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2004 IN REVIEW



See 'Headlines from 2004,' page 3

An Open Letter to the President-Elect

Dear President Bush:

On November 3rd, you stated that you intend to heal the wounds and earn the trust of the 55 million voters (myself included) who voted for Senator Kerry. We agree with your intention. We believe everyone wants to bring America together. We are one nation. There are no colonies of red and blue states.

However, among the reasons for the existing division are the actions of your first Administration, one which showed little inclination to reach out to American workers and their labor organizations. For instance:

- On Feb 17, 2001, you outlawed project labor agreements in federal contracts, indicating a disregard for area labor standards and industrial peace;
- When the Transportation Security Administration was created private sector minimum wage workers were brought on as federal employees and were prohibited from forming and joining a labor organization;
- When the Homeland Security Administration was created with the merger and consolidation of dozens of other agencies, many of the representation rights previously enjoyed by these employees were taken away under the false premise that union membership poses a security threat to our nation;
- The Department of Defense is now following the same blueprint as HSA and trying to take away the rights of 750,000 federal employees under the National Security Personnel System;
- Regulations restricting overtime pay for up to 8 million workers were imposed at your direction a month before the election.

The list, unfortunately, could go on and on.

You have won the election, by a majority, and I accept you as my President as every other American should. Since you are prohibited from running for another term, this term will be your legacy. Will it be a legacy of genuine conservative

compassion, a centrist Administration that meets the wants and needs of a majority of Americans? America desperately needs a centrist government, not an extremist government—from either the far right or the far left. If you wish to make that your goal, we stand ready to help in any way.

We agree with your observation that America cannot long endure the kind of divisiveness that has created bluer blue states and redder red states. We have to change perceptions to heal these wounds. Let's begin with a respectful dialogue directed toward the opportunity to find common ground. America's workers deserve no less from you and me. They want, need and demand stable jobs with decent wages and adequate benefits. They expect their government to protect them not only from foreign enemies but also from unfair foreign competition and cruel market forces.

Our shipyard workers in Pascagoula, Mississippi—building the sister ships of the USS Cole—are, with good reason, concerned that their jobs may be outsourced to Asia. When one Communist Chinese shipyard has a greater capacity than the entire US shipbuilding industry, we're concerned for the future of our nation.

We're very concerned that the entire national defense focus has been exclusively on terrorism, ignoring the possibility we will ever fight a conventional war against a nation—including nations such

as Communist China which is developing an arsenal of weapons of mass destruction and more conventional arms. Today's friends are tomorrow's enemies. Our national security cannot depend upon anyone except ourselves.

The Metal Trades Department is a strong proponent of national defense. We build and maintain the arsenal of the United States. We want it to continue to be built in the US by US workers who are aware that the weapons systems they build and maintain will be used by their sons and daughters. And they build it with that in mind.

You have repeatedly pledged that you will not outsource our national security to foreign powers; we believe that includes our defense jobs. It sends a powerful and negative message to workers in the US when Marine One, the helicopter you use, is foreign-built. That indicates you do not trust American workers to build the Presidential helicopter.

This is not the official position of any other organization. I do not purport to speak for all labor, only for the Metal Trades Department. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely and Respectfully,

Ronald E. Ault, President
Metal Trades Department, AFL-CIO

What a Privilege

Early this Fall, I went to the Executive Council of the Metal Trades and asked for some additional financial support to fund a series of trips to our councils in October to coordinate a series of organizing and education rallies. Their response was immediate and overwhelming.

On behalf of our councils, I want to thank the Executive Council for their support of the program. It was a privilege for me, but it was also an immeasurable benefit for our councils. The communities that our councils call home saw for the first time labor organizations with powerful potential and boundless energy—Amarillo, Texas; Tullahoma, Tennessee; Bremerton and Hanford Washington; Portsmouth, New Hampshire; Fernald, Ohio; Norfolk-Virginia Beach, Virginia; Pascagoula, Mississippi; New Orleans, Louisiana; and Belin, New Mexico. It was a privilege to see the organizational skills and leadership capabilities that until recently had largely gone unappreciated.

