Always check that you have an up-to-date version of the Strategic Industry Fund (SIF) rules.

Part I - Purpose

The purpose of the Strategic Industry Fund (SIF) is to finance campaigns to increase our bargaining power. This fund is focused on initiating campaigns which aim to change employers' anti-union, anti-worker behavior and contribute to our bargaining power. The SIF is intended to put CWA on the offensive 12 months a year, not just during bargaining.

Part II - Maintenance of the Funds

A. The SIF was established by resolution at the 2006 Convention.

B. The SIF was established and is maintained by an allocation of a quarter-hour of basic wages (.15 percent) per month of members and fee payers who are eligible to strike.

C. Contributions into the Strategic Industry Fund became effective with dues refund checks issued during the month of September 2006.

D. An MRF floor balance equaling \$377,494,108 was established by the 2006 Convention. If the MRF falls below this floor, the quarter hour contributions will revert back to the MRF until it reaches the floor once again.

E. The SIF shall be invested. All interest or appreciation earned shall be placed in the SIF Fund.

F. There is one Strategic Industry Fund that is earmarked for different industries based on percentage of member contribution.

PART III - INTERNATIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE RULES

A. Administrative Expense

1. Costs incurred by the International Union in connection with the administration of the SIF are to be paid from the regular administrative funds of the Union. These costs are expected to include such things as:

a. Bookkeeping and clerical costs.

b. Wages, salaries, and travel expenses of International Union officers, representatives, employees and agents, connected with receiving, investing, disbursing and accounting for Fund monies; and for other expenditures of a like nature associated with the administration of the Funds.

B. Financial Reports

1. A finance report of the SIF income and expenses shall be made to each CWA Convention.

C. Executive Board Authority and Responsibility:

1. Strategic SIF proposals will be developed by Local unions along with the appropriate Vice President(s) and then approved by the Executive Board.
2. Each SIF proposal must include specific goals, benchmarks, a detailed budget and prior to implementation, a process for review with Local unions.
3. Executive Board approved SIF proposals must be sent to the Defense Fund Oversight Committee (DFOC).
4. All approved SIF plans must be evaluated at least every six months and at the conclusion of the campaign. All evaluations will be shared with the DFOC.
5. SIF budgets shall not include reimbursement for any salaries in the CWA budget, or payment of debts.
6. SIF budgets may include financial support for CWA Local members who are working on a SIF campaign or delivering strategic education.
7. The Executive Board shall be responsible for the investment of SIF funds and review the operations of the Fund and the soundness of administrative rules governing the use of the Fund.
8. The Executive Board shall make changes and improvements in the administrative rules governing use of the Fund as time and experience dictates the need for such changes.
9. The Executive Board shall report all actions relative to this Section to the DFOC.
10. The Executive Board shall cause an annual audit of the Fund.

D. Defense Fund Oversight Committee Authority and Responsibility:

1. The Defense Fund Oversight Committee (DFOC) will have oversight responsibilities for the Strategic Industry Fund and will report to each convention on the activity of the SIF. The oversight responsibilities shall include a review of all authorizations, receipts, expenditures, evaluations, and the administration and investments of the funds.
2. The DFOC shall establish initial rules and procedures for the SIF, subject to the approval of the 2007 Convention.
3. The DFOC will recommend changes and improvements in the Fund's Rules as time and experience dictate the need for such changes.

E. CWA Fund Director - Authority and Responsibility:

Under the supervision of the Executive Board, the CWA Fund Director is to administer the funds and shall:

1. Assist the Executive Board and the Oversight Committee in their responsibilities to constantly review the operation of the Fund.
2. Serve as a non-voting member of the Oversight Committee.
3. Deposit SIF monies in separate accounts titled Strategic Industry Fund.

F. Authorization and Limitations Applying to Specific Expenditures from the SIF

1. Salaries and Expenses in the CWA budget, or payment of debt, shall not be paid from SIF funds.
2. Financial support for CWA Local members who are working on a SIF campaign may be paid from the SIF.
3. Travel expenses of officers, representatives, and employees of the International Union who are involved in activities directly related to SIF activity shall not be paid from the SIF.
4. Expenditures for production of education materials related to SIF activity may be paid from the SIF.
5. Expenditures for publicity purposes related to a SIF campaign may be paid from the SIF.
6. Expenditures for the development of supportive reports and documents related to a SIF campaign may be paid from the SIF.

Part IV - Local Administrative Rules

A. Administrative Expense

1. Any costs incurred by Locals in connection with the administration of the SIF Fund are to be paid from the regular administrative funds of the Local.
2. Operating within the principles and administrative rules governing the SIF, Locals shall be responsible for providing appropriate receipts or documentation for reimbursement of approved SIF activities on forms furnished by the International.

B. Authorized Local Expenditures from the SIF

The following expenses may be paid from the SIF subject to proper authorization:

1. Necessary actual travel expenses for members, stewards, officers, representatives, and agents incurred in connection with SIF activity.
2. Necessary common carrier fares or actual gasoline expenses where required for SIF activity.
3. Lost wages for work on SIF activities, including but not limited to delivering education, attending education or training, meeting with elected officials, developing materials or mobilization plans, delivering presentations to allied groups, participating in allied groups meetings, organizing SIF events, attending SIF events/meetings, developing strategic electronic communications.
4. Necessary brochures, placards, training materials, handbills and stickers will be union printed and where practical, display the CWA name.
5. Necessary rental of meeting/training room.

C. Responsibility and Accountability of Locals

1. A Local shall be responsible for all SIF monies received and expended and all expenditures shall be properly vouchered and reported to the CWA Fund Director, agent or field representatives on forms furnished by the International.
2. A local shall be responsible and held accountable for SIF monies that may have been disbursed by the Local in violation of SIF rules.
3. All expenditures from the SIF shall be properly vouchered and reported to the Fund Director, agent

or field representative on forms furnished by the International.

Rules clarification: The committee recommends that we formally add the language in the Defense Fund and Members' Relief Fund Rules and Ground Rules Part III, Section D.1, to include the tenth member of the DFOC, a representative of the IUE-CWA.

The Committee recommends that necessary medical expenses which are currently paid through the Defense Fund shall now be paid through the Members' Relief Fund.

The committee recommends the adoption of the report, our recommendations, and the SIF Rules.

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thank you, and thanks to the committee again for excellent work.

The motion before us is to adopt the Defense Fund Oversight Committee report, including adoption of the SIF rules. At Microphone No. 2, Delegate Vellequette.

DELEGATE LARRY VELLEQUETTE (Local 34043): I am here on a point of personal privilege. On behalf of the Toledo Council of Newspaper Unions and the 215 illegally locked out workers from the *Toledo Blade*, who you saw on the screen a short time ago, I am here to give a huge thank you to CWA locals and leaders across the United States and Canada.

When we cried out for help in our dispute, I am proud to say that CWA locals responded first and gave generously. Your generosity did not go unnoticed among our friends in the Teamsters and the Graphic Communications Conference who were illegally locked out. Thanks to your solidarity, they are back to work today at their rightful jobs. (Applause)

I would especially like to pass along the thanks of all 600 working men and women at the *Blade* for the leadership and compassion shown by President Larry Cohen, Vice Presidents Linda Foley, Bill Boarman, and Seth Rosen and the rest of the CWA Executive Board. In addition, I would like to pass along our thanks to those watchdogs and the angels on both the Defense Fund Committee and the Members' Relief Fund Committee, whose assistance in our time of need carried us through.

Because of the leadership and hard work of the CWA leaders and rank and file members, the good image of CWA among our Teamster brothers and sisters improved dramatically. Because of you, all the locked out workers, including those CWA members, kept their health insurance coverage during the course of the nine-month lockout. (Applause)

Because of you, when they went back to work they shared over \$3 million in back pay from those who broke the law. (Applause)

And because of the generosity of the people in this room, King and Ballou left Toledo with its forked-tail tucked between its hooved legs. (Applause)

And I would like to extend my privilege to present two T-shirts, one to President Cohen and one to Vice President Seth Rosen. The other two Vice Presidents already got theirs. These were T-shirts that every member, every locked out member wore as they returned to work on June 10.

They tried to break us. We told them they couldn't. Everybody wore T-shirts that said, "Unbreakable." (Applause)

Thank you very much, CWA. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thank you, Larry. It's an amazing story, and it is why we are here.

Microphone No. 5, Delegate Santora.

DELEGATE T SANTORA (Local 9000): I have got a question related-- I've got actually two questions. The first one is related to the change in the Rules on the last page of the report, where the necessary medical expenses paid through the Defense Fund are now paid through the Members' Relief Fund. Can you elaborate on the reasons why you are making that recommendation?

CHAIR CHELIOTES: The Committee felt that one of the most important aspects of a strike is sustaining health benefits for our members because employers more and more are cutting those off. (Applause) It was felt that the Members' Relief Fund, in giving members relief, should also provide for the medical benefits, and it has substantially more resources than the Defense Fund in order to do so, so we thought it was appropriate to move it in that direction.

PRESIDENT COHEN: Second question?

DELEGATE SANTORA: Yes. In the report, on page 3, under "Defense Fund, Non-Strike Related Expenses," there is an expenditure entitled "Stop Verizon Video Franchising," which sounds like a good thing, but it also seems a bit contradictory, because we've spent so much cash and political capital trying to get them the right to do video franchising. I was just wondering what happened in that case, is it still ongoing, and what are we doing?

PRESIDENT COHEN: Good question. Let's see. Does the committee know, or should I get the answer.

. . . Brief pause . . .

PRESIDENT COHEN: Delegate Santora, we will get you a written answer to that. We agree with you. We did not actually know if that is mislabeled or what that is. So you will get an answer in writing on this. Thank you for the question.

I have another one here. I covered it up. Sorry. Microphone No. 5, Delegate Santos.

DELEGATE STAN SANTOS (Local 9408): Good morning. My question is regarding Section B, authorized local expenditures for the SIF. We are in the Central Valley, a rural location. We have been doing a lot of work. I think we have been doing very good work along with the staff for Speed Matters and the Stewards Army.

But, you know, I feel sometimes like we are trying to create a 21st century product with 19th century tools. We sometimes are making our presentations with paper handouts. On the other hand, I have discovered it is very effective if we can have the proper electronic equipment to go in real time online and do a PowerPoint presentation, and put the Speed Matters website up on the wall, walk them through the Speed Test, and also go to the Stewards Army cwa.net website and walk through that. It really piques the interest of especially the young folks who are interested in electronic communications.

My question is: Why is there no category in the budget for the procurement of equipment that would help further that, especially for locals that are very limited, extremely limited in technology and cannot afford the financial costs? (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: All right. Arthur, do you want to answer?

CHAIR CHELIOTES: I think our goal is to be flexible and reasonable at the same time. Certainly, in the broad parameters of Item No. 3 in Section B, "Delivering Education," if that is the methodology used to deliver education and it is appropriate for the strategic campaign, I think the committee would certainly look at that favorably.

Again, the Executive Board would be the first to review it and approve it.

DELEGATE SANTOS: So then to summarize, the lost wages under No. 3 would not be confined to that, but it could also include the equipment that would be able to further the member and steward education?

CHAIR CHELIOTES: Well, I think as you read on in that paragraph, "developing materials," materials can take many different forms.

DELEGATE SANTOS: Okay, thank you.

PRESIDENT COHEN: All right, with no other delegates wishing to speak, the report is before us. All those in favor of adopting the report please indicate by raising your hands.

Down hands. Opposed by a like sign. It is adopted, and I thank the committee for their ongoing work.

CHAIR CHELIOTES: We would like to thank Carmine Turchi, who has retired but has helped this committee, and met with Bill Bates and the Secretary-Treasurer, for their work in helping us to get our work done. Thank you. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thank you.

It is my pleasure to introduce the Chair of the Executive Board's Organizing Committee and Vice President of District 4, Seth Rosen. This is an example of what I talked about yesterday, spreading the work-- not just up here, but all of us-- and leading the union together. Vice President Seth Rosen, District 4. (Applause)

VICE PRESIDENT SETH ROSEN (District 4): Good morning, brothers and sisters. It's time for the 2007 Organizing Awards. You know, as we recognize a group of locals for special success in our organizing program, we need to remember that the efforts of our local unions is the key to the success of our organizing program.

There are additional campaigns that are not receiving these awards where we were not successful or where the minimum goal of 100 new workers was not reached. But these efforts are just as important to our total program as the ones we are recognizing. These efforts reach out to our families, friends and neighbors, and help them build a union where they work.

Now we want to recognize those locals that have accomplished a significant objective: winning representation rights for at least 100 workers in new units in the past year. More than 300 locals have received this award at least once. Each local will receive a \$1,000 organizing subsidy-- and that's \$1,000 U.S.-- as well as a plaque for the current year. Locals who have won this award five and ten times will receive \$5,000.

So please join me as we honor those locals that have met their organizing commitment for the past year by organizing more than 100 workers in new units in one year.

Local 1032 in Ewing, New Jersey (applause), organized 50 employees of the Committee of Interns and Residents, 34 Township of Plainsboro workers, 63 Airway Cleaners workers, and 30 clerical workers at the New Jersey Housing Finance and Mortgage Agency.

Local 1037 in Newark, New Jersey (applause), organized 117 employees of the New Jersey Performing Arts Center.

Local 1040 in Trenton, New Jersey (applause), organized 21 Morris County Public Safety workers, 16 Somerset County workers, 56 employees of the New Jersey Pinelands Commission, and 14 workers at ABD Group Home.

Local 1096 in Plainsboro, New Jersey (applause), organized 44 employees at Marketwatch and 225 workers at Dow Jones Harborside. (Applause)

Local 1101 in New York, New York, organized 147 Cingular Wireless workers in three different units, and

six employees of Wireworks Business Systems. Local 1101. (Applause)

Local 81408 of Geneva, New York, organized 150 workers of Cambridge Eye Care and Vision World. (Applause)

Now for the rest of the awards, I would like to turn it over to my colleague on the Executive Board Organizing Committee, Newspaper Guild President Linda Foley. Linda? (Applause)

VICE PRESIDENT LINDA FOLEY (TNG-CWA): Thank you, Seth. Good morning, everyone.

Now to continue with the organizing Awards:

Local 3372 of Lexington, Kentucky-- my home local-- organized 360 Lexington Community Correction Officers. (Applause)

Local 3865 of Knoxville, Tennessee, organized 250 workers at the University of Tennessee. (Applause and cheers)

Local 4340 of Brooklyn Heights, Ohio, organized 27 Merrick House workers, 10 workers of Global Point Technologies, 12 employees of G-Tech Telecom, 12 techs at Apple Communications, 15 workers at Help Inc., 10 Advance Power workers, 5 Builders Cabling employees, 7 workers at Community House Solutions, 2 workers at The Printer, and 5 workers at Integrity Mail. That's a lot of organizing. (Applause and cheers)

Local 7019 of Phoenix, Arizona, organized 250 workers at the Arizona Department of Health Services. (Applause)

Local 7077 of Tucson, Arizona, organized 33 Eloy Police Department employees, 149 employees of the Maricopa County Probation Department, and 300 Arizona Juvenile corrections workers. We are also recognizing them for winning this award five times. (Applause and cheers)

Local 7702 of Pueblo, Colorado, organized 350 AT&T Wireless workers. (Applause)

Local 7777 of Denver, Colorado, organized 250 members of PROTAXI. (Applause)

Local 7911 of Albuquerque, New Mexico, organized 170 Santa Fe County Corrections employees. (Applause)

Local 9111 of Ontario, California, organized the 14 members of the Exeter Police Officer Association, 28 members of the Dinuba Police Officers Association, and 80 members in the Clark County Deputy Sheriff's Association. (Applause)

Local 9404 of San Rafael, California, organized 114 employees of SEIU's Local 614 and Local 1021. (Applause)

Congratulations to all. (Applause and cheers)

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thank you.

Now for a little drum roll. The President's Annual Award.

Since 1972, it's been our tradition and honor to recognize outstanding achievements in organizing by presenting the President's Annual Award. It was started by our founding President, Joe Beirne, and is considered to be our union's highest honor.

Down through the years, Joe's successors, Glenn Watts and Morty Bahr, carried on the tradition, and now I have this privilege. It's one I take on with great enthusiasm and pride in all our organizing locals, who are so

highly effective in bringing new members to CWA. Over the years, this award has gone to dozens of individuals, local unions, and even a couple of times to districts that have worked together to build our union.

This year, I have selected a truly international local, with members in both the United States and Canada that has become a model of CWA activism. This year's award goes to Local 1096 of The Newspaper Guild-CWA. This is the first Guild local to win the President's Award. We recognize the Newspaper Guild as well as District 1 in working together here.

. . . The delegates arose and applauded . . .

PRESIDENT COHEN: Representing more than 2,000 editorial, technical and support staff at the *Wall Street Journal* and other Dow Jones companies, Local 1096 for months has been involved in a tough-- tough is an understatement-- fight for a new contract. So imagine this: even while they are in the midst of this brutal contract fight with Dow Jones, they continue to build their bargaining strength through organizing. "Offense, not just defense," says Steve. (Applause)

And even a couple of years ago when Dow Jones acquired CBS Marketwatch, a highly respected e-newsletter on investment trends-- this sounds like a commercial for them, Steve-- the local was ready. They fought for coverage under their negotiated card check agreement. They already had card check but had to fight to get the new group covered.

President Steve Yount and Local Organizer Tim Martell visited the work locations, talked about the advantages of joining CWA in group meetings and one-on-one conversations. They built an internal committee across the country in support for bargaining rights.

Their hard work paid off when, in September 2006, a majority of the workers in-- get this, all these different places-- Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, Washington, D.C., and San Francisco gained recognition as members of our union. (Applause)

And it's not over. Not long after, the local turned its attention to organizing the largest remaining non-union editorial unit at Dow Jones: more than 220 newswire employees at the company's Harborside facility in Jersey City, New Jersey. With the local already into tough bargaining, the Harborside workers, reporters, editors, technical, sales, support staff, decided they wanted to join the fight. Management was pushing for drastic cuts in health care and in prescription drug benefits, in job protection, and wage standards.

Steve Yount, the President of the local, made it almost a full-time job building a strong internal organizing committee that signed up a majority of those workers. Now these new union brothers and sisters are standing with their Local, Local 1096, in the ongoing contract fight. All have worked without a contract since it expired on May 1st.

With bargaining continuing, the local has held mass "coffee breaks" and reporters have refused to voluntarily appear on CNBC, Wall Street Journal video, webcasts and radio, insisting on overtime pay for all extra time worked. They also walked out to send a strong message of solidarity to the company.

For their foresight in bargaining to organize and their determined follow-through to build our union, I am proud to present to Local 1096 and this President, Steve Yount, this year's President's Annual Award.

. . . The delegates arose and applauded . . .

PRESIDENT COHEN: All right, here's the whole team. The inscription reads, "In grateful recognition of dedicated service, as evidenced through whole-hearted acceptance of CWA's growth policy and program and dedicated effort directed toward making that policy effective. Awarded by the President of the Communications Workers of America on behalf of the organization."

Congratulations, and I present this to you, Steve Yount, President of Local 1096. (Applause)

DELEGATE STEVE YOUNT (Local 1096): I've got to be honest about this, this was completely a surprise. They told me I was going to get a free drink coupon if I came up here this morning. I don't know how I am getting this stuff back on the plane. (Laughter)

But it's been a difficult few months at Dow Jones, and there is still a great deal of work to do, in addition to the ongoing contract bargaining that continues and the organizing efforts which are not done because there are still a couple of other locations of Dow Jones that don't have representation.

And we're not done yet. We are going to have card check rights in our new contract. We are going to insist on that. Those locals, those areas, those locations are going to be organized, just like Harborside and Marketwatch. (Applause)

We also have the ongoing difficulty of finding alternatives to a bid from News Corp. for the *Wall Street Journal* and Dow Jones. If any of you know any billionaires who are interested in investing, have them give me a call, and we can talk.

