ATU MAKES HISTORIC MOVE
A HISTORICAL LOOK AT INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS SINCE 1893
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NEWSBRIEFS

ATU Facebook page 15,000 ‘likes’ and growing
ATU has been garnering the power of social media, with members, riders and transit advocates spreading the word about the ATU Facebook page. Our page now has more than 15,000 “likes,” and we have 16,000 in our sights. Help us reach that goal – “like” our page, invite your “friends” to “like” our page, and share our stories. And be sure to follow our Twitter handle @ATUComm to stay up to date on what’s trending in public transit, politics and other issues.

ATU out in full force for Fight for $15 Day of Action
ATU members across the country joined the “Fight for 15” National Day of Action. The movement has been spreading rapidly across the United States. You might not realize that many of our ATU brothers and sisters are among the millions of workers who make less than $15 per hour. Privatization has been the engine driving this trend, and foreign multinational transit providers and their friends in Congress are working hard to make this the norm in the transit industry. ATU locals in the Washington, DC area, Milwaukee, WI, and West Palm Beach, FL, were just a few of the locals to participate in the more than 500 events held in the nation.

Locals in the holiday spirit of giving back
From Local 508-Halifax, NS, to Local 1177-Norfolk, VA, to Local 883-Everett, WA, to Local 416-Peoria, IL, ATU Locals and their members were in the giving spirit this holiday season in support of their communities with “Stuff the Bus” events, food and toy drives, and other charitable activities.

INTERNATIONAL OFFICERS EMERITUS
International President Jim La Sala, ret.
International President Warren George, ret.
International Executive Vice President Ellis Franklin, ret.
International Executive Vice President Mike Siano, ret.

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Amalgamated Transit Union makes historic move into new headquarters

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Saskatoon, SK, is a growing metropolitan area with expanding suburban communities and spacious, less expensive homes, but many residents have become frustrated that they need a car to get downtown to work and school because the bus system is woefully inadequate. Buses run infrequently on weekdays, and not at all after 6 p.m. or on weekends.

One resident who recently moved to the suburbs has had serious struggles with the bus system, spending more than nine hours a week on buses to and from her downtown job. When she has to work in the evening, she’s forced to be creative in finding a way home.

Residents have complained, but a proposal to increase bus service that went before the city council was voted down because of the cost. That did not sit well with local citizens and transit advocates. The Saskatchewan Centre of Excellence for Transportation and Infrastructure says developing strong transit service in Saskatoon’s suburbs is critical to the growing suburban communities, but poses a “catch-22” – good service is needed to foster high ridership, but high ridership is often needed before there’s money or incentive to fund good service.

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Former Edmonton drivers serve as infrastructure ministers of province, nation

NDP MLA Brian Mason and Liberal MP Amarjeet Sohi may be from different parties, but that’s where their differences end. Both have served as members of Edmonton, AB’s city council, both are now infrastructure ministers, and both are ATU members and former Edmonton bus drivers.

MLA Mason was recently appointed Minister of Infrastructure and Minister of Transportation after the NDP’s surprise victory in the Alberta Legislative Assembly, and MP Amarjeet Sohi is serving Prime Minister Justin Trudeau as Minister of Infrastructure and Communities in the wake of the Liberal takeover of Parliament.

Even though they are from different parties the pair believes that they will have a great working relationship. It looks like a win-win-win for Alberta, transit patrons, and ATU members nationwide. 

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NDP MLA Brian Mason, left, and Liberal MP Amarjeet Sohi are serving as infrastructure ministers, respectively for Alberta and the nation. Both are ATU members and former Edmonton, AB, bus drivers.
Today’s union members may wonder what happened in a world that has turned against them.

No, you say? Well this Union is engaged in fights in places like Grand Rapids, MI, where the billionaire-run “Duchy” is trying to pry a meager retirement allowance out of the hands of its members. So, as a new mayor is sworn in this New Year, our members will be fighting to simply to hold on to the $1,200 a month pension they were promised after 30 years of service.

All across North America we are a Union in struggle. In New York, our school bus workers are still not whole after two years of a new mayor who promises to work to rebuild workers’ salaries.

Heartless

We face heartless well off people everywhere. Those of us who fight for decent wages today are just not popular.

My ancestors were not popular either. They escaped a famine in Ireland, a country suffering under the oppressive yoke of British rule. Under British Law (the Sharia Law of the day), they could not vote, could not serve on a jury, could not speak their own language in their homes, could not attend college or marry a Protestant. All because they were Catholics.

Stubborn to the core, Irish Catholics clung to their faith at least in part as an expression of the human will to not be ruled by others and to rebel against mistreatment and oppression. And, yes, some of them resorted to what today would be called terrorism.

No fair analysis, however, would conclude that they were the aggressors. This was all done in Ireland where the British were, as in so many other countries, foreign invaders.

They shot back

They never shot first. They shot back though, always trying to drive the invaders out of their land. They were not all terrorists, but they were all suspects.

When they came here, like the Italians, the Jews, the Germans and many others they faced slurs, attacks, and rejection. At job sites they were told that “No Irish Need Apply.” Their churches were burned, here in the land of the free.

Well, here in America today we are not the only ones who are unpopular. Listening to at least one presidential candidate, it might look like the clear path to popularity lies in degrading and attacking the next wave of poor, hopeless people to arrive here.

Oh, look they have their own religion - that makes it easy, and, yes, they come from a land like Ireland where people shot back and have engaged in very inhumane acts of terror. So, it’s not “politically correct” to throw our arms open to them, not even to the helpless hungry children among them.

Trudeau – a global symbol of Canada’s compassion

But through the noise and smoke comes Canadian Prime Minister Trudeau embracing the refugees, even as many around the world turn against them, calling upon his nation to rise and welcome these victims. He became a global symbol of Canada’s compassion.

I want (and I know this will not be popular) to salute the Canadians who set aside politics and more importantly, fear to connect with their humanity.

All across Canada people are making homes for these victims. Canadian ATU Locals are partnering to provide free transit while the refugees assimilate. This is exactly what the world needs – love and compassion – not more hatred and killing.

Many of us will hear that in our churches, mosques and temples this month. But will we have the grace and compassion to turn toward those people who so many around the world have turned against?

If we are true to our values we will.
There is a season for everything…

There is a season for everything, a time for every occupation and purpose under heaven.

