

# Labor News Digest

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## Victory...Defeating Kaiser's Illegal Lockout

Our struggle with Kaiser Aluminum began as a fight for a better contract. But like so many of our long disputes, it turned into a struggle to defend the very existence of our union. The company's strategy--the aggressive use of the lockout and the hiring of long-term 'temporary' scabs--wrote a new page in the play book of union busting under the National Labor Relations Act.

Since lockouts have become more common in the U.S., it was of tremendous importance to our union to stop Kaiser's lockout strategy dead in its tracks. Kaiser had hoped to transform its plants into workplaces that were staffed by working salaried supervisors, dozens of outside contractors, and hundreds of temps--the same combination of employees that so many nonunion employers use to prevent unionization. Unlike other union-busting efforts where employers force a strike with outrageous demands and then permanently replace our members and attempt to have the scabs vote out the union after a year, Kaiser aimed simply to ignore the union after the lockout and make us irrelevant through the success of its new 'temporary' workforce.

### Company Demands

At the heart of our contract struggle with Kaiser were two of the signature issues of our union--contracting out and retiree health insurance. In both areas Kaiser had sought radical revisions of existing contract language. Retirees faced having the company's contribution for health care "capped" at 1999 costs, with all future increases deducted from the retiree's pension check. As for contracting out, Kaiser sought the direct elimination of over 265 jobs immediately and an unlimited right to contract out at management's discretion in the future.

On both of these critical issues, the USWA was ultimately successful. The union's original contracting language was restored and improved with a first-ever expedited contracting out procedure in the aluminum industry. The retiree health insurance "cap" was eliminated from the contract and in its place a unique system of health care cost control with significant union involvement was established for all retirees.

### Wage and Benefit Gains

The final economic package included wage and COLA increases of about \$3.50 an hour over the five-year term and a pension multiplier increase of \$8.75 per month per year of service. The union also won significant restructuring benefits including severance bonuses of up to \$25,000 and up to three years of Enhanced Supplemental Unemployment Benefits (SUB) in exchange for productivity improvements.

But the most important victory was defeating Kaiser's lockout strategy and restoring the USWA to the plants. Our union's success was a direct result of the massive efforts of our Kaiser membership on a dozen fronts--too many to mention in a short article. However, three areas stand out because of their long-term implications.

### Corporate Campaign

First in importance was the legal effort that led to the National Labor Relation's Board (NLRB) issuing a complaint that charged that the lockout was unlawful from its inception. This complaint was based on Kaiser's insistence that the USWA's multi-plant bargaining unit be broken up and replaced with what amounted to five separate labor agreements in which the International was essentially removed from the contract and replaced by the local union. The NLRB has ruled in similar cases that this demand to change the bargaining unit was a permissive subject and therefore was an illegal subject over which to conduct a lockout.

Second, the unprecedented alliance between environmental activists and the USWA was successful in putting pressure on Kaiser and its parent corporation, Maxxam, Inc. (owner of Pacific Lumber Company) in many different forums. From protest marches to shareholder campaign, from lawsuits to environmental impact studies, the USWA joined with its environmental partners, Friends of the Earth, the Sierra Club, Earth

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## Briefs....

### History Lesson on Net Style

Learning the history of the American union movement can be a fun experience on workingfamilies.com. The edition of *America@Work* magazine has been adapted into an interactive photo essay, "100 Years of Struggle and Success." The representation bears witness to the efforts of working families throughout the decades as they struggled for respect on the job. Visit the essay on-line at workingfamilies.com under Today's Union Movement.

### Unions Raise Wages, Especially for Women and Minorities

A union card means a bigger paycheck, and it helps narrow the wage gap for women and minorities. Union workers earn 30 percent more than non-union workers. The union wage benefit is even higher for women, who earn 35 percent more. Black workers earn 39 percent more, and for Latino workers, the differential is 55 percent.

### Senate OK on Mine Safety Measure

In an unanimous vote, the U.S. Senate approved an International Labor Organization convention designed to improve safety and health conditions for miners around the world. While just one percent of the global workforce is employed in mining, the industry accounts for eight percent of workplace fatalities--about 15,000 deaths a year. The convention calls on governments and employers to reduce mining hazards, provide for thorough inspections, and implement adequate training. It also urges governments to establish an authority to enforce safety rules.

