

Ray Neu (local 72) speaks against membership's right to vote

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..... ONE MAN ONE VOTE LOSES

20 Local unions submitted 27 resolutions to the UAW International prior to the Convention demanding the democratic right of the membership to vote for all International officers-One Man One Vote. Even though no Local submitted a resolution supporting the the present system whereby only Conventions delegates vote for International Officers the Resolutions Committee at the Convention ignored these 27 resolutions and wrote their own calling for the Convention to maintain the present undemocratic system.

There was quite a lot of debate on the Convention floor over this resolution. For example:

Delegate David Stewart of Local 377 said, "My Local has wasted \$10,000 in the last 3 Conventions

sending me out here to cast votes when the deal is already made in the back room and in the caucuses. If we're going to send our delegates out here let them cast their vote!

Delegate Ray Neu from Local 72 took the Convention floor to speak against one man one vote and in favor of retaining the present system that only allows for the delegates to vote for the International officers. He said that in all his years this was the best system. The rest of the Local 72 delegation did not hold this position and voted for changing to one man one vote.

The majority of the Convention delegates voted to keep the voting procedure as it is.

Friday, June 6, 1980, Los Angeles Herald Examiner

United Auto Workers' 'solidarity' not all it's cracked up to be

By Jeff Ringsrud
Herald Examiner staff writer

A crack appeared in the much touted "solidarity" of the United Auto Workers yesterday as a small group of dissident delegates voiced dissatisfaction with the union's leadership and its alleged failure to address the problems of rank-and-file members.

"We intend to go back and mobilize the rank and file from a grass roots level, because the leadership of the UAW is not addressing the problems of plant closing and job security," said Al Gardner, delegate representing tool and die

workers in Detroit.

Gardner said he expressed the sentiments of about 30 delegates unable to get heard at the UAW convention in Anaheim.

The disgruntled delegates claimed the union's emphasis on restricting foreign cars as a way of easing unemployment is misguided.

"The thing we want is to do something to prevent plant closings and give the membership real job security," said Ron Delia, representing workers at the Ford plant in Pico Rivera that closed in February.

"I don't think we should be after the Japanese automakers, we think

we should direct our actions against the Big Three (General Motors, Chrysler, Ford)," said Delia.

He said the UAW leadership appeared unwilling to take on the issue of major corporations setting up plants abroad at the expense of domestic jobs.

Bob Berghoff, representing workers at McDonnell Douglas in Long Beach, said more than half the components of the aircraft made there is produced overseas.

"I've seen it happen in aerospace and now it's starting to happen with autos, and I think it's time to stand up for the working man in this country," Berghoff said.

UAW Convention Report

INT'L Falls Short on key issues

Anaheim, California - June 1-6 issued by FIGHTBACK

The 26th UAW Convention took place in Anaheim California on June 1 through 6. For most of the 1.5 million UAW members across the country very little changed during that week, at least very little changed for the better. Of course there was a lot of celebrating at the Convention Center, including 100's of balloons, streamers, bands playing and back slapping when the Doug Fraser Team was elected in a prearranged floor show to leadership of the International.

But for the most part the Convention failed to deal concretely with the pressing problems of; massive layoffs, plant closings, close to bankrupt SUB funds, the rampant inflation and worsening times for retirees that confronts UAW members daily.

Two Fightback Slate candidates, John Leyendecker and Jon Melrod attended as observers. We were able to witness first hand the functioning of the UAW International. We feel that although much of what we saw during the week was negative. Nevertheless there was a good number of delegates from every Region who went to LA with the intention of confronting the pressing issues facing the membership and of struggling to transform the International into a more fighting, democratic union.

Throughout the Convention week

many of these delegates stood up on the Convention floor to argue for resolutions and Constitutional changes that would benefit the rank and file, rather than rubber stamping the International.

Unfortunately many of their attempts to speak out on the floor were stifled by the completely undemocratic procedure in which the Convention was conducted.

The delegates from Local 72 who campaigned on the issues of one man one vote, continued 1 year terms for stewards, and no dues increase for laid off members, stuck to their campaign pledges and voted accordingly on these issues as they came to the floor.