Thursday November 5, 6:20 PM
My office is packed, the furniture labeled, and it’s time to go. The last phone call of the day is to retired International President Jim LaSala. Leaving is bittersweet. Some of our staff have been here over 25 years.

Monday November 9, it’s a little after noon.
I arrive at the new location. There are boxes to unpack and furniture to arrange. I find a quiet place by a two-story window, as the sun warms my face I look out over the campus. Admiring the rolling lawn and the mature trees, I think back to the many classes held here for ATU; to earning my college degree here at the Meany Center and the graduation ceremony in the chapel. Memories…

Thursday November 12, mid afternoon.
President Hanley calls Oscar and me to his office. He shows us a time capsule found in our now old building. It had to be pried open. The contents: past newsletters, magazines and correspondence. Also enclosed was an interesting pin. The emblem in the middle is cracked and illegible. It will be cleaned up and we’ll learn more. More memories…

Friday November 13, about 6:30 PM
Those who know me are aware that for the past two and half years my mother has been suffering with Alzheimer’s disease. It’s a type of dementia that causes problems with memory, thinking and behavior.

Alzheimer’s is a disease that interferes with the “memories of one’s life pressed between the pages of the mind.” The faded cracked photographs at times are just that for its victims. I’ve seen my mother go from 125 to 73 pounds over the last five months she’s been in hospice. Doctors say the shadows of death are converging. “No man or woman born of woman” escapes death.

Family members often discuss current events with residents and staff. Tonight was different. We all thought how wonderful it would have been to share dinner with the residents when they were in their prime. Most family members recalled the good times and described defined, purposeful lives lived by their loved ones.

‘Man’s Search for Meaning’
In the book, “Man’s Search for Meaning,” author Victor Frankel, tells the story of a Jewish prisoner in a Nazi concentration camp. The man survived because no matter what atrocity he experienced, he endured it so that he could see his family again. He found his purpose in the most hopeless of situations and pursued it.

ATU
Our predecessors made it their mission to lay a solid foundation, and build upon it to create the great Union we are today. They spelled out that mission in the preamble of our ATU Constitution:

“To secure and defend our rights, advance our interests as workers, create an authority whose seal shall constitute a certificate of character, intelligence and skill, build up an organization where all the working members of our crafts can participate in the discussion of those practical problems upon the solution of which depends our welfare and prosperity”.

This week we opened our new buildings. While honoring our past and with a steadfast commitment to our purpose we breathe life into the soul of the brick and mortar we now call home and are proud to be ATU.

Please visit www.atu.org for more information and the latest ATU news.
We need to do more than ever before to survive

Well, things are starting to get back to normal here at the new international headquarters building at our training center campus here in Silver Spring, MD. We haven’t moved far — just nine miles away from where we were on Wisconsin Avenue, but we’ve traveled light years ahead in terms of how much we’ll be able to do to serve you and the wider labor movement.

Change

I cannot help but reflect on how much has changed since the Union was founded 123 years ago, and how much has stayed the same.

Today, persons-of-color and women hold positions of responsibility in this office and throughout our Union that wouldn’t have been considered in 1892. And, yes, there is progress still to be made, but let’s not ignore how much has been accomplished through the blood, sweat and tears of those who came before us.

Over the last century the legal right to organize unions was recognized by the federal government, and the eight-hour day, 40-hour week became the norm. Health care, vacations, sick leave, workers compensation, health and safety laws, pensions, and more became a part of everyday employment.

The small, but determined group that met in Indianapolis in 1892, might be amazed to see all the progress that has been made, as well as the size and influence of the International Union they founded. They certainly would be astounded to see this new ATU campus.

They wouldn’t be surprised

But, sadly, they wouldn’t be at all surprised at the anti-union campaign being waged against us today by corporate America. All of the vicious, anti-worker tactics and rhetoric employed by the combines of the 19th and early 20th Centuries have been dusted off and used to great effect in the 21st.

On average, middle class workers today are worse off than they were 35 years ago. Workers can no longer rely on any of the benefits listed above. More and more middle class employees are slipping into the ranks of the working poor. No one can be sure that the good job they have today will be there tomorrow.

It is not an exaggeration to say that Koch brothers and their corporate and political allies are pouring millions into an all-out campaign to destroy us. And, if those transit workers who founded our Union could speak to us today they’d tell us that it would be a terrible mistake to think that we are somehow immune from their efforts.

Frankly, we need to do more than we’ve ever done before if ATU and the labor movement are to survive. And that’s why we’re here, at this new venue, responding, as ATU has always, to the challenges of our time.

Please visit www.atu.org for more information and the latest ATU news.
It’s hard not to like Justin Trudeau. Just after he was sworn in, Canada’s new Liberal prime minister said something that endeared him to people across Canada and the United States, and clearly set him apart from his predecessor.

CBC broadcaster Peter Mansbridge found it remarkable that Trudeau decided to have his entire cabinet take a bus together with him for their first day of work at Parliament.

Trudeau played down any fancy symbolism the bus might represent, saying that it was just a “real” way for him and his cabinet to begin their work together as a team.

Prime minister addresses CLC

Six days later, Trudeau addressed the national Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) meeting in Ottawa, signaling what the organization hopes is the “onset of a new era in relations between the labour movement and the federal government.”

“We were happy to welcome the prime minister to our meeting,” said CLC President Hassan Yussuff, “and to hear him recommit to repealing the former Conservative government’s anti-union legislation, C-377 and C-525.”

“We had a positive discussion and emphasized that we look forward to working with the prime minister and his cabinet on a number of issues that are priorities for working Canadians,” he added.

It has been over 50 years since a sitting prime minister addressed Canada’s central labour body. John Diefenbaker spoke at the CLC’s 1958 convention.

Honeymoon?

Trudeau is doing and saying things that transit and labour advocates like during this “honeymoon” period of his prime ministry. Whether he can maintain the political capital he’s generated remains to be seen.

As far as ATU members are concerned, Liberal transit privatization is no better than Conservative transit privatization — both lead to lost jobs and reduced compensation.

Trudeau should understand that meeting with labour leaders, no matter how nice that is, will not dissuade ATU from fighting with all its might any transit privatization schemes his government might hatch. ❖
International President Larry Hanley has appointed former Local Financial Secretary Sesil Rubain, 1700-Greyhound National, and Local Executive Vice President Manny Sforza, 113-Toronto, ON, as international representatives. “Sesil and Manny bring great skills, experience and knowledge to their new roles as international representatives. They are known as tireless fighters for their members at their locals and they will bring that same vigor, commitment and dedication to the international level,” says International President Larry Hanley.

