



The AFL-CIO SPLIT: A FORUM

With commentaries from Kevin Boyle, David Brody, Melvyn Dubofsky, Julie Guard, Jim Green, Will Jones, Nelson Lichtenstein, Joseph McCartin, Michael Merrill, David Montgomery, Ruth Needleman, and Judith Stein

Editors' Introduction

Dan Letwin and Rick Halpern

Events in the past year have brought American unionism to a moment of reckoning. Buffeted by a host of external challenges -- loss of union jobs, declines in real wages and working conditions, suppression of labor rights, indifference or hostility on the part of government, and an ongoing assault on material entitlements, public and private -- the House of Labor has now experienced its greatest rupture since the 1930s. Without question, the departure from the AFL-CIO of seven key unions -- spearheaded by Andrew Stern's Service Employees International Union, and joined by the United Food and Commercial Workers, UNITE HERE, Teamsters, Carpenters, Laborers, and Farmworkers -- opens a new chapter in the history of American labor.

How this chapter will unfold is not so obvious. Will the schism arrest, or accelerate, the downward slide of organized labor? Will the launching of an alternative Change to Win Coalition build upon, or undercut, the signs of union resurgence flickering here and there across the country? Will this breakaway enterprise mark a reawakening of U.S. labor -- jarring loose a calcified union establishment, consolidating its resources, freeing it from dubious political entanglements, unleashing a fresh wave of organizing, and restoring labor to the forefront of grassroots struggle? Or, will it prove an ill-timed gambit, dividing and demoralizing labor, perplexing its supporters, and weakening its hand in public affairs? What precedents, or lessons, does the birth of the CIO hold for the CTW? At a time when many of us are grappling with such questions, the *LAWCHA Newsletter* is pleased to present this special forum on the AFL-CIO split. In the pages that follow, eleven members of the LAWCHA community -- each a noted scholar of twentieth-century labor -- offer their takes on this momentous development (*cont. page 11*)

Knockin' On Labor's Door

David Montgomery

The recent secession of five major unions from the AFL-CIO bears little resemblance to the birth of the CIO, if any. Seventy years ago John L. Lewis went straight from the meeting that created the Committee for Industrial Organization to address throngs of striking workers in Akron about the promise of industrial organization. The recently enacted Wagner Act was designed to deter dismissal of union supporters and (*cont.*)

An Inhospitable Context?

Kevin Boyle

Shortly after this summer's AFL-CIO convention, America's finest news source, *The Onion*, asked six "randomly selected Americans" what they thought of the split in the union movement. "Wait a second," said an incredulous investment banker. "Didn't Reagan end organized labor?"

I want to believe that *The Onion* is wrong. Like the founders of Change to Win, I love (*cont.*)

(Montgomery cont.)

to provide accessible forms of organization. Small wonder, to use Dan Tobin's notorious phrase, "the rubbish" was pounding "at labor's door." Does any of that resemble 2005?

Nevertheless, we can only applaud serious efforts to organize the unorganized. Such efforts are most likely to succeed in the service sector and in construction. It is difficult (though not impossible) to move jobs found there to other countries. Moreover, recent immigrants have been especially numerous in occupations targeted by the Change to Win unions, and some at least of those unions took mobilization of the Immigrant Freedom Ride seriously. In one important respect today's immigrants recall the America of 1912 more than that of 1935 (when immigration had been virtually shut down for a decade): among the immigrants are many with valuable political experience from their homelands - often refugees from death squads. Their talents can revitalize the labor movement, just as earlier waves of immigrants did.

Neither the AFL-CIO nor the CTW has done anything effective to mobilize in support of the embattled manufacturing sector, where business is taking advantage of Bush's final years to devastate wages, health plans, and pensions. Witness the machinists of Northwest Airlines and Delphi. Where has either federation been? Moreover, both federations, but especially the CTW group, have turned for policy and for organizers to staffers who usually have good education and good hearts, but no real base among those who toil every day. The "rubbish" Tobin feared in 1935 demanded not only to get into unions, but also to run them. The innovative and often international struggles needed both to save past gains and to bring in new activists require strategies that arouse and unleash the rank and file.

(Boyle cont.)

the idea of a great organizing campaign sweeping through the nation's workplaces, drawing in Wal-Mart greeters, hotel cleaners, office janitors, chicken processors, and millions of their fellow Americans. It's wonderful to imagine a reinvigorated labor movement, a CIO for the twenty-first century.