## Victory...Defeating Kaiser's Illegal Lockout

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First, the Rose Foundation, and the Bay Area Coalition for the Headwaters, and many others in creating an ever-widening political campaign for corporate accountability. Out of all this activity a new organization was formed, the Alliance for Sustainable Jobs and the Environment, dedicated to promoting cooperation between environmentalists and unions.

### Good Corporate Citizens

Finally, a union was able, through a sustained grassroots campaign, to convince the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and the Department of Energy to initiate a Good Corporate Citizenship Clause in its future electrical power contracts with the aluminum industry in the Pacific Northwest. Since power is one of the most important ingredients in the conversion of alumina into aluminum, the cost of power ultimately determines the success or failure of an aluminum smelter. In the Pacific Northwest, home to 40 percent of the U.S. smelting capacity, companies have long enjoyed the benefits of government-subsidized electrical power.

Over the course of 18 months, through countless public hearings, demonstrations, lobbying meetings and tens of thousands of signature petitions, the USWA and its allies convinced the federal government that corporations receiving the benefit of subsidized electricity should be held accountable for their conduct in other arenas--namely their adherence to environmental, safety, labor, and other regulatory standards.

Consequently, all new aluminum company power contracts with the BPA will contain a Good Corporate Citizenship Clause which will allow the government to take away subsidized power from companies who are egregious violators of labor or other laws.

### Scabs Out--Steelworkers In

During the month of October 2000, Kaiser Aluminum discharged the scabs from its plants and brought back the steelworkers--just over two years after the start of the labor dispute.

John Goodman, one of our union's many activists said afterward: "When I looked into the eyes of my sons and granddaughters and thought of what the future may hold for them if we were not successful in this battle for human rights and dignity, I knew I had to go on."

No one chooses to be part of struggles like these. But once chosen, we never shirked our responsibilities to ourselves, to our union, or to the labor movement.

*Steelabor*, 570 White Pond Drive, Akron, OH 44320-1156.

## New Convention on Maternity Protection

Delegates to the International Labor Conference voted 305-22 to adopt a new convention on maternity protection, No. 183. They also registered an expected large number of abstentions (116).

The new instrument broadens the scope of coverage to specifically include all women, including those in the informal sector, and strengthens protection over previous ILO instruments.

Director General Juan Somavia called the revision of the ILO's earlier instruments on maternity protection "a perfect example of how gender equality is at the heart of decent work."

"I want to get to the core of this debate: that woman who would like to be able to bear a child safely and to nurture her child for some time after its birth without fear of losing her job, income, or career," he said.

Many of the abstentions reflected the opposition of employer delegates. U.S. employer representative Thomas Moorhead, told *Daily Labor Report* that he regretted the ILO "had adopted a convention that the United States could not ratify."

New Zealand employer delegate Ann Knowles said in the conference plenary discussion that 60 percent of ILO countries would be unable to adopt the convention because it conflicts with their national laws.

"It's not just a numbers game. It's not just ratification for the sake of it. It is a serious step," Knowles

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## New Convention on Maternity Protection

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said. "In ratifying, a member State is committing itself to having its domestic law be in accordance with the Convention. It is committing itself to implementing the terms of the Convention. And, under the review clause, Article 22 of the Constitution, member States have to report. And that is the key. Ratification means member States say, 'We will do something and we will tell you what we do and we will accept your telling us if we are not doing enough.'"

Knowles added, "Non-ratification means nothing happens. And we in the employers' groups believe women in the world need something to happen."

A statement from the U.S. Dept. of Labor noted that although the U.S. supported the principles underlying the new convention, "rapid ratification" was not expected due to lack of consistency between U.S. law and the convention's provisions.

Convention 183 extends the length of maternity leave from 12 to 14 weeks, including "a period of six weeks compulsory leave after childbirth, unless otherwise agreed at the national level by the government and the representative organizations of employers and workers." It further states that the leave "shall be provided before or after the maternity leave period in the case of illness, complications, or risk of complications arising out of pregnancy or child birth."