The message that we sent to the people at Marketwatch and Harborside, and we will continue to send to our own membership and other people at Dow Jones, is: This is your union. It exists only to serve your interests. We are dedicated to getting you more money, better benefits, stronger job protection, and better working conditions. That is the only reason we exist.

I think it's true for CWA as well. Those are the principles on which unions exist. Everything else has to be tailored to meet that message. We exist for the membership, and as long as we continue to be true to that mission, people will flock to join, because we are talking about their family. And that's the importance of the message that we have. Thank you very much. (Applause) Thank you all.

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thanks, Steve, and thanks to everyone here building our union. Thank you. (Applause and cheers)

I would ask the Resolutions & Rules Committee-- they are already here. Very good.

DELEGATE DENISE BURNS (Local 2107, Chair, Resolutions Committee): Thank you, Mr. President.

The Chair recognizes Charlie Braico.

DELEGATE CHARLIE BRAICO (Local 54041): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Would the delegates please turn to page 4 of the resolutions report. Take a look at Resolution 69A-07-2 entitled Restoring Pension Promises. I will read the resolved.

RESOLUTION 69A-07-2

Restoring Pension Promises

When the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA) passed in 1974, about one-half of the American workforce participated in defined benefit pension plans. Some 21 million workers still enjoy that kind of secure, company-funded pension program, but they now amount to less than 20 percent of the total workforce. Another 30 percent of workers have only a 401(k) plan to build a nest egg for retirement. Half of America's workers have no employer-sponsored retirement plan whatsoever.

Last August, President Bush signed the Pension Protection Act of 2006 (PPA), which has been described as the most extensive revision of pension law since the passage of the ERISA. At the time, the President said "Americans who spend a lifetime working hard should be confident that their pensions will be there when they retire."

A new study by the Employee Benefit Research Institute (EBRI) raises serious questions about the

likelihood that hard-working Americans can feel as confident about their retirement security as the President suggested.

The new PPA funding requirements are negatively impacting the security of future pension benefits. The requirements make it harder for employers to plan for funding benefits. Aspects of the new law require employers to make up shortfalls in investment earnings more quickly.

The EBRI study finds that 25 percent of employers closed their pension plans to new employees in the last two years and that 13 percent froze their plans for all employees. Another 30 percent of companies are expected to freeze their plans in the next two years. Workers affected by these actions will earn no additional benefits in future years with these employers.

This trend is no longer limited to troubled industries or companies on the verge of bankruptcy. Among the very profitable employers that have already acted to freeze benefits are IBM, Motorola, Hewlett Packard, Lockheed Martin and Verizon (for management).

CWA currently faces demands at the bargaining table from companies that want to eliminate the opportunity for workers to earn pension benefits in the future. For example, 650 members in New England employed by Idearc Media -- the telephone directory business spun -- off by Verizon last November--have been working without a contract since June 23. The two CWA locals, bargaining jointly with the IBEW from upstate New York, have been confronted with demands to roll back decades of negotiated benefits and contract provisions, by a company which reported nearly \$800 million in profits last year. Idearc management has proposed to freeze the pension plan effective January 1, 2008.

Similarly, 2,500 members of NABET-CWA employed by Disney/ABC are also working without a contract and are facing demands for devastating cutbacks in benefits, seniority and union jurisdiction. NABET-CWA and ABC share trusteeship for the NABET members' pension plan. In recent years, the trustees returned the plan to full funding and have implemented investment strategies which have protected the fund against earnings fluctuations. Despite these joint efforts, Disney/ABC is proposing to freeze the pension plan for all employees. NABET-CWA estimates the average union retiree would lose \$18,000 per year at age 65 if their plan is frozen.

At the same time it proposes devastating cuts for union workers, Disney/ABC would continue to maintain defined benefit pension plans for non-union employees. In fact, last year the company contributed more than \$360 million to these plans. In addition, the company provides a supplemental pension plan to its executives that will pay Chief Executive Robert Iger nearly \$1 million per year when he reaches age 65.

Senator Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) recently introduced legislation -- Restoring Pension Promises to All Workers Act -- to address the flaws in the PPA. If enacted, the bill will prevent pension abuses by employers. Harkin's bill would require any company with a supplemental pension plan for executives to provide similar benefits for all their workers.

RESOLVED: That the Communications Workers of America supports the Restoring Pension Promises to All Workers Act introduced by Senator Tom Harkin in order to prevent employers from escaping responsibilities to fund secure pension benefits.

Mr. President, the Resolutions Committee moves the adoption of Resolution 69A-07-2, entitled "Restoring Pension Promises."

PRESIDENT COHEN: On Microphone No. 3, Delegate Alcott.

DELEGATE GEORGE ALCOTT (Local 1301): Sisters and brothers, I rise in support of this resolution, "Restoring Pension Promises." I represent all of the Yellow Pages sales representatives throughout New England. Currently bargaining with Idearc Media, the spin-off company formed from the previous Verizon Information Services, we have been working without a contract since June 23rd, and just last Friday had eight of our representatives terminated, victims of company bargaining strategies.

Idearc is a \$3.2 billion corporation that reported a net income of over \$770 million for 2006. Idearc paid its chief executive, Kathy Harliss, \$1.7 million, and presented her company shares, now worth over \$7 million, yet have held firm since April 15th with demands that diminish or eliminate every one of our benefit plans, benefits fought long and hard for over 45 years, including freezing our pension plan, a plan which is currently over-funded by more than \$30 million, while at the same time rewarding Ms. Harliss with a very generous supplemental plan.

Idearc is far from a troubled company, but like IBM, Hewlett Packard, Motorola and a growing list of very profitable companies, increasingly greedy. How much do they need to earn before enough is enough? It must stop and it must stop now. (Applause)

Sisters and brothers, I urge you to support this resolution, support the legislation filed by Senator Harkin and stop the pension abuses occurring across this country by more and more corporations each and every day. Stop it and stop it now. Thank you. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: Microphone No. 1, Delegate Maxwell.

DELEGATE EUGENE J. MAXWELL (Local 51016): Mr. Chairman, I move to amend Resolution 69A-07-2 by adding an additional Resolved to the end of the resolution as follows: Resolved, that the delegates to the 69th Annual Convention of the Communications Workers of America actively support the NABET-CWA Sector members fighting back against Disney/ABC's proposal to freeze pension benefits by signing the "Fair Contract at Disney/ABC" activists pledge form and; that all CWA locals are encouraged to support all future Disney/ABC related mobilization activities, especially in New York, Washington, Chicago, San Francisco and Los Angeles.

PRESIDENT COHEN: You can speak on that if you would like, and also I need that text to repeat. I will definitely need to have that, if you can bring that to me. But you can speak on that.

DELEGATE MAXWELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Brothers and sisters, I commend the Resolutions Committee for bringing forward to the floor of this convention of the Communications Workers of America Resolution 69A-07-2, Restoring Pension Programs. As the complete text of the resolution makes clear, the very well-funded, well-managed pension plan that provides retirement security for our members' work at Disney/ABC is under attack.

Our contract with Disney/ABC expired on March 31st, 2007, and our members at ABC-TV are currently working without a contract. ABC negotiators made onerous and totally unacceptable demands in the opening round of bargaining, including a proposal to freeze pension benefits as of the end of this year. This outrageous proposal is a brazen assault on the future economic security of our members working at Disney/ABC.

What makes this proposal particularly disturbing is that the primary reason that ABC negotiators presented for the freezing of our benefits is because of changes in the law and financial reporting regulations resulting from adoption of the Pension Protection Act of 2006. Instead of protecting our pension, the law is being used as an excuse to terminate benefits.

Each of us here must do all that we can to make sure that the Pension Protection Act of 2006 does not become the Pension Destruction Act of 2007 and beyond. One way to do that is to support legislation such as that introduced by Senator Tom Harkin, as stated in the main resolve of the committee's resolution. But until such legislation is adopted, we need to make sure that companies like Disney/ABC are not successful in using current law as an excuse to shortchange our future by freezing our pension benefits.

And so, brothers and sisters, I ask you for your support of both this amendment and our bargaining efforts at Disney/ABC by signing the activist pledge form that you will find in the materials distributed to you here in the convention center today. We need your help to make sure that companies like Disney/ABC and every other employer of CWA members get the message loud and clear: that CWA members will stand together, as

we always have, against corporate greed and for the economic security of all working people.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thank you, Gene. I will read the amendment again. This is to add a second Resolved, and there is some background on this in the actual resolution that we didn't read before and the resolved as well.

“RESOLVED: That the delegates of the 69th Annual Convention of the Communications Workers of America actively support the NABET-CWA Sector members fighting back against Disney/ABC's proposal to freeze pension benefits by signing the “Fair Contract at Disney/ABC” activists pledge form; and that all CWA Locals are encouraged to support all future Disney/ABC related mobilization activities, especially in New York, Washington, Chicago, San Francisco and Los Angeles.”

That's the motion before us now, an amendment to add that Resolved. Is there anyone wishing to speak on that?

I have a question from Delegate Joyce. Are you speaking on the amendment or the main motion or combining them?

DELEGATE JAMES JOYCE (Local 51016): On the main motion.

PRESIDENT COHEN: All right. It's somewhat related in your case.

All right. There is no delegate wishing to speak on the amendment. The question is called. This is voting on the amendment I just read. All those in favor of adding that second resolved clause, please indicate by raising your hands. Down hands. Opposed by a like sign. It is adopted. (Applause)

Back to the main motion and to Microphone No. 3, Delegate Joyce.

DELEGATE JOYCE: Good morning. President Cohen, Executive Vice President Rechenbach, Secretary-Treasurer Easterling, members of the Executive Board, and fellow delegates, I rise here today in support of this resolution.

Since March of this year, over 2,500 members of our NABET Sector have been working without a contract at Disney/ABC. Technicians, news writers, telecommunications coordinators, desk assistants and other skilled professionals have faced devastating attacks on their jobs and benefits during negotiations with the Walt Disney Company's subsidiary, ABC, Inc. These members work at ABC-owned facilities in New York, Chicago, Washington, D.C., Los Angeles and San Francisco.

Despite posting a whopping \$3.4 billion in profits for 2006, Disney/ABC has shamefully insisted in these negotiations that our members accept a contract proposal that would freeze our healthy, well-funded pension plan, a pension plan that is over \$60 million over-funded. Many of these members have been working toward their pension benefits for decades in order to achieve a secure retirement. Many of these members now face the prospect of having the secure retirement rug pulled out from underneath them just as they are on the verge of collecting this benefit.

By replacing a defined benefit plan with a meager 401(k) plan this late in our members' careers, Disney/ABC, by their own admission, could be reducing retirement income by as much as 25 percent by the time our members reach age 65. In contrast, according to SEC filings, Disney/ABC will give CEO Bob Iger a secure retirement of at least \$1 million a year at age 65.

Furthermore, Disney's call to freeze this plan and to take away good retirement benefits from long-term NABET-CWA employees can only be characterized as an attempt at union-busting, because Disney recently contributed more than \$360 million into its non-union pension plans.

A few weeks ago, CWA President Larry Cohen attended a bargaining session with our negotiating committee across the table from Disney/ABC management. In my opinion, in that session Larry accurately characterized Disney/ABC's overall actions in these negotiations as being based in "union intolerance."

Are there any other reasons why Disney/ABC is attacking our healthy pension plan or why the trend for eliminating defined-benefit plans everywhere has become corporate public policy? Could it be that the pension plans of union members means power for our unions?

Presently, participation in these plans gives us a voice in the governance of these companies due to the large number of shares our plans hold as investments in these plans. By taking away these plans, these employers-- or if I can quote my good friend, Chris Shelton, in dealing with these types-- these "pigs" stand the prospect of taking away our ability to speak at the shareholder meetings and taking away our voice to hold these executives accountable for any of their actions.

But we will not let our voice be silenced and we will not let Disney/ABC or any other company strip away the promise of secure retirement. As the main text of the resolution states, Senator Tom Harkin has already introduced legislation to fix some of the flaws in last year's Pension Protection Act. His legislation would also level the playing field by making sure executives cannot reap the benefits of special retirement payments if that company has frozen pension plans for its rank-and-file workers.

Every delegate in this hall today can do something to join NABET-CWA members in this fight. On your tables you have a pledge sheet that asks you to take the pledge to sign up for the "Fair Contract at Disney/ABC Activist Network." By taking this pledge, you will join our members at NABET-CWA on the battlefield to protect pension promises. And I am proud to say that the first sheet handed to me personally is someone who knows about retirement security, our very own Dina Beaumont. She filled it out and brought it over to me and handed it to me personally. (Applause)

I implore you to sign that pledge and join us in this fight because, as Barbara Easterling said in her remarks yesterday, "This is what CWA stands for. This is who we are."

Take the pledge! Thank you. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: Seeing no other delegate wishing to speak--

. . . Calls for the question . . .

PRESIDENT COHEN: The question has been called. All those in favor of this resolution, please indicate by raising your hands. Down hands. Opposed by a like sign. It is adopted. (Applause)

CHAIR BURNS: Thank you, Mr. President. Would the delegates please turn to page 7 of the Resolutions Report and look at Resolution 69A-07-4 entitled "Stem Cell Research".

RESOLUTION 69A-07-4

Stem Cell Research

Research on stem cells is advancing knowledge about how an entire organism develops from a single cell and how health cells replace damaged cells. This promising area of science is also leading scientists to investigate the possibility of cell-based therapies to treat disease.

Stem cells have two important characteristics that distinguish them from other types of cells. First, they are unspecialized cells that renew themselves for long periods through cell division. The second is that under certain physiologic or experimental conditions, they can be induced to become cells with special functions such as the beating cells of the heart muscle or the insulin-producing cells of the pancreas.

Some of the most serious medical conditions, such as cancer and birth defects, are due to problems that

occur somewhere in this cell transformation process. A better understanding of normal cell development will allow us to understand and perhaps correct these medical conditions.

Another potential application of stem cells is making cells and tissues for medical therapies. Today, donated organs and tissues are often used to replace those that are diseased or destroyed. Unfortunately, the number of people needing a transplant far exceeds the number of organs available. Versatile stem cells offer the possibility of a renewable source of replacement cells and tissues that might take the place of organ transplants and could be used to treat a myriad of diseases, conditions, and disabilities including ALS, Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases, juvenile diabetes, spinal cord injury, stroke, burns, and heart disease.

In spite of the promise, scientific and medical advances have been stymied in the U.S. Under a policy announced by President George W. Bush on August 9, 2001, federal funding for embryonic stem cell research is allowed only for research using embryonic stem cell lines created on or before that day. The U.S. research community is lagging far behind other countries that systematically encourage stem cell research. In March of this year, the head of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the nation's premiere medical research facility, testified before Congress that he believes the limit is stifling efforts to find new medical breakthroughs. In addition to the Bush-appointed NIH director, a huge majority of Americans believe that funding embryonic stem cell research holds so much hope for so many who need cures and treatments.

RESOLVED: That the Communications Workers of America supports embryonic stem cell research and commits to efforts to establish federal funding for embryonic stem cell research.

Mr. President, the Resolutions Committee moves the adoption of Resolution 69A-07-4, "Stem Cell Research".

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thank you. And speaking from the podium, Vice President Catucci.

. . . The delegates arose and applauded and cheered at length . . .

VICE PRESIDENT PETE CATUCCI (District 2): Hell, I didn't say anything yet. (Laughter)

I want to thank President Cohen and all my brothers and sisters from District 2 for being up here supporting me. I hope I am able to stimulate you through my remarks. I hope you know what "stimulate" means. It's what you tell Stim when he's late for work. (Laughter)

Embryonic stem cell research is the Rosetta Stone for medical science. Pathologist Rudolf Virchow in the 1800s declared that all diseases begin at the cellular level, and he's been proven correct.

The cure for most all diseases lies in embryonic stem cell research. Scientific estimates are that over 100 million Americans would be cured of diseases that now affect them. Five types of cancer could be cured: ALS, MD, MS, Parkinson's, Lupus, Alzheimer's, Juvenile Diabetes, Sickle Cell Anemia-- and they have also made the blind see by injecting embryonic stem cells in the optic nerve.

Through embryonic stem cell therapy in other countries like-- China, Costa Rica, Italy, Singapore and Taiwan-- they have, through injections of embryonic stem cells, healed human diseased hearts without surgery, livers and kidneys.

You all remember Don Ho, who recently died, singing "Tiny Bubbles," well, two years ago he was told his heart was inoperable and they couldn't do anything about it. He went to Taiwan, they injected embryonic stem cells in his heart, and he lived actively for two more years.

Embryonic stem cells have become pancreatic islet cells. These are the cells that secrete insulin that diabetics inject. Stem cell therapy is real. It's not voodoo; it's been around for years. A lot of you refer to it as bone marrow transplant. It's not the bone marrow that they transplant; it's the stem cells from the bone marrow.

Embryonic stem cells are the body's repair mechanisms. Now, if they'd only grow hair and reduce unwanted weight, this research would sail through. (Laughter and applause)

Seriously, as a nation we must wake up. My sister, Shelena, has told me of a passage in the Bible that says, "My children perish for lack of knowledge." Well, I think this focuses right on that. There is also a book out there-- there's more than one-- but one says, "The Cures They Don't Want You to Know About". I want you to guess how much is spent in the United States of America on insulin alone? You know, it just happened to be in the *Wall Street Journal* on Friday, and it's \$1 billion a year. How about the billions and billions that are spent on other diseases?

Am I cynical or sarcastic? Really, look at it. If the pharmaceuticals wanted this, it already would have been law. (Applause)

The next roadblock is the "right-to-lifers." Well, what about all the afflicted right-to-lifers? (Applause) We are talking about using only-- only-- frozen embryonic stem cells that are not needed for their original purpose and are being thrown away in a dumpster. Why, if this is life, has there been no cry, demand or action to give these embryonic stem cells a holy burial service? They are tossed out like yesterday's garbage.

However, these same right-to-life proponents, including President Dumb-Dumb (laughter) have done nothing-- nothing-- to stop private companies from doing embryonic stem cell research. They have not introduced a bill or focused one second on these companies. Why, if they believe it is life, have they turned their backs on these?

Former Surgeon General Richard Carmona said they hushed him, and again, I didn't ask for this, but it showed up in the *Washington Post* on July 11th: "Anything that doesn't fit into the political appointees' ideological, theological or political agenda is often ignored, marginalized or simply buried. The problem with this approach is that in public health, as in a democracy, there is nothing worse than ignoring science or marginalizing the voice of science for reasons driven by changing political winds."

In one such case, Carmona, a former professor of surgery and public health at the University of Arizona, said he was told not to speak out during the national debate over whether the federal government should fund embryonic stem cell research, which President 'Dumb-Dumb' opposes. (Laughter) Much of the discussion was being driven by theology, ideology and preconceived beliefs that were scientifically incorrect.

You know, Larry says "better late than never that these people come out." I am sick and tired of everybody in the Bush Administration coming out and saying stuff after they leave. How about growing some gonads and saying it while you're there? (Applause)

I want you to examine for a second these heroic organ donors. Their organs are taken from them when there is no brain activity, when there's a flat line. As Senator Harkin said on the floor on this bill since he is a co-sponsor, "You can hook up all the machines in the world to an embryonic stem cell and you won't get any activity."

People have asked me, "Why embryonic stem cells, Pete, versus adult?" Well, embryonic stem cells are what they call "pluri potent," meaning it can turn into any cell in the body.

Also, with ALS it's the only cell that can make limitless quantities of the cells affected by the disease so they can study and figure out the disease. These are 100 percent octane versus 80 percent octane. They can do it all.

There is another argument that we shouldn't use federal funds for embryonic stem cell; we should leave it to the private enterprise. Really? What if JFK hadn't marshaled and mobilized all the federal funds behind NASA and left it to private enterprise? Do you think we'd be on the moon yet? I don't. Government is not bad; it's what you make of it. With the federal government's help, we can move to these cures very quickly.