An ATU member for more than 40 years, Rubain began his career as a Local 268 bus operator for the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority. In 1972 he began driving for intercity bus operator Goldline and served as a shop steward. Then in 1987 Rubain moved to Greyhound and became a member of ATU.

In 2004, at which time he was also elected vice president of the AFL-CIO Los Angeles County Federation of Labor. Lindsay was elected local president and business agent of Local 1277 in 2012.

Lindsay has worked on several Los Angeles mayoral campaigns, organizing the efforts of Local 1277, and the County Federation. He also worked on the “Measure R” Los Angeles County transit tax campaign that passed with 67% of the vote.

Lindsay is a 1987 graduate of Burbank High School, who holds an AA Degree in Automotive Technologies from Cerritos College (1989).

Jim Lindsay appointed international vice president

Local President Jim Lindsay, 1277-Los Angeles, CA, has been appointed international vice president. “Jim brings a wealth of experience, commitment, leadership and service to the International,” says International President Larry Hanley. “We welcome him to the General Executive Board and we look forward to his service as international vice president.”

Lindsay began his work in the transit industry as an employee of the Southern California Rapid Transit District and a member of Local 1277 in June 1990. He was elected shop steward of Local 1277 in 1994, treasurer in 1998, and financial secretary and assistant business agent in 2004, at which time he was also elected vice president of the AFL-CIO Los Angeles County Federation of Labor. Lindsay was elected local president and business agent of Local 1277 in 2012.

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Rubain, Sforza named international representatives

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During the 1990 Greyhound strike Rubain was a captain on the picket line for the duration of the three-year ordeal. In 2005 he was appointed as a shop steward for Local 1700 and a year later was elected financial secretary. He is married and the proud father of six children and has two grand children.

Sforza has 28 years experience in Local 113-Toronto, ON, since starting as a divisional clerk for the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) in 1987. In that role he has had a wide variety of duties including scheduling and other tasks. He was elected as a delegate to the International Convention in 2004 and 2007.

In 2010 he was elected vice president of Local 113 where he has played a key role in maintaining the Local’s pension fund and has been involved in the placement of members with medical issues and workers’ compensation claims. A native of Toronto, Manny is married with two children.
ATU is making the second major move in its 123-year history, and like the move to Washington, DC, in 1957, the new site will improve the Union's ability to respond to the challenges it faces now and in the future.

“It’s clear that ATU will have to be even more proactive than it has been in the past in both the U.S. and Canada if it is to withstand the corporate onslaught of groups like the Koch-brothers-funded American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) and their political allies that seek to eliminate unions,” says International President Larry Hanley. “The new international headquarters and training facility site will allow us to do just that.”

The new ATU international headquarters’ location on the former campus of the National Labor College in Silver Spring, MD, will greatly increase the Union’s educational capabilities, while retaining its proximity to AFL-CIO’s national office and the U.S. government.

ATU has also established a new international conference center on the campus that will provide labor and progressive movement activists with the instruction they need to bring about change in their communities. The International will, itself, be able to reduce expenses by bringing many of the training programs it has sponsored for members throughout the U.S. and Canada in-house, into its own state-of-the-art facility.

For 123 years the movement of the Union’s international offices has been a story of accepting an ever-larger role in promoting the rights of its members and working families in general.

ATU’s move to Washington 58 years ago allowed it to be much more effective in representing the interests of our members to the U.S. government. The new move will provide the Union with greater opportunity to train a new generation of labor and progressive activists who will go back and do that same advocacy in their states and communities.

It all started 123 years ago, in September 1892.

**DETROIT**

The headquarters of the Amalgamated Transit Union was moved even before the founding Convention adjourned in September 1892. The delegates to the founding Convention initially chose Indianapolis – the city where they were meeting – as their national headquarters.


Law, who had been very vocal at the beginning of the Convention, probably lost votes because he was inexplicably absent during the balloting. Husted won by just 10 votes. Law was elected chair of a group of three trustees for the Union, and a committee was formed to go find him.

Thinking their work was done, some delegates returned home early. But there were many among those who remained who were unhappy with the results of the election.
Law reappeared during the final evening session and made a motion to reconsider the election of officers. That motion carried with a margin of just 46 votes.

Disappointed with Law's lack of leadership, the Convention elected the young man from Columbus, OH – W.D. Mahon – to replace Law. As a Canadian division had been added to the Union during the previous year, W.D. Mahon became the Amalgamated’s first elected international president.

It then occurred to the delegates that they had no money to open an office in Indianapolis. No problem, said Law, who offered his division's (Division 3) office in Detroit as national headquarters. And if he were elected president, he said, he'd work for free until the Union got on its feet, and he'd convert his division's monthly publication into a national journal for the organization.

Well, after that Husted’s support dwindled to two delegates, and a young man from Columbus, OH, stepped up to nominate Law president of the Amalgamated – that man was William D. Mahon.

True to his word, Law opened up the national office in Detroit, and established the Union’s official publication – the *Street Railway Employes Gazette* (the predecessor of the *Motorman & Conductor*, and *In Transit*).

And that's how Detroit became the city in which ATU's headquarters was located for the next 65 years.

Unfortunately, Law soon abandoned his responsibilities to the national union when he became embroiled in a controversy between Catholics and Protestants within his division. The split within the local absorbed most of Law's time and attention.

Next, the Great Panic of 1893 hit the country, and by the time the Second Convention convened on October 9, in Cleveland, many divisions had collapsed; the Amalgamated was barely functioning. Only 19 delegates were in attendance.

After the Convention Mahon and his newly elected secretary-treasurer, Samuel M. Massey, rushed to Detroit to resolve the rift in Division 3. There they found that Law had absconded with the Division's treasury of $1,600, and created a new independent union – seven months before the Second Convention!

Mahon immediately revoked Division 3's charter, dealt with the internal dispute, and established a new local – Division 26 – in Detroit.

— continued on page 13
The December 1922 Motorman and Conductor described the building used as the Amalgamated’s international headquarters from 1915-1944.
Law was formally “expelled” from the Union in 1894, “as a traitor and an imposter,” and “debarred from becoming a member or affiliating with the [Union] for a period of 99 years.” As one might expect, the first and only national president of ATU was not around to rejoin the Union in 1993.

