



WHITE COLLAR

Office and Professional Employees International Union, AFL-CIO and CLC

No. 411

October-December 1983

© 1983

U.S. Labor Endorses Mondale



AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland (right) presents Walter Mondale to the AFL-CIO Convention delegates, immediately following their endorsement of Mondale for President.

Walter Mondale received the overwhelming and enthusiastic support of the AFL-CIO convention in his bid for the Democratic Party nomination for President. It was the first time the labor federation formally endorsed a candidate before the state primaries and marked a new stage in labor's involvement in the

Presidential election process. Following a standing vote, the convention hall was rocked by clapping, foot stomping and chants of "We want Fritz." The convention endorsement, which threw organized labor's powerful organizational and financial

resources behind the former Vice President, came following a recommendation by the AFL-CIO General Board. OPEIU's President John Kelly is a member of that board. At the General Board meeting, 90.7 percent of the
(Continued on page 6)



OTEU Local 378 in Vancouver, B.C. joins fellow trade unionists to launch "Operation Solidarity" to protest the B.C. government's regressive legislative proposals.

At the same time the U.S. labor movement was celebrating Solidarity Day III, the Canadian labour movement had launched Operation Solidarity in British Columbia to protest a 26-piece reactionary, anti-people package of legislation introduced this past summer by the Social Credit government of Bill

Bennett. According to an editorial in *Canadian Labour*, the publication of the Canadian Labour Congress, the shock and outrage expressed by citizens from all walks of life is taking the form of a political protest of a magnitude never before seen in the province.

Rallies have taken place since the summer in various parts of the province, frequently drawing as many as 50,000 people at a time. Addressing one of these rallies, Art Kabe, president of the B.C. Federation of Labour, made a direct
(Continued on page 5)

Canadians Launch Operation



WHITE COLLAR HIGHLIGHTS

AFL-CIO Convention	1, 6	Solidarity Day III	2, 4, 7
Operation Solidarity	1, 2, 5	Holiday Message	8

WHITE COLLAR

Official Organ of
**OFFICE AND PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES
INTERNATIONAL UNION**
affiliated with the AFL-CIO, CLC

JOHN KELLY
President

ROMEO CORBEIL
Secretary-Treasurer

POSTMASTERS, ATTENTION — Change of address Form 3579 should be addressed to: Office and Professional Employees International Union, 815 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006. (202) 393-4464.

GWEN WELLS
Managing Editor



PRINTED IN U.S.A.

Published quarterly by Office and Professional Employees International Union, 815 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006. Second class postage paid at Washington, D.C. (ISSN 0043-4876)
Reproduction by the Labor Press of any or all material herein contained is not only permitted, but wholly desirable in the interest of workers' education.

Subscription Price \$1 a Year



Editorial

How Others See the B.C. Budget

The following editorial first appeared in the *Toronto Star*, Canada's largest daily, on Saturday, July 9. It was submitted to this office by our OTEU Local 378 in British Columbia. It is interesting and important to note the threat the right-wing legislation in B.C. poses to the other Canadian provinces.

All of Canada is diminished when the level of compassion and caring falls below acceptable levels in any of its parts.

That is why the brutal measures in the B.C. budget, even though they fall entirely within areas of provincial jurisdiction, are cause for chagrin for all Canadians. Different provinces will naturally have different programs and policies, but there are certain thresholds of civility, decency and compassion for the most vulnerable, below which none of our governments should fall.

The newly re-elected Social Credit government of Premier Bill Bennett is busily smashing through those thresholds with a package of harshly retrograde measures that will cause real human hardship.

In moving to abolish rent controls and the provincial rentalsman's office, the human rights commission and the human rights branch of the labor ministry, and to cut the budget of the provincial ombudsman, Bennett is striking directly at the protection of low- and middle-income British Columbians. It is the relatively weak in society, those lacking in wealth and personal influence, who must most rely on the assistance of such institutions. Bennett proposes to leave them more vulnerable.

It is also the weakest who will suffer most from Bennett's increases in already deplorable hospital user fees, and from his curbs on welfare, legal aid and student loans.

A similar edge of brutality characterizes his

approach to reducing the size of the provincial civil service. It is highly desirable for any government to trim out any fat it finds in its bureaucracy, but Bennett intends instead to hack at it with a chainsaw.

Instead of identifying unnecessary positions and gradually eliminating them through attrition and transfers, he has set the arbitrary goal of reducing the size of the 44,000-member public service by 25 percent in barely more than a year. To achieve this, he has abruptly stripped all public servants of their job security and given his government the right to fire its employees without cause.

It's hard to see how Bennett can attain those reductions without cutting back sharply on government services—and, given the overall tilt his government is demonstrating, there's every reason to fear that the hardest hit services will be those that benefit the neediest. Moreover, at a time when some 185,000 British Columbians are already unemployed, to contemplate adding thousands of government workers to the ranks of the jobless is itself an act of social cruelty.

It's a nasty business, made all the worse by the fact that in his recent election campaign Bennett gave the voters little inkling of the extreme to which he has now gone. In any event, with only 50.1 percent of the popular vote, he can hardly claim overwhelming public support for a right-wing rampage that affronts Canadian traditions of social compassion and embarrasses us all.