And I ask you, who doesn't want to find the cures for these diseases other than the pharmaceuticals?

And in the future, when these cures are available for these horrible diseases, I want one of these right-to-lifers to reject that cure because it came from an embryonic stem cell. (Applause)

Bush says he's against torture. Really? He's torturing millions of Americans and their families by denying these possible cures.

If you haven't guessed it by now-- and I know you know because Larry told my son that he told you-- I've been diagnosed with ALS. There are five types. I have what they call Bulbar. It affects the speech first, swallowing second, and breathing third.

A lot of people don't realize when they tell them that they have ALS, and one fellow was told he had ALS and he said, "What's that?" They said, "Lou Gehrig's Disease." And he said, "If it's Lou Gehrig's disease, what the hell am I doing with it?" (Laughter)

There have been four families of CWA members that I know of who have been devastated by the loss of a loved one in CWA with ALS: Former local president Doug Woodbury passed away, from Sacramento; Tom Graham, who was the husband of Betty Graham; my secretary who was also Jim Booe's secretary; Julie Kmetyc, daughter of Sandy Kmetyc; and Chuck Collins, husband of Meg Collins, EVP of Local 1400.

I know that Lou Gehrig said that he was the luckiest person on the face of the earth. What the hell did he know; he was playing for "dem damn Yankees." (Laughter and applause) I will tell you that I'm the most blessed person on the face of the earth because I'm on the best team with CWA at the best conference, the union's. (Applause)

However, I would like to read an excerpt to you from "Tuesdays with Morrie," given to me by a CWA Guild member, Mitch Albom: "ALS is like a lit candle: It melts your nerves and leaves your body a pile of wax. Often, it begins with the legs and works its way up." I'm backwards.

"You lose control of your thigh muscles, so that you cannot support yourself standing. You lose control of your trunk muscles, so that you cannot sit up straight. By the end, if you are still alive, you are breathing through a tube in a hole in your throat, while your soul, perfectly awake, is imprisoned inside a limp husk, perhaps able to blink, or cluck a tongue like something from a science fiction movie. The man is frozen inside his own flesh. This takes no more than five years from the day you contract the disease." Well, I'm hoping to break that record. And I will try to keep fighting for a cure.

. . . The delegates arose and applauded at great length, cheering and whistling . . .

BROTHER CATUCCI: This disease was identified in 1940, and to this day there is no real medical treatment or cure. Edgar Cayce, a faith healer, was laughed at in the 1940s when he talked about treatment. I'm getting acupuncture from a wonderful person, I'm doing meditation, I'm doing massage therapy, and the people at Hopkins have now asked what I'm doing because they are impressed with the ability of the muscles to still be able to do something.

But ALS is not getting focused on for another reason. It's like Lupus. It's what they call an orphan disease; not enough people get it that anybody really worries about it. The only hope has been embryonic stem cell therapy for ALS. It helps 40 percent of the people improve, 20 percent die, and 40 percent show no change. But it only happens in Costa Rica and China, where they inject the embryonic stem cells in the base of the brain, and they go to the nerve path to repair it. Nothing is wrong with my brain, other than what you already know. (Laughter) And nothing is wrong with my muscles. It's the path between the two that gets eaten up.

You know, these other foreign countries are doing it, but in the United States they're not doing it, again, because it's getting held up. Let Bush or a member of his family get it, and presto-chango, we'll have embryonic stem cell research tomorrow. (Applause)

You know, you look at Nancy Reagan. She never came forward until Ronnie got Alzheimer's. And then

Joe Scarborough-- my brothers and sisters in District 3 know him, a conservative Congressman who is now rumored to be taking over the Imus show-- he, on the day of the vote, said he hoped that it passed and that Bush would sign it into legislation.

Now, I knew where he was going with it when he said, "I know your viewers are wondering why. My nine-year-old son was just diagnosed with Juvenile Diabetes, and I wish I would have listened when I was in Congress." Whoop-te-do, Joe. Come on board.

I have always been an advocate of embryonic stem cell research. My cousin was born with a snapped spine in a breach birth. My nephew Petey has had muscular dystrophy for 16 years, my sister-in-law has Lupus, and one of my good buddies died of ALS. My advocacy now has taken on a little more urgency.

I believe the stem cell research will become a reality because of you, because of what you're going to do for it. But, most especially, because of the strong and passionate leadership of my brother, our President, Larry Cohen. (Applause) His commitment to this-- and you all know what his commitment brings; you've seen it from the first two years of his presidency-- will help move this along.

This legislation would pave the way for cures for many diseases, as I said, that affect a hundred million people directly and their families, that go through the suffering of watching a loved one die, and wrecking them emotionally and sometimes financially.

Just as this legislation is so important, there's another piece of legislation of equal importance to all of us. It's called EFCA. It's the stem cell research for the union movement. And I would like to make one comment that might be out of line, but you all heard Hillary Clinton's comment back to you yesterday, congratulating us and saying if EFCA ended up on her desk, she would sign it. To me, to me, that's like saying if you bake the bread, I'll eat it. I want you to help me get EFCA. (Applause)

Without EFCA, unions will continue to die piece by piece, and democracy, health care, vacations, all benefits and dreams of the workers to one day give their children a better life than they have will die. Without Larry leading the way of the unions of America, EFCA would have already died.

You know, I'm in D.C., and I see a lot of things. I'm native to the area. And a lot of the presidents, I'm sure, looked at Larry, and said, "Go ahead, Don Quixote, go after that windmill. You're never going to get EFCA anyway."

What he accomplished-- and I saw Larry in the halls of Congress when he came with me to see Steny Hoyer to talk to Steny about making embryonic stem cell a Whip issue, and in between that he had two meetings with Senators on EFCA. There's no one who is working harder. But I don't care how strong, passionate, energetic, determined, dedicated or committed he is, he can't do it alone. He needs every one of you in this room to make EFCA a reality. (Applause)

With this legislation we can stop the torture of working families to make ends meet. We can elect more labor supporters to office when we have more union members. We can make America strong again, a moral and principled leader. Our mission as trade unionists is to make the world a better place through activism. If each one of you will commit to the "stem cell fix for labor," which is EFCA, and commit to organizing the millions that need us, then commit to embryonic stem cell research, too, please.

People ask me how I am. Well, I'm better, actually, than I've ever been in my life. I've always been a hoper and a prayer. I've had three tragedies in my family where my brother, kid brother, died on the way over to see me in a car wreck. My mom drowned when she was 52 with my niece in a pool, and my father died at 54 eight months later on Mother's Day. So, I've always been praying, but I've had solid examples of things that have happened since my diagnosis that prove to me an existence of God as a higher power, and I would like to share a few of those with you.

A simple one is this band. I would like everybody to wear it, and I'll tell you a little bit about it and what it means. But I wanted all my colleagues to wear it, and I knew that Brother Jeff had a yellow one on since his

dad Ralph was diagnosed with cancer years ago and subsequently passed away. Well, the night before-- and Jeff had that band on all that time-- the night before the meeting where we brought these out, Jeff's band broke. To me, that was heart-warming in the sense of the way of a message.

The second band that I got, a fellow-- and we all get them--a friend who sends me e-mails that are rather risqué. A week later he sent me, after my diagnosis, something that was out of character. No one other than my family knew about my diagnosis and people who I considered my family. It's called "Never Alone"

Do you know the legend of the Cherokee Indian youth's rite of passage? His dad takes him into the forest, blindfolded, and leaves him alone. He is required to sit on a stump the whole night, and not take off the blindfold until a ray of sun shines through it. He is all by himself. He cannot cry out for help to anyone. Once he survives the night, he is a man. He cannot tell the other boys of this experience. Each lad must come into his own manhood.

This boy was terrified. He could hear all kinds of noise. Beasts were all around him. Maybe even some human would hurt him. The wind blew the grass and earth and it shook his stump. But he sat stoically, never removing the blindfold. It would be the only way he could be a man.

Finally, after a horrific night, the sun appeared and he removed his blindfold. It was then that he saw his father sitting on the stump next to him, at watch, the entire night.

We are never alone. Even when we do not know it, our Father is protecting us. He is sitting on the stump beside us. All we have to do is reach out for Him. (Applause)

Another example, if you'll bear with me, is my buddy, Father Turtle, and Mike, my buddy who died of ALS. There were three of us golfers and race track degenerates. We always hung together. And Mike was diagnosed with ALS. I stayed with him until the end until I couldn't, frankly, continue to see him anymore. And Father Turtle stayed with him.

When I was diagnosed, I reached out for Father Turtle but he had moved because of personal problems. No one knew where he lived. I called two of his brothers. I called a friend up in Florida he used to live with. I couldn't track him down.

Three weeks later, he called me up and said, "Pete?"

I said, "Yes, Father Turtle."

He said, "Is it true that Mike Logan died?"

I said, "Yes, about two years ago. Why are you calling me?"

He said, "I just wanted to be brought up to date."

I said, "You don't know about the diagnosis?"

He said, "No."

I said, "Well, I've been diagnosed with ALS," and I just got chills all over my body. That, again, is another example. I have more, but I won't share them with you.

As for these bands, what the purpose of these bands is, we are selling them to raise money for ALS that will be donated in my name. But the reason is that CWA will be the name on all the walks for ALS that are starting up at the end of this month. CWA will be on all the bands sponsoring these walks.

We now have enough of these bands to form a damn rainbow. I think it's time to burn the bands and find a cure. (Applause) I know we can. One good thing about these red bands is that you'll always have red on

Thursday. (Laughter)

I know we can do this, but I'd like to share a piece from Nelson Mandela's 1994 inaugural address that speaks to all of us:

"Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate; our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us.

"We ask ourselves, 'Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?' Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God.

"Your playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do.

"We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone.

"And as we let our light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others."

Please, if you take only one thing away from me talking to you today, I'd be disappointed and kick all your asses. (Laughter) Because you should take three. Number one, EFCA and commitment-- not just sending postcards as the speaker said the other day, Leo Gerard, about writing a letter. No. Get off your butts and do something.

Number two: EFCA/Stem Cell. Educate people that "right to life" has nothing to do with it. A lot of people don't understand that once you get impregnated, they call it an embryo for the first eight weeks and then it becomes a fetus. We are not talking anything about anything that's in a woman. I would not, myself, agree to that kind of research anyway.

But, please, every day thank your spiritual power for the ability to walk, to talk, to breathe, to swallow, but most importantly, tell those that you love that you love them. There's no way after being told of my diagnosis that I would be here today if not for the caring and love of my friends, my family, my children-- Nick, Traci, and Francesca-- my seven brothers and three sisters, nine nephews and nieces, but most importantly, the love of my life for 40 years, my wife Terry. (Applause and cheers)

I hope and pray that I'll be with you next year to thank you for making embryonic stem cell research a reality, and EFCA a real happening with the election of a new Democratic President. We are on the march, as Larry said, but we need a cry.

So as I close, I would like you to join me and let them hear it in the bottom 48 states, in the halls of Congress: "EFCA/Stem Cell, EFCA/Stem Cell, EFCA/Stem Cell."

. . . The delegates arose and applauded, chanting in unison with Brother Catucci, and extending to him a prolonged warm and heartfelt standing ovation . . .

BROTHER CATUCCI: God bless you all, and let's continue the Convention now.

PRESIDENT COHEN: God bless you.

At Microphone No. 3, Delegate Pappas.

DELEGATE JAMES PAPPAS (Local 2336): I would like to begin by recognizing the courage of Vice President Catucci for standing before us today as both a messenger and for the message. His presence put the face on the hundreds of thousands of people today whose best hope for a future lies in stem cell research.

I have prepared a speech, but nothing I can say will be to the point as much as what we have just heard, so there is really no point to my giving it. I would like Pete's words to be the last word on this subject, and I would like the permission of my brothers and sisters to allow me to give the rest of my time to Sister Kmetyk and Sister Jensen, who have personal experiences and would like to make brief comments to this Convention. Thank you. (Applause)

DELEGATE SANDY KMETYK (President, Local 13500): Brothers and sisters, my daughter Julie was 24 years old, a Verizon employee, a chief steward. She died December of the year 2000. I was prepared today to tell you a little bit about our struggle, but now, with Pete's words, I can tell you that I am continuing Julie's struggle.

I am on the Board of Directors of the ALS Association of Western Pennsylvania and West Virginia. I do get involved in a lot of research and I can assure you, brothers and sisters, by supporting this resolution we do have a mice module where the mice were completely paralyzed and near death. With the injection of the stem cells, those mice are now healthy and running around. I urge you to support this.

I don't believe at this time I will say anything further other than, Pete, you know where you can get me. I will never forget the note you sent me when Julie died. I will be there with you. I will be prepared to talk to you to the very end. I'm not afraid to do that. Thank you. (Applause)

DELEGATE RUBY JENSEN (Vice President, Local 6222): I want to put a face to two names. I have two grandchildren, an 11-year-old and a 19-month-old, a boy. They have severe hemophilia, a bleeding disorder. There is nothing else that can heal hemophilia except this. I want to take the opportunity on behalf of my two grandsons to tell you how proud I am that this body is helping us accomplish that.

I hold a position in a national hemophilia group and we will be working, Pete, to make that a possibility. But I can also proudly tell these people that we lobby in Washington for CWA issues, and we are also lobbying because we care about each other. Thank you all. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: Microphone No. 2, Delegate Scinaldi.

DELEGATE LOUIS J. SCINALDI (Local 2202, District 2): President Cohen, Executive Board, fellow delegates and guests. Thank you for allowing me the privilege of addressing you for these few moments.

Since 1986 we have had the good fortune of having Pete Catucci as our Vice President. His love for our union and its members is unparalleled, and all of CWA has benefited considerably for his selflessness.

I feel so grateful to have the opportunity to know Pete and to work with Pete. I also have the honor of sharing a friendship with Pete. For 21 years he has served us and has led us to become the greatest District in the greatest union in America. For 21 years Vice President Catucci has stood behind us in good times as well as tough times, always willing to fight our fight.

It is now our time to stand behind Pete and help him fight his fight. It is our time to make Pete as proud of us as we are of him. Thank you, Pete. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: Resolution 4, "Stem Cell Research." All those in favor indicate by raising their hands. Down hands. Those opposed by a like sign. It is adopted.

. . . The delegates arose and applauded as President Cohen was overcome with emotion and embraced Vice President Pete Catucci . . .

PRESIDENT COHEN: Microphone No. 1, Delegate LaPierre.

DELEGATE CHRIS LaPIERRE (Local 1365): Thank you, Mr. President. I would like to propose a Resolved.

WHEREAS, many products sold in the United States are of foreign country origins; and

WHEREAS, many of those products are now food, fresh vegetables, fruits, cosmetics, personal hygiene products, et cetera; and

WHEREAS, most of these products do not disclose and are not required to disclose their country of origin; and

WHEREAS, many of those countries of origin have little or no regulations on the use of pesticides, additives and production processes; and

WHEREAS, recent products of non-U.S. origin have contaminated additives that could be harmful through human consumption; and

WHEREAS, all U.S. consumers should have the right to know the country of origin of all their consumable, cosmetic, personal hygiene and other product purchases before making such purchasing decisions; be it

RESOLVED, that the Communications Workers of America commits to establishing or proposing federal legislation that would require full disclosure of country of origin for all consumable products, including but not limited to, such products as vegetables and fruits and non-consumable products such as cosmetic and personal hygiene items; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Communications Workers of America advise all U.S. affiliated local unions of such proposed legislation and encourage all U.S. affiliated local unions to support and promote such legislation; and be in further

RESOLVED, that such proposed legislation programs be initiated as soon as practicable following the 2007 Convention.

Thank you.

PRESIDENT COHEN: Is there a second?

. . . The motion was duly seconded . . .

PRESIDENT COHEN: You can speak on the motion.

DELEGATE LAPIERRE: I'm okay.

PRESIDENT COHEN: Microphone No. 3, Delegate Nilsson.

DELEGATE GARY NILSSON (Local 1365): Mr. President and Delegates, I rise in support of this motion. There are so many reasons that legislation for full disclosure of country of origin is needed.

Certainly U.S. consumers should be able to conscientiously make purchasing decisions of all products sold in the U.S. to support U.S. workers, regardless of where those products are manufactured or grown.

With the more recent revelations of harmful additives being used in the production of toothpaste and the use of pesticides in vegetable and fruit production, all of which are strictly regulated in the U.S. but not so much in other countries.

In an effort to protect the jobs of U.S. workers and, more importantly, protect the well-being of our families, brothers and sisters, I urge all delegates to vote in support of this motion.

Thank you. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: No other delegate wishes the floor. Therefore, the question is called.

All those in favor of the motion indicate by raising your hand. Down hands. Those opposed, by a like sign. It is adopted. (Applause)

Microphone No. 1, Delegate Phillips.

DELEGATE ED PHILLIPS (Local 4340): I am proposing a resolution.

CWA is a diversified union, composed of many unions that have merged with CWA. These mergers, coupled with organizing, have expanded the diversity of our great union. Outreach and creative planning have opened doors for expansion within CWA. In spite of our best efforts, growth has been difficult amidst this political climate, but CWA is holding their own. Telecommunications has converted into many different meanings-- data transmissions, voice-over internet protocols, video-conferencing, fiber and voice are a few examples of the expansion of telecommunications.

RESOLVED: That CWA is a Labor Union, and the telecommunications industry is comprised of work that CWA has and should continue to perform; that CWA will continue to organize wall-to-wall within their existing CWA employers and within the industry.

RESOLVED: That CWA, when faced with outsourced work, will attempt to retain this work within the Bargaining Unit; and that CWA, when still faced with outsourced work, will maintain to the employer that this work needs to be CWA, where available, and Union when CWA members cannot perform this work.

PRESIDENT COHEN: Eddie, is that it? Was there more you wanted to say on it?

DELEGATE PHILLIPS: That is the resolution.

. . . The motion was duly seconded . . .

PRESIDENT COHEN: Do you want to speak on it?

DELEGATE PHILLIPS: Just a couple of minutes.

PRESIDENT COHEN: Okay, great.

DELEGATE PHILLIPS: At issue here was that CWA has done everything they can to maintain work within their employer organizations, but it has become clearer and clearer that with the CEO integrity at the levels that we see around this country, that you cannot count on a single employer anymore to be faithful to their unions and to their employees and to our members.

We must organize the entire industry so that we have a level playing field so that, in fact, should some of our employers cease to exist, be sold, or transferred, that our members, if faced with a layoff, can go somewhere else where they have a comparable wage and benefit level.

For certain, back in the 1900s, if you were a blacksmith, the advice of telling your son that he could go and be an apprentice in order to be a good blacksmith and that this was a good career for him, with the changes in telecommunications, I do not think that quite flies anymore.

I think that this resolution reaffirms protecting our members, and that we should do all the work. I think this resolution reaffirms that we are a labor union and support all labor unions. I think this is our work and we are going to have to fight to keep it, and we are going to have to fight to get it.

One last thing I did want to add: I have been involved in the union movement for 40 years now. This is my last Convention as a delegate because I am going to retire at the end of August. So all my years of experience scream at me that if we do not organize this industry we are going to be very, very sorry 10 years

from now. Thank you. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thanks for your years building CWA.

Microphone No. 3, Delegate Quintus.

DELEGATE MICHELLE QUINTUS (Local 21005): I am an organizer in Cleveland. I am also a flight attendant representative in New York City, and a flight attendant at United Airlines, and a member from Local 21005. I want to share with the delegates on the floor two interesting facts about airline travel, and I promise it will relate to the resolution.

One is, when you buy a ticket on Northwest Airlines and you get on the plane or you get to your flight, you may end up with a CWA member from Northwest Airlines who joined us last year, one of the 9,000 flight attendants who joined us last year. (Applause)

You may also end up being served by a flight attendant on Pinnacle Airlines, or Mesaba Airlines, or a brand new Northwest spin-off airline composed of 22 flight attendants called Compass Airlines. At Compass Airlines they are not yet AFA-CWA members, however, we are filing for an election next month.