Convention 183 also sets forth new provisions for job protection and nondiscrimination for pregnant and nursing women. In addition, it contains key language dealing with maternity benefits:

- Benefits shall be provided "through the compulsory social insurance funds or public funds, or in a manner to be determined by national law and practice";
- An employer "shall not be individually liable for the direct cost of any such monetary benefit...without that employer's specific agreement," unless specifically set forth in law;
- Cash benefits "shall be provided, in accordance with national laws and regulations or in any other manner consistent with national practice, to women who are absent from work on leave;" and
- Cash benefits should be provided "at a level that ensures that the woman can maintain herself and her child in proper conditions of health and with a suitable standard of living."

The new convention will enter into force one year after ratification by two ILO member states.

*International Labor Organization (ILO), 1828 L St., NW, Washington, DC 20036.*

## Your Social Security Statement

This past fall, 125 million workers began receiving annual Social Security Statements that literally put their financial futures in their hands.

Approximately 10 million statements will be delivered each month, with workers receiving their statements three months before their birthdays.

As Social Security Commissioner Kenneth Apfel pointed out in announcing the services, "Whether you are young or old, male or female, single or with a family, it is never too soon to plan for your future. The Social Security Statement will help Americans prepare today for their financial security tomorrow."

Social Security started sending an annual statement to workers who are 25 or older who do not already receive Social Security benefits. If you receive a Social Security Statement, it will show your earnings record and an estimate of the Social Security benefits you and your family can expect to receive when you are eligible. Since the statement provides an estimate of your retirement, disability, and survivors benefits, it can be a valuable tool to help you plan your financial future.

The Social Security Statement is also an easy way to make sure your earnings are accurate on your Social Security record. This is an important point because your Social Security benefits are based on your wage record.

Social Security has been mailing statements, previously known as Personal Earnings and Benefit Estimate Statements, automatically to individuals in select age categories since 1995. To date, more than 70 million statements have been mailed automatically. In addition, about 37 million people have requested statements from Social Security since the service began in 1988.

The renamed statement was recently redesigned to make it easier to read and understand.

*The Ironworker, 1750 New York Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20006.*

## Did You Know?

### Tony the Great

Several generations of Americans have grown up with the animated cartoon Tony the Tiger recommending that they eat healthy breakfasts built around "Grrreat" cereals.

Probably most people know that the specific cereal Tony recommends is Kellogg's Frosted Flakes.

But do you know the name of the union that represents the Kellogg's employees who make Frosted Flakes?

It's the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers & Grain Millers Union (BCTGM).

### McDonald's Happy Toys Said Made by Children

Chinese children as young as 14 help make some of the toys that are available with kids' meals at McDonald's restaurants, the *New York Times* and the *South China Morning Post* report.

One-fifth of the 2,000 workers at the City Toys, Ltd., factory in Shenzhen are younger than 16, the *Morning Post* said.

The factory, owned by Pleasure Tech Holdings Ltd., of Hong Kong, makes Snoopy, Winnie the Pooh, and Hello Kitty toys for McDonald's.

McDonald's said it will investigate the charges for as long as it takes to get the facts, the *Times* said.

*Union Label & Service Trades Department, 815 16th St., NW, Washington, DC 20006.*

## ***The State of Working America 2000-2001***

By Lawrence Mishel, Jared Bernstein, and John Schmitt

444 pages, Cornell University Press, January 2001

*The State of Working America 2000-2001* is not a book to curl up with on the couch, clutching the pages in the wee hours of the night, eagerly awaiting the climax. It is, however, a great resource book that has been highly acclaimed by everyone from Harvard University to the New York Review of Books.

Prepared biennially since 1988 by the Economic Policy Institute, the current edition reveals three important new developments in working America. First, inflation-adjusted wages actually began to rise in 1995, including wages for workers at the bottom, changing a 15-year declining trend. Second, labor productivity also began increasing in 1995. And finally, income inequality in the 1990s changed to be a closer level between the middle and lower classes while the top pulled further away from the rest. According to the research, the United States has the most unequal income distribution and one of the highest poverty rates among all advanced countries, and workers put in more hours at work than did workers in nearly all large industrialized countries.