But the harsh truth is, political context matters. It mattered in the 1930s, when the New Dealers gave the labor movement the legal and institutional support it needed to make its great leap forward. And it matters today, when the federal government refuses to support workers' right to organize, when economic policies undercut low wage workers at every turn, when there is no public check on corporate power. Breaking through those roadblocks is an enormous task. Yet that's precisely what the Change to Win coalition is going to have to do if it is to fulfill its pledge to remake organized labor.

That's not to say that John Sweeney's allies are right when they say that political action is the best way to reverse the government's anti-unionism. For all its good intentions, Sweeney's electoral strategy has been an abject failure; organized labor is in a weaker position now than it was even five years ago, as the Bush administration's recent decision to revoke Davis-Bacon in the Gulf States makes painfully clear. Perhaps Change to Win has it right: the only way to force government's hand is to build pressure from below, to take the fight out of the voting booth and into the nation's superstores and office blocks.

I want to believe. But I fear that, in their cynicism, the editors of *The Onion* know better.

Dissent and Democracy in the 1970s: A Lesson for Change-to-Win

Will Jones

We should hesitate to draw historical comparisons between the Change-to-Win Coalition and the CIO, which appeared during a period of unprecedented growth in union membership and political and cultural clout. A more fruitful comparison might be drawn to the 1970s, when unions faced a hostile political and cultural environment, an economic downturn, and membership growth restricted to sectors and populations with which union leaders had little experience and only sporadic success. In the 1970s, an important challenge to AFL-CIO leaders came from the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), a union that had doubled its membership over the past decade by organizing hundreds of thousands of health care, sanitation and other public service workers across the nation. Most of those new members were women and African Americans, placing AFSCME among the largest and most diverse unions in the United States. Speculation that AFSCME would leave the AFL-CIO and join with large non-affiliated unions such as the United Auto Workers, the Teamsters or the National Education Association generated a debate that is not unlike the one currently raging within the house of labor.

In some respects, the current debate is an extension of the earlier one. The recent split was initiated by the Service Employees International Union (SEIU). SEIU grew in the 1990s by organizing many of the workplaces that AFSCME had organized in the 1970s -- only to watch them privatized and outsourced in the 1980s. SEIU also adopted AFSCME's race -- and gender-conscious unionism -- and extended it in a number of highly successful drives among Latino and Asian immigrants. In both cases, however, the debate leading to the split occurred mostly at the highest levels of union bureaucracy. Union leaders failed to involve the new members whose presence inspired the debates in the first place. AFSCME was wracked in the 1980s by a series of devastating corruption cases that revealed a mid-level leadership that was insulated from accountability to the rank-and-file. The union survived that crisis, and its leaders have emerged as perhaps the most thoughtful critics of the Change to Win Coalition's own lack of democracy. They speak from experience.

Labor & the Left

Judith Stein

When the environment for organizing deteriorates, labor and left organizations often divide. The new groups claim that new will and tactics can produce success. Andrew Stern's SEIU and the other unions who have split from the AFL-CIO are in that tradition. The Change to Win Coalition (CTW) claims it is more like the CIO than the factionalism I have described. I don't find that credible. The CIO emerged from a rebellious rank and file that AFL leaders did not recognize and build upon. The recent secession came from the top and offers few new ideas and often poor counsel. During CTW's founding convention, Stern said that "a new partnership with employers was necessary to build unions and America." He got it backwards. Strong unions are a prerequisite to any partnership with employers. However, the CTW group is more than the instrument of one ambitious man. Although the new leaders mouth words about global unions, a necessary mantra for any enterprise these days, their unstated strategy is to avoid sectors that are subject to the forces of globalization. They propose to organize workers in sectors like the building service and home care, who cannot be outsourced. SEIU's achievement in these areas is less than its public relations campaign would have one believe. But even if future organizing was successful, this targeting would corset unionization into those areas of the economy that are sheltered from globalization. Unfortunately, protected areas are becoming fewer and fewer. To build a union movement around workers who cannot be outsourced is to give up on strong unions that can alter corporate behavior and market incentives in the workplace and in the state. That is not good news for auto and steelworkers, but it is not good news for janitors and home care workers, either.