That's interesting fact number one. Fact number two is that if you are flying on a flight from Chicago to New York one year, you may actually get served chicken. The next year you may not get served chicken. The reason for this is that one airline decided that it is not profitable to serve chicken on that flight anymore. So now on Northwest, Continental, United and Delta you no longer get chicken on the airplane. That's interesting fact number two.

The bottom line is that what the companies do is, they do whatever will save them money. So if they can get away with, the 22 flight attendants at Compass Airlines, if they can get away with paying them lower wages, forcing them to work longer work days, giving them less benefits as well as less job security, what do you think they are going to do? They are not going to serve us chicken. (Laughter)

Ladies and gentlemen, this is the airline version of outsourced work in the telecom industry. Industry standards are set by corporations based on what they can get away with. If we want to not only keep what we have, what we have gained through hard struggle in this movement, but actually increase our power, no worker should be left unorganized. (Applause)

I urge you to vote for and support this resolution. Thank you. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: There may be a question at Microphone No. 5., Delegate McMurry, or is that on a previous motion?

I do not see Delegate McMurry, so I will assume it was a different resolution.

If there is no one else wishing to speak on this resolution-- Microphone No. 1.

DELEGATE RICHARD LEATH (Local 1109): I would just like to amend this motion to include that before signing any contract that there be two provisions, one on health care and one on pensions.

. . . The motion was duly seconded . . .

PRESIDENT COHEN: Okay, you can speak on your motion.

DELEGATE LEE: Basically, I just want to be sure because I know that there are contracts out there that we do sign that do not include any health care provisions and do not include any pensions. So if we are going to adopt a motion like this, I believe that all contracts have to have those two provisions in them. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thank you.

Anyone wishing to speak on the amendment?

I just want to clarify from the Chair that we cannot do bargaining here. We will certainly include that amendment as it was stated, but I want to be clear that we cannot do bargaining for all of you and for every bargaining committee in CWA. But I think we will include what the intent of it was.

We are voting on the amendment, if no one else wishes to speak out. All those wishing to include a provision on health care and a provision on pensions, please raise your hands. Opposed by a like sign. It is adopted. (Applause)

Are there any speakers on the main motion?

Now we are on the main motion. I will read the Resolveds of the main motion: CWA will continue to organize wall-to-wall within the existing CWA employers and within the industry; that CWA, when faced with outsourced work, will attempt to retain this work within the bargaining unit; CWA, when still faced with outsourced work, will maintain to the employers that this work needs to be CWA, where available, and Union when CWA members cannot perform this work.

All those in favor of this motion raise their hands. Down hands. Opposed by a like sign. It is adopted. (Applause)

Microphone No. 1, Delegate Santos.

DELEGATE STAN SANTOS (Local 9408): Thank you. I just wanted to let everybody know, if you are not aware, that Jesus died in Iraq. Jesus died in Iraq.

PRESIDENT COHEN: We need a motion, delegate.

DELEGATE SANTOS: Yes, I am speaking to this.

PRESIDENT COHEN: We need the motion first.

DELEGATE SANTOS: Very well. That CWA support the immediate withdrawal from Iraq; that Congress should provide only sufficient resources for our orderly and safe withdrawal, leaving behind no permanent bases; and that candidates for President who seek our support must be pressed to state their position clearly and unequivocally on how they will fulfill this goal. (Applause)

. . . Cries of "Second" . . .

PRESIDENT COHEN: You may speak to your motion.

DELEGATE SANTOS: A few years ago, I went to see a friend in San Diego and sat in his living room where he had pictures on his wall of his son. He was very proud of his son, Jesus, who was in uniform and with his family in the pictures on the wall. We sat and talked about his son.

His son was born in Tijuana. Having been raised there as a young child, he saw the suffering, the poverty and the drugs, children in rags in the street. He wanted to have a better life and maybe help other people. Fernando, his father, came to the United States and worked in odd jobs, 7-11s, cleaning hotels, and managed to bring his family to California. In so doing, he helped his son to realize his dream.

His son became a Marine, and as a Marine in 2003 was among the first to cross the border from Kuwait. Within a few short hours, he stepped on some unexploded U.S. ordinance and died. He was the first what we call "green card soldier" to die; he was not a U.S. citizen.

Last year I was in Baltimore, thanks to our District 9 and the Minority Leadership Institute, and we were

having dinner in a restaurant. I noticed a young man sitting next to us at a table, and we struck up a conversation. I found out that his name was also Jesus. He had just returned from Iraq. He had lost a leg there. He was also an immigrant. Before I knew it, his mother was crying and telling me, "Look what they did to my son."

Therefore, I would like for it to be resolved out of this Convention that we reiterate our support for the previous resolution and that we do everything within our effort to make that come true, so that no more Jesuses and Marias or Joes or Petes or anybody dies in Iraq; that the war end immediately; and that we leave no footprint behind. I would appreciate that.

My son-in-law did a tour of duty and is scheduled to return in early 2008, and I would hope that if we are successful, there would be no chance that my grandchildren would be left without a father. There are also members here, I'm sure, who have children there, like one of our local presidents from Stockton. Thank you. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: Microphone 3, Delegate Schwager.

DELEGATE BOB SCHWAGER (Local 9417): Good morning, President Cohen. I stand in support of Brother Santos' motion. My son Jared joined the United States Marine Corps, just as many young men and women joined the armed services in various branches in patriotic response to an attack on the United States. Most of these young citizens were unaware or misled by the lies of our current administration to fight and put their lives and limbs on the line for an unjust and unpopular war based on weapons of mass destruction that were never found and other untruths and deceptions.

These kids were led to believe they were doing their patriotic duty of defending their country and fighting a war on terror. Instead, the reality is that they are fighting a war for oil, basically trading blood for oil or oil for blood.

As CWA members, I ask that we all do everything that we can to send these young men and women, these heroes, home as soon as possible. (Applause) I ask that we bring these kids home now. Thank you. (Applause and cheers)

PRESIDENT COHEN: Microphone No. 3, Delegate Henning.

DELEGATE BILL HENNING (Local 1180): Last month, under the auspices of "U.S. Labor Against the War," we hosted visiting trade unionists from Iraq. One was Faleh Abood Umara, who is the number two in the Oil Workers Union in the south. And the Oil Workers are leading the way in Iraq, trying to reclaim the resources for the Iraqi people and not for the U.S. multinational oil companies.

His message to us was clear: that the problems in Iraq today stem from the occupation and they cannot begin to address the problems and cannot begin to eliminate the ferocious sectarian violence that has taken the lives of trade unionists in Iraq until the occupation comes to an end. (Applause)

The second person who accompanied Faleh on the delegation was the first elected woman trade union leader of a national union in Iraq, Hashmeya Muhsin Hussein, who is the President of the Electrical Utility Workers. Their message is clear to us: worker-to-worker, union-to-union, we need to end the war, end the occupation. We need to bring the troops home, and we need to take care of them when they get here.

Thank you very much. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: No other delegates seeking the floor; the question is called. All those in favor of the motion indicate by raising your hands. Down hands. Opposed by a like sign. It is adopted. (Applause)

I want to thank the Resolutions Committee and the Chair, Denise Burns, for their hard work. Thank you. (Applause)

Now I would like to call the Appeals Committee to the platform. While they are coming up, I want to report on the results of cases that last year's Convention ordered arbitrated-- actually it was two years ago, 2005. The Convention ordered the CWA arbitrate five cases. I reported out on two of those cases last year. We now have the disposition on the other three.

Shelavia Whitfield, Local 1023: Verizon had terminated Ms. Whitfield for excessive absence. The Union maintained that the discharge was without just cause because of discrepancies concerning the approval of FMLA time. The arbitrator found that the company did have just cause to discharge Ms. Whitfield and upheld the company's actions.

Charles Taylor, Local 1023: Verizon had terminated Mr. Taylor, a Service Rep, for making harassing calls to other Verizon employees, using abusive foul language and racial epithets. The Union argued that Mr. Taylor's actions were as those of a customer, not an employer. The arbitrator found a sufficient connection between the harassing conduct and Mr. Taylor's employment and concluded that the company did have just cause for termination.

Janet Logan, Local 6171: The case was settled and withdrawn on October 6, 2006.

In addition, the 2006 Convention ordered two cases to be arbitrated. Deborah Turner, Local 6301: At the written request of the grievant, on January 19, 2007, the case was withdrawn. And Sherry Hartke, Local 6301: A hearing was held on June 6, 2007. We do not have a decision yet.

Now I will introduce the Committee.

. . . As each member of the Appeals Committee was introduced, the delegates responded with a single clap of recognition . . .

Diane Stangle, Executive Vice President, CWA Local 1118, Chair; Rhonda Taylor, President, Local 3902; Michael Handley, President, CWA Local 4123; Diana Markowski, President, CWA Local 13100; Greg Schaffer, President, CWA Local 86116.

I now recognize the Chair of the Committee.

DELEGATE DIANE STANGLE (Local 1118, Chair, Appeals Committee): Thank you, President Cohen.

Delegates, Alternates and Guests: The Appeals Committee convened on July 12, 2007, through July 15, 2007, at the Sheraton Centre, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, for the purpose of receiving and disposing of appeals in accordance with the CWA Constitution and the appeals procedure of the Union as established by Conventions and the Executive Board.

The Committee was available to meet with interested parties on July 12 through July 15, between the hours of 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. Outside of these hours, the Appeals Committee was available by appointment.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the members of this Committee-- Rhonda Taylor, President, Local 3902; Greg Schaffer, President, Local 86116; Diana Markowski, President, Local 13100; and Mike Handley, President, Local 4123-- for their commitment and hard work.

Our recommendations are based on the information contained in the files, as well as additional information that was provided to the Appeals Committee.

Also, the Committee would like to thank Gail Evans, Staff, District 2, for her support and guidance.

Now, please, delegates, read along with us Appeal No. 1, which will be read by Diana Markowski:

DELEGATE DIANA MARKOWSKI (Local 13100): Thank you, Diane.

APPEAL NO. 1

Nick Hawkins, Vice President of CWA Local 3305, has appealed the Executive Board's decision to uphold the decision of President Cohen not to arbitrate the grievance filed by Steve Meade, a member of his local.

Mr. Meade is an Outside Plant Technician working for BellSouth. The Local's position is that the Company assigned Mr. Meade, on numerous occasions, to perform splicing work on non-pressurized energized cable, and they believe he should have been paid a differential for this work. They filed a grievance when the Company failed to pay him accordingly.

Article 4 of the BellSouth General Agreement addresses differential payments for working a higher-rated job. The general agreement does not include job descriptions. BellSouth Network Operations Outside Plant Technicians Differential Guidelines, dated May 2003, clearly states that when an Outside Plant Technician energizes non-pressurized cable, this work does not qualify for a pay differential.

The Union challenged the denial of the differential payments to the Outside Plant Technician and on two separate occasions arbitrated the issue in the past. An arbitration heard in 1963 stated: "In general, the Company is under no contractual obligation to pay a differential to Scale P-2 employees (Linemen or Installers) when they perform any operation exclusively on PIC cable, except where such work involves a moisture proof closure."

A second arbitration heard in 1978 resulted in a similar outcome regarding the Outside Plant Technician and splicing work.

In direct conflict with company guidelines, company management and Local representatives reached an agreement on the differential during a Local Government Partnership meeting. However, the agreement was retracted by higher level managers citing the fact the issue had been dealt with and settled in two previous arbitrations.

The Appeals Committee, having fully reviewed the records in this case, recommends that the Executive Board's decision be upheld and the appeal of Nick Hawkins, on behalf of Steve Meade, be denied.

We further recommend that this issue be handled during contract negotiations.

CHAIR STANGLE: Thank you, Diane.

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thank you. At Microphone No. 3, Delegate Spikes.

DELEGATE GWEN SPIKES (Local 6139): I rise in support of the Committee's recommendation to deny arbitration based on the fact that it has been arbitrated twice with the same results. It is specified in the contract that this is not a violation. I agree with the Committee's recommendation that this be referred to the bargaining unit at the appropriate time. Thank you.

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thank you.

Microphone No. 4, Delegate Wolfe.

DELEGATE JEFFREY W. WOLFE (Local 3305): I would like to thank the Appeals Committee for listening to me on Sunday and I appreciate the time that you gave me.

I am the President of the local and I filed this grievance, and I know that it has been arbitrated twice, back in '63 and '78. PIC Cable has been a thorn in our behinds forever. And I guess that maybe fifteen, or ten years ago I could come up here and stand at the mike and probably everybody here would know what I was talking about-- a lineman doing splicing work. We represent so many industries now that it's sort of hard to explain, but it's simply about somebody making a lower rate of pay doing a higher rate of pay job and not getting paid for it.

I guess if you're a navigator of a plane out there and you could fly an airplane, and they wanted you to and made you to, you'd want pilots' pay. (Applause) If you were a conductor on a train and you could drive the train, and they made you do an engineer's work, you would probably want the engineer's pay.

Way back in '63 this was arbitrated on, and it was simple-- putting a blue-white wire onto a blue-white wire, maybe on 25 pair or 50 pair of cable. They've now gotten to where they send linemen out to splice 900 pair of cable or above. Now, just because it is not pressurized, you still have to know what blue-white wire to put to what blue-white wire. There could be 24 to 32 different blue-white wires in there, and you've got to know which one to put it to, or you are going to knock somebody out. It's as simple as that. Sometimes, because the print may be different, you might splice the blue-white wire to the black-blue wire, and you have to know what black-blue wire to put it to.

So, things have changed. Even though our linemen still are not getting paid, I think there are splicers out there and the linemen here know what I'm talking about. It's about time we got this changed and it does not seem like we are getting it changed in the contract negotiations. So maybe it is time we arbitrated it again. I don't know, but it just seems to me like it is time for that change.

And all comes down to-- I have an uncle who used to be a conductor, and he says he doesn't have anything to do with the stop lights and the lights on the tracks. He doesn't have anything to do with the tracks being changed out there. He doesn't have anything to do with anything. He doesn't even get to blow the whistle on the darn train. But you let the dadgum thing jump the rails, and you will see who gets the blame.

So I would like you to please overturn the Appeals Committee and arbitrate this case on behalf of Mr. Meade. Thank you very much. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: No other delegates wishing to speak on the motion, so I will remind you that on appeals you are voting for the committee's report or against.

All those in favor of the motion please indicate by raising your hands. Down hands. Opposed by a like sign.

We will do it once more. Down hands.

All those in favor please indicate by raising your hands. Down hands. Opposed by a like sign.

For. (Applause) For.

We will go to the next item, please, Appeal No. 2

CHAIR STANGLE: Appeal No. 2 will be read by Mike Handley.

Appeal No. 2 will be read by Mike Handley.

DELEGATE MICHAEL HANDLEY (Local 4123): Before I read the summary of Appeal No. 2, I would like to direct the delegates' attention to the last line in the summary. There is a typographical error. The phrase reads, "The appeal of Sheronnie Pearl." It should read, "The appeal for Sheronnie Pearl," and that is the way I will be reading it in the summary.

APPEAL NO. 2

James Allen, Executive Vice President of Local 6215, is appealing the Executive Board's decision not to arbitrate the grievance of Sheronnie Pearl.

Mr. Pearl, with a seniority date of July 31, 2000, was employed by SBC as a "Supply Attendant." He was terminated in March 2006 for a violation of the Company's Code of Business Conduct.

The following events transpired in 2005:

In November, Mr. Pearl, on disability, had not received his disability payments. On December 5th, Mr. Pearl contacted Sedgewick, (the disability claims administrator) and informed them he had not received his payments. Sedgewick informed Mr. Pearl they would stop payment on the four checks issued in November and then issue one single check for \$2,100. Mr. Pearl received the single check dated December 6, 2005, and cashed it. On December 13th, Mr. Pearl received one of the checks in the mail that was dated November 8th. Mr. Pearl took that check and cashed it at a liquor store. On December 21st, Mr. Pearl received another check dated for November 23rd, and took that check to the same liquor store to cash. The clerk at the store informed Mr. Pearl that the check he brought in on December 14th, was returned with a "stopped payment" status. After learning this information, Mr. Pearl cashed the second check at the same store.

The Local contends that Mr. Pearl was due check payments for the month of December and mistakenly thought the checks he received in December were his payments for this time period. The checks Mr. Pearl received were clearly dated November 8th, and November 23rd. The Local does not dispute that Mr. Pearl had a conversation with Sedgewick on December 5th, nor that he was told they would stop payment on the November checks and issue a single check for the full amount of the November payments.

The Local contends that Mr. Pearl returned to the liquor store with the check dated for November 23rd, and only presented the check to the clerk for verification of the check's status.

The file contains a copy of the second check dated November 23rd, clearly stamped with RETURN REASON STOP PAYMENT, indicating the check had been presented for payment. The Local does not dispute that Mr. Pearl was informed by the clerk at the liquor store that the check he brought in dated November 8th was returned for stop payment. Nor do they dispute, after being informed of this information that Mr. Pearl cashed the second check.

After reviewing these facts and all information provided, the Appeals Committee feels that an arbitrator would not rule in the Union's favor. Therefore, the Appeals Committee recommends that the Executive Board's decision be upheld and the appeal for Sheronnie Pearl be denied.

PRESIDENT COHEN: At Microphone No. 4, Delegate Allen.

DELEGATE JAMES ALLEN (Local 6215): I again thank the Committee for their diligence and respect in handling this case, but there are a couple of grammatical errors that I need to correct in there. Number one, he cashed his check always at the liquor store. That's nothing unusual. Number two, when he went for the stop payment check, the second check, that was to make good on the first check. He never received any money for that check.

He was due the money-- well, let me begin my report by saying, first, for the month of November 2005, Sheronnie Pearl was injured on the job and was placed on disability by his doctor. The company failed to pay him the entire month of November, because they were sending his checks to the wrong address.

After much discussion with the company, it was agreed that the company would send one makeup check too make up for his future checks and would be sent to the correct address. The company issued the stop payments on all previously issued checks. On December 5th he received the correct makeup check at his correct address.

One week passed, and he received another check for one week's pay, which he was due, that he thought was part of his continuing payments. Sheronnie did not check the issue date on the check that he received in the mail. He did not know or realize that this was a check for November finally catching up to him, and he cashed the check.

Another week passed and he received a call from the store and they told him that the check he had cashed had a stop payment on it. Sheronnie received another check in the mail and he took it to the store to

check it and see if it was a good check. The store agreed to run it through the system to see if it was a good check. That's the stop payment, the second stop payment.

They ran it through in an effort to get their money back on the first check, but they didn't give him any money for this check. The second check had a stop payment on it also.

At this point the company was again delinquent in making payments to Sheronnie Pearl. He was due three weeks' pay from the company. Sheronnie went until January 16th without receiving a payment, and he finally found out the company was sending the second amount of checks to the wrong address again. He went and picked them up.

Sheronnie found out where his checks were being sent, and he retrieved over six weeks' worth of delinquent checks that would have been sent to the wrong address. He believed someone was tampering with his mail and all his checks were sent to his doctor's office from that point forward.

While he was on disability, he received a notice from the company's asset protection ordering him to report for interrogation, and he was terminated as a result of that interrogation while he was still on disability. He still received disability checks after that date. He never, ever received more money than he was due.

The company could not get his accounts right as to where they were sending his checks. Never at any point did he receive any overpayment from the company. Don't allow the company's mistakes of sending the checks to the wrong address to cost Sheronnie Pearl his job. Cast your vote against the Appeals Committee's recommendation in this case. Thank you. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: I would just like to add, that was Delegate James Allen from Local 6215. I would remind the delegates to please start out with your name and local.

Microphone No. 5, Delegate Wynn.

DELEGATE GREGORY WYNN (Local 4100): Thank you, President Cohen. I would like to thank the Appeals Committee for their hard work on these appeals.