The international headquarters’ first home was at 14 Kanter Building in Detroit. We don’t know much about the Kanter Building, but according to Poor’s Manual of Street Surface Railways of 1895, the office was right next door to the offices of the Fort Wayne and Belle Isle Railway. The railway was the first Detroit streetcar company to switch to 100% electric operation.

International headquarters soon outgrew its space at the Kantor Building and in 1901, moved to 601-603 Hodges Building in Detroit.

In 1915 it was time to move again. This time, to a brand new building at 104 High Street in Detroit.

The Amalgamated stayed in one place, but its address changed twice, reflecting the burgeoning growth of Motor City. In 1920, the address changed to 260 East High Street, and and changed again to 260 Vernor Highway E., in 1927. International headquarters remained there until 1944.

A lot of memories were made in the Vernor Highway headquarters. The 1944 move described in the M&C (pages 14-15) represented more than a simple change of location. The founders of the union were retiring. A new, younger generation was taking over. They were taking the Amalgamated “downtown.”

But, ATU couldn’t be held in any location for very long – particularly when many unions were moving their headquarters to Washington, DC to be close to where labor law and regulations are made.

ATU soon decided it would make that move too. But the Union would not rent space in the AFL-CIO building, or any other building in the nation’s capital. It was decided that it would build its own international headquarters building in Northwest Washington, DC.

The M&C reported on the building’s progress in 1956 (pages 16-18).

In 1978, due to the headquarters building’s deteriorating condition and the Union’s need for greater space, the General Executive Board, at International President John Maroney’s urging, approved a proposal for a new five-floor office building with underground parking on the former building site.

Construction was delayed by a zoning ruling which forced the building to be changed to a mixed commercial and residential property. Despite these obstacles, the structure was finally completed at a total cost of approximately $9 million.

— continued on page 20
On his last day at Headquarters before leaving for Florida, W. D. Mahon helped with the packing. His last day in the office he had occupied for nearly 30 years. He'll come back in the Spring to a new corner office overlooking downtown Detroit.

MOVING Day has come and gone and the International Office is now At Home in its new location on the 11th floor of the Griswold building in downtown Detroit.

For some time it had been evident that larger quarters would have to be found to house the increased staff necessitated by the expansion and growth of the Association. At the September Board meeting in 1943 a committee of two, P. J. O'Brien and Sam B. Berrong, was appointed subject to the approval of President Mahon to investigate and select a new site.

The actual moving, under the efficient supervision of O. L. Mahon, office manager, and David Wade, senior bookkeeper, was accomplished with a minimum loss of time. Several days before M-Day the movers brought a number of big wooden packing boxes to the office and each one packed his or her own books and papers. After nearly 30 years there was an accumulation of material which had to be sorted and some of it—outdated and of no value—discarded. Every piece of furniture and box had to be labeled so that the movers would know into which room each article went in the new location.

For a few days everyone was busy and everyone was dusty—the men in their shirt sleeves and the girls wearing aprons to protect their dresses. When we were partially packed the huge van pulled up in front and the movers swarmed through the building. First to go were files and boxes of supplies and equipment we could do without temporarily.

One casualty of that first day's moving was Jack Gagen. They took his pipe—of all things—and the chair in which he was accustomed to sit for his after-luncheon smoke. Jack had to buy a cigar and his chair for his after-lunch smoke that day was a pile of folded packing boxes. The noise and confusion finally got Robert Armstrong who was trying to carry on at his desk in an otherwise empty office. He put on his hat in disgust and said that he was going home but a short time later he was back again attacking his huge stack of correspondence with a determined do-or-die expression on his face. James McGinnity, International organizer, rolled up his sleeves and worked like a Trojan. Finally, after a couple of days, the building was cleared of everything, but desks and chairs and typewriters.

On Wednesday, October 4, they took the last load. That afternoon at one o'clock, we all reported at the new location—everyone, that is, except President Mahon, who had left the day before for Florida.

Then began the process of unpacking and arranging desks—putting books back in the bookcases and so forth. By 10 on Thursday morning the Motorman office was functioning normally again as were most of the other offices.

The November 1944 Motorman and Conductor described the move from the Vernor Highway headquarters to the Griswold Building in 1944.
The November 1944 Motorman and Conductor described the move from the Vernor Highway headquarters to the Griswold Building in 1944."

And now a word about the building we’ve outgrown. Constructed in 1915 by the Amalgamated at the instigation of its far-sighted President, W. D. Mahon, it was at one time the envy of other labor organizations in Detroit and it served the Association well for nearly three decades. Originally a two-story structure, the building acquired a third story in 1921. The August, 1915, Motorman, in announcing the new headquarters said:

“While the inside of the new Association headquarters building is not yet finished . . . the ground floor is sufficiently apportioned and temporary conveniences are in so that the building is now occupied as the general headquarters of the Association. The office records, equipment and furniture were moved into the new building Saturday, August 14. The new building is extremely well constructed, conveniently located in north central Detroit and upon the most beautiful of the older streets of the city. It is 48 feet long by 36 feet deep. On either side is 12 feet of vacant Association property. The lot is 170 feet deep. The building stands 15 feet back from the sidewalk, thus providing a fine lawn. The building is fire proof and contains a commodious steel vault, well bricked in, serving the basement and first floor. This fine office building had its inception in the mind of International President W. D. Mahon, whose recommendation to the 13th convention to construct such a building was adopted. The construction of the building, however, was entrusted to International Treasurer Rezin Orr. He did his work with the usual caution and studious conclusions characteristic of him in the affairs of the Association.”

Detroit newspapers took pictures and carried stories on the moving. Said the Times of its interview with President Mahon:

“There was a glint of fighting humor in his eye as he said: ‘Someone asked me what it feels like to be 83 and I said it felt good. Most of your enemies are dead and buried.’”

“It was horse cars when we started,” the Times further quoted W. D. “There was just one experimental electric line in Richmond, Va. Pretty soon there were cable cars and then the whole country had electric transportation. At one time, there were about 700 miles of interurban lines running out of Detroit and you could cross the country on electric lines.

“Then the buses came along and we had another major change of operations. It’s all progress and with 160,000 members, we’ve kept up in the past and will in the future.”