Solidarity Day Letters of Appreciation

American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations

815 Sixteenth Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006
(202) 637-5000

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

LANE KIRKLAND PRESIDENT	THOMAS R. DONAHUE SECRETARY-TREASURER
John H. Lyons S. Frank Hartley Diane E. Watts Robert Jones Lloyd McFadden John W. Wrenn James E. Givens James E. Hartfield William H. Sanderson Marvin A. Sunde	Thomas W. Gleason George H. Kelly Bill C. Campbell Clyde W. H. Smith Robert T. Winters John W. Wrenn James E. Givens James E. Hartfield William H. Sanderson Marvin A. Sunde

September 7, 1983

Mr. John Kelly, President
Office and Professional Employees
International Union
265 West 14th Street, Suite 610
New York, New York 10011

Dear Trade Unionists:

Congratulations to all of you who did so much to make Solidarity Day III the kind of success we hoped for -- 1,331,300 total attendance in 131 events.

Thanks to you, Across America, We Were Heard.

And across America, many cities reported a revival not just of Labor Day events but the revival of spirit so essential to our movement.

In the weeks ahead, we will move from protest to politics. The message, however, will remain as it was on Solidarity Day III, that Americans must have a change in national economic policy, and a change in government attitude toward its people, in order to get us back on the road to full employment and a just society.

In your work on Solidarity Day III, you effectively laid the groundwork for success in those future efforts. The indispensable link is Solidarity in our ranks and you helped to strengthen that link magnificently on Labor Day 1983. Thank you.

In Solidarity,

John Kelly
President

American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations

815 Sixteenth Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006
(202) 637-5000

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

LANE KIRKLAND PRESIDENT	THOMAS R. DONAHUE SECRETARY-TREASURER
John H. Lyons S. Frank Hartley Diane E. Watts Robert Jones Lloyd McFadden John W. Wrenn James E. Givens James E. Hartfield William H. Sanderson Marvin A. Sunde	Thomas W. Gleason George H. Kelly Bill C. Campbell Clyde W. H. Smith Robert T. Winters John W. Wrenn James E. Givens James E. Hartfield William H. Sanderson Marvin A. Sunde

September 9, 1983

John Kelly, President
OPEIU - Suite 610
265 W. 14th Street
New York, NY 10011

Dear President Kelly:

I wanted to express my gratitude to you for arranging your busy schedule to speak on Solidarity Day 1983. This was one of the critical elements contributing to the success of Solidarity Day III. Thirty nine International Union Presidents addressed local events throughout the country on Labor Day. Reports from the event coordinators were extremely complimentary and appreciative.

I also want to express my appreciation for your assistance in providing other officers from your union as speakers for many different events throughout the country. In all we had 140 different speakers from 39 different unions at 151 events. The addition of a national officer provided a great impetus to the success of the events.

All told, we have counted over 1.3 million participants at these Labor Day events. It was an extraordinarily successful effort by all measures -- television and press coverage, the enthusiasm of local leadership and the pleasure of the participants.

Again, thanks for your help.

Sincerely,

John Kelly
President

Thomas R. Donahue
Secretary-Treasurer

SOLIDARITY DAY 1983



OTEU Locals 378 and 15 in Vancouver, B.C. march in support of Operation Solidarity, and against the Bennett government's anti-people policies.

Work and Health
by Press Associates, Inc.

Workplace Radiation— Dangers and Safeguards

by Phillip L. Polakoff, M.D.

Radiation is generally divided into two categories—ionizing and non-ionizing. This is about non-ionizing radiation. But first, what's the difference between the two?

Ionizing radiation is the kind whose rays pack so much energy that when they interact with atoms they shatter them, remove electrons from them and cause them to develop an electric charge. A charged particle is called an ion, so the force behind this charge is called ionizing radiation.

Ionizing radiation is that part of the energy band, or spectrum, that corresponds to X-rays, alpha, beta and gamma rays, and neutrons. With their atom-smashing potential, when these rays ionize atoms in the body, they can damage them seriously, even fatally.

Non-ionizing radiation doesn't have enough energy to ionize atoms, so it is called non-ionizing. But it can still cause painful reactions as anybody can tell you who ever got sunburned from the ultraviolet rays of the sun, or suffered eye damage from the infrared heat of a furnace or other industrial heat source. Microwave ovens, radar, some medical apparatus and laser beams also use this end of the radiation band.

Here are some industrial exposures to various kinds of non-ionizing radiation and their major effects. This list is from "Work Is Dangerous to Your Health," a handbook on health hazards in the workplace, by Jeanne M. Stellman, Ph.D., and Susan M. Daum, M.D., (Vintage Books).

ULTRAVIOLET. Sunlight (all outdoor workers), electric-arc welding, germicidal lamps, "black light" used in blueprinting, laundry-mark identification, dial illumination. Ultraviolet radiation irritates and damages eye tissue; can cause painful sunburn and possibly skin cancer.

LASERS. Used in construction industry as reference lines, in medicine for surgery, in communications, in holography; may be used in drilling or wherever a concentrated high-energy beam is useful. Lasers are extremely hazardous to the eyes because the lenses of the eyes focus the light intensely on the retina.

INFRARED. Given off by all heated sources. Welders, steelworkers, glassblowers, etc., are exposed. Also used for drying and baking paint, varnishes and enamels. Infrared can cause damage to parts of the eyes. Workers may develop a condition known as "heat cataract."