I have two questions. Question No. 1, what part of the Code of Business Conduct was he terminated for?

PRESIDENT COHEN: Do you have the answer? I will ask the District otherwise.

DELEGATE HANDLEY: Yes, thank you. It was for-- the Code of Conduct was for fraud, misrepresenting company funds.

DELEGATE WYNN: Thank you.

DELEGATE HANDLEY: But I would like to add, when we interviewed the local, when they came in and spoke with us, there is nothing to verify that in the file.

DELEGATE WYNN: Thank you.

PRESIDENT COHEN: You are entitled to a second question.

DELEGATE WYNN: Thank you. The two checks he received dated December 6th and November 23rd, what were the amounts?

DELEGATE HANDLEY: They were both for \$539.

DELEGATE WYNN: Thank you.

PRESIDENT COHEN: On Microphone No. 4, Delegate Reyna.

DELEGATE PAMELA LAWSON (Local 3108): My name is Pamela Lawson.

PRESIDENT COHEN: I am sorry. You are not the one I have. She was at the "Questions" mike. That was my mistake. I apologize, Pamela. Microphone No. 4, Pamela Lawson

DELEGATE LAWSON: First, I have worked in the Legacy Team Payroll Office for 23 years. I am speaking from a subject matter expert view, and I have never met Executive Vice President James Allen, Local 6215, prior to today. When I read the appeal and handout, I snapped because this is so ludicrous. Therefore, I can't sit silently without stating facts that I know to be true from more than two decades of experience. I did talk to Mr. Allen for a little bit before I decided to speak.

An important note is that, according to the Local, Mr. Pearl did not cash that second check, and he would not have cashed that first check if the liquor store had contacted the bank and knew there was a stop payment. The way stop payments basically work is that we contact the bank, it usually takes two days, the stop payment goes through, and then the bank won't cash the check.

So, where the liquor was looking for its money back, that's because it had already paid it, whereas, if it had contacted the bank like it should have, as most businesses would, they would have never paid it out.

The second thing that I want to explain is that I have seen overpayments to the tune of \$300,000. Of course, these were management people. Normally they would get a \$5,000 check for the month, and they just didn't notice they were overpaid when they got a \$50,000 check, nor did they call. When they found out about it, we would collect it back and they would claim a hardship, and we would collect maybe \$100 a month. So they had a free loan of about \$300,000 for years, interest free.

So, I have seen a lot of this go on, and never have I seen them fired and I, quite frankly, have never seen an occupational fired on misrepresentation of funds. When the company sends a check for \$539. unless you're-- I've got to admit that even I, being the payroll person, I don't look at the dates. If it says \$539 and that's what I'm supposed to get, I don't put my readers on and say, "Oh, is this for this amount of time or this amount of time?" (Applause) I go to the bank and I cash it.

I can't believe that the intent of Mr. Pearl was to go to the bank and go, "Ooh, I'm going to stick it to them by cashing the check they gave me." I don't see that that was his intent.

Also, I am laid off from the Legacy T-side and am now on the Legacy S-side. E-Link does the payroll office. I am not trying to put down anyone on the Legacy S-side or E-Link or anything, but since I have been on the skills match, I have been overpaid \$1,748 on March 23rd. I tried to give them the check back. They told me to cash it, so I cashed the check. Then I tried to say, "Okay, take the money back, take the money back." And they did not take the money back until the paycheck last Friday. That's four months, and I am overpaid \$1,748.

Mr. Pearl was never overpaid. It was a wash. He cashed a check that the liquor store passed through, but he was owed the money for a different week, okay, and it was \$539. There is no overpayment, so there is no crime, in my humble opinion. You know, if it was \$300,000 and it was something of the magnitude of what I told you I've seen management do, then that might be misrepresentation of funds.

We always say, an injury to one is an injury to all. If Mr. Pearl is terminated and we don't at least take it to the steps we know we can take-- and by the way, pull the records of the overpayments of both Legacy T and Legacy S, and you will have that in arbitration, to be able to prove that this was nothing but a mistake. Thank you. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: Microphone 5, Delegate Reyna.

DELEGATE VALERIE REYNA (Local 9415): My question is simple: I just want to know, on the second check, did Mr. Pearl get \$539 in cash in his hands?

DELEGATE HANDLEY: There is nothing contained in this file to say that he did. The only thing that the file contains is a copy of the check that was submitted to a bank which came back, "Return reason - stop payment." That's all we have.

DELEGATE REYNA: I don't have a second question, but I think that would be important to know.

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thank you.

On Microphone No. 1, Delegate Mooney.

DELEGATE EDWARD F. MOONEY (Local 13000): I call the question. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: It's non-debatable. All those in favor of calling the question, please indicate by raising your hands. Down hands. Opposed by a like sign. The question has been called.

Just to be clear, you can tell by who's at which mike, "For" the Committee in this case, or "Against" the Committee. But if you are voting "For," that the Appeals Committee recommends that the Executive Board's decision be upheld, then that is the "For," that the appeal of Sheronnie Pearl be denied. If you are voting "Against," you are voting against the Committee's report. I was asked to repeat that again by a delegate.

All those in favor of the motion before us, please indicate by raising your hands. Down hands. Opposed by a like sign. It will be arbitrated. (Applause and cheers)

CHAIR STANGLE: Appeal No. 3 will be read by Greg Schafer.

DELEGATE GREG SCHAFER (Local 86116): Thank you. I would like to point out, before I start, to the delegates that there is an error in the fourth to the last paragraph, and it's in the last sentence. It says, "He also states he did not remember having been in the van." That should be corrected to read, "He also states he did not remember having beer in the van."

APPEAL NO. 3

On January 13, 2007, President Louise Mohr of Local 4470 appealed the decision of the Executive Board not to arbitrate the grievance of Mike (David) Louth.

Mr. Louth was a 36-year employee of Sprint and held the title of Business Service Tech. Mr. Louth was suspended pending investigation on September 13, 2004, when he was observed by his supervisor asleep in the company vehicle on company property during working hours. Upon further investigation by the supervisor on the same day, it was discovered that the grievant's company vehicle contained several containers of beer with at least one can open and partially full, two cans that had not been opened, and one empty can.

The Company met with the grievant and asked him how much he had to drink. The grievant responded "Too much." The Company offered to take the grievant home, but the grievant said he would have his wife pick him up. The grievant was not tested for blood alcohol content.

On September 14, 2004, the Union, Company and grievant met. The Company asked the grievant if he remembered the events of the previous day. The grievant said he did not remember the conversations he had with the supervisor that day. Both the Union and the Company suggested the grievant seek treatment for alcohol dependency.

On September 15, 2004, the Company attempted to notify the grievant he was being terminated for violation of three company policies (Standards of Conduct, Substance Abuse Policy, and the Sprint Principles of Business Conduct). These policies were clarified in an e-mail to President Mohr. The Company indicated that each policy had been violated, referencing the possession of alcohol in a company vehicle and on company property.

The grievant submitted an undated statement of events as he recalls. In the statement he admits to having a few drinks at lunch. He also admits to going home for break and having a few more drinks. At 4 p.m., he remembers he went to the barn to make out his time sheet, but did not remember being awakened. He also states he did not remember having beer in the van.

Not remembering is not the same as denying something happened and, unfortunately, Mr. Louth and the supervisor are the only two witnesses to the alcohol in the company vehicle on company property.

While the loss of employment by a 36-year employee is not to be taken lightly, the Committee believes an arbitrator would not sustain the Union's grievance based on the blatant multiple violations of the employer's Code of conduct.

Accordingly the Appeals Committee, after careful review of the pertinent facts of this grievance, recommends that the CWA Executive Board's decision be upheld and the appeal denied.

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thank you.

On Microphone No. 3, Delegate Plezia.

DELEGATE MICHAEL PLEZIA (Local 4340): As the person in charge of Local 4340's grievance procedure, and more specifically the arbitration procedure, I have been involved in many arbitration cases, researched and reviewed arbitrators' decisions and have personally spoken to or, if you will, picked the brains of many arbitrators regarding their decision-making process, and it's more than I care to mention.

So in my opinion, the facts of this case as I see the arbitrator would see them are: Number one, when the company and union and grievant met, the grievant did not remember events of the previous day. At the same meeting, both the union and company suggested the grievant seek treatment for alcohol dependency.

Okay, on the no memory part, the member admits in his submitted statement to drinking a few while at lunch and going home on break and having a few more at home. This fact alone constitutes the decision of drinking on the job and after drinking, obviously, driving the employer's vehicle and is a violation of their code and also of the safety of those around that person.

So having said that, there are a couple of definite facts there that the member forgot and then remembered that he did, in fact, drink. Although we give it our all in representing our members in grievances and also representing our members in arbitration, sometimes they stack the deck against us, which I believe from every fact I have heard here, is the case.

Although he is a long-tenured employee, he did have a responsibility to his union, as well as to this process, as we do. So, although he is a long-tenured employee, I don't believe there is an arbitrator out there that will give more weight to the tenure of this grievant than to his self-admitted violations of drinking and driving the vehicle.

I know the Committee has done thorough research and investigated efficiently, effectively, fairly, and most importantly, honestly. I commend them for their work. I support the decision of this Committee and would urge this Convention to support them as well. Thank you. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thank you. Microphone No. 4, Delegate Timmerman.

DELEGATE MICHAEL A. TIMMERMAN (Local 4470): Good morning, President Cohen, Executive Board, Fellow Delegates, Alternates and Guests. I rise to ask your support, brothers and sisters, in overturning the Executive Board's decision not to arbitrate the grievance of Michael David Louth.

We believe we have provided sufficient information to prove that the company did not have just cause to terminate Mr. Louth. The case may seem very complicated, but in reality it's very simple if we just look at a

few points. There was a rush to terminate. The incident occurred September 13, 2004, at approximately at 4:00 p.m. The suspension meeting was held the very next day at 10:00 a.m. On Wednesday, the very following day, he was terminated in the early afternoon.

The point to be made here, there is no harm done to the company. They lost no customer, no money, nothing.

Mr. Louth was 59 years of age at the time, and a long-term employee, as you have heard, for over 36 years, no prior discipline, zero prior discipline. And I can't say that enough. He was terminated for "violation of Sprint practices."

After being pushed for a more precise explanation, we received from HR that he violated three policies and it was due to possession of alcohol in a company vehicle. Let it be noted that the company did not terminate Mr. Louth for being drunk or drinking on the job-- only for possession in his truck. Also let it be noted that the foreman "found" the beer cans after Mr. Louth had exited the truck with no other witnesses that the cans were even there. If they truly thought that he was under the influence, they should have tested him, but they didn't. Mr. Louth was never tested nor was he requested to test. Never.

It should also be noted there is no progressive discipline in this case. It was strictly capital punishment. Discipline is designed to be corrective in nature, not punitive.

We have produced several cases similar in nature where the company used suspensions to take corrective action, not the death penalty of termination. In the most recent instance, the person that was involved had three different alcohol-related incidents. The first two resulted in suspensions, the third in termination. That's the way it should be. Corrective discipline; not a rush to terminate.

With the way Sprint doles out the discipline, it causes severe disparity of treatment. I want to quote from Kevin Conlin, who used to be District 4's legal counsel, "Did the employer have a clearly communicated and consistently enforced policy concerning drug or alcohol use? If not, an arbitrator may reduce or overturn an employer's decision to discipline. Arbitrators have also refused to uphold discipline related to substance use if the employer has treated any other users more leniently," which they have.

Also take note that the company offered an early-out to that department shortly after he was terminated. It is imperative that we protect our members as a whole. If we allow punishment that doesn't fit the crime to go unchallenged, where will it all end? (Applause)

We used outside legal counsel to review this case. They said, in their impromptu suggestions with arbitrators, that because of today's environment there is a reluctance to allow for terminations of long-term older-aged, first-time offenders, even when the violations are alcohol or drug-related.

In summary-- and I can't say this enough-- we have a long-term member with 36-plus years of service and a perfectly clean record. Zero. He wasn't even caught jaywalking. We have a lack of progressive discipline. We have the company changing how they implement their disciplinary practices. If we don't arbitrate a case for a 36-year member with a perfectly clean record, when will we arbitrate? A 36-year member deserves his day in court. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: Microphone No. 5, Delegate Harvey.

DELEGATE WILLIAM B. HARVEY (Local 9415): Thank you, President Cohen. My question, my first question to the committee is, even if there is no proof of alcohol on the company's premises and no proof that the grievant had drinks at lunch, would the grievant's admission that he drove the company vehicle home from break be enough for an arbitrator to sustain a discharge? Do you know?

CHAIR STANGLE: Would you repeat the question, please?

DELEGATE HARVEY: Yes. Even if there is no proof of alcohol on the company's premises, and no

proof that the grievant had drinks at lunch, would the grievant's admission that he drove the company vehicle home for break be enough for an arbitrator to sustain a discharge?

CHAIR STANGLE: I would not be able to comment on what the arbitrator's decision would be, but if he did not admit to driving a vehicle under the influence, I would have to say, no, it would not be just cause for disciplinary action.

PRESIDENT COHEN: Second question?

DELEGATE HARVEY: My second question is, would there be additional negative consequences of losing this arbitration, if it were arbitrated, besides the employee not getting his job back?

CHAIR STANGLE: Yes. Shortly after the termination, as Mr. Timmerman indicated, there was an incentive to retire. And with Sprint's retirement plan, anybody under the-- my understanding is and I'm not quite sure of the percentages-- for anyone under the 65-year-old limit, pensions would be reduced. So this gentleman was terminated lacking the \$20,000 incentive, and also an opportunity to collect his full pension.

DELEGATE HARVEY: Thank you.

CHAIR STANGLE: You're welcome.

PRESIDENT COHEN: On Microphone No. 3, Delegate Pagani.

DELEGATE SAMUEL P. PAGANI (Local 4527): Although I understand the desire to arbitrate all cases involving a member who has been terminated, I also understand there are winners and losers in these cases. It is my understanding that the member had been hospitalized two times previously for alcohol abuse. When the member was terminated, the company also stated three violations of company policy.

I urge the delegates to vote to uphold the Committee's decision. Thank you.

PRESIDENT COHEN: On Microphone No. 4, Delegate Lawson.

DELEGATE PAMELA LAWSON (Local 3108): I was speaking against, but is that true, that was he hospitalized for treatment twice?

DELEGATE SCHAFER: On one previous occasion he was-- I am trying to find the exact dates here-- he was treated for alcohol withdrawal from 10/30 of '01 until 11/26 of '01, and then the second time, according to the file, was on 9/14/97 after the grievant had been suspended pending investigation for having alcohol in his truck.

PRESIDENT COHEN: All right. You are not at the "Questions" mike, Delegate. I realize you are trying to find the facts out here, but if you could decide if you want to speak there or not, that would be great.

All right, you are recognized on Microphone No. 4, Delegate Lawson.

DELEGATE LAWSON: I just want to recognize and let everybody know that alcoholism is covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Alcoholism, as well as an addiction, is a disease. It's a proven disease. It's proven to be hereditary. It's a disease just like heart disease is or any other disease that you have. I would think that, in this case and with his longevity on the job and the problems that they told him to go and seek assistance from a rehabilitation standpoint, I would think that they would allow him at least that opportunity to do that before they terminated him. (Applause)

You know, addiction is not looked at by most people as a disease, but it is medically proven. It's medically out there. They are developing drugs to help them just like they are with people with heart disease. And I would think that maybe after 36 years, this guy might have deserved another chance, and, if not another chance, at least the ability to leave the company as retired instead of terminated. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: Microphone No. 1, Delegate Delessandro.

DELEGATE WILLIAM S. DALESSANDRO (Local 4474): I call the question.

PRESIDENT COHEN: I just want to explain on that motion that Bill had been at that mike, but the motion was not in order until we have two for and two against. That's why I didn't take the question previously.

This is to call the question on Appeal No. 3. All those in favor of calling the question, indicate by raising your hands. Down hands. Opposed by a like sign. The question has been called.

Now we are voting on Appeal No. 3. Again, if you are voting "For," you are voting to support the Committee, which supports in turn the Executive Board's decision, that that be upheld and the appeal be denied.

All those in favor on Appeal No. 3 of supporting the Committee, please indicate by raising your hands.

Down hands. Opposed by a like sign. It will be arbitrated. (Applause and cheers)

It's slightly after 12:00. We are in recess until 1:30 p.m.

. . . Thereupon, the Convention recessed at 12:13 p.m. . . .

TUESDAY AFTERNOON SESSION

The Convention reconvened at 1:30 p.m., CWA President Larry Cohen presiding.

PRESIDENT COHEN: I will now call on the Secretary-Treasurer for some announcements.

SECRETARY-TREASURER EASTERLING: We are going to begin the session for this afternoon, and I've got quite a few announcements. If any of your fellow local officers or delegates are not in the room, please let them know the announcements I'm about to give.

. . . Announcements by Secretary-Treasurer Easterling regarding lost and found items, Diversity Committee meetings, SAGE Group winners and raffle winners, and exhibit booths.

SECRETARY-TREASURER EASTERLING: Also, I am going to read to you parts of letters we have received, starting with Barack Obama.

... Portions of the following Convention greetings were read to the delegates, the full text of which are included in their entirety for the record, as follows: . . .

"Dear Friends,

"This letter is to welcome all of you to the 69th Annual Convention of the Communications Workers of America (CWA). Thank you for the opportunity to share these greetings. I want to extend special thanks to President Larry Cohen, Secretary-Treasurer Barbara J. Easterling, Executive Vice President Jeff Rechenbach, the members of the CWA Executive Board, and also to our CWA Canadian brothers and sisters in labor. Holding your convention in Toronto is a timely reminder that the United States and our neighbors to the north remain bound by domestic principles that transcend national boundaries.

"CWA continues to serve as a leader and a conscience for working men and women across the country, and as a longtime friend of your organization, I was proud to address your Legislative Political Conference delegates in Washington, D.C., in March. This year's convention theme is particularly appropriate because we are on the march, both in Washington and in your communities across the country. With eighteen months to go before the Presidential and Congressional elections, together we are positioning the next President to take our legislative agenda further than ever before.

"Over the years, you and I have worked together on a wide variety of issues. Passage of the Employee Free Choice Act in the House showed that a clear majority supports the right to form a union if the preponderance of workers sign cards seeking union recognition. The card-check campaign CWA ran, with the progressive, forward-thinking management of Cingular Wireless, stands as proof that labor can work together with corporations to accomplish a first contract. I will continue to work for passage of this bill in the Senate, and as President, I will sign the Employee Free Choice Act into law as soon as it comes across my desk.

"Health care is another pressing issue where we share a common vision. When a country that spends over \$2 trillion on health care every year cannot ensure universal coverage for its citizens, we know that the system is badly flawed. My health care plan will provide affordable, comprehensive, and portable coverage for all Americans, and I will sign it into law by the end of my first term as President.

"When it comes to producing high-quality goods and services in the global market, the U.S. workforce is second to none. Our nation continues to enjoy economic growth because people like you come to work every day and take pride in the goods and services you provide. As President, I will make long-term investments in education, training, and workforce development, so that our workers continue to have the skills they need to compete in the 21st Century. We can be the generation that reshapes our economy for the digital age and invests in scientific research that will keep our workers competitive. We can also make sure that every American family is financially secure by raising the minimum wage, securing pensions, and protecting Social Security.

“The Internet’s use as a central means of business communication is growing exponentially, yet the government has allowed America to fall behind. As American service and manufacturing industries move forward, from telecommunications to distance learning, from farming to public safety, these vital workplaces will require a new broadband-telecommunications policy that again makes America number one in Internet penetration. CWA has taken the lead on this issue, your Speed Matters research initiative is helping legislators at the federal, state and local levels create smart telecommunications policy, expanding broadband technology and services that will propel our communities into the modern age.