In addition there was a successful picket line of 150 delegates and supporters that called for stronger action by the International in opposing plant closings and in support of job security. (See reprinted newspaper article page 3.)

On the second to last day of the Convention there was also a press conference called for by 45 delegates and alternates who were unhappy with the weak stance of the International. (see reprinted article page 8)

The Fightback Slate hopes that the following report will help educate and inform Local 72 members as to some of the events that took place at the Convention.

FRASER'S "STATE OF THE UNION"

The following are quotes from Fraser's opening speech.

"...as we meet here today, we have 58 different Local unions that are on strike, mostly small plants... and this Convention should let those 58 smaller Local unions know that we stand with them in their struggle."

He noted that the Convention is meeting "in one of the most troublesome periods in the history of our union...starting tomorrow (June 22) we will have 235,000 workers indefinitely laid off just in Ford, GM, Chrysler and AMC."

In referring to imports Fraser cited figures showing they had taken over 27% of the market in the first 4 months of this year. The Japanese share of the market is 22%.

Fraser said, "If you just eliminated the overtime in Japan you would reduce their exports by 400,000 cars."

Speaking about the worsening political situation in the 80's Fraser said, "The reason is that Congress has no commitment to solve the problems confronting the nation; their only commitment is to get themselves re-elected. The political parties of this country are not held accountable for their actions."

In his opening speech Fraser addressed many of the problems facing UAW members but his speech provided little or no direction out of the present crisis.

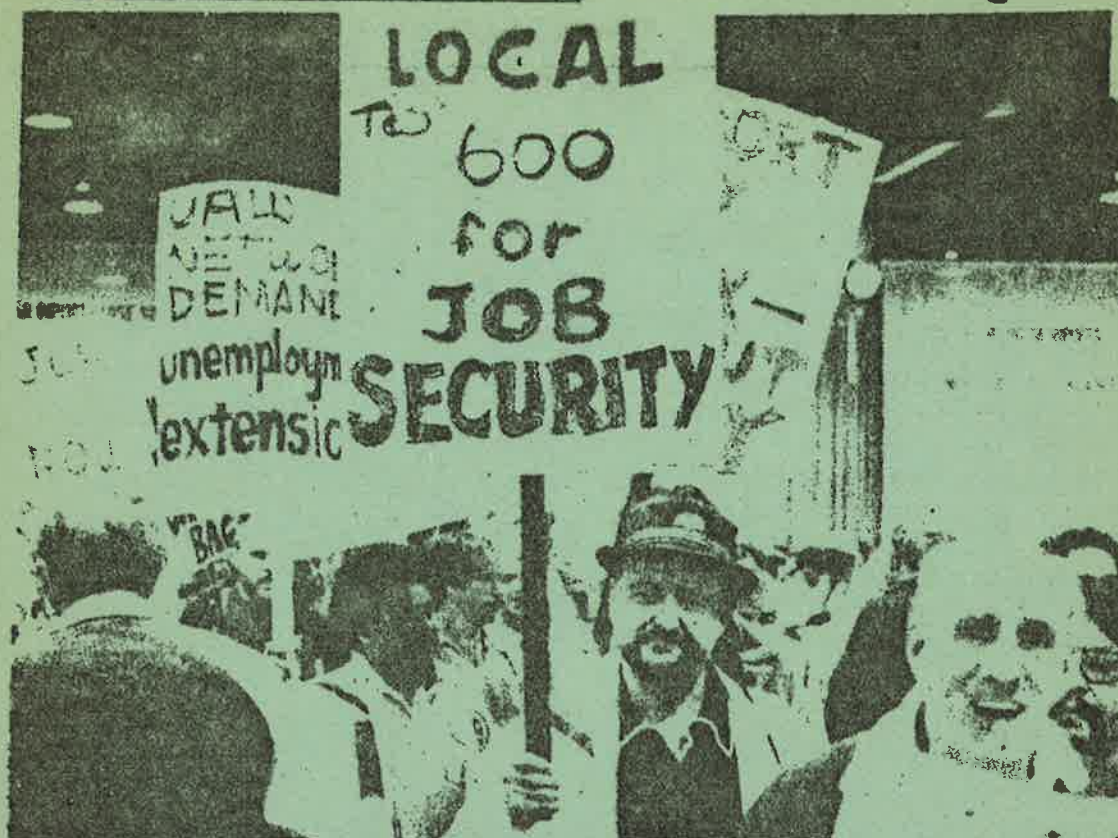
Fraser was on target when he ponted to the inadequacy of the Democratic Party in dealing with