Cover Picture: W. D. carefully places in a packing box the Crom, emblem of the Mexican Federation of Labor (Confederacion Regional Obrera Mexicana), presented to him in 1926 when he was an honored delegate to their 7th Annual Convention in Mexico City.
Your New Home’s Coming Along Fine!

Cornerstone Ceremonies at Washington Headquarters Will Take Place Sept. 15

Another important milestone in the Amalgamated Association’s organizational progress will be marked Sept. 15. On that date, which is the 64th anniversary of our founding, the cornerstone of our new headquarters in Washington will be laid.

Thus our Association joins forty-six other national and international unions that already have located in Washington, making it the Labor as well as the Nation’s capital.

International President A. L. Spradling, announcing the event, has notified all Local Divisions that any officers and members who may find it convenient to attend, will be most welcome.

The ceremony itself will be brief, but impressive.

AFL-CIO President George Meany will be the principal honored guest. Among others expected to be present are AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer William Schnitzler, members of the Executive Council, our own Amalgamated Association top officers and members of our General Executive Board. Already many Local Divisions have informed us they plan to be represented at the affair.

A sketch of the building as it will look when completed is reproduced elsewhere in this article. The architecture is of the modern, functional school, a two story structure with a 100 foot front and 92 feet deep. It is located at the south-east corner of Garrison Street and Wisconsin Ave., a principal thoroughfare leading to Maryland. It is on a busy street car line, operated by members of Div. 689 and a couple of blocks from one of the main trolley barns.

Every bit of cement, stone, glass, steel and other equipment that is going into our new building was produced by union labor. We have taken particular care to see that this requirement is fulfilled to the letter, as a mark of appreciation for the friendship and support given us through the years by our brothers in the other skilled crafts and trades.

The September 1956 Motorman and Conductor described the progress made preparing for the move to Washington, DC.
The structure will be faced with white Cherokee Georgia marble and Moosabeck Vermont granite. Instead of the conventional windows, the entire facade of the upper story will be of glass in front of which are vertical aluminum weather controls which move automatically with the sun to protect the interior from its rays.

The entrance to the headquarters will be finished in terraza and marble. The feature of this area is a monumental staircase of unique design which has no visible means of support, and which will give easy, casual access to the main part of the building.

AND HERE'S how the Amalgamated Association's fine new home will look when completed. It is situated at 5025 Wisconsin Ave., N. W., Washington, D. C., on Friendship Heights Trolley Route 30 operated by members of Div. 689, and right near the car barn.

The upper floor will provide space for the general work area and our officers. The office interiors are to be paneled in walnut. The street level floor will contain the library, Board room, additional office space, an equipment room, and utility rooms. A modern conditioning system will circulate washed air and keep the temperature and humidity at normal in all seasons.
While the building is not large by institutional standards, as compared with some of the edifices erected by other organizations, it already has inspired considerable comment from architects and experts in allied fields as being functionally outstanding and of beautiful design. The theme and decor are the work of Wilson and Denton, well known Washington architects, who designed the four million dollar Machinists’ Building (ours will cost a tenth of that) on Connecticut Avenue. A Washington wag, comparing our structure with the monumental and imposing edifices erected by the AFL-CIO, Teamsters, Machinists and others, remarked “after looking over some of these other Temples I think you guys will have to call your place Car Man’s Cottage or Bus Man’s Bungalow.”

Nevertheless, our Washington Headquarters will be the finest our organization ever has had. In the sixty-four years of our existence we’ve only had one other home of our own. That was the structure we built and occupied on August 14, 1915. It was authorized by the Salt Lake Convention of 1913 and located at what was known as 104 E. High St., Detroit, in those days. The street name later was changed and our address became 260 E. Vernor Highway.

The late President Mahon had his troubles with that project. When the “interests” learned a labor union was going to build and occupy a building they put up every obstacle conceivable to prevent its erection. Eventually we were successful, and to rub it in on our enemies, we talked the Detroit Federation of Labor into building a Labor Temple next door. Our Vernor Highway building cost the princely sum of $11,647.69 and the lot cost $14,357.50. We occupied those premises, which were 48 feet front and 36 feet deep, until September of 1944, when we sold the building and moved into office space at 1214 Griswold Street in downtown Detroit.

Detroit became the home of the Amalgamated Association officially in 1894 after the Milwaukee Convention decided we should locate there. President Mahon had been working out of his home at Columbus, Ohio, the previous year, his first in office.

Detroit was a well-established organization then, with a treasury and office space. The finances of the International organization at the 1893 Cleveland Convention showed a balance of $172.36, Division 26’s officers invited Mahon to come to the thriving Michigan metropolis of 365,000 people and share space with them. They even helped finance the Motorman and Conductor. Mahon was glad to accept and moved in with Division 26 in the Kanter Building. By 1901 the organization had grown so that the needs of the International outgrew the space availability and Mahon was forced to find office room in the Hodges Building on Woodward Avenue, where the International carried on its work until we moved to our first home in 1915.

Work was started on our new headquarters in mid-May when the wreckers tore down two old residences which stood at the location. By June 26 the construction men were above ground and the work has moved along on schedule so far. Fortunately all the steel needed was on the job before the steel strike and barring unforeseen delays the structure should be completed in December.

Dedication of our Washington headquarters will be one of the highlights of our Thirty-fourth Convention to be held in Washington, D. C., beginning Sept. 9, 1957.

In the Nation’s capital we will have as neighbors such affiliates and other labor organizations as: The AFL-CIO Headquarters, Auto Workers, Agricultural Workers, American Newspaper Guild, Asbestos Workers, Bookbinders, Bakers and Confectionery Workers, Bricklayers, Butchers, Cigar Makers, Communications Workers, Electrical, Radio and Machine (IUE) Workers, Electrical Workers (IBEW), Fire Fighters, Government Employees, Hod Carriers, Insurance Agents, Insurance Workers, Letter Carriers, Machinists, Marble, Slate and Stone Polishers; Marine Engineers, Masters, Mates and Pilots; Messengers (Special Delivery), Mine Workers, Office Employees, Operating Engineers, Paperworkers, Pattern Makers, Plumbers and Pipefitters, Post Office Clerks, Postal Transport Workers, Railway Labor Assn., Retail Clerks, Shoe Workers, Sheet Metal Workers, Teamsters, Technical Engineers, United Textile Workers, Textile Workers of America, Tobacco Workers and Utility Workers. Other unions have offices in the outlying areas around the District of Columbia.
The March 1957 Motorman and Conductor described the move to the new building in Washington, DC.
The international executive officers and staff first moved into the new building in March 1982. Thirty-three years later, with challenges not seen since the early 1900s, ATU decided that it had to find a way to re-energize its political activism. In 2014, the AFL-CIO decided to sell its National Labor College and campus, providing ATU with an opportunity to acquire the property and offer a much more expanded training program for its members as well as other union and activist organizations.