The State of Organized Labor: A View from Another World

Ruth Needleman

I am currently teaching U.S. labor history to a dozen graduate students in Brazil. They know little about U.S. labor beyond a set of popular stereotypes of the consumer-driven propertied suburban aristocrat, on the one hand, and the cold warrior AFL-CIA operative, on the other. Shared historical memory of the US-assisted military coup of 1964, however, figures centrally in my students' experiences with U.S. neo-liberal exploitation of Brazil and the world. Compared to the drama and denunciation of many U.S. labor activists to the recent division within U.S. organized labor, their reaction conveyed more cynicism and also more ideological sophistication. "E que?" "And so...?"

Labor movements in most Latin American and European countries have multiple centers of activism, aligned with different political tendencies or parties reflecting different ideological positions. The AFL and later the AFL-CIO have characterized organizational unity as more important than politics and effective working-class action. The most damning curse Labor hurled at any dissent within its ranks was "dual-unionism." The Communist Party's Trade Union Educational League (TUEL), the myriad of black caucuses from the League of Revolutionary Black Workers (DRUM, FRUM, ELRUM) in auto, to the Ad Hoc Committee in steel, women's caucuses, Latino caucuses, and on to Change to Win were all labeled dual unionist and divisive and, therefore, ultimately anti-union.

Organizational unity has served primarily as an ideological strait-jacket, a way of maintaining control over and limiting the beliefs, practices and priorities of U.S. working-class activists. Unity does matter, but so too do solidarity, anti-oppression, and anti-imperialist policies for the workplace and the world. What matters is what labor does, not what labor says it stands for. And on this ground the differences are not what they may seem to be between the two union clusters, representing together a shameful minority of the workforce.

It is important to acknowledge that neither group is homogeneous in culture, commitment and politics; both want to organize more effectively and become larger. Unite-to-Win has a sector-based approach, made more possible by selective participation of unions. They have focused on domestic labor markets less vulnerable to capital flight: health care, hotels and restaurants, transportation, and basic labor. They are committing more resources and coordinating more effectively among themselves in large community-based organizing campaigns. Export-resistant sectors of the economy hold a greater promise of success for short-term organizing. Stressing the power that comes from market leverage and concentration, Change to Win, unfortunately, dropped the language of adversarial relationships and solidarity at their founding congress, and emphasized instead militancy and mobilization.

The AFL-CIO member unions differ enormously in their internal cultures and commitment to new organizing. The manufacturing unions, born in the mass struggles of the 1930's, have experienced a massive loss of jobs through free trade agreements and cheap global labor markets. As a result, some unions with the Steelworkers out in front are building stronger global awareness among their members. They have yet to embrace the anti-neo-liberal consciousness driving most social and labor campaigns worldwide, but these unions recognize increasingly that they cannot be effective operating outside of global partnerships. Change to Win may have some illusions.

From a Brazilian perspective, the differences are more tactical than strategic, because ideologically neither makes a break with capitalism, imperialist neo-liberal expansion and war, and neither recognizes

(cont.)

(Needleman, cont.)

the fundamental connection and shared destiny between their union members and the rest of the marginalized world: the poor, homeless, landless, jobless, immigrant, battered, victimized, marginalized majority. In Brazil, unions build autonomous social organizations, educate millions of non-members right alongside members, join the landless in occupying land, and invade anti-union strongholds like General Motors, to send a message, knowing the cost will be in the tens of thousands of dollars without a single monetary short-term gain. Their objective is just global solidarity, and social justice.

A focus on short-term gain has put blinders on U.S. unions. They have missed some fundamental lessons from history, from the CIO as well as the civil rights movements. Organization can be expanded through top-down campaigns, and hierarchical organizations can mobilize people. But movements arise through the self-organization of activists and the fusing of multiple networks. What organizations can do to fertilize the ground, to facilitate self-organization, is agitate and educate. The AFL-CIO eliminated its education department 5 years ago, allegedly to do more effective organizing. SEIU eliminated its education department more recently to put more resources into organizing. Education in most U.S. unions today, regardless of affiliation, is a function of immediate campaign needs, and carefully eschews controversial issues like war, racism, homophobia, sexism, the right to control over our own life and body, -- the very issues that maintain our workforce in ignorance of capitalism's most invidious exploitation.

For my Brazilian students, it's not a question of organization but of ideology, and unity for unity's sake means little. They'd prefer unity in opposition to neo-liberalism



under U.S. hegemony and solidarity in action, which as many recent strikes demonstrate in Latin America as well as Europe, is possible when multiple organizations act together.

