

This Is Simply Our Time

Another Labor Day has come and gone. For many in the population it was marked by an extra day of rest and maybe a backyard barbeque. The annual newspaper articles made an appearance and each contained the obligatory discussion about why the long weekend at the beginning of September is not merely a marker for the end of summer, but rather recognition of the labor movement.

Most of these articles then proceeded to report statistics that focused on the continuing decline of labor in today's society and often raised questions about the future viability of the labor movement.

Lately it seems that there is a constant flow of reports about labor losing it relevance. The media seems less supportive of our causes than in the past and much of the reporting has a negative tone. The primary focus tends to be on the declining percentages of unionized workers and the division that presently exists within organized labor.

However as we all know, the battles in the labor movement have never been won because we had the numbers, but rather because of our commitment and dedication. We have never represented the majority in society. Our successes have been achieved because we acted in a unified manner and that solidarity magnified our influence exponentially.

Is the labor movement in both the United States and Canada facing a tremendous number of challenges at this point in history? Will the labor movement survive? The answer to both of these questions is a resounding YES! Workers have always met resistance when attempting to make changes. Accomplishing our goals has never been easy, but that has never deterred our predecessors. This is simply our time and our set of challenges.

Imagine for a moment the struggles that the earliest trade unionists had to endure. The eight-hour day, overtime, health and pension benefits, and many of the other things that today we take for granted were only dreams at that point in time. Think of the challenges that our own forefathers faced when they first formed our great Alliance in 1893. In comparison are today's obstacles insurmountable? Hardly, but it will take a concerted effort to achieve success.

President Short has challenged our members in the United States to become engaged in the upcoming off-year elections and that challenge must be met, but it cannot end there. We in the labor movement need to harness the positive energy that is created from such activism and continue to build upon it. For the sake of those that will follow, we cannot and will not shirk from the challenges of our time.

2007 SUPPLIES

The local union supplies for 2007 will be mailed at the end of November to those local unions that have submitted their 3rd Quarter Report for 2006 and purchased the appropriate number of per capita stamps.

The number of per capita stamps that must be purchased is equal to the number of members reported on the 1st and 2nd Quarterly Reports for 2006 plus two times the number of members reported on the 3rd Quarter Report for 2006 (to allow for an estimate of the numbers that will be reported on the 4th Quarter Report for 2006). When the 4th Quarter Report for 2006 is submitted in January 2007, an adjustment to balance each local union's account is made if necessary.

PER CAPITA TAX INCREASE

As a reminder, delegates to the 65th Quadrennial Convention voted to increase the per capita tax for local unions by one dollar (\$1.00) effective 1/1/07. Therefore, effective that date, the quarterly per capita will increase to \$42. The per capita for Special Department local unions will remain unchanged.