In November 2015, ATU moved to the new campus inaugurating a new era of ATU advocacy.
LOCAL 689-WASHINGTON, DC

Division 689 was chartered on January 19, 1916, but the Division’s* location was kept secret. The charter city was revealed as Washington, DC, sometime before March, when International Vice President Rezin Orr and Division representatives attempted to start negotiations with the Washington Railway and Electric Company.

On March 5, a Washington Times headline screamed, “STREET CAR MEN STRIKE.” The Motorman & Conductor (M&C), predecessor to In Transit, reported Orr “was unable to obtain conferences with the companies… The members of the newly organized local suspended work in recognition of a lockout….”

The company settled with Division 689 two days later, granting increases “from 2 to 4 ½ cents per hour.”

In July, the new DC members reported, “Division 689 is making rapid strides, and to date has a 90% organization. By January 1, 1917, it is to be hoped that we will be 100% organized. The union gave an excursion to Chesapeake Beach, Md., June 26th and 27th, and 3,000 took part each day… July 4th the street car men were excellently represented in the parade that preceded the dedication of the new A. F. of L. office building. All along the line of march they received much applause… Our boys are solid and determined to make the union a permanent success.”

LOCAL 690-FITCHBURG, MA

Local 690-Fitchburg, MA, was organized by GEB Chair John H. Reardon and chartered on January 20, 1916. Unlike other divisions, the organization of Local 690 seems to have gone smoothly. In July 1917, the members told the Union, “Div. No. 690, now organized six months, wishes to say that we are proceeding successfully. We obtain new applications every meeting and every member is working faithfully to swell the membership roll.

“At our recent election of officers we elected and installed officers for one year as follows: President, W. C. White; vice-president, L. F. Harris; financial secretary, J. E. Fitzpatrick; treasurer, H. T. Brown; recording secretary, W. L. Newell; warden, J. F. Sanderson; conductor, J. A. Allen; correspondent, J. W. Gainey; executive board, W. C. White, H. F. Dugan, L. O. Geoffrion, Charles Revar, W. L. Newell and W. E. Goddard.

“Our executive board recently, for consultation, visited President Rooney of Div. No. 22, Worcester.

“Brother Morgan, in his talks at our meetings, shows the making of a good lawyer. Brother Dickie St. Cyr thinks he is a pretty good man on the flyer. Brother Piadek is mentalizing on matrimony.

“Our meetings are held the first Thursday of each month at 9 A. M. and 8 P. M.”
LOCAL 691-SPRINGFIELD, MO
The July 1916 M&C reported that “G. E. B. Member J. C. Colgan in February assisted in organizing Div. No. 691, Springfield, Mo.” which was chartered on January 27, 1916. He “was returned to Springfield, where the newly instituted local had entered strike in protest of refusal of the company to recognize the Association. The strike occurred Feb. 20 and was amicably settled Feb. 23. Board Member Colgan was assisted in the work in Springfield by President R. T. Wood of the Missouri State F. of L. and the Springfield Central Labor Union…”

The Division went back on strike on October 5, however, after “the secretary of the local was dismissed from the service… upon petty charges” in violation of the contract’s arbitration provision.

The December 2016 M&C reported, “that all efforts to effect an honorable adjustment have proved futile. The Commissioner of Public Utilities of Missouri prepared an agreement for arbitration of the dispute, which was accepted by the local, but rejected by the company. This was the last effort reported in the interest of a settlement, and it appears that the strike will become an endurance contest.”

That contest came to an end on June 15, 1917, when a new agreement was signed with a new arbitration clause.

LOCAL 694-SAN ANTONIO, TX
Division 694-San Antonio, TX, was organized by International Vice President Ben Commons, and chartered on February 28, 1916, with little to no turmoil.

The members reported in the September 1916 M&C: “Div. No. 694 is pleased to report that she made a good showing on Labor Day. About 140 of our members were in line of parade… In the center of our line we had an old-time mule car, nicely decorated and loaded with children… We got the first prize, which was $50 cash. There were forty unions in the parade and we were among the latest organized. We were not awarded the first prize so much from our numbers or showy display as for our neat and business like appearance and our presentation was much to the credit of our arrangements committee…”

“We are now wearing a union button and are pleased with the results…”

“Div. No. 694 is getting along fine. There is but one man among us not yet in. Newcomers lose no time in joining us. Our meetings are well attended. Unionism has taken hold of us, not only in name but in spirit, and we are sure to have a local second to none.”

LOCAL 697-TOLEDO, OH
Division 697-Toledo, OH, was organized by International President W. D. Mahon, GEB Member Edward McMorrow, and Toledo Central Labor Union Business Agent John J. Quinlivan, and chartered by the Amalgamated on March 14, 1916.

The April 1916 M&C reported, “Div. No. 697, Toledo, Ohio, was locked out March 28, the management refusing to permit employes to work who should identify themselves as members of the Association by wearing the union emblem button.”

“As you are well aware,” the Division told the Union in the September 1916 M&C, “this company for a number of years was very hostile to our organization. Following the organization of the men, the company refused to recognize or treat with the organization.

“The men, however, were determined to fully establish their organization and decided to put on the monthly button. As soon as the men put on the button the company retaliated by locking them all out.

“The result was that the lines of this system were tied up completely from March 28 to April 9, 1916, when a settlement was secured and a contract made fully recognizing the organization and establishing improved working conditions in the way of wages, hours of labor and general working conditions.”

LOCAL 704-TOLEDO, OH
Division 704-Little Rock, AR, was organized by International Vice President Ben Commons, and chartered on May 20, 1916. In July 2016, the Division reported in
the M&C, “The company learned of the new organization and immediately discharged 7 of our men… Bro. Commons, accompanied by a committee from the Central Trades and Labor Council, called on our general manager and requested reinstatement of the discharged men and recognition of the organization.