Stern's Gamble

Nelson Lichtenstein

Andrew Stern has led the Change to Win revolt because he wants to put new energy and more money into organizing. Well, so does every other unionist, but Stern has had a plan -- one whose main plank has always been a consolidation and centralization of the unions in order to target specific industry sectors with well funded and well-coordinated organizing and bargaining campaigns. There is nothing wrong with this strategy, but is a breakup of the AFL-CIO the most effective way to put that program into practice and revitalize labor's fortunes in these difficult times?

Stern and his breakaway comrades are fond of citing the 1935 split in the old AFL
(cont.)

(Lichtenstein cont.)

that gave rise to the successful organizing campaigns in steel, auto, electrical products, and rubber. But can Stern and his associates play the sparkplug role of John L. Lewis and Sidney Hillman? Or will they merely replicate the more recent, ineffectual efforts of the United Automobile Workers, the Teamsters, and the Carpenters, who quit the AFL-CIO in dramatic fashion but failed to stir the working class soul or recruit a new generation of unionists?

It is hard to see how the Change to Win rebels can do any better -- and the initial signs have not been encouraging. Conservatives in politics and business are gleeful at the split, while many ordinary citizens are bewildered. Already, the division at the top of the union hierarchy has begun to hurt union political and organizing efforts down below. In California, where the union movement has been a kind of "Research and Development" test site for the national unions, the split has reduced funding to fight anti-union propositions on the ballot this November, and now threatens to fragment the Los Angeles Central Labor Council and inaugurate organizational raids between the SEIU and AFSCME. At present, the division within the American trade union movement appears as a self-inflicted wound whose damage will in all likelihood stretch well into the future.

As a labor partisan I hope that my gloomy prognostication is mistaken. Stern and his closest allies are motivated by the best of intentions. But sometimes an effort to ape past glories merely generates a caricature of that history. As a famous 19th century political economist once wrote "All history occurs twice, first as tragedy, second as farce."

Keep Punching

David Brody

In thinking about labor's current split, we need to avoid making glib parallels to the CIO. The motivating issue in 1935 was the sense that the train was about to leave the station. Either labor movement jumped on board or miss the chance of a generation. Today it's just the opposite. The situation could hardly be worse for organized labor and the split is as much a sign of desperation as anything else. But the form the dispute takes is actually very reminiscent of the 1930s. Andy Stern complains about organizing resources and institutional rigidities. The details are a bit different from Lewis's complaints, but maybe except for politics, not that different. One might argue, in fact, that the institutional continuity revealed by these similarities is at the heart of the current crisis. The labor movement is a conservative--one might almost say a clumsy--institution. Once things are set up in a certain way, union people don't like to change. There's an instinct to protect what they have--better to service the membership (and defend its jobs) than try to get more members. They don't like to change the rules, they don't like criticism or free-wheeling debate, and failure--say (to take an issue I've recently been studying) the way their adversaries sneaked in there and stole the labor law from them--doesn't seem to shake things up. I think that's at bottom what's driving Stern. He wants to bust the labor movement open and make it a live institution again. He sees the fleetness of foot and institutional ruthlessness of employers and asks, why can't we be like that? I think that's a healthy thing. Will it work? Maybe not in the short term, not in the dramatic way that the CIO succeeded. I've argued that organized labor is a secondary institution in our society, one without much capacity for changing the larger environment on which it depends. We'd need the equivalent of the Great Depression to create that environment. But labor can't stop punching. I think that's what Stern is up to. He wants labor to keep punching.

Occupational Unionism Has Won

Michael Merrill

Two features of the recent fragmentation of the labor movement strike me as notable.

First, AFL unions are playing the leading part on both sides of the split. This is not a replay of 1935. The CIO unions have no dog in the hunt. Occupational unionism has won. Second, the recent split has instead pitted occupational unions that primarily serve low wage workers-SEIU, HERE-UNITE, UFCW, and the Laborers, with the Teamsters and Carpenters along for the ride for their own reasons-and those who serve primarily high-wage workers like the "mechanical" building trades, the Machinists, what's left of the CIO, and public sector unions that represent a significant number of professional or supervisory personnel (like AFSCME) or both (like the CWA and the UFT).

