

(This draft is proposed it is being discussed by convention delegates and may be substantially changed before the final report comes out.)

Proposed Draft of Convention Report

Summary of the Official Actions and Events of the Convention.

Resolutions

Following past UAW procedures, the resolutions presented to the convention were not the resolutions submitted by locals. The official Resolutions Committee puts out its own book-length set of resolutions drafted by International Staff and in a few cases may modify them based on some of the resolutions submitted by locals. The convention voted down any attempts to have discussion on any resolutions submitted by a local. No resolutions contrary to the desires of the President's office were included. You can ask any delegate to see a copy of the resolutions book.

The convention passed all the resolutions unchanged as presented by the Resolutions Committee. Many repeated the point that the cause of much of labor's problems is the Bush Administration/Republican/Big Business policies on trade, social policies, and particularly on labor legislation and appointments to the NLRB and courts. Some delegates pointed out that most Democrats were not much better. But clearly the tone was that the main task in the next few months was to elect Democrats in the November elections.

Resolutions reiterated the UAW concern for Fair Trade rather than so-called "Free Trade," which is only freedom to reduce working conditions and move jobs to places with the lowest working conditions in the world.

The Convention passed an important resolution on Health Care policy. The resolution exposes the so-called solutions that shift the burden to working people while enriching the insurance companies. The UAW strongly advocates a Universal Single Payer Health Care System, recognizing that the lack of one tilts the playing field in corporate America and puts us at a disadvantage in bargaining. We also favor strengthening Medicare and Social Security.

In another resolution the Convention addressed the issue of immigration that has become a hot issue in recent days. The resolution calls for "guest workers" to have rights in the workplace, for immigrant worker access to unemployment benefits and other safety net programs, and for the opportunity for immigrant workers to become citizens. The resolution is extremely important since the right wing has managed to capture a lot of support with its anti-immigration policies and it is critical for the labor movement and the immigrant rights movement to see each other as natural allies.

The convention made winning legal rights for unions, including card-check recognition, a crucial political priority in the next period. On this resolution many of the delegates who spoke were veterans of several organizing drives. They detailed the difficulties because of the ability of the employer to intimidate and harass pro-union workers, hold captive meetings, and use long delays and rulings provided by the Bush-dominated NLRB. Winning card-check and employer neutrality was critical to successful drives, they said.

The convention passed a strong resolution in support of our troops and veterans. Many delegates spoke from experience how the Bush administration has placed our troops in harm's way for political purposes, how they are not properly equipped, and how, when they return home, they are not supported in dealing with their medical or psychological injuries. The resolution calls for troops to be brought home as quickly as possible.

Constitutional Amendments

Finances:

The International Union as well as locals are facing a financial crunch as a result of declining membership.

The most important constitutional amendment was the one that transferred large amounts of money from the strike fund to general funds in several ways. \$50 million of the strike fund is transferred directly for general use. Another \$60 million is available to the IEB for special projects.

Previously, dues money collected for the strike fund had been diverted to both the International and Locals. This amendment almost completely diverts the strike fund dues and effectively increases the local share of total dues collected from 48% to 50.35 % and the International share from 37% to just under 45%. The remaining 5% of the dues dollar will go to the strike fund only if strike money is paid out. Otherwise it is also divided between the International and the Locals.

Currently 75% of the interest and dividends of the strike funds go to Organization, Education, and Communication. This change allows for the remaining 25% to be used by the IEB as well.

Salaries:

International officers and International Reps were given salary increases amounting to one 3% increase from the last contract plus accumulated COLA

Publications:

An amendment ended the requirement that Solidarity magazine be published monthly and allows using the internet for more communications

Other amendments seemed to settle technicalities or were wording changes. (Civil Rights Committees are now called Civil and Human Rights Committees. The Strike Insurance Fund is now called the Strike Assistance Fund.) A final amendment allows but does not require the IEB to shrink its number of members the next time there is a vacancy.

Election Results

There were no contested elections and officers were as selected months earlier by the Administration Caucus.

The International Executive Board will now include
Ron Gettelfinger, President,
Elizabeth Bunn, Secy Treas (Finances, TOPS organizing, Women's Dept.)
General Holiefield (Chrysler, Heavy Truck, General Dynamics)

Bob King (Ford, Independents, Parts, Suppliers and Severstal (formerly Rouge Steel))
Cal Rapson (GM, Delphi, Vets)
Jimmy Settles (Ag Imp, Aerospace, Transplants, American Axle, Guide, TOPS servicing)
Terry Thurman (Organizing)
And the elected Regional Directors

Joe Peters was reelected Director from our own Region 1. In his acceptance speech to the Regional Caucus he pointedly talked about how this region was going to work hard to protect wages, retirees and the basic trades.

Note that delegates do not get to vote for "assignments" (such as who will head the Chrysler Department). The major assignments shown in parentheses above were announced after the Convention.

Guest Speakers

There were several excellent guest speakers. Two themes ran through the talks: (1) the need to mobilize the labor movement to defeat the Republicans this November and (2) the historic alliance between the UAW and the Civil Rights movement and about how that same kind of alliance and the commitment for social justice for everyone was necessary to forge ahead.

Senator Barak Obama, D-Illinois, said he saw the US unionized auto companies in crisis, called for "creative solutions," and urged support for his "Health Care for Hybrids" proposed legislation which would have the federal government pick up part of the cost of retiree health in exchange for auto companies investing in fuel-efficient, advanced technology vehicles.

Julian Bond said the anti-labor right wing has temporarily succeeded in getting power by combining ostentatious piety with a victim mentality.

Marcello Malentacchi, General Secretary of the International Metalworkers Federation, expressed outrage at Delphi's attempt to destroy living standards of US workers. He called for global solidarity as the way to take on multinational corporations.

Baldemar Velasquez, president of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee, described how immigrants naturally support the labor movement and detailed several successful organizing drives that succeeded without NLRB elections. "The union organizer's role is not to ask *which country are you from...* but to ask *which side are you on?*" and "If you separate a rich man from his money anything is negotiable."

Rep Shelley Berkley, (D-Nev) and Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-Cal) condemned Bush and argued for electing Democrats this fall.

John Sweeney, AFL-CIO President, also made it a point to denounce Delphi's abuse of bankruptcy.