The 446-page book is divided into seven chapters: "Family Income", "Wages", "Jobs", "Wealth", "Poverty", "Regional Analysis", and "International Comparisons". Each chapter is divided into several subsections making research easy and efficient. A conclusion follows each chapter to sum up the issues in the chapter, emphasizing the important developments and concerns. Trends are discussed throughout the book including explanations of the trends.

### **Findings from 1998 include these facts:**

- The top one percent of stock owners own almost half of all stocks.
- About one in four African-Americans and one in four Hispanics live in poverty.
- The wealthiest one percent control 38 percent of the nation's wealth.
- The national poverty rate was a full percentage point higher than in 1979.
- Nearly one in four children live in poverty.

The book provides the details and statistics that can arm a union activist with facts to change minds and open awareness in others. It is a "must have" book because it is current, has easy-to-find answers, and provides the research in an objective manner. John J. Sweeney, AFL-CIO president, sums up the book in this manner: "No other publication in America is as valuable in assessing what's happening to working men and women."

## **Protesting Kohl's Department Store**

With a police helicopter circling overhead, 150 Steelworkers, other union members and student activists marched at a Kohl's Department store to protest union-busting by Kohl's suppliers in Nicaragua.

Only police presence, including a paddy wagon and a patrol car that blocked the entrance, stopped the marchers from entering the store to demand the manager contact Kohl's Chairman William Kellogg to pressure Chentex factory to reinstate 700 fired union members.

Before the confrontation, union members and students from Ohio State University rallied in the store parking lot in a show of global solidarity that featured two young Nicaraguan women activists who were fired when workers asked for an 8-cents-an-hour wage increase.

Zenayda Torres and Angelica Perez tearfully told the rally how working conditions at the plant were beginning to improve after the union was informed. But workers were fired when they asked for a small increase in wages.

Chentex factory workers earn about 20 cents for every pair of Kohl's jeans they produce. Workers make about \$65 a month and are forced to work overtime--sometimes as long as a full 24-hour day, the Nicaraguan workers said.

District I Director Dave McCall said the increase in wages would have "lifted the workers out of misery into poverty."

During an emotional charged speech, McCall ripped three Kohl's credit cards in half to demonstrate his distaste for union busting anywhere in the world.

Joining in the protest were the National Labor Committee, Jobs With Justice, and Students Against Sweatshops. Other rallies protesting Kohl's involvement with Chentex were held in several cities, including Minneapolis, Milwaukee, Toledo, and Pittsburgh.

*Steellabor*, 570 White Pond Drive, Akron, OH 44320-1156.

## Wal-Mart...It's Not Sam Walton's Store Anymore

If you take a good look behind Wal-Mart's yellow smiley face, you won't see the store Sam Walton built. His dream started nearly 40 years ago. The Wal-Mart Sam began building in 1962 was a business that cared about employees and the communities they served. Sam Walton made it his personal business to make sure that was the case. It's no wonder employees said, "In Sam We Trust," because they could rely on his intervention to fix any problem that came up.

Sam's gone now, and the down-home store he built has been shattered by Wal-Mart management at the company's home office in Bentonville, Ark. Now the store behind the yellow, happy face is one of the world's biggest antiunion companies. All the retail giant's U.S. stores are nonunion. Its transportation and distribution network is nonunion, much of its manufacturing is nonunion with most of it coming from foreign countries, and the company's entire food division, except for 10 courageous meat department workers in a Wal-Mart supercenter in Jacksonville, Texas, is nonunion.

Today's Wal-Mart is a global giant whose management practices bring...

- Lost U.S. jobs.
- Rising U.S. health care costs.
- Lower wage and benefits for all American workers.

While good union families try to shop in union stores, sometimes they can't. When you or your co-workers must shop at Wal-Mart ask them to...

- Buy only American-made products when shopping Wal-mart.
- Ask Wal-Mart managers why they sell so many foreign-made products while the company encourages American patriotism.
- Tell Wal-Mart employees that union families across the country support their desire for fair treatment and good wages and benefits and will help them achieve union representation.
- Tell management to obey the law and respect workers' right to organize to make Wal-Mart a better place to work.

