

Unions, People and Diversity Building Solidarity Across a Diverse Membership

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Diversity has been an issue for the labor movement from the earliest days of unions. Unions reflect the combined consciousness of their leaders and members. As a consequence, organized labor's record on diversity is complex and mixed. Different unions at various times have either welcomed diversity as a matter of principle and moved to build inclusive organizations, or have adopted strategies of exclusion in efforts to control the supply of labor.

Examples of the latter come easily to mind. From the beginning of wage labor, unionized workers have struck to resist working with those they considered different from themselves—workers of African descent, Chinese workers recruited to build the railroads, immigrants of different nationality or religion, and women. Labor history is marked by riots and mob violence aimed at driving targeted workers from jobs and from communities. Motivated by prejudice, job scarcity, and fear that opening work to lower-paid workers would erode wages, this hostility was reinforced by common employer tactics of recruiting excluded workers as strikebreakers. Even twentieth-century industrial unions, whose memberships tended to be more diverse, tolerated internal workplace job segregation by race, ethnicity and gender.

While unionization has been used to enforce bias, the labor movement has also broken barriers and brought diverse people together. Unionization has provided a powerful institutional framework through which diverse communities articulate and negotiate progressive social change. Collective bargaining promotes equality by establishing that wages, seniority, due process and other negotiated provisions of employment apply equally across all represented members, not just to a dominant majority. These traditions, as well, go back to the earliest days of unions.

In this article I highlight some current efforts unions are making to address issues of diversity, both in their roles as workplace representatives as well as within the structure and culture of their own organizations. They reflect the best traditions of the past and illustrate an exciting organizational willingness among many unions today to value and respect the diversity of their memberships.

The connection between unions and diversity is an easy one to make. Unions are about people. They are membership organizations created by working people as a means of mutual protection and collective advocacy for economic and social justice. The Service Employees International Union (SEIU) expresses it this way: "We're a labor union with 1.3 million members, united to improve the lives of working people and their families, and to lead the way to a more just and humane society."¹ What affects the workplace and the community affects unions.

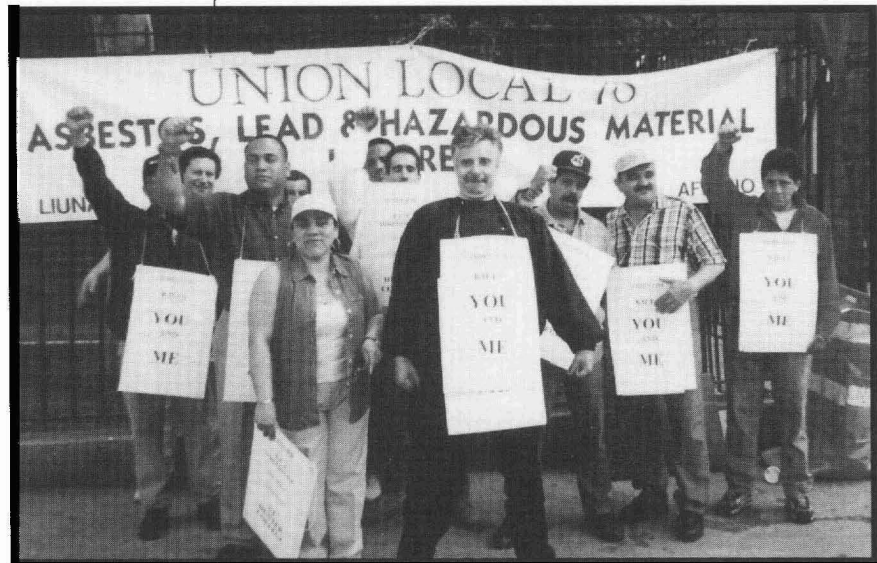
Unions represent roughly sixteen percent of the work force.² Their membership reflects the diversity of America. In 1977, women were roughly one third of all union members. Among African Americans in the work force, twenty percent of men and sixteen percent of women belonged to unions, compared to sixteen percent of white men and eleven percent of white women. Among Latino workers unionization has grown twenty percent since 1983. In 1997, thirteen percent of Latino men and eleven percent of Latina women workers were union members.³ Among Asian Americans, thirteen percent of men and twelve percent of women belonged to unions in 1996.⁴ In baseline economic terms, union membership makes a difference.