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

2004 will be remembered as a hectic, challenging time—coming from every direction. The Department was faced with:

- Alarming declines in the Navy's allocations for shipbuilding and repair;
- New initiatives to contract federal jobs covered by Metal Trades contracts;
- An unprecedented power grab by the Department of Defense with its new National Security Personnel System;
- Ongoing efforts by the Defense Department and the White House to expand loopholes in Buy American requirements;
- A general decline in manufacturing and craft employment throughout the economy;

- A Republican-dominated Congress and White House intent on implementing anti-worker legislation and policies; and
- The most extensive voter registration/ voter education drive ever by organized labor.

The Department met the test of these and other challenges with a strategy to improve communications by utilizing the web and e-mail; employ the most up-to-date technology in the operations and support of the Department; and to forge and strengthen alliances with labor, like-minded and supportive business groups and political leaders.

How did we do? You be the judge. This publication presents a few of the highlights of the past year and takes a look at the challenges of the upcoming year.

Headlines from 2004

60 Council Leaders Participate in Department Training at IAM's Placid Harbor Center

Rumsfeld Plan Threatens Rights for 750,000 DOD Workers

White House Plans to Cut Overtime Rights of Millions

Thousands Protest NSPS

Bremerton, Tidewater, Portsmouth Rallies Draw Thousands

30 Organizations Coalesce to Fight NSPS



MTD Conference Draws 150 Delegates; Features Sweeney, Gephardt, Hunt, Schaitburger

More than 150 delegates attended the Metal Trades Annual Conference in Washington September 2nd and 3rd to get a sharp look at developments confronting shipbuilding, nuclear energy, petrochemical and other industrial operations under Metal Trades Department contracts.

Highlights of the session included



Former House Minority Leader Dick Gephardt accepts applause from conferees as he begins his address. At right are Department President Ron Ault and Iron Workers President Joseph Hunt.

an address by AFL-CIO President John Sweeney who described the looming November elections as “the most important in our lifetimes.” He praised the Kerry-Edwards ticket as “winners” and said thanks to their efforts “working families and labor” were placed at the top of the agenda in the Democratic Convention in Boston.

Sweeney singled out Kerry for his affirmation of labor’s values. “John Kerry really put down a mark for all elected officials to follow when he said ‘I don’t cross picket lines; never have, never will.’”

In the face of a “Republican smear machine in full gear,” Sweeney predicted Kerry can overcome it. “Kerry is a tough and steady guy. We’re going to give him our very best.” The AFL-CIO will see to it that every vote in this election will be counted, Sweeney vowed.

Delegates gave their warmest welcome to Dick Gephardt serving as a surrogate for the Kerry-Edwards campaign. Gephardt, who has enjoyed strong ties to the

labor movement throughout his congressional career, said his commitment to workers will remain firm.

“As long as I’ve got a breath in my body I’m going to fight for the working families of this country,” Gephardt said.

He said the Bush Administration is foisting a distorted definition of patriotism on the country.

“Patriotism is not just about protecting the country. It’s also about protecting our people and our workers. It’s about providing education and health care for Americans.”

Gephardt expressed confidence that voters “are ready for the kind of message of hope and opportunity” that the Kerry campaign embraces. He criticized the Republicans for failing to make any mention of jobs and

work except as an export.

Patriotism Defined

He said Republican economic policy ignores the need for adequate wages and benefits to drive consumer demand and expressed concern over what he said is a “concerted political attempt by Republi-

Right: Cynthia Brown, head of the American Shipbuilding Association, addressing the conference.



cans to do in unions.”

Gephardt said winning this election is “all about turnout.” When the time comes, he predicted, America’s working families will “step up, stand out and take back our country.”

Iron Workers Message

Iron Workers President Joe Hunt showcased advances in job safety that Iron Workers and other trades have achieved through improved standards and regulation and pointed to impressive organizing that all trade and craft unions have experienced in cooperation with industry. “Through our principles and partners we have captured an increasing market share and ensured the best outcome for workers.” Cooperative efforts within the industry have “enabled unions to work with good faith,” he said.