our problems. After 40 years of Labor backing the Democrats the 26th UAW Convention had no Presidential Candidate to offer the delegates. But instead of calling on Labor to form its own independent political party to send Labor, instead of so called "friends of Labor" to Washington, Fraser called for a return to the 1976 Democratic Party Platform. Brother Fraser, what good did it do us in '76--that was the same year AMC in Milwaukee shut down, causing untold hardship both there and in Kenosha.

As to the 58 small plants on strike Fraser said, "we stand with them in their struggle." We couldn't agree more Brother Fraser, but talk is cheap. Right now UAW Local 469 at Master Lock in Milwaukee is on strike and the company is running scabs across the picket line. It should be up to UAW Region 10 to build support but up till now it has been up to rank and file workers on their own to join the Master Lock picket line.

As to your plan for stopping overtime in Japan to cut down 400,000 imports. There are presently Big 3 plants in the US suffering massive layoffs while the remaining work force is being forced to work 58 hours a week. President Fraser, how do you propose to cut off overtime in Japan when the UAW International has never fought to win voluntary overtime in the Big 3?

See Fightback's Program Page 7



Sign-Bearing Autoworkers March At UAW Convention In Anaheim

Autoworkers Picket Convention

ANAHEIM — About 150 noisy, sign-carrying autoworkers, unhappy that their union isn't taking a stronger stand to protect them from plant closures, staged a brief protest Monday at the United Auto Workers convention.

The group included union convention delegates and rank-and-file workers from UAW Network, a California autoworker caucus.

The marchers demanded that certain improvements be made in UAW contracts to protect workers who have lost jobs and might be out of work as auto plants close.

Chants such as "Reopen Pico Rivera" (the Southern California Ford

Motor Co. plant recently closed) filled the air.

The march, which began shortly before the second day of the six-day convention was to begin, moved inside as protesters headed for the convention floor.

A brief shoving match occurred when some UAW officials attempted to keep the protesters out.

"The hall doesn't allow us to have signs in," said one of the officials when asked why he shut the glass doors.

The chanting and sign waving continued as the marchers circled the inside of the main hall in full view of an estimated 3,000 delegates and UAW leaders.

Pete Kelley, a convention delegate and an employee of General Motor's Technical Center in Michigan, said the coalition was not happy with union leaders and the lack of issues addressed so far.

He said he particularly disliked UAW president Douglas Fraser's keynote speech Sunday, during which Fraser blamed much of the current auto industry woes on Japanese imports.

"Imports are not all of the problem," Kelley said.

He said a lack of auto plant expansion and auto company and union concessions to technology that eliminates jobs are factors which also affect autoworker employment.

PLANT CLOSINGS WEAK RESOLUTION DRAWS DEBATE

The resolutions cited a study estimating that 15 million US workers were victims of plant shutdowns between 1969 and 1976. Given this problem, the resolution states, "it is the responsibility of government to establish decent standards of corporate behavior in these situations, to preserve jobs and protect the economic life blood of our communities." The resolution specifically endorses the National Employment Priorities Act (HR 5040) which would require mandatory advance notice of shutdowns, public hearings, assistance toward reconversion, transfer rights, income maintenance, retraining, etc.

OPPOSITION

Although most delegates support legislative action like HR5040

to protect jobs, many took the Convention floor to speak for additional stronger activities. Some of the most vocal opposition came from the Local 3, Dodge Main delegation whose plant has been completely shut down. As one of their spokesmen delegate Lacy Brooks said on the Convention floor, "We need to place emphasis on reopening shut-down plants and we need to create a coalition to call for a national day of demonstration to implement the resolution." During the last few days of the Convention 1000 delegates, a third of all those present signed a petition circulated by Dodge Main Local 3 calling for a Labor Day March on Washington to oppose plant shutdowns.