Union women earned roughly forty percent more than their non-union counterparts; African Americans, forty-four percent more; and Latino workers, fifty-three percent more.⁵ And the diversity of union membership is growing. Today, women and people of color make up the majority of newly organized workers.⁶

In the workplace, unions organize the interests, ideas and actions of employees. Through the collective bargaining process and cooperative joint labor-management initiatives, unions provide an organizational resource to articulate and resolve shared, as well as conflicting, interests of workers and managers.⁷ As the diversity of the work force grows, unions offer management in organized workplaces a strategically for thinking through innovative organizational change.

In the past, many segments of the labor movement have given strong support to civil-rights

legislation and worked in coalition to promote understanding and combat discrimination. Unionized wage and benefit standards ensure better access to education and other opportunities for women and people of color. Through participation in coalitions like the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, the AFL-CIO, along with the autoworkers, the steelworkers, the postal workers, the oil and chemical workers and several other national affiliates, promotes understanding and awareness, works to combat hate mentalities



Hunter College, NY, May, 1998—"What affects the workplace and the community affects unions."

and supports affirmative action and civil-rights legislation.⁸

Organized labor has opened doors and provided opportunities for leadership. But once new constituencies were admitted, unions have tended to expect conformance to the cultural majority's way of doing things. Too often, tradition and loyalty have prevented unions from being responsive to new constituencies' concerns. Indications are, however, that new times lie ahead.

Traditional civil-rights-based advocacy of equal treatment for all is being expanded to include an examination of organizational culture and systemic exclusion. Unions are moving to probe the internal practices of the workplace and of their own organizations to ensure that the diversity of voices within their membership ranks have opportunity to be expressed, to influence decision-making and to

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achieve leadership roles. Unions are working to build awareness and skills among their leadership and membership to overcome divisive prejudice and bias within their ranks.

For unions, diversity is a membership issue. Diversity is an organizing issue. Diversity is an issue of fair representation. Race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, ability and other dimensions of difference are internal organizational issues for unions, as well as issues of workplace representation and political advocacy. Success means creating union organizations that are inviting and responsive to the diversity of the work force, that build credibility across diverse communities, and that are able to inspire, engage and unify diverse memberships for common purpose. It means creating organizational cultures that allow diverse voices to be heard and that encourage members and organizational leaders alike to listen to and learn from one another. The accounts that follow illustrate what is occurring within the labor movement at both the national and local levels.

***The AFL-CIO and its affiliates:
Looking to a more diverse future***

When convention delegates to the AFL-CIO voted in 1995 to change its executive structure to create the new position of executive vice-president and elected Linda Chavez-Thompson to that office, the message was clear. Chavez-Thompson, a second generation Mexican-American, is now the highest-ranking woman in the labor movement and the first person of color ever elected to an executive office of

the AFL-CIO. "I'm a woman and I'm tan and I'm from Texas. I represent the America that organized labor has tended to overlook," she is quoted as saying.⁹ She represents the America whose participation and inclusion organized labor is moving to build.

Under the banner of "Organizing for change, changing to organize!" today's AFL-CIO is committed to rebuilding the labor movement through organizing, mobilization and full participation.¹⁰ To promote these goals, the AFL-CIO and many of its affiliates are putting new emphasis on the recruitment, development and training of women and people of color for leadership roles. Issues of diversity are being addressed in ongoing leadership and education curricula. Organized labor continues its strong public policy advocacy of civil rights and work and family initiatives, with increased emphasis on strengthening ties with community organizations.

The AFL-CIO's Union Cities program, an initiative to revitalize the labor movement from the grass roots up, illustrates this commitment. The program is designed to unite international unions, state federations, central labor councils and local unions around eight common goals, one of which is that "union structure at all levels reflects the faces of its members."¹¹ The strategy advocates building "an inclusive labor movement that seriously appreciates cultures other than that of the majority." The program outlines several action steps to select, recruit and train women and people of color for leadership, staff and delegate positions, including an evaluation of internal structural barriers and the creation of opportunities for mentoring.