Nevertheless, Hunt said, “we have to face the losses we have endured since 2000.” Alluding to the Bush-Rumsfeld initiative to impose the National Security Personnel System (NSPS) on Defense Department personnel, Hunt called it the “worst form of cowardice” and “out-and-

Continued, next page



MTD, Forges Progress Through New Alliances

Continued from previous page

out shameful” to impugn the patriotism of DOD workers. “We have worked in times of war and peace” without surrendering personal freedom and the right to union representation.

Harold Schaitburger, President of the International Association of Fire Fighters, recalled the tragedy of 911 when more than 300 of his union’s members perished in the World Trade Center collapse. Schaitburger said his visit to the conference was an opportunity to say thanks to all the union craft workers who worked for days in the rubble to search for survivors and bodies. “We recognize that when the chips were down, your members worked for days with us. We’ll never forget,” he said.

He also expressed the Fire Fighters appreciation for “the generosity, solidarity and commitment of the Metal Trades and President Ron Ault in securing bargaining rights for federal locals in fire fighting units.

Schaitburger said it will take the same level of commitment and support to win the presidential election for John Kerry. Labor will be forced to “match its people power, economic power and political power against a Bush machine that is mean, angry and flooded with cash.”

He accused the Bush Administration of creating an economy “that might be great for George Bush and Dick Cheney, but not for working people.” Countering the Republican’s negative attacks will require workers to keep the focus on people—“the economy, jobs, health care and education,” he declared.

Shipbuilding Crisis Imperils Navy’s Future

Cynthia Brown, President of the American Shipbuilding Association, sounded an alarm over continued declines in shipbuilding activity in the nation. For 13 straight years—America has had the lowest rates of naval ship construction since 1932. At the current rate of construction—six ships a year—the U.S. Navy will have a 180 ship fleet in 30 years. Today, she said, the Navy has only 297 available ships, despite the fact that the wars in Iraq

and Afghanistan have required the largest naval mobilization since World War II.

Brown said the demands on the U.S. fleet have been so great that the Navy has been forced to conduct “experiments in desperation” such as rotating crews at sea. Such techniques, she said, have resulted in skimping on regular maintenance and diverting ships to foreign yards for repair.

Brown predicted that China is on its way to eclipse the U.S. Navy in the next 10 years. China’s rise in shipbuilding has enabled it to capture 11 percent of the world market.

“If we lose our ability to build ships, we will cease to be a sea power. If we cease to be a sea power, we will no longer be a world power,” she warned.

Balisle on One Shipyard

Rear Admiral Philip Balisle, Commander of Naval Sea Systems Command, praised the work of Metal Trades shipyard workers in both federal and private yards. “This team has done great things” in maintaining the Navy’s highest state of readiness “thanks to the day-to-day work” of Metal Trades workers.

Balisle said the Navy will continue to make demands on shipyard workers to reach greater efficiencies, although he conceded that the term efficiency can also



Fire Fighters President Harold Schaitburger.

be used as a buzz word for “doing more with fewer people.”

Balisle refused to be drawn into the controversy over NSPS. In response to queries about how NAVSEA figures into efforts for change to personnel policies in the Department of Defense, Balisle said NAVSEA’s role is to implement policies once they have been adopted. He did however promise that under his watch, NAVSEA will

implement policies in a manner that is “fair, diligent and consistent. We will engage with you in full collaboration.”

Other highlights of the conference included:

- A presentation by the AFL-CIO’s Bill Samuel and Byron Charlton on labor’s congressional agenda.
- A multi-union press conference to call attention to the threat represented by DOD’s National Security Personnel System.
- A panel of union legislative representatives highlighting cooperation among Metal Trades affiliates and the AFL-CIO on legislative issues.
- Workshops on NSPS and health and safety issues.
- A hands-on demonstration of the use of the AFL-CIO Working Families Tool Kit.

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The Metaletter.
888 16th St. NW, Room 670,
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Greg Kenefick, editor
e-mail: gregk141@aol.com



Councils Rally for Working Families

Metal Trades councils held a series of rallies in the fall to urge Metal Trades-represented working families to go to the polls on election day. Focusing on unique Metal Trades issues—the controversial National Security Personnel System, failure by the Bush Administration to press for adequate shipbuilding budgets, anti-union policies within the Department of Energy—the rallies turned out thousands of workers and families.