MICROWAVE. Found in military, radio navigation, radar communications, food ovens, certain drying processes, medical diathermy. Eyes and testicles are most susceptible to damage; genetic effects and effects from long-term low levels are unknown. Microwave generators may also give off X-rays.

RADIOFREQUENCY WAVES (RF). Used in heating equipment and for hardening metals, soldering and brazing. RF can be used in woodworking for bonding, laminating and gluing. This form of radiation is also used for sterilizing containers, thermo sealing and curing plastics. Improper operation installation of equipment generating this form of radiation can lead to electrical shock and burns. If an operator has wet feet, he or she can be electrocuted.

The key word for protection against non-ionizing radiation—any radiation, for that matter—is "shielding." Keep the rays from striking the body. This can mean anything from clothing to creams that screen out the sun, to reflective surfaces or the appropriate shade of the lens in welders' goggles.

Ovens and other sources of infrared (heat) radiation can be shielded with shiny materials to reflect the heat back toward its source. Some installations use a water screen for the same purpose.

Infrared radiation does not penetrate below the superficial layer of the skin. Its only effect is to heat the skin and the tissues immediately below it. The effects of ultraviolet waves is much more violent and a severe burn can be suffered, often before you know you have had too much exposure.

Microwaves penetrate deeply into the body and cause its temperature to rise. If the intensity of the microwaves is great enough, it can lead to permanent damage to the affected area. This deep heat penetrating ability is why the testicles are susceptible to damage. To function properly, the testicles have to maintain a temperature lower than the rest of the body. That's why they are on the outside. If this temperature rises because of microwave radiation, for example, the cell lining of the testicles can degenerate.

Microwave sources can be effectively shielded by fine metal screens such as copper mesh, or thin steel plates.

With lasers, enclosure of the beam and remote-control operation are probably wise precautions. If this cannot be done, there are other safety steps that should be followed. Never align the beam



Washington Window

Job Health Regulation: Burden or Benefit?

By Press Associates, Inc.

Sheila Bennett, a respiratory technician at the Medical College of Pennsylvania, is among 19 women who must use the hospital's ethylene oxide sterilizer to clean delicate medical equipment like pacemakers.

In the four years she has worked at the hospital, 12 of her co-workers have experienced miscarriages, premature births or infertility. Others have suffered severe rashes and eye irritations.

For a long time, the cause remained a mystery. Hospital management never informed Bennett or the other women of the danger of exposure to ethylene oxide (EtO).

"It was only after I found information on EtO in a garbage can that I began to question the safety of working with the gas," Bennett told the House labor standards subcommittee at a recent hearing on proposed OSHA regulations on workplace exposure to EtO.

Bennett is one of 100,000 workers in hospitals and in the medical products industry who work around EtO. Exposure to the gas has been linked to cancer, spontaneous abortions, birth defects and male sterility in studies going back to 1977.

In recent years, unions have been working to educate their members about the hazards of EtO. But these efforts have met with very limited success when confronted with unconcerned hospital management and the absence of strong federal safety and health regulations on EtO.

More than two years ago, unions and the public-interest Health Research Group petitioned OSHA to issue a temporary emergency standard for EtO.

Despite the hard evidence on its grave dangers and a recommendation from the agency's own research arm, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), OSHA refused to act.

OSHA denied the petition for emergency regulations despite its own findings that from 450 to 643 excess cancer deaths per 10,000 exposed workers might result under the current lax standard. Instead, the agency set in motion its slowest regulatory procedure, putting off final rulemaking to late 1984.

Turning to the courts, the unions won a ruling

which ordered OSHA to speed up rulemaking on EtO. Never before had a federal appeals court found it necessary to force OSHA to issue a standard.

Last April, OSHA proposed a standard which limits EtO exposure to fifty times less than the current limit. During hearings in July, union health experts testified that exposure should be limited to a level much lower than that proposed by OSHA and that a short-term exposure limit also is needed to protect workers.

At the hearing of the House labor standards panel, labor representatives expressed outrage over recent revelations that a high OSHA official tried to block the possibility of a tough EtO standard after meeting with the head of the Ethylene Oxide Industry Council in mid-June. The subcommittee is investigating whether OSHA's rulemaking process was compromised.

Said one unionist, "OSHA's handling of EtO is fast becoming an outrage on the order of EPA's handling of the superfund" to clean up toxic wastes.

To illustrate the pressing need for strong EtO regulations, one union released a survey of hospitals and their employees. Among the findings:

- Workers in 16 of the 26 hospitals in the survey reported that they can smell EtO at least occasionally. This indicates that these workers are exposed, at least briefly, to extremely high concentrations of the gas.

- In only 12 of the 25 hospitals has anyone ever monitored the level of workers' exposure to EtO.

- In only 11 of 25 hospitals has management had a regular maintenance program to check the sterilizer for leaks.

At the same time, it was found that the union-proposed standard, 20 times stricter than the OSHA proposal, has been attained at several hospitals using existing technology.

As testified, "There is no doubt that the Administration has taken seriously its commitment to remove the regulatory burden from the backs of business, even if it means deliberately ignoring the expressed intent of Congress in passing the Occupational Safety and Health Act. But, the price of premature deaths, unborn children and ruined health is far too great for the working people of this country."

by eye, or focus it on a mirror or other highly reflective surface. When the beam is aligned, it should be focused on a dull, nonreflecting object. Goggles should be worn that are designed for the particular kind of laser being

used. The laser should be fixed-mounted so that it cannot be swung around accidentally.