To increase responsiveness to its membership diversity and advance full participation, the AFL-CIO recognizes several official constituency groups of union leaders, staff and members. Among these are: the A. Philip Randolph Institute; the Coalition of Labor Union Women; the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement; the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance; the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists; Pride at Work, representing gay and lesbian unionists; and Frontlash, a youth organization. These organizations are a source of information about diverse constituency perspectives and concerns, as well as a vehicle for outreach, advocacy and leadership development.

Implementing new practices to respond to diversity is not without controversy. Ken Margolies, former Education Director for the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT) relayed an experience when the newsletter was translated into Spanish. "The Teamsters were quite aware that with a diverse work force the union couldn't grow through organizing or win good contracts without the support of a diverse membership and a diverse community. When the union started the Spanish newsletter, several members wrote in to say that this is America and everyone should use English—including some Latinos who said it was patronizing to assume they couldn't learn English like generations of immigrants before them. However, many other members praised the

union for starting the Spanish newsletter and about two thousand members requested it."¹²

Opening leadership through education and training

Training has been a long-standing component of leadership development and an essential support for initiatives to broaden the diversity of leadership and staff at all levels. The Amalgamated Transit Workers (ATU), for example, represents a highly diverse work force of urban transit, school bus and ambulance operators, service and maintenance employees as well as municipal workers. The core of the membership is in major urban areas, where transit systems receive federal funds and operate under federal affirmative action and non-discrimination regulations. With an extremely lean national staff, the ATU depends on the informed and active involvement of its locals.

According to Warren George, international executive vice-president, the ATU philosophy is that the union leadership must reflect the membership to be a successful,

were pioneers as union members and a few years later as union officers. I found that when both races worked side by side, we learned about each other. In union jobs, the wage is for the job. Everyone made the same wage and this created a more level playing field for us to get to respect each other."¹⁴ According to Bennett, the Black Caucus in the ATU was first established thirty-one years ago to get more African Americans into leadership positions. Today three caucuses are active within ATU, representing African-American, Latino and women members.

Making differences work through broadening awareness

Education is used as a vehicle to broaden awareness of organizational culture change as well as a tool for leadership development. Unions like the garment and textile workers (UNITE), the communication workers (CWA), the electrical workers (IUE), and the teamsters (IBT) are developing specific diversity curricula for use at the local level, and including diversity awareness workshops in regional and national conferences.

Workplace Diversity: Achieving a Unified Workforce, is a diversity-awareness curriculum developed for the operating engineers (IUOE) in conjunction with the Tradeswomen of Purpose, Women in Non-Traditional Work, Inc., and the George Meany Center for Labor Studies. The training is not focused specifically on women, but rather covers sections on commonalities and differences, self-definition, group interactions and sexual harassment. It is offered primarily in the apprenticeship programs, but also for local union officers and staff. According to Edna Primrose-Coates, now with the IUOE Job Corps Program, the purpose in designing the training was to give participants something to think about. "We wanted to avoid finger-pointing, to build personal and group interaction skills, to create a comfort level around diversity issues."¹⁵

At the service employees (SEIU), a new curriculum is being developed for diversity that will focus on commonalities as well as understanding differences. According to Pat Tyson, director of SEIU's Community Campaigns and Support Department, current materials on racism, sexism, homophobia and immigration tend to be compartmentalized, each treated as its own issue. Bringing these components together as a social-justice curriculum will go beyond the typical "isms," broadening the discussion of difference to include issues like age, ability, education and occupational differences, and to work towards regaining the "connecting force," building allies, partnerships and coalitions. In her view, diversity training is not about how to get the job done better. "It's about how to respect and recognize each other to create a more wholesome, pleasurable environment."¹⁶

In the workplace, developing the awareness to make differences work is a need shared by labor and management.