Rallies were held by Metal Trades Councils in Tidewater, Virginia; Tullahoma, Tennessee; Belin, New Mexico; Portsmouth, New Hampshire; Seattle; Amarillo, Texas; Pascagoula, Mississippi; Cincinnati, Ohio; and New Orleans.



Congress Moves Fund to Pay Sick Nuclear Workers

Over the objections of the Bush Administration, Congress has taken the responsibility for compensating sick nuclear workers from the Department of Energy and assigned it to the Department of Labor. The original law enacted two years ago set up a \$95 million compensation fund for nuclear workers and put the job with the DOL. But, the Bush White House objected to that decision. Instead, the Administration set up a system that gave the job to Department of Energy contractors that ran the nuclear programs. At year-end only 31 of some 25,000 claims have been paid.

'Sea Swapping' Delays Navy's Repairs

"Sea swapping" is one of the experimental techniques the Navy is using for its wartime deployment for Afghanistan and Iraq, but the tactic may be straining the shrinking fleet.

Sea swapping involves flying in new crews to forward-positioned ships at sea rather than bringing the ship into port for the exchange.

The Metal Trades and the American Shipbuilding Association have jointly expressed concerns that the Navy's efforts to extend individual ship deployments could compromise needed repairs and periodic maintenance. The Navy should, instead, be pressing the Pentagon and the Administration to pursue additional funding to speed up shipbuilding and repair schedules. At the current rate of shipbuilding, the Navy's overall fleet will fall below 200 ships even though the Navy's own analysts have

called for 375 ships for the fleet.

Based on a study by the Center of Naval Analysis, sea swapping is having a negative effect on morale and maintenance because crews perform best when they are trained on and familiar with their assigned ship.

'Protecting' Shipbuilding, Pentagon Style

Arthur K. Cebrowski, a top aide to Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, wants the latitude to evade congressional orders requiring the Pentagon to "Buy American" ships, weapons and materials.

"If you want to help American industry, you don't help them by shielding them from the world," Cebrowski told reporters not long ago. "We have protected the American shipbuilding industry to the

point it is defunct," he said.

Cebrowski, who serves as Rumsfeld's director of Force Transformation, said the military needs to use the expertise of foreign shipbuilders and defense contractors.

The Pentagon has come under fire from the Metal Trades, other unions and members of Congress for long-term leases on foreign ships instead of ordering new or refurbished U.S. ships.

Council Aids Injured Sandia Metal Tradesman

It has been two years since Pat Long suffered paralyzing injuries when he broke his neck in a tragic car accident on his way home from work at the Sandia Lab. In that time, Long's colleagues from the Sandia Metal Trades Council have learned the true meaning of brotherhood.

A 17-year veteran at the research lab, Long endured weeks of hospitalization and rehabilitation as he learned to live with the plate doctors had inserted to stabilize his neck. After three surgeries, infections and extended hospital stays, Long returned home to find his co-workers from the Council had remodeled his bathroom

to make it wheelchair accessible, taken care of his yard work, installed driveway lights, repaired his patio and painted and made general repairs around the home. The Council also raised money for the Longs.

Long himself is an irrepressible personality, dedicated to working himself back into full independence. A full-time nurse cares for him while his wife, Mona is at work. Long has taken it on himself to teach the nurse English as she teaches him Spanish.

Long retired on disability—a process that was eased for him by his friends in the

Council and management.

Mona Long expressed the couple's appreciation in the Sandia Lab News: "The words seem small when I know that the appreciation Pat and I feel is so much greater. It was wonderful as the help was given freely. We did not realize how much people could care. This is definitely a life change for us. Every day we learn something together and find joy in small accomplishments."

HAMMER Creator Sam Volpentest Celebrates 100th Birthday

Sam Volpentest, marked his 100th birthday on September 23rd in a ceremony honoring his crowning achievement—the community, labor and management cooperative program known as HAMMER.

Volpentest has been a financial guardian angel for the tri-cities area—Richland, Pasco and Kennewick, Washington, home to the Hanford Nuclear facility. He was the driving force behind HAMMER, designed to put safety measures in place to protect the local community and nuclear workers against accidents and more recently, terrorist attacks.