You can let Wal-Mart workers know that joining with co-workers to form a union would empower them to end unfair management practices. Tell Wal-Mart workers to call the toll-free, confidential hotline at 1-800-695-0603.

*United Food and Commercial Workers International Union, 1775 K St., NW, Washington, DC 20006-1598.*

## North American Labor Report

**Support Actors...**As talks between striking Screen Actors and Television and Radio Artists and the advertising industry resume, the AFL-CIO launched a national newspaper ad campaign in support of the strikers. Actors Kevin Spacey and Harrison Ford each donated \$100,000 and TV host Jay Leno donated \$10,000 to the unions' strike fund. AFTRA members struck the advertising industry over management demands to roll back actors' residuals for commercials.

**Victory for Workers...**Eighty workers from the Los Angeles garment factory, J.H. Design, sued the company for running a sweatshop. Now J.H. Design is paying out \$172,000 for back wages and other compensation to those eight workers the company fired. The company made college jackets for a number of American universities and for Nike, Reebok, and Disney. Students and other community activists played an important part in winning the settlement.

**More Trouble for Labor Ready...**Class action lawsuits against Labor Ready, one of the largest and fastest-growing temporary employment agencies, were filed in New York City and San Jose, California. The suits charged that the firm violates the states' laws by illegally skimming money from workers' pay by charging employees an average of \$1.50 to withdraw their daily pay from the company's cash dispensing machines. It is estimated that the company earned some \$7.7 million from that practice in 1999. Labor Ready is one of the leaders in a nationwide trend of temp agencies in the construction industry and already has 839 office in 49 states, Puerto Rico, Canada, and the United Kingdom. The AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades Department's "Temp Workers Deserve a Permanent Voice@Work" campaign is supporting the lawsuits.

**NEA Honors Kennedy...**Calling him "our champion, paladin, and warrior," the National Education Association gave its top honor, the Friend of Education Award, to Senator Edward M. Kennedy.

"Every major education law passed since the 1960s has borne his imprint," declared Bob Chase, president of the nation's largest education union. "Most impressive is his sustained commitment, the sheer persistence of this man's service to children and public education" through 38 years in the Senate.

## Becoming A Good Steward

The following items will serve as a checklist or set of goals you might set for yourself in becoming a good steward:

- Keep yourself informed on union affairs.
- Serve as an example to your members.
- Keep the members informed on union policies and union activities.
- Attend union meetings and union affairs. Encourage and bring the members from your department. Don't chide members for missing meetings. Think of others ways to communicate with them.
- Meet the new members early, inform them, educate them, help them become members--make them more than dues payers.
- Get your local to act as a union--have them stick together.
- Act as a leader--do not let personal likes or dislikes prejudice your actions as a grievance representative.
- Give the membership the satisfaction of listening to their problems.
- Fight discrimination, whether it be overt or very discreet. Discourage it--discourage prejudice of any kind.
- Keep accurate up-to-date records. Write it down.
- Do not promise if you cannot deliver.
- Encourage political action on the part of your members. See to it that they are registered and vote.
- Know how to refer to the union contracts, by-laws, and local and international constitutions. If you are not sure, seek help so that you can become familiar with the documents.
- Encourage and support the union's activities on behalf of organizing the unorganized.
- Inform the membership of union services. Encourage them to take advantage of not only the services the union sponsors outright, but those the union helps subsidize. If your local does not already have a community service representative, encourage the local in creating one.
- Fight, whenever you need it, the anti-union element. You can best do this by being informed and being dedicated to the labor movement.
- Do not hesitate or stall. If you do not know, admit you do not know. Then try to get the answer.
- Keep your workers informed on sources of information. Give pertinent information whenever a worker wants it.
- In dealing with management, remember that you are the elected or appointed representative of your fellow members. Never consider yourself to be inferior to management representatives. You are always their equal.
- Be proud of your position. Remember you are a union representative of your local union, which has full support of tens of thousands of members bound together in an international union, with the support of millions of other union members.
- Wear your union button and encourage your co-workers to wear it.
- Investigate every grievance as if it were your own. Keep the member informed. Make sure you keep your deadlines. There is no excuse for missing a time limit. Research every grievance as if it were going to arbitration, but try to resolve it at the lowest possible level. Keep you local union informed of the status of each grievance.
- Attend and encourage attendance at any labor education program that might be available to you and your members.
- Remember your goal is to be the best union representative you can be. Always strive for this goal. Excellence has no substitute.