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growing and vibrant labor organization. "We represented the bus drivers in Memphis in 1968. We're very emphatic that we do not condone racism and discrimination. We negotiate non-discrimination clauses in all our contracts and include it as an obligation in our union constitution. In 1971 we elected Oliver Green to the office of international secretary-treasurer. Today he remains one of the highest ranking African-American officials in the labor movement."¹³

The ATU combines a vocal stance against racial discrimination and sexual harassment with active education and leadership development training. Begun on a small scale in the late 1970s, the program is now in full swing under the leadership of International President Jim La Sala. Among the eighteen ATU vice-presidents, eight are African Americans, including one woman, and one is Hispanic.

Charles Bennett is a business agent for Local 713 in Memphis, Tennessee. "In the late '50s and early '60s there were not a lot of African Americans in the transit service in the South. Then work opened up for us. In the ATU, we

Prejudice, bias and harassment raise representation issues for the union. In cases of member-against-member harassment leading to discipline, for example, the union has a duty to represent the person being harassed as well as the harasser. Some unions, like the autoworkers (UAW), have internal investigation and resolution processes for non-egregious complaints of member-to-member harassment. After the outbreak of sexual harassment charges at Mitsubishi Motors, the UAW initiated and conducted the joint labor-management training for local officers, stewards, managers and supervisors.¹⁷

Work-force diversity awareness training is emerging as an appropriate area for joint labor-management programs. Since the early 1990s, the UAW and Ford have worked together through the UAW-Ford National Programs Center to include diversity-awareness sessions in their Automotive Industry Studies program, an ongoing work-force-based education initiative.¹⁸ Tony Strusa is a union employee-involvement facilitator for steelworkers, USWA Local 593. In his view,

"Diversity is an important issue for every employer and union in America today. Unfortunately our diversity is ignored more often than it is recognized. Once individuals are hired, they become company employees and union members. So diversity in the plant is diversity in the union by virtue of employment. I would recommend the company and the union work together to present a program that would make everyone aware of what diversity really is. Diversity will either drive us together or pull us apart. The driving together comes when we recognize and embrace diversity for what it really is and the pulling apart comes when we ignore it and hope it will go away."¹⁹

In workplaces that have moved toward greater employee involvement and a team environment, the need for members to work together well is accentuated. Velma Messers, international representative with the South West Region of UNITE, recommends that work-force diversity training be jointly designed and conducted, especially with new work processes. "As members have more opportunity to speak out and get involved, diversity-awareness training can help break down old biases which undermine these

processes. The union needs to be involved. We add perspective that management alone often misses. We convey credibility with our membership."²⁰

Organizing across diverse communities: LIUNA and Laborers Local 78

The Asbestos, Lead & Hazardous Waste Laborers Local 78 of the Laborers International Union of North America (LIUNA) is a new local union, organized in New York City to represent the work force who perform the heavy, dirty, hazardous work of asbestos and lead removal.²¹ In its first two years, the local grew from contracts with twenty-five employers to over eighty. In 1998, the membership numbered about 2000, predominantly new immigrants from two distinct cultural groups. Approximately two-thirds are of Polish and Slavic origin; one-third from Central and South America. There is significant diversity within each community as well.

According to Dave Johnson, an organizer for LIUNA, this is a "bottom of the barrel" industry, with many unscrupulous employers ready to take advantage of the vulnerability of new, non-English-speaking immigrants. Before the organizing drive, the actual wage rate averaged between \$12 and \$15 per hour. The federally mandated prevailing total wage of \$30.89 per hour was rarely paid, as contractors found workers who would accept unreported payment in cash or

who were in no position to report underpayment. Today, through negotiation, the prevailing hourly wage scale has been reestablished at \$24: \$19.90 in wages and \$4.10 in benefits including health, pension and training funds.

"For us, diversity is a fact of life," says Pawel Kedzior, business manager for Local 78, a former worker who rose to leadership during the organizing campaign. Work-force diversity presents issues of communication, credibility and trust. During the campaign, it was extremely important that the organizing committee reflect the work force, with the ability to communicate in Spanish, Polish and English. Today union meetings are conducted, and literature and mailings published, in the three languages. Two members of the local's executive board are Spanish-speaking. Recently the local initiated English as a



LIUNA picket line, downtown Manhattan, March, 1998.