Sam Volpentest

Obituary

Long-Time MTD Educator Don Doherty

Donald Hugh Doherty died May 20, 2004 in Richmond, Virginia. Doherty had long been associated with the Metal Trades Department as an arbitration expert for the Department's training conferences. He was 78.

A native of Ontario, Canada, Doherty went to work for the AFL-CIO in 1950. In 1970, he became a commissioner with the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service. In his 25 years with the FMCS Doherty was instrumental in resolving a number of high-profile labor disputes, including a bitter strike at Pittston Coal and a major dispute at the Norfolk Navy Shipyard.

Following his 1995 retirement, Doherty went to work as an arbitrator, remaining

active until his death. Doherty also maintained active relationships with many professional and philanthropic organizations.

He was preceded in death by his wife of 51 years, Mollie Ileen O'Donoghue Doherty. He is survived by sons Kevin, David and Brian; daughters Jaye Anne, Maria and Teresa; many grandchildren, nieces and nephews; and his sisters Hildalene McInroy and Sister Emily Doherty.



Don Doherty

Union Sources for Scholarships & Education Aid

Every year, unions give away some \$4 million in scholarships, grants and higher education tuition assistance for members and their families. Yet, lots of union families are unaware that these programs exist.

One of the largest scholarship offerings is sponsored by the Union Plus program—which provided more than \$150,000 in student aid last year to 106 students from 38 affiliated unions. Other scholarship programs are administered by individual unions—local, regional and national. Almost all are exclusively available to family members of the sponsoring union.

For more information on a range of individual union scholarship programs, visit the AFL-CIO web site (www.aflcio.org/familyfunresources/collegecost/scholars.cfm).

For information and applications for the Union Plus Scholarship program, go to: www.unionprivilege.org/benefits/education/.

Union Plus also provides extensive information and assistance to help union families deal with education issues—tips on financing and loans for tuition, books and student living expenses through a unique "college planner" web site. Union Plus can also put students and parents directly in touch with a financial aid counselor. Phone: (877) 881-1022.

Arbitrator Restores Bargaining Unit Work, Orders Parties to Negotiate Remedy In AEMTC Case

In a major victory for the Air Engineering Metal Trades Council in Tullahoma, Tennessee, an arbitrator has directed the Aerospace Testing Alliance (ATA) to restore the functions of Quality Precision Evaluators (QPE) to the bargaining unit.

Although the case originated before ATA took over the calibration functions performed at the Arnold AFB Air Engineering unit by its predecessor contractor, ASA, arbitrator Matthew M. Frankiewicz said the decision applies to ATA as the legitimate contract successor.

At the heart of the issue was whether the employer could or should remove QPE

work from the bargaining unit out of concern over a possible conflict of interest.

The Air Engineering lab calibrates and repairs a wide range of precision measurement equipment for the Air Force Metrology Department. Union-represented personnel initially calibrate measuring equipment—actually signing their name to products they handle. Quality Precision Evaluation is a process wherein lab personnel verify the work of other technicians by sampling equipment that has been initially calibrated. That work was performed by bargaining unit personnel on a rotating basis until 1999 when an Air

Force Audit recommended that QPE work rotations be replaced by creating full-time QPE positions. The union did not object to the separation of QPE from the calibration work, but did object to removing the new positions from the bargaining unit.

Frankiewicz found that the potential conflict of interest had nothing to do with whether or not employees were in the same bargaining unit. More importantly, he said, “the collective bargaining agreement does not provide either a good faith or a business justification exception to the rule assigning bargaining unit work to persons outside the bargaining unit.”

Frankiewicz conceded that it is not possible to pinpoint precisely the damage that management’s decision caused to individual employees or the union, but he noted that ignoring the contract would have resulted in reduced overtime opportunities for workers and deprived the union of additional members. He said it is also conceivable that the newly-hired workers might have enjoyed higher wages if the union had been allowed to negotiate on their behalf.

He said the parties “are in a better position than I to make informed judgments” as he directed the union and management to negotiate a remedy which will “make whole” those who were adversely affected by creating the jobs outside the bargaining unit.



The Metaletter
888 16th St. NW 6th Floor,
Washington, DC 20006

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Phone: (202) 974-8030
Fax: (202) 974-8035