That these groups should split is not surprising. They have different institutional priorities and membership service requirements. There is a large and growing low-wage service workforce consisting of a disproportionate number of new immigrants who demand old-fashioned "pure and simple" contract unionism. The priorities of low-wage service workers, however, are not the same as those of high-wage or public sector workers, whose jobs are more stable and more "professionalized." Economists have long talked of a "dual labor market" and it is by no means surprising that this dualism would be reflected in a "dual labor movement." Indeed, some amount of differentiation and specialization is to be expected and even desired.

It is of course possible to overdraw this contrast. The needs of low- or high-wage

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Labor and Schism in a Time of Peril

Melvyn Dubofsky

The current split in the labor movement seems understandable. After all, after a full decade in power John Sweeney's leadership team has proved itself as incapable as the Meany-Kirkland old guard in reversing the ebb in labor's fortunes. No wonder, then, that the leaders of those unions that have suffered least from labor's decline rebelled against the established order. Yet, I think, that they and most especially Andy Stern, are making a grave mistake in choosing to divide labor and to engender inter-union competition for new members. Stern understands the Gramscian imperative to operate with "optimism of the will," yet he neglects the other half of Gramsci's aphorism, "pessimism of the intelligence."

Previous splits in the labor movement occurred at moments when labor appeared on the rise and politics or economics favored unionization. John L. Lewis did not challenge the barons of the AFL until he had seen masses of workers defy their employers as well as take to the streets in mass city-wide strikes; not until Roosevelt's New Deal had begun to turn left after the 1934 elections and more especially after the passage of the Wagner Act in the summer 1935, did Lewis create CIO.

Today, Stern and his allies face a different reality. Workers are neither shutting down key sectors of industry nor taking to the streets by the many thousands. Political factors operate against the growth of unionism and the prevailing legal regime places insurmountable barriers before union organizers. Stern, moreover, has built a coalition that lacks a common commitment beyond its rhetorical obeisance to

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Open Questions

Jim Green

One aspect of the Change to Win coalition's criticism of existing AFL-CIO structures and practices was easy to accept when it was publicized last year. There are too many small unions competing with each other in jurisdictions that no longer make strategic sense. The criticism harkens back to the one made of the American Federation of Labor by the Industrial Workers of the World in the early 1900s. Even if the Wobblies had not been revolutionaries who advocated sabotage and refused to accept trade agreements, they would have had to be separate from the AFL in order to carry out their organizing strategy—one that was extremely important in mobilizing the unorganized before wartime repression destroyed the IWW.

The IWW had no more chance of implementing its syndicalist structure on the AFL than the CTW had of getting the current AFL-CIO to merge 60 existing unions into 20 larger ones that would, in Andy Stern's view, be able to tackle big corporations like Wal-Mart and CVS. That

demand, I suppose, made split inevitable. But it is difficult to understand what other significant issues required a costly split at a time when working class people need a unified labor movement more than ever.

Now that the separation has occurred two other questions arise: will it result in major advances in organizing, and, if it does, what kind of unions will it produce? In Boston the three new SEIU locals, the UNITE-HERE local and the New England District of the Carpenters have some talented, progressive leaders, and are running some of the most aggressive organizing campaigns we've seen, but this was the case before the split as well; so I am not sure what advantage has been gained, given the desire of some of these same leaders to continue to cooperate with their old AFL-CIO allies. I must add that some of these CTW locals are also staff-driven and dominated by mandates from national office. In one case, our SEIU local of UMass professionals, a very independent and democratic one, was simply wiped out as a result of a national reorganization plan. This is not evidence of the social movement unionism we hoped for from SEIU a decade ago.

(Merrill cont.)

workers, or of manual or professional employees, or of the public or the private sector, are more or less worthy of attention. But they are different, even given a measure of overlap. To the extent the current split in the labor movement results in an effective recognition of this difference and a division of organizational labor between those who would serve the former and those who would serve the latter, it will revitalize rather than enervate the movement.

(Dubofsky cont.)

the need to organize. The differences in style, politics, and beliefs between SEIU and UNITE-HERE, on the one side, and the Carpenters and the Teamsters, on the other, are too wide to bridge successfully. This, then, is a split in the labor movement that comes at the wrong time in the wrong way, however much its objectives are exemplary.