Second Language Training for the membership. At the request of an Ecuadorian group of members, Local 78 sponsored a laborer contingent in the Ecuadorian community parade.

Polish and Latino members may share the experience of being recent immigrants, but bring different backgrounds, educational experiences and mentalities towards work. Union leadership's desire to create a cohesive organization from such diverse work forces has generated an awareness of these cultural issues. In his elected leadership position, Kedzior says he is "learning something every day." He has learned the Latino membership may misinterpret and be put off by his exacting, "almost militaristic," way of speaking. He recognizes the need to develop a greater understanding of the unintended messages that his distinct cultural style may convey.

On the other hand, he finds much of his work puts him in the role of educator, working to empower the members to pursue their rights, develop a shared work ethic, understand the workings of the industry, the workers' compensation system, and hiring-hall procedures. Lack of understanding leads to suspicion of discrimination and creates conflict within the membership. Understanding how the procedures operate helps build membership trust of the union and of one another.²²

Women are part of the construction world today. Union representation in job-site problem solving has helped women get established in the industry. Safety and health procedures, for example, require workers to shower at the end of the shift. Many contractors were reluctant to hire women because of the impracticality or expense of providing separate showers. Local 78 has been able to resolve this issue by working out a process for varying men's and women's schedules to allow the showers to be shared.

According to Lavon Chambers, there is "sweeping change" in the industry.²³ A former organizer with Harlem Fight Back, a community coalition that, in its struggle to secure construction jobs for minority workers was often in direct conflict with the building-trades unions, Chambers is now a union representative on the Laborers-Employers Cooperative and Educational Trust, a partnership between the Laborers District Council and signatory contractors created to generate business opportunities and ensure compliance with federal regulations on job sites. "Instead of driving workers off the job for being non-union, the union is signing new workers up. Union leadership is more respectful." From his viewpoint, when the union addresses diversity, it builds alliances across communities and paves the way for a larger portion of the market share. So long as the change continues, Chambers says he will continue to carry his union card in his back pocket.

This spirit is reflective of structural changes undertaken on the national union level. In 1996, LIUNA General President Arthur A. Coia created the Minority Advancement Department at the recommendation of LIUNA 2000 Taskforce, a work-life-family committee. The Department's mission is twofold. First, internally, the goal is to ensure the full and active participation of minority laborers in all affairs of their union, from organizing to training, from grass-roots lobbying to political action. Second, externally, the task is to revitalize the labor-civil rights alliances and combat hate crimes.

The department, headed by George Gudger, LIUNA vice-president and past-president of the Georgia State A. Philip Randolph Institute, is producing results. Workshops on diversity are presented at regional and area conferences and LIUNA's quarterly leadership programs. New ties are being built with the community.

Responding to suggestions from members of a Louisiana local whose community witnessed the burning of four African-American churches, LIUNA organized the "Rebuild, Respond and Protect" initiative to mobilize union members and others to rebuild churches, protect congregations and prevent further racist violence. In coalition with the Congressional Black Caucus, the National Minority Contractors' Association, religious, human-rights and civil-rights groups, and other building-trades unions, the project is now a national initiative, which includes the development of a "Church Watch" program to prevent

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further destruction. LIUNA's efforts are building stronger community ties and being recognized. LIUNA has contributed net proceeds from union merchandise sold through its magazine to the Martin Luther King Jr. Center For Nonviolent Social Change. In 1996, the National Conference of Black Mayors honored LIUNA President Coia for his work to establish training programs for minority workers.²⁴

Opening organizational cultures to better represent the membership

At the most fundamental level, unions are value-based organizations, created to promote worker dignity and respect and to ensure membership voice in decision making. Unions carry an obligation to pursue fair treatment, fair wages and benefits, and fair representation. Respecting the diversity within their memberships is a dynamic learning process. It challenges unions to examine their own internal organizational values and continually explore innovative ways to represent diverse memberships.