Delegate after delegate spoke up on the floor demanding stronger action against plant closings and for job security. The list of UAW plants that have shut down grows longer every day. Lynch Road and Dodge Main in Detroit, Mahwah in New Jersey, GM Southgate and Pico Rivera in California and more have shut their doors. Finally Doug Fraser took the floor to concede to the delegates that as a final resort the UAW International would issue a call for a march on Washington DC.

Many delegates remained dissatisfied as can be seen by the article on page 3 from the LA Register and the following interview and conversations with 2 Local Presidents.

LOCAL 923 PRES. DEMANDS CONTRACT PROTECTION FROM PLANT CLOSINGS

The membership of Ford Local 923 in Pico Rivera California received shocking news one day a few months ago. Management walked into the plant and announced that in 2 weeks all production would halt for good. Many of the workers with 25 and up years seniority were thrown out on the streets without transfer rights. One brother was 1 week short of 10 years for his pension. He lost the whole thing.

On the first day of debate on the International's weak kneed proposal on job security, Local 923 President Ron Delia took the Convention floor to call for contractual language to protect workers from plant closings. In conversations with Ron Delia throughout the Convention he specifically pointed to 5 contract demands that would help in securing UAW members jobs.

The Fightback Slate agrees with the demands raised by Delia and we have listed them on page 7 in our program for the UAW.

FIGHTBACK INTERVIEWS PRES. OF FORD UNIT

INTERVIEW WITH AL GARDNER
PRESIDENT LOCAL 600 FORD
TOOL AND DIE UNIT.

Q. Al, do you think the International has dealt adequately with the problem of job security at this Convention?

A. No they have not. The International by calling for import quotas and other protectionist measures is ignoring the real danger. The real danger is the

Big 3 who are planning to invest 80 billion by the mid 80's that will end up exporting our jobs out of North America to cheap labor markets overseas. 4

Right now Ford is planning the new front wheel drive Escort and Mercury Lynx which will make their debut this fall as the future life blood of Ford. It will not, however, be the life blood for UAW members since the new car will have manual transaxles from Japan, cylinder heads from Italy, brakes from Brazil, clutches from France, shock absorber struts from Spain and other parts from an additional 12 countries.

Q. Do the other auto companies have similar plans to export our jobs overseas?

A. Certainly. GM is building 5 new plants overseas and Chrysler

has similar plans. As I understand it AMC/Renault will be producing some of its 4 cylinder engines in Mexico. By the mid 80's Mexico will have the capacity to build 2,000,000 engines a year even though the total Mexican overall local car output probably will not exceed 500,000 by that time.

Q. Are you saying that foreign workers or foreign countries are our enemy?

A. MOST DEFINATELY NOT. THE ENEMIES ARE OUR OWN MANUFACTURERS WHO PLAN TO EXPORT OUR JOBS OVERSEAS. It is the American companies like Chrysler that have let Dodge Main

in Detroit deteriorate to the point where they have shut it down completely without putting a dime back in for retooling or modernizing. We have already seen American corporations use the present crisis to force concessions. Ford salaried workers have lost their stock plan and 20% of their vacation. Recently we have seen Ford threaten to close Cleveland Stamping unless the membership votes to accept major take-aways in the present contract.

These greedy American corporations are our enemy. As a start the UAW should initiate a call for a demonstration against plant closings in Washington on Labor Day.

AL GARDNER WAS NOMINATED FOR INTERNATIONAL VICE PRESIDENT AT THE CONVENTION BUT HE DECLINED THE NOMINATION.

UAW Constitutional Changes

There was an entire series of changes in the UAW Constitution voted on and passed at the Convention. For the most part they will not be of benefit to the membership, although the International played their game of trying to paint a very different picture.

ARTICLE 11 SALARIES-International Reps salaries raised from \$25,500 to \$35,735.

ARTICLE 16 INITIATION FEES AND DUES-SECTION 19-50% of the interests and dividends of the International Strike Fund may now be used in the organization, education, and communication fund.

ARTICLE 16-SECTION 16-Laid off members collecting SUB will pay 1 hours straight time dues per month instead of the previous sum of \$5 per month.