TWU Express, 80 West End Ave., New York, NY 10023.

## Make Your Local Stronger...Follow These 10 Steps

**1. Put principles before personalities.** It all begins when you decide to do something to improve your life by joining together to get things done. Don't let personal bugaboos get in the way. Respect each other's rights. Put yourself in the other person's shoes. Then stick together. There's nothing management likes more than a workforce that can be easily divided and manipulated.

**2. Know your union contract.** Management can't take advantage of people who know their rights, only of people who are ignorant of those rights.

**3. Elect a steward/chairperson you trust.** Choosing a person with the biggest mouth who's least scared of the boss certainly helps. But choose someone who is also cool-headed enough to work things out diplomatically.

**4. Share the load.** Your steward/chairperson works both with you and for you. But he or she can't do it alone. Let your steward know what you think and how you can help out. Volunteer for stuff you know you can handle. Over committing is a recipe for letting yourself down as well as others. Is a task too much for you? Split it with a buddy.

**5. Keep on top of the situation.** Build a solid structure by defining what your steward is and isn't responsible for. Encourage other departments to get involved, make sure each is represented, and know who those reps are. Establish who is accountable to it and hold them to it.

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## Make Your Local Stronger...Follow These 10 Steps

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**6. Know when to speak up.** You know what's best for yourself, so tell it like it is. Be sure to include everyone with different points of view. You never know who's been through what you're going through, and solutions can often come from the least expected sources. Got a language problem in your shop? Ask your steward to provide a translator.

**7. Don't spread rumors.** They often divide people and can weaken the union you are building.

**8. Never cry wolf.** Know the difference between a grievance and a gripe. If someone or something is bugging you, work it out with that person, or your steward, or a trusted third party. Don't call in the troops for the small stuff. It wastes energy and can weaken your credibility for the big stuff.

**9. Meet at lunch time.** Most people are too busy to come back for a meeting after work. Lunch meetings include everyone and are a relaxed way to keep everyone updated. Hold those meetings regularly--set a realistic schedule and stick to it. Take turns taking minutes.

**10. You're not at work for just one day.** You can't always get what you want when you want it. One small victory can lead to another and another. Over time, you'll see real gains made. Show your appreciation and say thanks to those who are helping to make your local stronger and workplace better.

UNITE, 1710 Broadway, New York, NY 10019.

## Labor's Impact Felt Nationwide

*Union Mobilization Brings Gains in House and Senate*

Even though Al Gore and congressional Democrats fell painstakingly short of winning in this year's elections, it is widely evident that the labor movement left a deep imprint on the outcome of races all across the country.

Union voters played a decisive role in elections from the presidency to state and local offices. Union households made up a record high 26 percent of voters on election day, up from 23 percent in 1996 and 1998, according to a national survey of union members conducted by the independent polling firm Peter Hart Research Associates.

The high turnout and overwhelming support for Al Gore by Ironworkers and other union members played a pivotal role in many states, including; Michigan, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and Washington. Around the country, union members also mobilized in record numbers around key elections, winning the state senate in Colorado and defeating two "paycheck deception" ballot initiatives that attacked the voice of working families in Oregon. More specifically:

- Al Gore carried Michigan, Pennsylvania, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Washington while losing the vote among non-union households.
- Michigan Senator Debbie Staenow (D) lost the non-union household vote by 20 percent but was elected on the strength of union households making up 43 percent of the electorate and favoring her by a 28 percent margin.
- Jean Carnahan (D) lost the non-union household vote by six percent but was elected because union households voted for her by an 18 percent margin.
- In Washington State, Maria Cantwell (D) lost the non-union household vote by seven percent but won the union household vote by 21 percent.
- Bob Wise (D) lost the non-union household vote by five percent but was elected governor of West Virginia on the strength of a 35 percent margin among union households.
- Bob Holden (D) lost the non-union household vote by four percent but was elected governor of Missouri because union households voted for him by a 12 percent margin.