“I want to thank you again for the outstanding work you do on behalf of workers, families and all Americans. With the strength of your Stewards’ Army motivating every American to go to the polls in 2008, we can take that work directly to Washington. I hope that you will join me because if we try harder than ever before, if our campaign becomes a vehicle for your hopes and your ideas, then I am confident we will not only elect a new President, but also transform the country.

“I wish you all the best as you consider the important institutional policy matters that will make our nation’s workforce and infrastructure stronger. Please keep me informed about the innovative solutions that emerge from this Convention. I look forward to continuing our work together in the coming weeks and months, and to a great victory in November 2008.

“Sincerely,”

s/Barack Obama, U.S. Senator (Applause)

And from John Edwards:

“Dear Brothers and Sisters,

“It gives me great pleasure to send greetings to all of the delegates attending the 69th Annual Convention of the Communications Workers of America. In addition to President Larry Cohen, Secretary-Treasurer Barbara J. Easterling, Executive Vice President Jeff Rechenbach, and all of the members of the CWA executive board, I would like to extend a special greeting to our CWA Canadian brothers and sisters in labor.

“The theme you selected for this year’s convention could not be more appropriate. Yes, together we are on the march, both in Washington and in your respective communities across the country. With sixteen months to go before the November 2008 presidential and congressional elections, together we are setting the stage to pass a working families legislative agenda.

“As a longtime friend of CWA, I am pleased to have had the opportunity this past March to address your Legislative Political Conference in Washington, D.C. As I mentioned then, CWA continues to set the pace as a national leader and national conscience for working men and women across the country. Over the years, you and I have worked together on a number of issues. Together we can continue to fight for one America, a place where everyone has a fair shot at the American Dream.

“A good place to start is strengthening our labor laws. Union membership can be the difference between a poverty-wage job and a middle-class society. Federal law promises workers the right to choose a union, but the law is poorly defined. I support the Employee Free Choice Act to give workers a real choice in whether to form a union, and making penalties for breaking labor laws tougher and faster, so unions can compete on a level playing field and the right to join a union and bargain collectively means something. I also support banning the permanent replacement of strikers so unions can bargain fairly.

“CWA’s card check campaign with Cingular Wireless stands as proof that forward-thinking labor and management can work together. CWA’s relationship with Cingular is absolute proof that card check works. As President of the United States, you can be assured that when the Employee Free Choice Act comes across my desk, I will sign it into law.

“Universal health care is another pressing issue on which your members and my campaign share a

common concern. I am proud to be the first major presidential candidate to propose a specific plan to guarantee quality, affordable health care for every single man, woman and child in America. Under my plan, businesses will either cover their employees or help pay their premium. The government will make insurance affordable through new tax credits and by leading the way toward more cost-effective care. New "Health Care Markets" will give families and businesses purchasing power and a choice of quality plans, including one public plan.

"Finally, once these steps have been taken, all American residents will be required to take responsibility and get insurance.

"Guaranteeing quality, affordable health care will help working families negotiate for better pay and stronger pensions at the collective bargaining table.

"In America today, families are working harder to get by. Over the last 20 years, American incomes have grown apart: 40 percent of the income growth in the 1980s and 1990s went to the top one percent. The top 300,000 individuals now make more than the bottom 150 million. The result is Two Americas, one struggling to get by and another has everything it could want.

"I believe we have to build One American Economy, where everyone has the opportunity to work hard and build a better life. I will restore respect for work to our tax code and cut taxes for working families. I will overhaul our weak labor laws to give workers a real right to organize.

"We need smarter trade policies. Trade deals need to make sense for American workers, not just corporations. I will make sure any new trade agreements include strong labor and environmental standards and will vigorously enforce American workers' rights in existing agreements. I will also expand trade adjustment assistance to do much more for the workers and communities that are hurt by global competition and reform our international tax code to remove incentives for companies to move overseas.

"As American service and manufacturing industries move forward in this century, we know that these vital work places will require a new broadband-telecommunications policy that will again make America number one in internet penetration.

"We're the most technologically advanced nation in the world, yet too many Americans lack access to the Internet. The Internet can put a world of opportunities at people's fingertips, but, like so much in our Two Americas, it is out of reach for far too many Americans.

"There is no reason, in the country that built the Internet and the personal computer, for a child to be unable to do his homework, or a small-town mechanic to be unable to work his trade, or a rural doctor to be unable to treat her patient with the world's best care all because the big phone or cable company doesn't think it's worthwhile to bring service to the area.

"We need to bring our health care system, our energy economy and our educational system into a new era, where knowledge as power is no longer concentrated in just a few hands. Without high-speed internet, you can't have electronic medical records that reduce error and bring down health care costs. Without high-speed internet, you can't have distance learning that opens up the world to our children. And without high-speed internet, you can't use new technologies like "smart meters" that help power companies use energy more efficiently, lowering our bills and helping our environment.

"We need a national commitment in our country to closing the digital divide, so every American has access to the Internet. CWA's Speed Matters research initiative is helping legislators at the federal, state and local levels to make smart telecommunications policy regarding expansion of broadband technology and services that will propel their communities into the modern age.

"We need a national broadband map, like the one pioneered in Kentucky, so investors and others can see where in our union national people are shut out from the Internet. And we need to make sure big corporations don't stand in the way of providing greater access to the Internet, especially in rural America.

"I'm troubled that the Fairpoint-Verizon deal, for example, might hurt workers and rural communities. We also have to make sure these deals don't shortchange rural communities, leaving families with poor or no access to Internet service. We have to make sure these companies honor the letter and spirit of their deals with their workers.

"There is so much at stake in this next election-- the right to organize and bargain collectively, trade policies that benefit workers, pensions you can count on, universal health care, closing the digital divide. We will need the strength of CWA's "Stewards Army" to motivate every American to go to the polls in November 2008. I want to thank you again for all you do on behalf of all Americans.

"I wish you all the best at the Annual Convention as you set your strategy to build a stronger union and a stronger America. Please continue to let me know what I can do to help your membership in the fight for health care, job security, pensions and decent wages. Let me know what we can do together to not just defend what we have, but grow the labor movement.

"We all look forward to a great victory in November 2008.

"In solidarity,"

s/Senator John Edwards (Applause)

And now we're going to show you a brief video that I have about the "Milkshake Man." It actually will be Joe Mantegna, the movie star portraying of the "Milkshake Man" and a star from the "Friends" TV show, which I don't watch so I don't really recognize him. The young man is portraying an Iraqi veteran, and Joe Mantegna is portraying a Vietnam veteran who is the "Milkshake Man." We have seen this video-- actually it was performed on Memorial Day in 2004. I want you to be able to see it so that you will really understand what he is all about. Thank you.

. . . A video was shown with Joe Mantegna describing his portrayal of "Milkshake Man," a wounded Vietnam war veteran determined to now help Iraqi veterans with the difficulties they encounter dealing with the trauma and even the simple things of life upon their return from overseas . . . (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: I want to thank the Appeals Committee for their work. I meant to do that before we broke for lunch. If we could all thank them. (Applause)

Now I will introduce the Retired Members Council, and they are all up here.

. . . As the members of the Retired Members Council were introduced, the delegates responded with a single clap of recognition . . .

James Starr, District 3, President and Council Chair; Bobby Brown, District 6 President and Council Co-Chair; Addie Brinkley, District 9 President and Secretary-Treasurer; Audrey Buchanan-Swan, District 1 President; Adele Rogers; District 1 Vice President; Mike Vivirito, District 2 President; Jenny Sylvester, District 2 Vice President; Irrel "Fuzzy" Finch, District 3 Vice President; Annie Flack, District 4 President; Marcy Gregory, District 4 Vice President; Ray Kramer, District 6 Vice President; Ann Cummings, District 7 President, on medical leave of absence; Lorraine Miller, District 7 Acting President; Chuck Latimer, District 9 Vice President; Ray Myers, District 13 President; Bill Ahrens, District 13 Vice President; Joanne Brook, Merger-Partner Sector President; Bill Freeda, Merger-Partner Sector Vice President.

As James comes up, I want to say a few things here as well. I mentioned this yesterday. In "Ready for the Future" our charge was to double our membership in three years. And in just the last six months we have added 10,000 new members in the Retired Members Council, and we are well on our way to reaching that goal. I know that James and all these leaders are determined to break way through this goal and to be here in a convention in the future, not too far, where we can say we have 100,000 members in the Retired Members Council, because that's the kind of potential we have here.

Our retired members, as we all know here, are continuing the fight on the same issues-- health care for all, retirement security, jobs, bargaining and organizing rights-- realizing we all have the same goals and the same commitment to build our movement. Ed Creegan would be proud, indeed, of these tremendous gains. We applaud his leadership and mourn his passing and now unite with our new RMC Chair, James Starr. (Applause)

JAMES STARR (Chair, Retired Members Council): Thank you, President Cohen.

Y'all please be seated. (Laughter)

I appreciate the President covering a good part of the report, because he is from Philly and he talks a lot quicker than I do. (Laughter) But I must say thanks to some people. I want to thank, on behalf of the Retired Members Council, the CWA officers and the Executive Board of our union for all the help they give our retirees year round.

We also want to thank the Vice Presidents who came by our annual meeting, Chris Shelton, Ralph Maly, Andy Milburn and Noah Savant. I hope I didn't leave anybody out. Brooks Sunkett: We want to thank Vice President Sunkett for coming by our Board meeting and interacting.

For the first time in the history of the Council, we have a Public Worker Sector member on this Executive Board and that is a valuable asset to the Board. (Applause) And a special thanks to the delegates, and of course, the local officers and job stewards and members for the help they give us daily in the field on a continuing basis.

And now the staff: We must thank the staff because it's easy to blame them when the least little thing goes wrong or if something doesn't go right.

Last, but not least, we want to thank our very own staffperson, Helen Gibson. (Applause)

Everybody knows we support universal health care. I have to do this for a reason. Larry and I have a little plan. I am putting it on him. But one thing I must not fail to mention is that the RMC supports the repeal by Congress of the Social Security Government Pension offset and windfall elimination provision, which unfairly penalizes public sector employees by reducing Social Security benefits in direct proportion to their public sector pensions. It just ain't right. (Applause)

I got through that. I have to keep Helen happy. Here's the main report. You all have a copy of this, so we will just highlight it.

Mr. President, we would ask that it be included in the record, and on the back, we intended to put the name of the officers and Board members on this. I checked it but I overlooked it.

. . . The Report of RMC is included below in its entirety for the record ...

Report of the Retired Members' Council to the 2007 CWA Convention

The CWA Retired Members' Council is active and growing. Here is what happened over the past year, what we have accomplished and what we are working toward:

The year began on a sad note when Ed Creegan, Retired Members' Council chair since 2002, died January 12th of respiratory failure. Creegan was a former president of Local 1106 in New York and later president of its retiree chapter. Urging more locals to build retiree chapters, he told delegates at the 2006 CWA Convention, "An organized, active Retiree Council can be a tremendous weapon when dealing with unreasonable and anti-union employers."

The Council was restructured as of January 1, 2007. Retirees now become lifetime members by paying a one-time \$25 fee directly to the national council. Previously, retirees joined local chapters, which annually paid a per capita fee to the council. If retirees moved or their chapter dissolved, the council lost the ability to communicate with them. Now there is a direct relationship between the council and each retiree. Prior to June 1, retirees in chapters established before January 1, 2007, were grandfathered in as lifetime members, meaning they didn't have to pay the \$25 fee.

The Council is well on its way to the CWA Ready for the Future goal of having 50,000 members by 2009. Since the 2006 convention, we have grown by more than 10,000 members, for a total of 31,000. The direct mail campaign to 127,000 CWA retirees yielded 9,000 new members-- better than a seven percent return, a gigantic success statistically for direct mail. The Council has also added 26 new retiree chapters, bringing the total to 157. The new chapters include a statewide chapter in Utah and a regional chapter in Eastern Iowa.

We are part of the CWA Stewards Army. This vital way of reaching out and mobilizing members that began with CWA is spreading throughout the labor movement. Retiree stewards will support CWA activities in organizing, bargaining and political arenas, as well as issues that affect retirees.

The RMC is online. Our new website, www.cwaretirees.com, is an important resource for retired and soon-to-be retired members. It features timely topics, such as health care issues affecting retirees, links to affinity groups, a list of chapters and council officers and a link to join the council.

Locals can benefit immensely from active retiree chapters and are encouraged to support the work of the council in several ways:

1. Giving the gift of council lifetime membership to their retiring members. Payments can be automatically deducted from the local's dues check. Contact the CWA Secretary-Treasurer's office at hgibson@cwa-union.org for more information.
2. Organizing a retiree chapter or banding with other locals to form regional or statewide chapters.
3. Putting a link to the RMC website on their own website.

Goals for the Coming Year:

1. Continue to organize local, regional and state chapters to strengthen the council and the union at large.
2. Stay focused on retirement security, especially health care. We will continue to work with all levels of CWA to support bargaining and legislative and political action on issues critical to our members.

Unlike pension benefits, health coverage for retirees is not guaranteed or protected by law. Instead, strong collective bargaining agreements backed by mobilized union members and retirees are what protect health coverage for retired workers. The council will stand with CWA in the fight to maintain quality and affordable health benefits for those we represent in every round of negotiations with every employer.

The Council will also continue to fight alongside CWA in the political arena for comprehensive health care benefits for everyone-- workers and retirees. We recognize that our nation's health care crisis cannot be solved at the bargaining table and certainly can't be fixed by shifting costs to retirees. Any cost-shifting amounts to a de facto pension cut, and places an even greater burden on people with fixed income. The only answer is fundamental change in national health policy.

Work with the Alliance for Retired Americans at the state and local level for social justice seniors.

Work with other retiree and community-based organizations for the betterment of our members and all older Americans.

DELEGATE STARR: Read that report. Keep it and we appreciate that.

Now we are going to do what Larry gave us permission to do. Instead of doing a minute of silence for Ed Creegan, I would like us to do this report, and then we will hear from Jeannie Spoor to sing just one verse of a song. I would like for you all, and Ed would appreciate more than a minute of silence, so if you could stand up and say, "Ivan Seidenberg, shame on you." Assuming anybody here doesn't know who that was, I guess he is still the CEO of Verizon, anti-worker and anti-everything we stand for. So repeat with me. "Ivan Seidenberg, shame on you. Ivan Seidenberg, shame on you."

. . . The delegates arose and chanted "Ivan Seidenberg, shame on you" . . .

DELEGATE STARR: Thank you all. (Applause)

. . . A very moving rendition of "Amazing Grace" was sung by Jeanette Spoor, Local 30213 . . .

SISTER SPOOR: For Ed!

. . . The delegates arose and applauded and cheered at length . . .

SECRETARY-TREASURER EASTERLING: As you know, the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation has been CWA's charity of choice for many years. Its founder and our very good friend, Elizabeth Glaser, attended our conventions, as both her husband and her son have done over the years.

It is the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatrics AIDS Foundation that has led the field to make sure that new drugs for adults are redesigned so they can be available to children. Our efforts have allowed the Foundation to extend their work beyond our shores and to address the issues in countries that are years behind us in the treatment and the prevention of HIV-AIDS.

Today, as a member of the Foundation's Board, I am very proud to introduce to you the President and CEO of the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation, Pamela Barnes. (Applause)

PAMELA BARNES (President and CEO, Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation): Thank you, Barbara. What a great honor and a privilege it is for me to be here on behalf of all of my colleagues, and all of the wonderful moms and babies around the world that you have enabled us to reach out to and help.

Barbara is truly a woman of vision, and we are so grateful for her service on our Board of Directors. Let us also take a moment to thank Larry Cohen and colleagues here for allowing me to attend this conference again this year.

I just have to say one more time that I am so deeply moved. I happen to be the child of two former members of the CWA, and I say that with great honor, because I think they are looking down and giving me encouragement here. (Applause)

As Barbara said, Elizabeth appeared here before your Convention now 17 years ago, and I am here today to tell you that the spirit of Elizabeth continues, and you have helped support the spirit of Elizabeth now around the world.

I am going to ask you to direct your attention to the screen, and I am going to share with you the story of Annabella, and then I'll tell you about my recent visit with Annabella in Uganda.

. . . The delegates were shown a very moving video about Annabella, an HIV-infected child and her family in Africa who have received much-needed treatment sponsored by the Pediatric AIDS Foundation . . .

SISTER BARNES: I saw Annabella and her mother and her sister about four weeks ago in Uganda, and I can only tell you that I'm here to say thank you from Annabella and from her mother. She is healthy, she is vibrant, and she is quite a lovely young woman, now going to school regularly and looking forward to her future.

And, I have to tell you, the words that she kept saying to me were that she had such a sense of hope. So I am here to say thank you. Over the last 17 years the members of CWA have donated over \$6 million to the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation. (Applause)

There is still a great deal of work to do. But we at the Foundation know, because Elizabeth really led the way, that we can do the job that needs to be done. The transmission of Pediatric HIV in the United States now allows only 200 or fewer children to be born with HIV in the United States. But one child every minute of every day is born HIV positive in the developing world.

So you are helping us to continue to bring hope to moms and to babies around the world. And for all of us at the Foundation, and for all of those moms and babies, let me again say thank you for your support. We are deeply honored, and we will honor the tradition of CWA and continue to help to reach the moms and babies around the world. Thank you so much. (Prolonged applause)

SECRETARY-TREASURER EASTERLING: Thank you very much, Pam, for your leadership role in the Pediatric AIDS Foundation, and for everything that you are doing every day to let us know that our money is the best investment we can make to save the lives of children and mothers throughout the world.

When I realize it's been 17 years, it's almost overwhelming. Time goes so quickly. But to think that we have been a part in saving the number of lives that we have, and when I think back to when Elizabeth came to address us, you know, just begging for something to help children because there were no drugs at that time, the drugs were for adults what they had, and her goal was to make them available to children.

And when I see what you have done and I see what we have been able to do around the world, I am very, very proud of CWA. This year, we have 408 Locals that participated in our Charity of Choice program, contributing a grand total of \$456,700. (Applause) While that is great, we have 1,200 locals. So think of how much more we could do if we all participated, and I am urging you to do that.

I want to thank each and every one of you that have made this possible, and I urge you to keep up the great work. CWA, as you know, is the Foundation's largest single donor, and we are proud of that. But we can be even more proud if we can reach the 100 percent mark.

Now to the awards. The Ariel Glaser Award-- and Elizabeth when she was alive allowed us to use that name to create an award in her daughter's name. The Ariel Glaser Award is presented each year to the Local that contributed the most money in 2006. This year the award goes once again to CWA Local 9400 for a contribution of \$50,046. (Applause) Their President, Michael Hartigan, will accept the award. (Presentation - Applause)

Our next award is the Hope Award, which is presented to the Local that achieved the highest percentage of their quota. In 2006, that figure was 1221 percent, and it was given by CWA Local 7500. Their President, Rozanne Dubois, will accept the award. (Presentation - Applause)

Rozanne reminded her Vice President, Annie Hill, that she promised her last year that she would bring that award home this year, and so she has.

If I could ask you to come back for just a minute, Pam, one of our vendors has stepped up to the plate once again. They have done this in the past, and they want you to have a check for \$5,000. That's the Principal Life Insurance Company.

MS. BARNES: Thank you so much, Barbara. Thank you. (Presentation - Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: We will do "Amazing Grace" again. It might be an improvement over "Taps."

. . . "Taps" was sounded as a prelude to the Memorial Service . . .

PRESIDENT COHEN: Assembled here in Toronto, Ontario, for the 69th Annual Convention of the Communications Workers of America, it is fitting that we pause and remember those who are no longer with us. We acknowledge the endless debt we owe the men and women who unselfishly devoted their lives to the building of our union, as we set aside all else to honor our colleagues who during the past year have been called to a higher purpose.

Let us now join in remembering those members of the CWA family who have passed from us, including two active and six retired staff. We invite you to read the stories of their career in the "In Memoriam" booklet.