For additional information on radiation and its effects, contact the OPEIU Research Department.

Solidarity Day - We Were Heard



WE WILL BE HEARD
SOLIDARITY DAY 1983 AFL-CIO



Thousands of OPEIU members and millions of trade unionists and American workers rallied behind union banners to make Solidarity Day III the largest Labor Day turnout in the nation's history.

Carrying placards and banners reflecting the Solidarity Day theme, "Across America, We will Be Heard," American workers turned out to demonstrate their solid support for the labor movement's political policies and their solid opposition to the onerous policies of the current Administration.

Parades, protests, rallies, demonstrations, marches, street fairs, picnics, breakfasts—in many different fashions in many different cities the Labor Day celebrants protested the country's economic policies, inhumane social program cuts and lengthening unemployment rolls.

The message heard across the nation was one of hope. As OPEIU International President John Kelly told a Minneapolis gathering. "This Labor Day is not just a celebration of our past achievements, it's a recommitment to all that is good and just, to progress. It is a day to reaffirm our belief in the struggle for equality and for a better way of life."

(President Kelly's Labor Day speech, as well as letters of appreciation, can be found throughout this issue.)



Canadians Launch Operation Solidarity

(Continued from page 1)

appeal to Premier Bill Bennett:

"Operation Solidarity is speaking for the unemployed, the sick, the poor, the weak, for the weary, for the long line of children, women and men who in darkness and despair have never received adequate assistance from your government.

"If you pass this legislation, your act will be applauded only by bigots, the narrow-minded and the powerful. But, every fair-minded person in this province regardless of religious or political persuasion will condemn you for trying to crush out the feeling of hope and any aspirations of the weakest in our society.

The worst of it

All B.C. public sector unions, including OTEU (OPEIU), face an immediate challenge to their collective bargaining rights from the government which has introduced the *Public Service Labour Relations Amendment Act (Bill 2)*. This bill is designed to legislate large portions of the public sector agreements out of existence.

Clauses in collective agreements dealing with appointments, promotions, reclassifications and relocation are being wiped out and will in the future be determined solely at the discretion of the government.

The bill also frees the government from any procedural constraint in appointing government employees. It is a clear attack on the merit principle in government appointments and a move to restore patronage throughout the government service.

If passed, this particular bill will legislate out of existence any negotiated agreement regarding hours of work and work schedules, shift work, overtime, and vacation scheduling. All seniority, substitution pay and protection against contracting out will also disappear.

Bill 3, Public Sector Restraint Act, is perhaps the most odious piece of legislation ever introduced by a provincial government in Canada.

In its original form, it stated that "notwithstanding the Labour Code and the Public Service Labour Relations Act, a public sector employer may terminate the employment of an employee without cause."

The government has been acting as if this bill were already law and has fired over 1,000 employees and cut vital programs in the human rights field.

Amendments introduced by Provincial Secretary Chabot merely changed the words, not the intent, of Bill 3 and failed to reduce any of the discriminatory powers the government is giving itself.

But, public sector employees are not the only ones hurt by the brutal measures imposed by the B.C. government. All sectors of society are affected:

- The sick people are being penalized by increased user fees and cutbacks in health services.
- Teachers face thousands of firings and students have seen their financial assistance slashed and their education devalued.
- Tenants are losing the protection of rent controls and the Rentalsman's office.
- Minorities, as well as all other British Columbians, have lost the protection of the Human Rights Commission.
- The disadvantaged face a dismal winter of lower social assistance benefits and fewer services.
- Women face setbacks in equality rights as discrimination in job applications and other practices are no longer banned.
- Consumers have lost their consumer-help agencies.
- Taxpayers are being charged higher sales and new restaurant taxes, and businessmen will suffer the consequences.

In short, Bennett's insensitivity will hurt the majority of the citizens of British Columbia.

The end result of the government's massive legislative attack on the people of British Columbia has been the creation of a broad-based protest coalition, spearheaded by the B.C. labour movement.

Although Bennett has mocked the rallies and demonstrations of the coalition, most political observers within the province believe that they should not and cannot be ignored. Some go so far as to predict that Bennett's right-wing rampage will inevitably lead to his own political demise. Canada's labour unions will have to make sure that this is so.

Editorial

The Need to Protest

OTEU members received the following letter from Local 378 President Fred Trotter, following the August 10 protest of proposed reactionary legislation in B.C. (Trotter also serves as International Vice President and Canadian Director.)

Over 100,000 people, including many members of OTEU Local 378, have made the recently concluded Operation Solidarity rallies a tremendous success. Never before in Canada have so many people from all walks of life, and political and religious beliefs, spoken out so strongly against their government and its policies.

The Operation Solidarity Coalition will continue its program of protest so long as this legislation remains a possibility. Local 378 and all trade unions remain committed to that cause. We cannot allow the destruction of the very fabric of our society which has allowed us to call ourselves a democracy up until now.

Much work remains to be done. We must still overcome many misconceptions in the minds of the public at large and probably even some of our members. In line with the latter concern we will shortly be undertaking a survey to determine your level of understanding and your need for further information.