What was most impressive about the Labor 2000 effort was the unprecedented grassroots and mobilization effort. This ongoing campaign designed to enhance labor's overall political clout was made evident by the record level of union family participation in this year's elections:

- We added 2.3 million union household voters to the polls--up from half a million in 1998.
- More than 1,000 labor field coordinators trained and organized hundreds of thousands of union volunteers--that's up from 400 coordinators in 1998 and 200 in 1996.
- We made eight million personal phone calls to educate union members about the candidates and to get out the vote--up from 5.5 million.

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## Labor's Impact Felt Nationwide

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• We sent out 12 million pieces of mail, distributed 14 million leaflets, and sent out 60,000 e-mails nationwide.

In short, organized labor was clearly the margin of victory for many candidates at all levels. Everyone should be proud of their efforts even though the Republican Party will now control the Presidency and both the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate for the first time in 50 years.

There will undoubtedly be many legislative attacks launched against us, however, labor is more engaged and better prepared to defend itself in the U.S. Congress than it has been in previous years. If it's true that politics is always about tomorrow, it's both satisfying and rewarding to see a labor movement constantly building for the political battles of the future.

AFL-CIO, 815 E. 16th St., NE, Washington, DC 20006.

## Wear It Union Made!

UNITE provides an on-line, up-to-date list of unionized companies that make promotional products, [www.uniteunion.org/unionlabel/promo2.html](http://www.uniteunion.org/unionlabel/promo2.html). The website also lists several suggested uses for the item, such as including logos on baseball caps and knitted caps for active and retired members, printing colorful "Get Out the Vote" T-shirts, and using embroidered patches for awards.

## 2001 Edition Books for Union Leaders & Activists

### The Labor Law Source Book: Texts of Twenty Federal Labor Laws

*Edited by Robert M. Schwarts*

• This book includes the National Labor Relations Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act, the Labor Management Relations (Taft-Hartley) Act, Occupational Safety and Health Act, Family and Medical Leave Act, and 15 more. The full, actual language of each law is presented--without elaboration by the editor--and a helpful topic finder at the back of the book tells you which law applies to basic concerns and classes of workers. A valuable basic reference, the book is 290 pages and the cost is \$15.00.

### The Basic ACLU Guide to the Rights of Employees and Union Members

*By Wayne N. Outten, Robert J. Rabin, Lisa R. Lipman*

• This comprehensive book answers hundreds of workers' most common employment- and union-related questions, from explaining what pension "vesting" is and the law on overtime to a worker's rights as a union member, including the law on union elections, union discipline, and loads of other issues.

The book is clearly written and easy to understand. It asks questions ("Can I be fired for my off-the-job relationships?"), then follows with direct answers.

Each section comes with legal citations, if you really want to scare someone. This book has been put together by the American Civil Liberties Union, it even comes with lists of legal resources for victims of all sorts of employment discrimination. The book is 640 pages and the cost is \$15.95.

UCS Books has many categories to choose from. For example, *Tools for Union Leaders and Activists, Resources for Negotiators, Popular Reading and Cartoons, Understanding Economics and History, Biographies*, and other Union-Building Tools.

To place an order for these books you need to contact **UCS Books, 165 Conduit St., Annapolis, MD 21401-2512** or call **800-321-2545**. If you would like to place an order on-line please go to [www.unionist.com](http://www.unionist.com).

## Disability Benefits Can Continue While You Work

Don't let the fear of losing your disability payments or your medical coverage discourage you from trying to work.

Under special rules called "work incentives," you can continue to receive cash benefits and health care coverage while you test your ability to work on a regular basis.

Different work incentives are available, depending on whether you receive Social Security or Supplemental Security Income disability payments.

If you're thinking about going back to work, look into these special rules. They're designed to help you make the transition to full-time employment with the risk of losing your benefits.

However, be sure to let Social Security know that you're returning to work, even if it's only on a trial basis.

For more information, call Social Security at 1-800-772-1213 and ask for the booklet, *Working While Disabled--How We Can Help*.

*The Ironworker*, 1750 New York Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20006.

## Articles?

Do you have an idea, strategy, or point of view about *Labor News Digest*? If so, let us know.

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