ARTICLE 19 CONTRACT AND NEGOTIATIONS-Changed so that Local Unions no longer have to hold membership meetings for the pupose of voting on contracts. Under the new language the Regional Director has the power to establish other methods of ratification. This change will permit Local 72 to continue its present form of contract ratification, but may very well have a long term effect of limiting the membership's right to ratify contracts. For details see the article on what happened at Local 148 in Long Beach California.

ARTICLE 45-SHOP STEWARDS AND SHOP COMMITTEEMEN-Those Locals that so desire will continue to have 1 year terms of office for stewards and committeemen.

FOR CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE ON CONTRACT RATIFICATION SEE PAGE 7

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CONTRACT RATIFICATION PROCEDURE

DANGEROUS RESOLUTION

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One of the most organized delegations at the Convention came from Local 148, McDonnell Douglas in Long Beach, California. Their slate of 22 candidates, known as the Responsible Action Program, swept all delegate and alternate positions in their Local. The entire delegation was well organ-

ized and strongly opposed to changing Article 19 Section 3 of the Constitution. Even though the Constitutional change passed we are reprinting the following excerpt from a letter handed out by Local 148 delegates on the Convention floor.

IN 1975 OUR CONTRACT WAS APPROVED WITHOUT A RATIFICATION MEETING. ONLY A SKIMPY SUMMARY OF THE CONTRACT CHANGES WERE DISCLOSED TO OUR MEMBERSHIP. MEMBERS WERE THEN INTIMIDATED INTO CASTING THEIR BALLOT AT THE UNION HALL WITHOUT THE BENEFIT OF AN OPEN MEETING WHERE FULL DISCLOSURE AND OPEN DEBATE COULD TAKE PLACE. THEREFORE OUR MEMBERS VOTED TO ACCEPT AN INFERIOR CONTRACT BECAUSE THEY WERE NOT AWARE OF ITS FULL CONTENT.

ITION WE SUFFERED MAJOR SETBACKS IN HEALTH CARE BENEFITS AND CONTRACT LANGUAGE COVERING UNION REPRESENTATION WAS GUTTED. BECAUSE OUR MEMBERSHIP HAS ALREADY FELT THE REPRUCUSSIONS OF A CONTRACT APPROVED WITHOUT A RATIFICATION MEETING, WE THINK IT IS IMPORTANT ALL UAW MEMBERS RECOGNIZE THE PITFALLS OF THIS PROPOSED CHANGE.

THE RATIFICATION MEETING IS ONE OF THE MOST CRUCIAL "CHECKS AND BALANCES" OUR UAW MEMBERS HAVE.

AS A RESULT WE WERE SADDLED WITH A SUB-STANDARD AGREEMENT. FOR EXAMPLE, INDIVIDUALS SEEKING PROMOTION TO A HIGHER LEVEL JOB MUST FIRST TAKE A CUT IN PAY FROM 50 CENTS TO \$1.50 AN HOUR. IN ADD-

IT IS THE ONLY WAY WE CAN HOLD OUR UNION OFFICIALS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CONTRACTS THEY NEGOTIATE, AND IT MUST BE PRESERVED.

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1. FIGHT FOR CONTRACT LANGUAGE TO PROTECT JOB SECURITY
 - A. 2 year warning and 2 years full benefits including pay if a plant closes down.
 - B. No forced overtime
 - C. Guaranteed SUB fund
 - D. Voluntary inverse seniority during layoffs
 - E. Short work week with no cut in pay
 2. FULL COMMITMENT BY THE UAW TO ORGANIZE THE SOUTH
 3. STOP THE EXPORT OF UAW JOBS TO LOW WAGE COUNTRIES OVERSEAS
 4. FIGHT RACIAL DISCRIMINATION BY STRONGER ACTION INCLUDING MORE FUNDING FOR LOCAL UNION FAIR EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES COMMITTEE'S
 5. UAW COMMITMENT TO FIGHT FOR WOMEN'S EQUALITY, IN PARTICULAR THE PASSAGE OF THE ERA
 6. STOP BEGGING THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY FOR FAVORS, INSTEAD FORM AN INDEPENDENT THIRD POLITICAL PARTY DEDICATED TO SOCIAL JUSTICE.