“This was refused. A strike was called for the following Saturday. In the meantime the boys joined the organization rapidly. Forty joined in a body.

“On the evening that the strike was to take place the mayor of Little Rock asked for a postponement of the strike until the following Monday. This request was granted and in the meantime the union was recognized and the discharged men reinstated.

“We are now full-fledged union men, working under a signed agreement in which the company agrees to recognize and treat with the duly authorized and accredited representatives or committees of the Association in the adjustment of all questions and differences that may arise in the future. This agreement is for two years dating from May 22, 1916.”

LOCAL 713-MEMPHIS, TN

The September 1916 M&C, reported, that “Div. No. 713, Memphis, Tenn., was organized by Vice-President Ben Commons after a vicious campaign on the part of the company to prevent the men from organizing… no sooner had [Commons] arrived than the company set upon him with their thugs and gunmen. Brother Commons was assaulted twice, but he continued in the work among the men… [and] succeeded in establishing Div. No. 713. The company’s thugs continued their work of intimidation, but the results did not stop the men from organizing - if anything, it encouraged them.” Division 713 was chartered July 10, 1916.

“The company discharged the men as soon as they became members of the union and then began to assault the members, which resulted in one of the members being killed; following which the men suspended work July 22 completely tying up the lines. The strike lasted 24 hours, a settlement being reached the following day, July 23. Under the settlement all discharged men were reinstated with pay and later an agreement was entered into with the company, fully recognizing the union and providing for increased wages and improved conditions for the period of three years.”

LOCAL 714-PORTLAND, ME

International President Mahon reported in the August 1916 M&C that, “Div. No. 714 of Portland, Maine, was organized by Charles Roux, business agent of the Carpenters’ Association in that city. As soon as the company learned that the men were organizing they discharged some eighteen members… The result was that a strike was called July 12, 1916…” The Division was chartered on July 13, 1916.

“I went to Portland in person, accompanied by Vice-President O’Brien and Brother Reardon… Upon reaching Portland we were called upon by a committee representing the Chamber of Commerce. Through this committee negotiations were continued during Saturday night, Sunday and Sunday night… A settlement was reached Monday morning, July 17, 1916. This settlement provided for the reinstatement of all the men who had been on strike and who had been suspended for joining the union, with full pay for all the time that they were out. It also provided that a contract should be made, fully recognizing Div. No. 714 of our Association...

“The contract was drafted and agreed to between our organization and the company on the afternoon of the 17th —the men all returning to work on the morning of the 17th.”

LOCAL 717-MANCHESTER, NH

Division 717-Manchester, NH, was organized by GEB Member John H. Reardon, and chartered on July 31, 1916. Manchester seems to be another one of those lucky locals that were organized without significant trouble.

Its members reported in the October 1916 M&C: “As a newly-organized local, we of Div. No. 717, are most agreeably satisfied. We are pleased with the change from non-unionism to unionism. We find a new spirit pervading our ranks. The organization of our local has inspired an interest in the employment beyond any conception that we had. It seems to afford a sort of relax— a breathing spell in a man’s life to be one of those effecting such a change in employment and passing from the one state—non-unionism—to the other, that of unionism.

“Through the good offices of Brother P. F. Sheehan, of
the Brockton local, we have been successful in negotiating an agreement with our company, which is highly appreciated…

“Right here our boys wish, through the columns of the M. and C., to extend thanks to Brother P. F. Sheehan and all others who took part in assisting us in effecting our organization and assisting in bringing about our agreement.”

LOCAL 725-BIRMINGHAM, AL
Division 725-Birmingham, AL, was organized by International Vice President Ben Commons, and chartered on August 10, 1916. The members reported in the October 1916 M&C, that “Brother Commons came here about August 10th and things immediately began to move. In less than ten days of diligent work on his part, a fine organization of nearly 700 members, motormen, conductors, shop and repair men were banded together as strong as steel and firm as adamant… Our boys went through two previous unsuccessful attempts, one in 1907, another in 1913. However… [w]e are now with you, sister locals of the Amalgamated, and we intend to remain and assist in the work of up-building our social, political and financial standing in our respective communities.

“We of Div. No. 725 now wish to extend the right hand of fellowship to our brother workers in other Divisions and assure them that we feel proud of the fact that we can stand up and look the world in the face as having proclaimed and established our independence as a working organization. We trust the day will never dawn when you may regret our advent into your midst.”

LOCAL 726-STATEN ISLAND, NY
Division 726-Staten Island, NY, was organized by C. Howard Severs, a conductor and president of Division 540-Trenton, NJ, and chartered on August 11, 1916. Later, International Vice President George Keenan reported, “this Division was getting along nicely and indications were that the men and the Company would work in harmony in the future.”

That situation stood in high contrast to that of transit workers in the other boroughs of New York City who thought they had just concluded a highly contentious strike. The nonunion Staten Island street car men went on strike with Amalgamated’s organized New York transit workers in 1916, but, unlike them, their goal was organization, and they achieved their goal with the Richmond Light and Rail Company.

The Staten Island Division was chartered just after the New York Divisions appeared to have an agreement with the New York Railways Company. The New York City locals soon discovered that they had been had, as the company was forcing its workers to sign a “master and servant” agreement.

But the members of the newly organized Local 726 worked for Richmond Light and Rail, not the New York Railways Company, and kept working. They are still at it 100 years later.

LOCAL 732-ATLANTA, GA
Division 732-Atlanta, GA, was organized by Business Agent William Pollard of the Electrical Workers and President H. O. Teat of the Brotherhood of Firemen and Enginemen, and chartered on September 23, 1916.

The November 1916 M&C reported, “…As soon as the company became aware of the movement they discharged such of the employees as they suspected to be responsible for encouragement of the organization and declared a policy not to tolerate in employment members of the Amalgamated Association.”

It was not until 1918, that Local 732 would be recognized by the company, as reported by the July 1918 M&C:

“A settlement was affected July 19th by which an agreement was signed recognizing the organization and all matters in dispute referred to the Federal War Labor Board for decision… All discharged members were reinstated.” The following month the M&C reported:

“At last Div. No. 732 has got on the map. We of the 1916 brothers have been working, waiting and hoping to see the men get together. Our history of two years ago is quite well known and it is unnecessary here to repeat from that. The time came and our efforts of two years have been rewarded. We are now twelve hundred strong and extending…”

* ATU local unions were originally called local “divisions.”
The Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) has issued a statement in support of the goals of the Paris Climate Change Conference that calls on Canada to commit to ambitious, achievable science-based targets for significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Excerpts follow:

I. Labour’s urgent need to address the climate crisis

Canada and the world must respond forcefully and without delay to the climate crisis. Climate change is already having significant negative impacts on workers and their communities, in Canada and around the world. Heat waves, droughts, floods, rising sea levels, and biodiversity loss are causing the displacement of workers and indigenous peoples worldwide.