Representation of gay and lesbian workers squarely raises this challenge. The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) is leading the way.²⁵ In 1982, delegates to the International Convention passed the first resolution supporting civil rights for gays and lesbians. Since then, the union has made

prohibiting the barring of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

To better understand gay and lesbian issues, AFSCME President Gerald W. McEntee meets yearly with the Gay and Lesbian Advisory Committee. AFSCME's education department provides training materials and the video, *Out at Work*, for use at the local level. The past several international conventions have featured a gay and lesbian booth, reception and workshops for convention delegates. One day of the convention is informally designated as "gay day," when buttons reading "Another AFSCME member for gay and lesbian rights" are passed around. According to Cady, "People tended to keep the buttons hidden in their palms, until President McEntee put his on while addressing the convention. Now they're everywhere."

"I think there's more acceptance now," Cady adds.

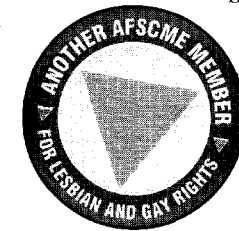
"The early convention workshops were mostly attended by gays and lesbians or by straight people who were careful to declare, 'I'm not gay.' Now attendance is more widespread. I think delegates are genuinely interested in learning how to offer better representation."

Many major [AFSCME] contracts now include sexual orientation

in the non-discrimination clause. The union is making progress extending benefits to domestic partners, generally beginning with the non-cost items like bereavement leave and then moving into cost items like health insurance and pensions.

Diversity and organized labor's future

As the experiences described above illustrate, diversity is both an ethical and pragmatic concern for unions. Embracing diversity will enhance organized labor's ability to listen and learn from their members, to identify innovative ways to meet diverse members' needs, and to create the credibility needed to organize new sectors of the workforce. Building awareness, open-mindedness and understanding across



membership constituencies serves to strengthen commitment from those who may feel disaffected by their differences, and to dispel the prejudices and stereotypes which pit workers against workers. Diversity helps organized labor achieve its best potential to lead the way to a more just society.

steady progress in building understanding and awareness and developing appropriate representation.

"It's important that the union find ways to offer equal representation and similar benefits to all our members," according to Ginny Cady, labor economist with AFSCME's Research and Collective Bargaining Services Department. "It's a fairness issue." Many major contracts now include sexual orientation in the non-discrimination clause. The union is making progress extending benefits to domestic partners, generally beginning with the non-cost items like bereavement leave and then moving into cost items like health insurance and pensions.

AFSCME is also a strong advocate for gay and lesbian rights in the legislative arena, working in coalition with advocacy groups like Project Open Mind and the Names Project—the AIDS Memorial Quilt—and actively promoting AIDS education and prevention. AFSCME was the only AFL-CIO union to submit a friend-of-the-court brief to overturn the Colorado constitutional amendment

In the words of Linda Chavez-Thompson to the Fiftieth Annual Conference of the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, "In the labor movement, we bring people together, whether they're disabled or not—whether they're black or brown or white—whether they're gay or straight, female or male, old or young—whether their family members came to this country 300 years ago or last month. When we let our differences divide us, our enemies win. When we respect our differences and—at the same time—celebrate all that we have in common, we win. It's that simple." ■