One popular misconception which exists, is that by taking from unionized workers, you somehow improve the standards for those in the non-union sector. Quite

the opposite is true. Not only will non-unionized workers not benefit from the weakened trade union movement, but rather they will have an even lesser standard than they have today.

Unionized workers set the standard for wages and benefits in the community. If you reduce the standards for unionized workers by 20 percent, for example, you will most surely reduce the standards for non-union workers by that amount or more. And, the non-union, lower-paid workers will suffer more because they start from a lower base. That reality is clearly evident when one compares the standards of workers in provinces or industries where unions have some strength in relation to those that don't.

The simple truth is that if B.C.'s labour movement is weakened, the wages and working conditions of all B.C. workers will be adversely affected.

In closing, I would like to thank all our members who sacrificed pay and gave up their time to attend the rallies and demonstrate visibly their objection to the government's program. I thank also those members who were unable to attend the rallies but contributed financially to Operation Solidarity. It's not too late to show your support by sending a cheque for two or three hours pay, payable to "Operation Solidarity," to OTEU Local 378 at 960 Kingsway, Vancouver, B.C. V5V 3C4.

A Time To Be Heard

(Continued from page 7)

The Reagan Administration has seemingly set a cutoff rate that has hovered around 45 percent. And, they have maintained this rate although it has meant eliminating benefits for many pensioners whose afflictions had worsened markedly.

The review has fallen the hardest on mental patients, leading one Wisconsin State claims examiner to complain in an internal memo that to be allowed a pension, "a claimant has to be in a catatonic stupor or to be a totally raving maniac."

The heartlessness of the cuts was recognized by more than the labor movement, as 61.2 percent were ordered back on the rolls by law judges.

In December, deciding one of 95 class-action suits against social security that are making their way through the federal courts, a Minneapolis district judge ruled that guidelines used to judge mentally ill were "arbitrary, capricious, irrational and an abuse of discretion," as well as illegal. He ordered benefits restored to an estimated 20,000 mentally ill who had been cut off in the six upper Midwest states.

We are faced with an administration that promised us a better life than we had before. Remember his "are you better off today?" He promised us trickle-down economics—tax cuts and incentives for the wealthy and big business, with the increased profits trickling down to the middle and lower classes. He promised a safety net of social programs to protect the poor and aged.

The administration lobbied hard and won tax cuts and additional incentives for the rich and corporate community. But, nothing trickled down. Instead, the middle and lower classes—working America—got unemployment. As they plummeted, they found no safety net to catch them. Reagan had ripped it out from under them with cuts in food stamps and welfare programs, cuts in training programs, cuts in disability insurance. And, the numbers below the poverty line

grew and grew.

This Labor Day we enter another struggle—one for justice, dignity and decency. For those with the ability to work, it means jobs. Every American who wants a job should be able to have one. And, to create employment requires a national industrial policy in which labor would join business and government in modernizing older basic industries, developing technologically advanced new industries and passing protective legislation like domestic auto content. In the meantime, it means training and extended unemployment programs.

For those unable to work, it means a sturdy and dependable safety net—restored child nutrition and food stamp programs, restored disability benefits.

It means electing an administration that cares for all of America's people—not just the wealthy.

This Labor Day is not just a celebration of our past achievements, it's a recommitment of all that is good and just, to progress. It is a day to reaffirm our beliefs in the struggle for equality and for a better way of life.

This day—Solidarity Day III—trade unionists are marching under the banner "Across America, We Will Be Heard."

But, where we will be heard best and loudest is in the polls November 4, 1984. And, today we make the commitment to be there. We may not be able to compete with the ultra-right and ultra-rich with money. But, we are made up of millions of working Americans—old and young, black and white, male and female—who are fed up and who want to return this nation to economic health and decency.

We face a formidable adversary in the same way as the Minneapolis strikers in 1934. But like them, against incredible odds, we plan to win.

It is our—the American working people's—turn to be heard.

AFL-CIO Endorses Mondale

(Continued from page 1)

nearly 14.3 million votes represented were cast in favor of endorsing Mondale.

Following the board's action, AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland said, "We have acted here as we were instructed by our membership."

In fact, said President John Kelly, OPEIU conducted a straw vote to determine the feelings of the local union leadership at OPEIU's 1983 convention. Nearly 60 percent of the U.S. delegates endorsed Mondale for President. Seventeen percent supported John Glenn and only three percent endorsed Ronald Reagan.

In addition, President Kelly reported that Mondale had addressed the OPEIU executive board in June 1983. One assurance he had given the board was that if elected he would press for labor law reform. He was warmly received by OPEIU officers at that time.

The AFL-CIO Executive Council said that this pre-primary endorsement, based on a consensus of affiliated national and international unions, AFL-CIO trade and industrial departments and state and local central bodies, will assure the solidarity that is essential for the labor movement to have an effective voice in the political process.

Among the friends of labor seeking the Democratic presidential nomination, "Walter F. Mondale has earned special esteem," said a resolution adopted by the convention.

"He has been an ally of the trade union movement," said the resolution, in the struggle "for jobs at decent wages, for better public education and medical care, for equal rights and civil rights, and for decent housing."