SECRETARY-TREASURER EASTERLING: JOHN AGEE: John Agee was a consummate union leader and negotiator throughout AT&T's transition from Ma Bell to its various new corporate incarnations after the breakup in the early '80s. From Local officer in Texas in the 1950s, Agee rose to become an assistant to Vice President Ron Allen of AT&T Technologies in 1984. John went on to serve as Administrative Assistant to Vice President Jim Irvine after the Communications and Technologies offices were combined. John retired in 1991 and he died on July 7th at age 75.

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT RECHENBACH: DENNIS ALLEN. A consummate union builder, Dennis Allen brought hundreds of members into the union that would eventually become IUE-CWA, including 1,500 at American Bumper and Manufacturing. Denny died on February 23rd while still serving as a staff representative in IUE-CWA's District 8. He was 58 years old.

SECRETARY-TREASURER EASTERLING: JAMES DENNIS, JR. Loyalty, friendship and hard work characterize Jim Dennis' 21-year career as a District 1 CWA Representative, serving both telecom locals in New York City and public sector locals in New Jersey. Jim retired in January 2003. He died on April 23rd at age 60.

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT RECHENBACH: EDWARD DISCH. Ed Disch was well-respected for the annual stewards' schools he conducted for Wisconsin locals. He served as a CWA Representative for more than four decades and briefly as Administrative Assistant to the Vice President of District 5 prior to its merger into District 4. He worked out of the union's Illinois office from 1968 until his retirement in March 1994. Ed died on June 12th. He was 78.

SECRETARY-TREASURER EASTERLING: A. KENNETH FERGUSON. Credited with astute oversight of the union's education, scholarship and safety programs, Ken Ferguson served as assistant to several CWA Executive Vice Presidents during his 28 years on staff, including James Massey, Louis Knecht, George Miller and M.E. Nichols. Ken retired in 1988. He died last December at age 90.

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT RECHENBACH: THOMAS KEANE. From his beginnings as a brazer and welder at a General Electric air conditioning plant, Thomas Keane went on to negotiate contracts for IUE-CWA members from Nevada to Texas. He became a staff representative in the mid-1980s and carried out those duties until his death in July of last year. Tom was 59.

SECRETARY-TREASURER EASTERLING: CRYSTAL ROBERTS. Crystal Roberts was an outstanding leader throughout nearly three decades, as a Local 4302 officer and seven years as a CWA Representative. She played a key role in CWA's get-out-the-vote in Ohio, and in negotiating fair contracts for workers at Verizon, Century Tel and other employers. Crystal retired in January of this year. She died last month at age 54.

VICE PRESIDENT BILL BOARMAN: Shortly after we arrived here for the Convention, we learned of the passing of William F. Metz, a long-time president of Mailers Local M-3 in St. Louis and a highly-effective ITU-CWA staff member. It was too late to include him in the printed "In Memoriam" booklet, but we prepared a special tribute to him, which you have in your kits.

Bill joined the staff as the first Mailer coordinator in 1986 and, for the next 13 years, worked with both Mailer and Printing Sector locals throughout the Midwest. A rock-hard negotiator, Bill was responsible for a breakthrough agreement in the late '60s that reduced healthcare premiums for Post-Dispatch Mailers from \$27

a month to only a few dollars. Bill retired in 1999. He was 73 when he died on July 11th.

PRESIDENT COHEN: Let us now pause to remember those CWA Local Officers who have passed from our midst since our last Convention: Mike McCreary, Local 3802, Vice President; Vickie Hughes, Local 9404, Secretary-Treasurer; Cathy Clark, Local 9575, Executive Board Member; Lee Cole, Local 14813, President; Donna Phillips, Local 84725, Secretary-Treasurer; Richard Davis, Local 84768, Executive Board Member; Ed Creegan, CWA Retired Members' Council, Chair.

For all those who have passed from us during the past year, we now offer our solemn prayers of love. We shall never forget their loyalty, their courage, and their ideals. Each created a legacy that will forever bring us closer together-- a legacy of devotion to CWA and to the men and women whom we represent. They have provided us with examples that light the path toward human dignity. We pledge to follow their examples and to carry the high standards that they exemplified. May they rest in peace.

. . . "Taps" was sounded . . .

EXECUTIVE VICE PREIDENTJEFF RECHENBACH: We usually take a break after that, but now we are going to do the COPE Awards. Let me, before I do that, clarify something that was said by one of my colleagues earlier that has to do with this red band. Pete sold me this on the premise that stem cells would cure baldness. (Laughter) So I think I have been misled here. (Laughter) Give it some time. (Laughter)

This is a great time politically for CWA. Again this year, our CWA-COPE awards program recognizes the outstanding political efforts of our locals and districts in the year 2006. I want to thank every member, every officer, and every retiree at all levels for the commitment and work you have put into making our political program the success that it is.

CWA members have won the first leg of our race to achieve collective bargaining rights, retirement security, and healthcare reform. But as all of us know, this race will be a marathon. You have continued the fight by actively engaging in support for the passage of the Employee Free Choice Act in the House of Representatives. This was, and remains, a pitched battle with growing numbers of organizations now partnering with us in this important struggle for workplace justice and equality.

Through the leadership of House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Labor and Education Chair George Miller, and Labor Subcommittee Chairman Rob Andrews, worker-friendly legislators in the House raised the bar for members of the United States Senate. Although we were not able to reach a veto-proof majority in the Senate, your outstanding work led to a solid majority response that puts EFCA on the track toward passage in future Congresses.

In 2006, your collective efforts helped deliver unparalleled change in our country's political landscape. Thanks to your belief in our country's ability to rebound politically, for the fourth straight year our members contributed a record amount of voluntary dollars to CWA-COPE.

The political lines have been drawn for the 2008 elections. Like last year, the CWA Political Department has identified a preliminary list of battleground states that will make the difference in the 2008 elections. CWA legislative-political coordinators and the CWA political office have already begun supporting those incumbent legislators and new candidates who we feel will deliver on our issues.

And last year, CWA members contributed more than \$3 million to political campaigns across the country. CWA members are now actively engaged in your workplaces around the country, in communities, and at local union meetings, asking for your continued support of COPE.

On the screen is the list of CWA-COPE Honor Locals that met the COPE challenge in 2006. There are a couple of additions that need to be made on there, and if you see a correction that needs to be made, please get back to the political office. We should add 7090 President Dennis Aybock, and the President of 7019 should show Chris Rossie, to the list as they roll through.

The list of CWA-COPE Honor Locals was distributed this morning and will be incorporated in the official Convention proceedings.

**2006 CWA-COPE PROGRAM
HONOR LOCALS**

LOCAL	PRESIDENT	LOCAL	PRESIDENT
1009	Daphne L. Clark	2003	Aneikia Greiner
1020	Elizabeth A. Christy	2004	Ronald L. Gaskins
1023	Reynaldo Massa	2006	Bruce A. Parrish
1037	Hetty Rosenstein	2007	Annette Y. Goad
1060	Douglas L. Brown	2009	Shannon W. Fink
1079	Leroy T. Baylor, Jr.	2011	James J. Mazzie
1080	Joann Colucci-Turbett	2100	Wilbur S. Holland, Jr.
1082	Linda J. Smith	2101	Dennis Serrette, Admin.
1084	George Jackson	2106	Paula M. Vinciguerra
1086	Linda McCann	2107	Denise A. Burns
1100	Gail E. Murcott	2108	Leslie D. Evans
1101	Joseph F. Connolly	2109	Charles F. Fouts, Jr.
1102	Edward Luster	2202	Louis J. Scinaldi
1103	Robert McCracken	2206	Richard P. Wallace
1106	Anthony W. Caudullo	82162	Mitchell R. Adams
1107	Anthony Caprara	82167	Sherry D. Heck
1108	George C. Welker	82647	Johnnie Williams, Sr.
1109	John Dempsey	3102	Michael L. Dyer
1113	Joan H. Noonan	3104	James M. Donohue
1114	Thomas Marino	3106	William DeLoach
1115	Michael Dagostino	3113	Michael Singleton
1117	Gregory L. Chenez	3115	Samuel J. Bake
1118	Michael G. Bain	3120	William J. Tracy
1122	James M. Wagner	3121	N.L. Daniels
1123	Stephen N. Matro	3122	Donald E. Abicht
1124	Lyle J. Decillis	3201	Roger L. Todd
1128	Thomas M. Allen	3217	Ronald P. Ennis
1141	Marianne Perry	3220	John M. McInnis
1150	Laura R. Unger	3309	Thomas S. Wadley
1152	Mary Mazzeo	3310	Mary E. Garr
1168	John Klein	3313	Gary A. Shewmaker
1170	Linda McGrath	3317	Gary W. Coleman
1301	George R. Alcott III	3372	Michael A. Garkovich
1395	Thomas V. Lane	3504	Herman V. Junkin, Jr.
21032	Robert J. Romps	3514	R. G. Trammell
51026	John Ziller	3517	Garry R. Jordan
81201	Jeffrey C. Crosby	3518	Lawrence L. Sullivan
81232	Patrick J. Conley	3605	Richard F. Honeycutt
81244	William J. Balint	3683	Donald K. Tyner
81250	Richard Chenevert	3704	R.J. Slattery
81255	Harry Chandler	3706	Debra C. Brown
81303	Alfred Broomhead	3716	M. E. Parks
81361	Carl Kochersberger	3719	F. B. McKerley, Jr.
81380	Howard Connors	3802	J.B. Neblett
81381	John Vasko	3904	Andrew J. Gifford
81382	Howard J. Vanduyne	3910	L. R. Palmer
81455	Felix R. Tuccillo	3911	Edward F. Williams
2001	Linda L. Miller	33229	Bruce Engel

LOCAL	PRESIDENT	LOCAL	PRESIDENT
83736	Raymond S. Szwanke	6206	Brian T. Goonan
4008	James R. Charbonneau	6214	Glynn R. Stanley
4009	Gregory M. Streby	6215	J. D. Williams
4025	Kim M. Collier-Hartjes	6218	Timothy Freeman
4032	Carl V. Spencer	6222	Claude Cummings
4100	Gregory Wynn	6225	Stephen A. Williams
4101	D.G. Osim	6228	Ronald Gray
4103	Richard A. Short	6301	Sandra L. Grogan
4107	Janet Rich	6310	Anthony Ellebracht
4108	William M. Martin	6311	Tim K. Skinner
4123	Michael L. Handley	6312	James R. Billedo
4216	Marcus Scaggs	6314	Craig R. Thierry
4217	Bryon Capper	6316	Erin R. Hall
4302	Steven J. Robinette	6320	Kevin G. Kujawa
4309	Pam G. Wynn	6325	Gary P. Hough
4310	Grace L. Rogers	6327	Anetra M. Session
4321	F. Mathews	6350	Robert K. Huss
4322	Terry Riddlebarger	6377	Earline Jones
4326	Paul Storms	6401	Jason P. Burns
4370	Harry Williamson, Jr.	6407	Rory K. Schaffer
4371	Tami Drollinger	6409	Steven K. Shelley
4379	Aaron M. Draime	6450	Colleen M. Downing
4485	Anthony Sweeten	6500	John T. Madsen
4611	Michael J. Goebel	6502	Ricky P. Belk
4620	Gary M. Laabs	6503	Michael D. Koller
4622	Roger K. Neubauer	6505	Jacqueline R. Fields
4670	Ron Vechinski	6508	Emily D. Wiggs
4998	Pamela Rogers	6733	Sidney H. Searcy
24033	Peter M. Lebeau	86029	Sylvia G. Del Rio
84716	Bruce E. Wilson	86122	Daniel Uribe
84727	Patrick J. Bucci	86818	Ronald T. McDonald
84749	Lloyd R. Creeger	7000	Linda L. Hatfield
84773	Lonnie L. Lisle	7001	Jose R. Araiza
84774	Richard Snow	7019	Chris Rossie
84811	Kathleen A. Pawluk	7026	Dean R. Smith
84848	Jeffrey Ragland	7032	Dennis Nielsen
84859	Melvin E. Luigs	7037	Michael C. Salazar
84981	Arthur J. Brown, Jr.	7050	David Blackburn
84999	Patrick T. McCracken	7090	Dennis Aybock
6009	Jerry L. Butler	7101	Mary J. Welsh
6012	David F. Ratcliff	7102	Mark J. Rocha
6113	William A. Smith	7103	Kenneth J. Mertes
6128	Gregory L. Adcox	7108	Linda L. Schaffer
6132	R.J. Flores	7110	Francis J. Giunta II
6137	Charlie Z. Torres	7171	Dennis R. Dunbar
6139	Gwendolyn M. Spikes	7172	William Zeigler
6143	Ralph Cortez	7200	Gregory A. Perez
6151	Earnest L. Tilley	7201	Steven M. Lewsader
6178	Olivia Espinosa	7202	Thomas M. Eaton
6186	Judy Lugo	7203	Gerald J. Finn
6200	Angela R. Guillory	7205	Anthony P. Schmitz
6201	Denny K. Kramer	7206	Carolyn S. Rogge
6202	Alice C. Andrade	7212	Franklin S. Hardee
6203	Jackie D. Maxey	7214	Terrance L. Newman

LOCAL	PRESIDENT	LOCAL	PRESIDENT
7219	Chester F. Nettetstad	7790	Charles L. Mitchell
7250	Shari Wojtowicz	7800	Malachy J. Sreenan
7270	David L. Evans	7803	Jeanne M. Stewart
7272	Michelle J. Nelson	7804	Randall R. Grams
7290	Alton C. Mumm	7810	Bill D. Jenkins
7303	Patricia M. Berlin	7812	Kenneth C. Harding
7400	Craig A. Cammarata	7816	James V. Ackerman
7401	Alan R. Ogg	7817	Dennis L. Olson
7470	Michael J. Arnold	7818	Sean P. Morrow
7500	Rozanne Dubois	7906	Kenneth J. Saether, Sr.
7505	William L. Glover	37083	Marcus Courtney
7603	David B. Duvall	9333	Edna L. Johnson
7610	John J. Gabica	9413	Charles A. Benway
7621	Ronald D. Marsden	9415	Valerie A. Reyna
7704	Kent C. Anderson	9423	Louis H. Rocha
7705	Lee B. Linford	9432	Joel A. Nielson
7708	Velma J. Patton	9477	Michael Taylor
7716	Larry P. McCormick	13100	Diana Markowski
7717	Thomas W. Costello	88120	Michael Cerrone
7750	Marilyn J. Block	88628	Michael C. Schelb
7777	Suzan L. Miller	88640	Eric G. Dejohn

VICE PRESIDENT RECHENBACH: Let's give a round of applause to those Locals for a job well done. (Applause)

An essential part of our political program is the fine work being done by our CWA Retired Members' Chapters. They are ready, willing and able to assist your local in any state or local election campaign. They are a great resource. I should add that the Retired members' Council just this morning had each and every member of their Board sign up for our \$8 in '08 program. Thank you very much, Retirees-- blazing a trail for us again. (Applause)

This year's awards recognize outstanding achievement in political action during 2006. When this is all over I ask all the winners to gather on the right of the stage for a photo so we can memorialize this event. The first award is presented to the local that raised the most CWA-COPE dollars in 2006. The winner of the award this year, coincidentally, also was honored at the last Convention for outstanding fundraising activities. We are pleased to present this Special Local Award to Local 1101, which raised \$122,570 last year. Local 1101 President Joe Connelly, please come forward and accept this award. (Presentation - Applause)

And why don't we just get doubles of that picture, because the next award also goes to 1101. The Local that had the most members sign up in CWA-COPE is also 1101 with 3,510 members participating in COPE. (Presentation - Applause)

Now let's present the District Achievement Awards for COPE fundraising. The district that raised the most CWA-COPE dollars in 2006 is District 1 which raised \$746,969, Chris Shelton. (Applause) And just to make it easy on you, stay right there, because the next award is for the district with the most members giving to COPE, and that is also District 1 with 15,712 COPE givers. (Applause)

But lest Chris get too greedy, the district with the highest percentage of member participation in CWA-COPE is District 7 with 15.67 percent of its members contributing. Annie Hill. (Applause and cheers) I noticed he took longer to take that picture. (Laughter)

We are now pleased to announce the President's Distinguished Achievement Awards for Political Action. These awards recognize locals and districts that reach the \$1.00 weekly giving targets that have been set out.

First, we will present two local awards. The local that had the highest percentage of members contributing to CWA-COPE at \$1.00 or more per week is Local 1395 with 96 percent of their members contributing to COPE. Local 1395 President Thomas Lane, please come forward. (Presentation - Applause)

The local with the most members contributing to CWA-COPE at one dollar plus per week-- I hope Joe Connelly didn't go too far away-- is Local 1101 with 1,719 Local 1101 members contributing more than \$1.00 a week. (Presentation - Applause) Let's get him a chair up here next year. (Laughter)

Now, we will present the two district awards. The district with the highest percentage of members contributing to CWA-COPE at one dollar or higher per week is District 7 with 10.88 percent of their membership contributing at that level. Vice President Annie Hill, please come forward. (Presentation - Applause)

And our last District Award, the district with the most members contributing to CWA-COPE at \$1.00-plus, with 9,233 members contributing at that level, District 1, Vice President Chris Shelton. (Presentation - Applause)

We put him at the end of the row just to give him a workout. (Laughter)

Congratulations, again, to all of the staff, locals, and officers of Districts 1 and 7 for a great job. (Applause and cheers)

And finally, I would like to present the Maxine Lee Award. This award was established in March of 1985 in honor of Maxine Lee's many years of outstanding service to CWA-COPE and CWA's political action programs. Maxine Lee was a pioneer in CWA-COPE fundraising. This year, we would like to present the Maxine Lee Award to a local that has shown it can overcome fundraising obstacles and help build our COPE program. This local is 100 percent public workers and they have no check-off negotiated in their contract, yet has still managed to sign up more than 1,100 of their members through a direct debit program.

I'd like to give this special Maxine Lee Award to Local 6186. Would President Judy Lugo come up to accept this award along with our thanks and congratulations. (Presentation - Applause) Think about that. No check-off, 1,100 people on direct debit. Talk about overcoming obstacles. That is an amazing, amazing accomplishment.

As I conclude, I again want to remind you that from here until November 2008, we will have our best opportunity in years to win back America by doing the preparation that's going to be necessary to win these critical elections.

Our goal is clear: We must continue to build our COPE program to provide the funds necessary to wage an all-out campaign over those two years to take back the White House for working families. We hope that our \$8 in '08 program will help us toward that important task.

Thank you for all that you do on behalf of our political program. We now conclude the COPE Awards Program. Thank you. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: We now turn to the Annual Newsletter Awards, and to present those awards we have the President of AFA-CWA, Vice President Pat Friend, and Vice President of District 6, Andy Millburn. Pat and Andy. (Applause)

VICE PRESIDENT PAT FRIEND (AFA-CWA): Thanks, Larry. It is now time for the annual awards honoring the tremendous time, energy and talent that our locals put into communicating with their members. But what is new this year is that, in addition to giving our traditional awards for outstanding newsletters, we are recognizing the best work being done through online communications.

The ability to communicate with and mobilize our members by e-mail and through our websites is vital and it gets more important every day. The rare members who don't have computers today may well have them tomorrow. And you know that CWA is doing everything possible through our Speed Matters campaign to help all Americans get access to the highest speed and highest quality Internet connections.

Technology is already helping us reach our members and build our union, and there is no end to its potential. But this by no means makes our printed newsletters less important. Daily newspapers are still hugely profitable today even though Americans have more cable channels and online news outlets than ever. Technology still requires people to actively pursue it-- to go online and read their e-mail or call up a website. But when you put a newsletter in your members' hands, especially one with an interesting story or gripping photograph on the cover, there is a good chance they will sit down and read it.

We are going to honor some of those newsletters in a moment. But let us start with our newest awards. Just like our newsletter contest, a distinguished panel of three judges chose the web winner.