End Notes

1. See www.seiu.org.
2. In the United States, organized labor consists predominately of independent national and international unions, most but not all of which are affiliated with the national labor federation, the AFL-CIO. National and international unions set their own policy, within the framework of national labor law. In general, national and international unions are organized through a variety of divisional and regional structures into locals, which provide representation at the workplace level. Traditionally, the labor movement could be described as having two branches: craft unions like the building trades, and industrial unions like the autoworkers. Today, unionization in the public and service sectors and among professionals adds to this mix. For more information, visit the AFL-CIO website and surf links to the affiliate unions at www.aflcio.org.
3. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Developments in Labor-Management Relations*, Table 1, January 28, 1998. Also see "The Union Difference" on the AFL-CIO website at www.aflcio.org.
4. Bureau of National Affairs, *Union Membership and Earnings Data Book*, 1997.
5. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Developments in Labor-Management Relations*, Table 2, January 28, 1998.
6. Kate Bronfenbrenner, "From the Bottom Up: Building Unions and Building Leaders Through Organizing and First Contract Campaigns," delivered to the UCLEA/AFL-CIO Education Conference, San Jose, CA, April 30-May 2, 1998.
7. See Mishel and Voos, *Unions and Economic Competitiveness*, 1992; and Freeman and Medoff, *What Do Unions Do?*, 1984.
8. See the LCCR website at www.civilrights.org. "The Leadership Conference on Civil Rights (LCCR), one of the nation's oldest and most diverse civil-rights and human-rights coalitions, was founded by a labor leader, a civil-rights leader and a religious activist—A. Philip Randolph of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Workers, Roy Wilkins of the NAACP, and Arnold Aronson, a religious activist who headed a coalition of Jewish organizations, with the understanding that civil rights and labor rights could not be separated." Also see the AFL-CIO Executive Board Policy Statement on Affirmative Action, August 1995, available at www.aflcio.org.
9. "Shattering the AFL-CIO's Glass Ceiling," *Business Week* (November 13, 1995). Linda Chavez-Thompson represents labor's voice on the President's Commission on Race and serves on the boards of The National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ); the Institute for Women's Policy Research; and The Executive Committee of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute.
10. See AFL-CIO Executive Board Policy Statements: "Membership Mobilization," March 1998; "Building Power for Workers by Organizing," February 1996; and "Full Participation in the Labor Movement," September 1995, all available at www.aflcio.org.
11. AFL-CIO, "The Road to a Union City," at www.aflcio.org.
12. Fax message from Ken Margolies, now with Cornell University ILR, Metropolitan District, August 4, 1998.
13. Interview with Warren George, executive vice-president, ATU, August 1998. The commitment to confront systemic discrimination is reflected in the ATU's public-policy advocacy, as for example the "Job Access and Reverse Commute" provisions in the recent surface transportation act, TEA-21, which provides grants for transit services from inner cities to suburban job opportunities.
14. Interview with Charles K. Bennett, BA/FS, ATU Local 713, August 1998.
15. Interview with Edna Primrose-Coates, national director, IUOE Job Corps Program, January 1998.
16. Interview with Patricia Tyson, director, Community Campaign Support Department, SEIU, August 1998.
17. Interview with Millie Smith, UAW, Civil Rights Department, August 1998.
18. These programs were developed and are taught by The Institute for Industry Studies, Cornell University ILR.
19. Interview with Tony Strusa, employee involvement facilitator, USWA Local 593, August 1998.
20. Interview with Velma Messers, international representative, South West Region, UNITE, August 1998.
21. Interviews with Pawel Kedzior, business manager, Laborers Local 78; Dave Johnson, organizer, Eastern Region LIUNA, July 1998; and David Roscow, LIUNA Public Affairs Department, August 1998.
22. This is true of the union-operated hiring hall, the negotiated process through which contractors access the labor pool for particular jobs. According to negotiated hiring-hall procedures, members' names are put on a rotating list and referred to a job site according to their order on the list and the skills required for the job. Contractors belonging to the association have the right to carry workers from job to job and can request workers by name. Contractors who do not belong to the association can only call half the workers by name, and must fill half from the out-of-work list. In general, Polish workers have longer tenure in the industry and with Local 78's union predecessors and, thus, are more likely to have working relationships with individual contractors. This has led to misunderstandings and accusations of favoritism by newer Latino members who observe Polish members being called by name. According to Kedzior, when the list sends Polish and Latino workers to the same jobs, the members learn to work with one another despite language differences. The Local is seeing more Latino members developing relationships with contractors from job to job.
23. Interview with Lavon Chambers, Laborers Local 79 & LECET, August 1998.
24. Interview with David Roscow, Public Affairs Department, LIUNA, August 1998; and LIUNA publications, press releases and membership orientation videos.
25. Interviews with Bailey Walker, director of education, AFSCME, January 1988; and Ginny Cady, labor economist, Research and Collective Bargaining Services, AFSCME July 1998; and Van Sheets, associate director of political action, AFSCME, August 1998. Also see www.afscme.org.