Pictured here is the OPEIU delegation to the AFL-CIO Convention. From left-to-right, they include Secretary-Treasurer Roméo Corbeil; Vice Presidents Bill Adams, Gary Kirkland, Gwen Newton and Michael Goodwin; and International President John Kelly.

AFL-CIO Convention

Mondale Outlines Platform; Kirkland Decries Injustice

Walter Mondale welcomed the endorsement of the AFL-CIO and asked for labor's help "in this great national campaign to rebuild America."

Mondale, the frontrunner for the Democratic nomination, laid out his program before 776 cheering delegates at the AFL-CIO's biennial convention in Hollywood, Florida.

"I am ready and so are the American people," Mondale declared. "Americans want our edge back. . . . We're ready for a season of excellence. We're ready to work for America."

"And, so today I'm asking for your help in this great national campaign to rebuild America. There is no reason on earth for America to fear the future. We have everything we need except a leader, and I will be that leader and, if you will help me, together we will help America."

The convention looked like a political rally. Mondale entered the hall and moved through a crush of delegates up and down the aisles, shaking hands and greeting old friends. A band played "Happy Days Are Here Again" and "Solidarity Forever."

AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland set the stage in his keynote address with a slashing attack on the Reagan Administration.

Kirkland referred to the consequences of the Reagan recession, which the AFL-CIO estimated at some 18 million people unemployed or forced on part-time.

Behind the statistics, Kirkland said, "lies a bleak picture of broken lives, blighted communities, ruined enterprises, shattered hopes and lost opportunities, strewn across the length and breadth of this land."

"That is the debris of arrogance and indifference in high public office," Kirkland continued, "left unattended and unrestored by any 'recovery' we have seen so far."

"But this is the price of government by and for a narrow class, driven by an appetite for privilege and for tax avoidance."

Kirkland did not mention the President by name, but referred to "their chief spokesman and protector

in the White House," and added "But, the most disarming manner, the most practiced piety, and the most facile enunciation cannot forever mask reality."

Kirkland recalled that candidate Reagan three years ago promised to lead the way to "a shining city, high on a hill."

"Today," Kirkland said, "the streets of that shining city are riddled with potholes and its bridges are falling down. Its rotting water system threatens an epidemic and its waste pollutes its streams."

"Its steel plants and cotton mills stand dark and idle. The lines outside its unemployment offices are limited only by the ruthless curtailment of access to benefits."

Kirkland said popular support for the defense of the nation grows weaker "because its costs are extracted from the hides and sweat of the poor, while those who have fattened most greedily on the favors of liberty are exempted from its burdens."

The central question in the Reagan era, Kirkland said, is the proper role of government in human affairs. "Should government be regarded as the natural enemy or used, where appropriate, as an instrument of progress? That is the main question at issue in the elections of 1984."

Kirkland recalled how Social Security led to the disappearance of county poorhouses, how New Deal programs such as the Forest Service and Civilian Conservation Corps restored the parks, how rural electrification benefited farmers, how public health programs eradicated common diseases.

"That government spending—as the retarded right calls it—paid for itself many times over," Kirkland said.

For its part, the labor movement brought many millions of people into the middle class through its bargaining and legislative efforts, he said.

"Democracy is the politics of optimism. Trade unionism is the economics of optimism," Kirkland declared. "Both breed confidence that the people bear their fate in their own hands."

Together, in solidarity, Kirkland said, both those instruments can be blended into a great campaign to change course and build a more just, more tolerant and stronger nation.

The endorsement of presidential candidate Mondale, he said, is part of the role played by working people in the process.

Mondale, after an enthusiastic welcome from the delegates, listed the chief elements of his program:

- A sensible budget, with reduced deficits, a rebuilt revenue base and responsible fiscal policy;
- A strong new trade policy; "I will match other countries' export subsidies product-for-product and dollar-for-dollar;"
- Investment in the nation's future through a capital budget to rebuild highways, bridges, cities, ports and public facilities and strengthening of education standards; and
- Labor-business cooperation on industrial renewal, with management investing in people and plant while labor stresses quality and productivity.

Mondale said that, as president, he would enforce workers' rights "and fight for the adoption of the Labor Law Reform Act."

He pledged to close tax loopholes "and make the wealthy pay their fair share of the taxes." He promised to "slap a lid on health costs" and "clamp down on utility bills."

He said he would "crack down on civil rights violators" and make sure race or sex had nothing to do with pay or success. He said he would "fight to get the drugs off the streets and put the crooks behind bars."

In lauding the contributions of labor, Mondale said that "today every American who holds a safe job, works decent hours and earns decent pay is standing on your shoulders."

"I have a vision for our country," Mondale declared, "and I know how to lead us there. . . . I am ready to be President of the United States."



1984—A Time To Be Heard

by **John Kelly**
International President

On Solidarity Day III—Labor Day 1984—International President John Kelly addressed thousands of trade unionists at a breakfast meeting in Minneapolis, Minnesota. His remarks, received with enthusiastic applause, are reprinted here.

The labor movement has always been a force for all that is good and just in this nation—a force for American progress.

American labor unions have played a central role in the elevation of the nation's standard of living.

It is often hard for us to remember and to take for granted—decent wages, pensions, health and welfare protections, vacations with pay, holidays, grievance and arbitration machinery—all of which would never have existed to the degree they do today without the battles fought by unions for working people.