It's the (Political) Economy, Stupid

Joseph A. McCartin

Whether the schism between the AFL-CIO and the CTW will significantly weaken U.S. labor will depend on how the federations treat each other in the months ahead. But one thing already seems clear: the split is unlikely to improve labor's short-run fortunes. This is not only because it has occurred at an inopportune moment, unlike the past schisms that produced the AFL and CIO. It is also because the problems that presently beset U.S. labor are symptomatic of global processes that are beyond the ability of unions alone to control. Union density is dropping worldwide, as we witness the most profound economic transformation in a century. Even where workers are organized, their unions are enfeebled. Evidence: strike rates have fallen faster than union membership (the number of U.S. workers who struck in 2002 was 1/60th of the 1952 figure). This suggests that U.S. labor's crisis owes less to unimaginative leaders, having too many unions in a loose federation, or even unfavorable labor laws, than to the ways in which global economic changes have exacerbated these problems. The debate that preceded labor's schism fetishized organizing and federation structure, but slighted a larger issue: the collapse of the political economy which had once helped sustain U.S. unions. Welfare provision, pension security, trade and labor market regulations, and controls over capital have been all but washed away. Each of the rival federations now contains a group somewhat insulated from globalization and the collapse of the old regulatory order—service workers in the CTW, public employees in the AFL-CIO. But neither federation is likely to expand beyond its base—let alone spark a broad revival—unless it can link its growth to the construction of a new regulatory regime, as the CIO once did. That new regime must include viable national and transnational regulatory structures and its

construction will require collaboration with many groups beyond labor's ranks.

Although these are perilous times, there is reason to hope. If we avert a labor civil war, and if SEIU continues to grow while most of its new partners continue to languish, as I suspect will occur, the CTW's example should make clear that the solution to labor's problems is not to be found solely (or even primarily) within the movement itself, contrary to what the CTW's leaders suggest. When we can come together around that reality and frame a strategy in light of it, we'll be one step closer to the broad union resurgence that both the U.S. and the world badly need.

Canadian Unions: Troubled but Not (Yet) Split

Julie Guard

Canada's labour movement has not been riven by the fractious divisions that exploded at this summer's annual AFL-CIO Convention, when six unions, representing some five million members, forged a new coalition around a program for change. Union decline has not been as marked in Canada, where union density was 31.8 percent in 2004, as in the USA, where it was only 13.8 percent. Canada's public sector unions are the core of its union movement, with 75.5 percent of public sector employees in unions as compared with 40.7 percent in the United States. Despite some provincial variation, labour legislation and Labour Relations Boards (both under provincial jurisdiction) are decidedly more labour-friendly than their counterparts in the USA and employer assaults on unions are far less aggressive. Yet the signs of trouble are evident. Unionization has declined from almost 37.6 percent in 1981 and new organizing has stalled at just under 1 percent a year. Indeed, since the late 1990s, union membership has *(continued)*

(Guard cont.)

increased more from mergers and raiding than by organizing the unorganized.

Yet despite early warning signs of declining unionization - particularly in the private sector-- the Canadian Labour Congress, the counterpart to the AFL-CIO, insists that it has no role in organizing. Some of its affiliates, including the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW), who have benefited from CLC support in their North American campaign to organize Wal-Mart and the British Columbia unions whose organizing capacity has been expanded because of the work of their Organizing Institute, disagree. The CLC's reluctance to take a more active role in promoting unionization is matched only by its hesitation to rein in affiliates that engage in raiding. In Manitoba alone, one union, the Teamsters, recently doubled its membership by absorbing existing locals of other unions. Some unionists interpret the CLC executive's reluctance to impose sanctions on this illicit expansionism as evidence that the break-up of the AFL-CIO has created new opportunities for some Canadian unions to act with impunity, confident that their membership numbers will protect them.

None of this makes unions more relevant or helps build a genuine workers' movement. Nor will it help unions organize the unorganized, become more relevant to workers, or hold off employers' attacks. Union mergers and raiding are diversions from the real work of organizing new workers and mobilizing rank-and-file activism, important activities in which a number of unions, labour federations and regional labour councils are engaged.



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(Editors' Introduction cont.)

In both tone and analysis, these commentaries vary greatly. Running through them, however, are certain broad themes: a recognition that the realities facing twenty-first century labor afford few easy answers; a skepticism over the CTW venture, yet a reluctance at this early stage to dismiss it out of hand; and, an awareness that historical fissures -- whether fool-hardy or farsighted -- can yield outcomes in the long-term that few at the time may foresee.

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Copy for the next issue is due on 15 April 2006 and can be sent to one of the co-editors:

Rick Halpern, University of Toronto,
rick.halpern@utoronto.ca
Dan Letwin, Penn State University,
letwin@psu.edu

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