Our first award goes to the Best Website. The winner is: Local 21005, the website of AFA-CWA United Airlines Council 5. (Applause) The judges said the website's extensive content, attractive design, and frequent updates made this a standout among the entries. Accepting the award for Council 5 is Dianne Tamuk, Council President. (Presentation - Applause)

Larry says, "No wonder you get to announce them all," but the fact that the first one is AFA-CWA local is purely coincidental.

Our next award is for the Best Electronic newsletter, or e-newsletter, and the winner is The Indianapolis News Guild, TNG-CWA Local 34070. The judges like the "e-Inkling" for its straightforward and useful content that is e-mailed on a regular basis. Critical information is presented in the body of the e-mail message with no need to open attachments or click through to a website. Accepting the award is TNG-CWA President Linda Foley. (Presentation - Applause)

Our next award is for the Best Online Advocacy Campaign. The winner is Local 1103. I think I have heard that number here some place today. (Laughter) The judges said Local 1103's campaign in support of the Speed Matters SIF is a model of online advocacy. The local used a special section of its website to keep activists informed about what they could do to promote the New York Telecommunications Reform Act. The judges were impressed with the combination of information, specific action requests, and accountability.

Accepting the award is Local 1103 President Bob McCracken and fellow local officers who helped put together this unique outreach program. Congratulations. (Presentation - Applause)

There is one more website award, and this one was decided by a different, but equally distinguished, panel of judges-- you. This is our Members' Choice Award, and members voted online. Instead of receiving a plaque, our two winners will get to display a "CWA Members' Choice Award 2007" insignia on their websites for the next year. The website that received the most overall votes from you, the CWA members, is Local 1103. (Presentation - Applause)

In order to recognize smaller locals that don't get as much traffic, we have a second Members' Choice Award for the local that received the most votes relative to its size. The winner is Local 4250. (Presentation - Applause)

Congratulations to our first-ever web winners, and I will now turn it over to Vice President Andy Millburn to present the printed newsletter awards.

VICE PRESIDENT ANDY MILBURN (District 6): Thank you, Pat. And now we will present the top awards, for General Excellence, in our printed newsletter contest.

In Category One, for locals with fewer than 500 members, the winner is *Guild News*, TNG-CWA Local 39098, Stewart Applin and Russ Cain, Editors. Judges called this a "cleanly organized and well written"

publication that makes striking use of its two-color format. Accepting the award is Local 39098, Sylvia Ulloa. (Presentation - Applause)

In Category Two, for locals with 50 to 1,000 members, the winner is *Info.Net*, CWA Local 4034, Shelly Lubbinge, Editor. Judges praised this publication's "beautiful color, strong design, and good photos." Accepting the award is Local 4034 President Jay Egan. (Presentation - Applause)

In Category Three, for locals with up to 3,000 members, the winner is *The West Wing*, AFA-CWA Local 27066, Lisa LeCarre, Editor. Judges called this a "consistently well written and visually appealing" news magazine. Accepting the award is America West Master Executive Council President Gary Richardson. (Presentation - Applause)

In Category Four, for our largest locals, the winner is *Viewpoint*, CWA Local 1040, Robert O. Yaeger, Editor; Steven Manulkin, Assistant Editor. Judges described this as a "colorful, informative and well laid-out newsletter with good use of local photos." Accepting the award is Local 1040 President Carolyn Wade. (Presentation - Applause)

Finally, our Oscar Jager Journalism Award. It is presented each year to a publication that reflects the dedication and hard work of the late Oscar Jager, a past editor of the *CWA News* and a lifetime labor publicist.

The winner is *The Communique*, CWA Local 1180, Esther Kaplan, Editor. *The Communique* was honored in particular for the cover article, "The New War on Unions," that took the first place award in the news category. This exceptional piece of research and reporting is a model for helping our members understand the enormous challenges workers and their unions face today. Accepting the award are Local 1180 President Art Cheliotas and Vice Presidents Linda Jenkins and Bill Henning. (Presentation - Applause)

Congratulations to our winners, and thank you to everyone who is communicating with our members through the Internet and newsletters. Your work is vital and it is appreciated.

SECRETARY-TREASURER EASTERLING: I get the heavy-duty work, the announcements. Gloria Young of Local 1087 won an iPod from the Union-Built PC vendor, and you can pick it up at that booth.

Delegates have been asking how to purchase the ALS bands. The District 2 members have sold out of the ones that they brought to the convention, but District 2 will send interested districts and sectors a supply. The district vice presidents will be receiving some of those and they will be available.

We have greetings for the Convention, and I will read those today. The first one is from Bill Richardson.

. . . Secretary-Treasurer Easterling read portions of Convention greetings, which are included in their entirety as follows: . . .

Letter of Greeting: 69th Annual Convention, Communications Workers of America

I wish I could be there with my brothers and sisters of the Communications Workers of America at your 69th Annual Convention. The Democratic Party owes a great deal to the men and women of CWA and the Labor Movement, and so do I. Thank you for your support over the years.

Today, I want to share with you my concern that too many Americans are struggling economically. Working families' wages are stretched thin and face impossible choices: buying health coverage today or saving for retirement and putting gas in the car or paying for groceries. Meanwhile, corporate earning was at record levels last year.

It doesn't make sense. The American worker is more productive than ever. But his wages are flat, his pension is threatened, and his health care is cut.

It doesn't have to be this way.

In New Mexico, our approach is simple: I demand that business, labor and government work together. Republican and Democrat, rural or urban, we work to find solutions.

We have created more than 84,000 new jobs, most of them high wage. We have the lowest unemployment rate in almost 30 years, the fifth best economic growth rate in the country and up to seventh best personal income growth.

We are dramatically expanding access to health insurance to working families. And today, every child five years or younger has access to health care coverage.

Rather than tax cuts for the wealthy, we have focused tax relief that puts people to work, empowers families and has sparked economic growth. We did all this and balanced the budget five times. And we did this while standing with labor unions.

One of my first acts as Governor was to reinstate collective bargaining and we're raising the minimum wage to \$7.50 per hour over the next two years.

The men and women of the Labor Movement are a primary reason why I have been able to accomplish so much in New Mexico.

And one of my first acts as Governor and the second bill I signed was to restore collective bargaining rights to our hardworking state workers. Now all public employees have the right to negotiate fair contract, including fair share. If you benefit from a union's representation, you should share a little bit of the cost.

I had the opportunity to work with Lawrence Sandoval, the chief negotiator for CWA. We agreed on a new pay package giving 13 percent increase over three years and a 22.6 percent increase for CWA's lowest paid workers. And I supported CWA's card check in New Mexico. Because I believe workers deserve a fair chance to have a free choice, to form unions, without harassment or interference.

And I didn't stop there. My administration dramatically increased health benefits for our state employees so now virtually every employee has quality affordable health insurance.

In New Mexico, we have union representatives on every state board affecting your membership. In my cabinet, all the way up to deputy chief of staff and former head of the New Mexico Building Trades, Brian Condit.

I also started Wire New Mexico, a massive project to create a high speed, high capacity data, voice and video communications system statewide. Of course, this network will be installed and maintained by union workers.

Over the years, unions and I have seen eye-to-eye a lot. And I want to say it was an honor to work with former CWA President Morty Bahr. He is a leader, a colleague and a great friend.

As a Governor I've been proud to receive the endorsement of every statewide labor union and in my fifteen years in Congress I received an eighty-eight percent rating from the AFL-CIO.

Now at a time when some unions are shrinking, your union is growing. Give yourselves a hand. Now whatever you do, don't stop.

I believe Democrats must be your true ally in this effort. While Republicans are conspiring to eliminate unions with "right to work" legislation, Democrats must support laws that allow unions to organize and recruit. That's why I support the Employee Free Choice Act.

We must close America's digital divide, improve our global communications competitiveness and create more high-tech, high-wage union jobs.

But the only way we can accomplish these things is by working together, Democrats and Labor. Together we must fight to make work pay. Together we must demand job security. Together we must elect new leadership, not just politicians who "talk the talk," but leaders who "walk the walk."

Can we do it? We must do it for all the working men and women of this country.

Thank you,

s/Bill Richardson, Governor of New Mexico (Applause)

SECRETARY-TREASURER EASTERLING: And from Joe Biden:

"Dear Delegates,

"It gives me great pleasure to send greetings to all of you attending the 69th Annual Convention of the Communications Workers of America (CWA). In addition to President Larry Cohen, Secretary-Treasurer Barbara J. Easterling, Executive Vice President Jeff Rechenbach, and all of the members of the CWA executive board, I would like to extend/send a special greeting to our CWA Canadian brothers and sisters in labor. In a global economy, we have to work together.

"As a long time friend of CWA, I am pleased to have had the opportunity this past March to address your Legislative Political Conference delegates in Washington, D.C. Over the years, you and I have worked together on a number of issues: protecting Social Security, raising the minimum wage and protecting the prevailing wage. There is more to be done.

"We must pass the Employee Free Choice Act. I think we forget this sometimes, we have a strong middle class in this country because of labor. There is a direct correlation between the strength of the union movement and growth in wages for the lowest 40 percent. In 1973, 26 percent of workers in America belonged to unions and that was the last time middle class incomes were able to keep pace with the cost of living. Since then, as union membership has declined, so have paychecks. Today just 12 percent of American workers belong to a union and the spending power of a paycheck is actually lower than it was in 1973.

"This administration has lined up 10 deep to strip away about 100 years of labor progress. We can slow them down by passing the Employee Free Choice Act, but we won't be able to stop them until we have a Democrat in the White House. As President of the United States, you can be assured once the Employee Free Choice Act comes across my desk, I will sign it into law.

"In addition, universal health care is another pressing issue which your members and my campaign share a common concern. Everyone, adults and children, should have access to health care in this country. We are nine million children and thirty-seven million adults short of that goal. Seventy percent of those people are in families with one or more full time worker." (Applause)

SECRETARY-TREASURER EASTERLING: That's it, except that on the EFCA cards, we have boxes at all three exits, and you can simply fill out your card and you can drop that in on your way out today. Thank you.

PRESIDENT COHEN: I have a motion to adjourn. It does take precedence, but there are a number of people at the "Privilege" mike. With the consent of the Convention, I would like to hold the motion in order to recognize some of those delegates who have something to share with this Convention. These are not motions; they are privileges. If that's okay, I will recognize them without objection. (Applause)

All right. Delegate Blackwell.

DELEGATE ANITA BLACKWELL (Local 4340): I'm from the great state of Ohio. When it came to putting into action our belief in justice and equality, the CWA family is astonishing. I would like to express my sincere heart-felt thank you for the milestone work in the name of diversity that we have accomplished at the

69th Convention. I am proud to be union. I am proud to be CWA. May God continue to bless us individually and collectively for the work that we do in the name of CWA. Thank you. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: Delegate Joyce.

DELEGATE JAMES C. JOYCE (Local 51016): On behalf of the 2,500 members at ABC, we want to thank everyone for support for already filling out your pledge sheets to join the activist network. We have received well over 150 so far. If you haven't turned it in to us, please bring it up to the NABET table which is right in front of the podium, or upon exiting, we have a couple of members in the back that will be collecting these as well.

Thank you for your support. Everybody back at ABC will know that this convention stood behind them as we struggle to get a new contract at ABC. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thanks, Jim.

Delegate Huber.

DELEGATE JACK HUBER (Local 4320): Yesterday we heard Vice President Rechenbach share his thoughts on the Employee Free Choice Act, and this afternoon we heard Vice President Catucci eloquently do the same.

My reason for coming to the mike is that last evening, the City Council of Columbus, Ohio, unanimously adopted a resolution supporting the Employee Free Choice Act, and I encourage all locals who are members of a CLC to go back home and work through your CLC. Go to your city councils, go to your county governments, and let's send those up to our headquarters in Washington so that, as we move forward on trying to get this bill passed, we will have the ammunition that we need. Thank you.

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thanks, Jack. And if I can just add, actually dozens of cities have passed those, and CWAers have been in the forefront. It's a significant part of our strategy over the next 18 months, to get city councils across America, state legislatures across America-- and I think we are now up to 20 governors that have endorsed the Employee Free Choice Act at their meeting this coming weekend in Michigan, the Democratic governors are, and we hope to get the rest of those who still haven't done it. We will let you know which ones-- elected officials across the country, thousands of them, to sign on so that when this battle resumes it is clear that across America, not just millions of union members and their unions but elected officials from coast to coast, are supporting workers' rights.

Thanks, Jack, for reminding us of that. I took my own privilege, I guess.

Delegate Sarnoff.

DELEGATE STEPHEN C. SARNOFF (Local 3179): Sisters and brothers, I want to thank President Cohen and the Executive Board and our union for continuing to lead the fight for health care for all. This issue is always the 800-pound gorilla at every bargaining table we sit at.

In my City of Clearwater, where we have to bargain health care every year, we are once again facing management's pressure to shift more of the cost to us. Their insurance company gives us all kinds of reports to show us where our money is spent. They love to tell us how only five percent of our members are costing 25 to 30 percent of the total expense of the plan. They propose this time that those who use the insurance the most have to pay more for it. If you cannot afford to pay your share, then you won't use it. That's their idea.

In the eyes of management, insurance is to be seen but not used. They think they can divide us and conquer us because of the cost. We have only one message to tell them: An injury to one is an injury to all. (Applause)

If we cannot take care of the sickest among us, then what is the purpose of trade unionism? Sisters and brothers, we will resist this attack on us, as we have done in the past, but thanks to the actions of this Convention and our Executive Board, we will be on the offensive to make this issue the kitchen table issue for the 2008 election after ending the war.

The impetus for this attack on your benefits is recent Florida legislation that was supposed to help us reduce property taxes, but it's actually to advance us in the race to the bottom. The national TABOR [Taxpayer Bill Of Rights] movement has now gone to Florida. They wanted to go where the weather was a little warmer. And so what they have done is through the Republican legislature, they have proposed the largest tax cut in the history of the State of Florida.

Who can be against a tax cut, right? Unfortunately, this tax cut will end the careers of over 100,000 public service employees, and some of those are our own brothers and sisters. At the end of the day, most people might save a couple of hundred dollars of their yearly property tax.

This is the same action that has gone on in Texas, Oklahoma, Colorado, California. It's gone across the country, and if it hasn't gotten to you yet, it will. This isn't about saving you some tax dollars. This is about killing government. These people, these right-wing extremists-- because that's what they are, not just conservatives; they are extremists led by an architect named Grover Norquist-- have only one mission in life, and that is to put government out of business.

They don't understand or they don't want to understand that government is us-- all of us. Whether we like government or not, we depend on the services that government provides to us.

In the State of Colorado, where seven years ago they were proud to say, "We are going to strangle government, we are going to reduce government services", after seven years of bad roads and bad health care, bad infrastructure, they are now finally reversing themselves and getting rid of TABOR.

The brothers and sisters in Florida will be calling on you soon for your support to help fight this monster. Thank you.

PRESIDENT COHEN: Thank you, Steve.

Delegate Plezia.

DELEGATE MICHAEL PLEZIA (Local 4340): The person I am about to say something about is going to be really mad at me after I say it, but I didn't promise you. I will keep it brief, and for you, Eddie, I will say I'll keep it short.

I would be remiss if I didn't recognize or ask the Convention to at least notice and recognize Ed Phillips, President of Local 4340, as this will be his last Convention as a delegate.

. . . The delegates arose and applauded at length . . .

DELEGATE PLEZIA: I better not go over that way, huh, Ed? I just wanted to say that Ed has been dedicated for a long, long time, and has taught Anita and me a lot of things, even though people say Anita and I cannot be taught. Ed has made our local a far better place to work and live in. Ed has accomplished quite a bit and has also been an attribute to the national and to these conventions by thinking outside of the box. Maybe his ideas have not always been popular-- one member, one vote-- but he has always done the right thing. I want to thank him for that.

And one thing I do want to say: I have had the privilege of working with Ed. We both got elected at the same time, and on occasion we might disagree. But one thing that we have always come back to and it has always worked was, "What are we here for?" For the membership. And that's what we have stood for with Ed's leadership. Ed, Anita and I promise to try and do hopefully as great a job as you did to keep the local in good standing and also to move it forward and to also help this union nationally. I thank you. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: On Microphone No. 1, Delegate Benway.

DELEGATE CHARLES A. BENWAY (Local 9413): Mr. President, with me is Rick Blair, the President of IUE-CWA Local 89118 from Fallon, Nevada. We would like to invite you and your staff and all of the delegates to Las Vegas, Nevada, for the 2008 CWA Convention.

PRESIDENT COHEN: We will be there. (Applause)

DELEGATE BENWAY: With that, I would like to make a motion that we adjourn the 69th CWA Convention. (Applause)

PRESIDENT COHEN: Before I take that vote, I would like to take a couple of minutes. I know you are disappointed because you are ready to go, but it won't be long. Just like yesterday, I have no notes.

First, just a couple of quick things: There were delegates who wanted to support the fight against ALS. We ran out of these wristbands. We will get more. In the meantime, you can make contributions and talk to someone in District 2 who is working on this. You will find them easily, and we will be in touch with you.

Second, Jeff would be disappointed if I didn't tell everybody that tomorrow is his birthday, Jeff Rechenbach, our wonderful Executive Vice President. (Applause) I'm going to get it for that one. I wonder what the payback will be.

I want to thank our Canadian leadership, our Canadian membership, the Buffalo locals as well, for hosting this Convention, for a terrific job. We can feel the spirit of Canada here. We can feel what it is like to be in a city and be in a country where working people count.

. . . The delegates arose and applauded at length . . .

PRESIDENT COHEN: We say, "CWA." Now how do you know that, "CW-eh?"

I want to thank all the staff that worked on this Convention, and all the staff that work with us every single day fighting the fight-- in Canada, in the U.S., around the world, as we are on the march. Thank you. (Applause)

This was, as we had hoped, an historic convention. We changed the structure of the Executive Board. We changed the way we work together. We are breaking down walls to build greater unity. We did it with respect for each other. We did it without yelling or anger. We did it in the spirit of unionism. We did it in the spirit of CWA, and we should all remember not only what we did here, which people will long remember, but also how we did it here.

My greatest hope was that we would march out of here a stronger union, more united, more determined, more committed than ever before, and I'm convinced that with your great work here this week we will march out of here a stronger union, more united, more determined, more committed than ever before, and I thank you for that. (Applause)

We are building together in the U.S., and building onto it in Canada, a movement for political change. We realize that the three sides of the Triangle work together, and that particularly on the political side we are on the march. But many of the same issues that we face on the bargaining side are also on the political side-- health care, jobs, a trade policy, and most importantly, to bring back bargaining and organizing rights.

We made a commitment here together, those of us in the U.S., that every time we see a candidate, it's not "American Idol." We don't get wild-eyed, regardless of where they are from or anything else about them; we lock arms with fellow trade union members and say to the candidate, "What will you do to lead the fight to bring back worker and organized bargaining rights in the United States? What will you do?"

And when you tell us what you will do, we will tell you that we will be there with you and fight harder than we have ever fought before to change the direction of the United States of America. (Applause)

And we heard from our Brother Pete Catucci about how his own fight is linked with that fight, and how he wants us to carry this on with him. As he said to District 2 yesterday, "I am not a quitter. My fight continues." And when we march out of here, when we have doubts, think of him. Ready to give up? Think of him. Ready to stand still? Think of him. That's what he has asked us to do, and I know that's what every one of us will do. (Applause)

So as we take the vote to adjourn and to march on, we will hear a tune from Bruce Springsteen. It's a spiritual tune. "Keep Your Eyes on the Prize. Hold On. Keep Your Eyes on the Prize. Hold On."

The motion is before us, all those in favor of the motion to adjourn please indicate by raising your hands. Down hands opposed by a like sign. The 69th Convention of Communications Workers of America is adjourned. "Keep Your Eyes on the Prize. Hold On." (Applause)

. . . Thereupon, the 69th Convention of the Communications Workers of America adjourned, sine die, at 3:11 p.m. . . .

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