Just one such battle occurred in Minneapolis. In 1934 a strike against the trucking companies of Minneapolis began what was to become a general strike, closing down most of the city. That strike was characterized by an intense solidarity among all of the city's unions and the farmer's organizations, by "roving pickets," and finally by a violence instigated by the city's police force siding with the employers and a vicious anti-union state government. But, against the incredible odds, the working people of Minneapolis were successful. Management capitulated, signed the contract and the trade unionists celebrated for a full 12 hours.

These struggles were duplicated across America; and, in fact, are very often fought today—although without the violence. Of course, we do have the union-busting consultants—our own pinkertons with briefcases.

Because of the battles on both the collective bargaining and legislative fronts, the labor movement virtually created the American middle class. But not for trade unions, there would be no public education, prohibitions of child labor, wage and hour legislation, legislated safety and health protections, medicare and social security, protection against age, race or sex discrimination, and the list goes on and on.

And, the labor movement has never forgotten those least able to defend themselves—the poor, disabled and elderly. Trade unions have been among the staunchest supporters of food stamps, aid to dependent children, disability insurance, and the like. Why? Because we have always believed that no U.S. citizen should go hungry, homeless, or lack for adequate medical care.

Labor Day began as a celebration to commemorate the achievements of the labor movement, like the few I have mentioned.

In 1882 New York City held the first Labor Day parade. In 1887 Oregon established the first state holiday; and in 1894 federal legislation was passed making Labor Day a national holiday.

Through years of war, depression and violent labor struggle, the labor movement thrived. In spite of setbacks like the Taft-Hartley Act with its infamous Section 14(b)—allowing right-to-work-for-less legislation—we progressed, flourished and celebrated each Labor Day.

But, only because we were consistently willing to fight on all battlefronts, against all adversaries—big business, anti-union U.S. administrations, ultra-right organizations, regressive congressional candidates.

Companies have come and gone, as have administrations, political organizations and politicians. But, the labor movement lives on. And, not because it has become easier. We face the same adversaries today. And, if anything, our task of representing working people has become more difficult.

Because in the 1970's the corporate, anti-union, ultra-right, regressive forces melded into a viable, well-organized, intensively destructive force. This anti-people, anti-union, pro-big business coalition took control of both the White House and the Senate.

And, they did it with our assistance.

Riding a tide of anti-federalism, the ultra-right and Ronald Reagan painted a picture of big government as the oppressor and promised to cut federal spending to get this oppressor off our backs. Less government, according to Reagan, would mean a healthier economy. The American people—yes, even trade unionists—believed. And, Reagan rode the tide into office.

And, less government is exactly what we got. But, not in the way or with the results we expected.

Social programs were savagely cut. Bankruptcies, the federal budget deficit and the unemployment rate soared. The United States entered the worst recession since the Great Depression. And, who suffered? Certainly not big business or the ultra-rich. Only the poor, the middle class, the working people of America.

But, the Reagan Administration points with pride to the lowered inflation rate. Yes, but at what cost? We have long known that inflation could be lowered by lengthening our unemployment lines. This approach has been rejected by every prior administration—Republican and Democrat—because it is both cruel and counter-productive.

Indeed, according to a *New York Times* editorial, the costs of this anti-inflation policy have been staggering. An additional seven million Americans have slipped into poverty, and the poverty rate continues to rise. A record (official) 12 million workers were without jobs by the end of 1982, and the unemployment rate is expected to remain above 9 percent this year. More than \$300 billion in national income has already been lost as a result of the deep and prolonged recession.

In the state of Minnesota, the unemployment rate—although lower than the national average—stood at 7.9 percent. When Reagan took office, the State averaged 4.2 percent unemployed (1979).

This current job deficit stems from the *conscious decision* to battle inflation with unemployment. And, it is this intentional increase in joblessness that demonstrates the moral and intellectual bankruptcy of the Reagan economic program.

At precisely the same time that the Reagan Administration began its callous job-cutting program, it began and carried out a systematic assault on federal food and nutrition programs. After all, he promised to get government off our backs. And, federal funds for food assistance were among the major targets of the first Reagan budget cuts.

Child nutrition programs were cut by \$1.46 billion. Of the 26 million children getting free or subsidized school lunches before Mr. Reagan became President, 3.2 million dropped out of the program because of the change he put through. Last year 2,700 schools stopped participating altogether because the new Reagan rules made it impracticable for them.

Then there were food stamps. As candidate and president, Mr. Reagan has repeatedly mocked this single most important federal benefit for the poor, suggesting that it enabled cheaters to drink. He persuaded Congress to tighten eligibility standards in 1981 and 1982. This year he asked for more restrictions, one that would cut food stamp benefits for 62 percent of families using them—mostly people below the poverty line, many of them forced out of work by his policies in the first place.

And, what of the poverty line? On August 2, 1983, the census bureau reported the U.S. poverty rate in recession-scarred 1982 climbed to its highest level in 17 years. An incredible 15 percent of Americans, the bureau reported, fell below the poverty threshold in 1982. The number of people in poverty—that is, earning less than \$9,862 for a family of four—increased 2.6 million, or 8.1 percent, to 34.4 million.

34.4 million Americans living in poverty. This is unthinkable in the richest country in the world.

The President announced that he was "perplexed" and "deeply concerned" about reports of hunger in America.

But, we are not perplexed about the extent of hunger and its causes, and neither should Reagan be, since he created most of it with the cutbacks in the food stamp and nutritional programs while putting millions out of work. He created it with his vicious assault on the disabled American workers.

The lunacy of cuts from the disability rolls is now legendary. At least 250,000 have been ordered off the social security disability rolls in the past two years—permanently. Another 100,000 either have had their benefits restored, or will eventually by social security law judges who decided they shouldn't have been removed in the first place.

There have been cases like Lyle Ely and Kimberly Bailey.

Lyle Ely was blind in one eye and had tunnel vision in the other. He could not, as he complained on one of the many forms he filled out in the last years of his life, see well enough to read, drive a car or watch television. His partial blindness, along with convulsive seizures that also plagued him, was caused by a tumor that grew to the size of a large orange in the front part of his brain. But claims examiners and reviewing physicians who had never seen him found him well enough to work, cancelled his social security disability pension, and reaffirmed the cancellation when Ely applied for reconsideration. Ely, formerly a construction worker and lineman, died on the day his benefits were restored by a law judge.

Kimberly Bailey worked as a flight instructor and chief pilot for a now-defunct flying school at La Guardia Airport before mental illness and other afflictions rendered her unemployable. After she, too, was cut off social security, she wound up living in California on general relief of \$210 a month, less than her pension. Too broke to buy the powerful medicines that had tamed her psychosis, she also lacked money to buy the special foods she needed because of her allergic reactions. In October, 1981, four months after her termination, she jumped off a cliff, suffering multiple fractures.

The extraordinary scope of the social security review, ordered under Reagan, had made no direct attempt to find beneficiaries who actually recovered and are able to work. Instead, it defined permanent disability so narrowly that the number of pensioners subject to review soared. Prime targets were not those whose medical condition was likely to have improved, but those collecting the biggest pensions.

This is particularly outrageous since these workers have contributed into the social security fund and benefits are based on their payments into social security during the total work career. These are not "welfare cheats."

(Continued on page 5)

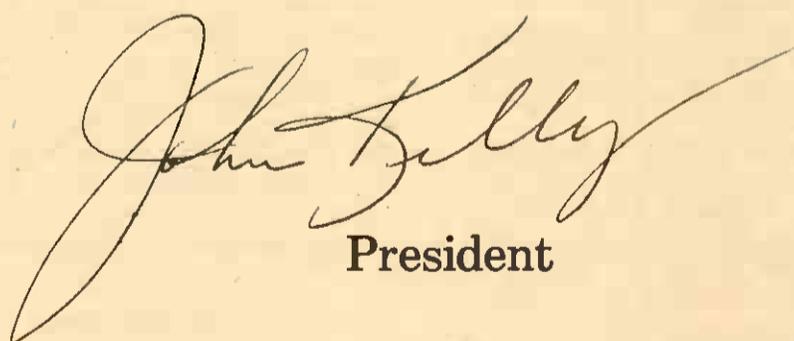
U.S. Price Index		Canadian Index*	
U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics New Base 1967 = 100		Statistics Canada New Base 1981 = 100	
1982		1982	
April	284.3	April	108.6
May	287.1	May	110.1
June	290.6	June	111.2
July	291.8	July	111.8
August	292.4	August	112.3
September	292.8	September	112.9
October	293.6	October	113.6
November	293.2	November	114.4
December	292.0	December	114.4
1983		1983	
January	292.1	January	114.1
February	292.3	February	114.6
March	293.0	March	115.8
April	294.9	April	115.8
May	296.3	May	116.1
June	297.2	June	117.4
July	298.2	July	117.9
August	299.5	August	118.5
September	300.8	September	118.5

*Effective with the release of the January 1983 index, the official base for the Canadian CPI has been converted from 1971 = 100 to 1981 = 100. All figures — 1981 through 1983 — have been converted to this new base, for your information.

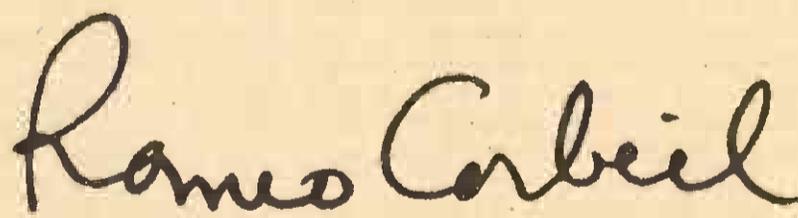
If you move, send your old and new address, including zip code and social security or social insurance number and Local Union number to: Romeo Corbeil, Sec.-Treas., 815 16th Street, N.W., Suite 606, Washington, D.C. 20006.

Season's Greetings

To all members of the Office and Professional Employees International Union, we extend best wishes for a most joyous holiday season and a prosperous and Happy New Year. In a true sense of solidarity, may we draw closer together, as citizens of two great nations and as members of a great International Union, to work toward peace and security for all.



President



Secretary-Treasurer

and Vice Presidents:

Billie D. Adams
Gilles Beauregard
Michael Goodwin
Gerald D. Iushewitz
Kathleen Kinnick

Gary Kirkland
James Mahoney
Harvey R. Markusen
J. B. Moss

Gwen Newton
Michel Rousseau
L. J. Sheridan
Fred A. Trotter
William P. Wittal