In Canada, rising ocean temperatures and prolonged dry spells are affecting production and employment in aquaculture, mining, farming, forestry and even oil and gas extraction. The science is clear: if we continue to emit greenhouse gases at the current rate, the world risks further warming and lasting changes in the planet’s climate system, raising the likelihood of severe, widespread, and irreversible impacts on people, economies, and ecosystems.

To have a reasonable chance of limiting global warming to a rise of 2°C this century and averting intolerable impacts on millions of people, the world community must restrict future carbon emissions to a finite amount, amounting to a “global carbon budget” for the planet…

According the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, in order to limit global warming to 2°C during this century, industrialized countries will have to reduce GHG emissions 40% to 70% below 2010 levels by 2050, and to near zero by 2100. G7 countries including Canada have committed to zero emissions by 2100, but it is possible to limit the risk of catastrophic warming and achieve near zero emissions by 2050.

The primary cause of global warming is the burning of fossil fuels: coal, oil and gas. To limit the destructive effects of global warming, we must reduce our emissions of heat-trapping greenhouse gases generated by fossil fuels. This will require:

- Dramatically expanding the use of renewable energy like wind and solar power to generate electricity, and transitioning to a clean energy economy that depends less and less on fossil fuels.

- Progressively limiting the amount of carbon that polluters are allowed to emit, and redesigning industries to be more efficient, burn less fossil fuels, and increasingly rely on renewable energy.

- Insulating and converting homes and buildings so that they are more energy efficient.

- Improve and expand low-emissions transportation and public transit.

Climate change is simultaneously the greatest threat of our time, and the greatest opportunity of our era for economic growth and job creation. The CLC rejects the notion that there is a fundamental conflict between the economy and jobs and environmental sustainability. Both a green jobs strategy and a sustainable economic development strategy are needed, placing sectoral strategies and trade policies at the centre of the agenda on climate change...
A member recently asked Local President Bradshaw why Local 569 is involved in politics. We thought we’d share his cogent response:

The Union is legally and ethically bound to represent its members’ best interests to the best of its ability. There is a long history of the International Union, ATU Canada, and this Local supporting the candidates and political parties that best represent our interests at the various levels of government.

And it pays off – the difference between lobbying Alberta’s former Conservative provincial government and the current New Democratic Party (NDP) government is the difference of night and day.

The Conservatives’ objective is to do everything possible to make it hard for unions to operate. They refuse even to meet with us; don’t return our calls, etc. The NDP government not only meets with us, they listen to us.

Recent meetings with government

Since the provincial election on May 5, we have met with Transportation Minister Brian Mason (himself a member of our Local) to discuss matters around a dependable funding strategy for transit properties around the province, possible solutions for the impending collapse of Greyhound (Greyhound employees are members of this Union as well) and other topics of importance to our members.

I currently sit on the Alberta Federation of Labour’s Labour Law Working Group. We have been asked by the Minister of Labour, Lori Sigurdson, to provide input on changes to the rules around essential services and the right to strike. We will also be presenting to Minister Sigurdson on updating the Provincial Labour Relations Code.

We have also met with Municipal Affairs Minister Deron Bilous to talk about the above topics and about extending the conditions of Bill 1 to cover municipal elections as well. You may know that Bill 1 was the bill to prohibit campaign donations from corporations and unions.

You may think it odd that the union would want to see such a provision, but the corporate world provides FAR more funding to election candidates than unions ever thought of doing (85% for corporations vs. 17% for unions).

The fact is that – like you – we don’t think we should have to spend members’ dues on election campaigns either, but it’s important that we have some politicians in place who are friendly to the unions’ interests. These things all help protect our members’ jobs.

It’s our job

It’s a bit long-winded, but in the end, the union doesn’t think it can tell you how to vote. You’re by yourself in that voting booth and you should vote for the party whose values most closely align with your own. That’s the responsibility we all carry in a democracy. People in other parts of the world literally risk their lives for the right to vote. We have it pretty good here.

What we’re doing when we commit resources to election campaigns is telling our membership which party will best facilitate the union’s ability to fulfill its mandate of representing your interests. Legally and ethically, it’s our job.

There’s a big wide world out there, and it’s tough to keep up with all the events which can affect your profession and your livelihood. One of the easiest ways to stay informed is by visiting: www.atu.org.

Information about Traveling to Canada

An international destination of choice, Toronto is easily accessed by land, water and air. Don’t forget to ensure you have a valid passport at all times. American citizens returning home should also be aware that there are new customs requirements in effect.

For more information, visit the websites of:

**Citizenship and Immigration Canada**

**U.S. Department of State** (Passport Information)
http://www.travel.state.gov/content/travel/english.html
Grâce et compassion

Les membres du Syndicat d’aujourd’hui se demandent sans doute ce qui est arrivé dans ce monde qui semble s’être tourné contre eux.

Non, dites-vous?

Eh bien, ce Syndicat a mené des combats dans des endroits comme Grand Rapids, au Michigan, où le « duché » gouverné par des milliardaires tente de soutirer une maigre allocation de retraite des mains de ses membres. Donc, alors qu’un nouveau maire sera assermenté en cette nouvelle année, nos membres devront se battre simplement pour conserver la pension de 1200 $ par mois qui leur a été promise après leurs 30 années de service.

Partout en Amérique du Nord, nous sommes un Syndicat impliqué dans une lutte. À New York, nos conducteurs d’autobus scolaires ne sont toujours pas entiers après l’élection d’un nouveau maire qui promet depuis deux ans de travailler à rebâtir les salaires des travailleurs.

Insensibles

Partout, nous sommes confrontés à des gens bien nantis, mais sans cœur. Ceux d’entre nous qui se battent aujourd’hui pour des salaires décent ne sont tout simplement pas populaires.

Mes ancêtres n’étaient pas populaires non plus. Ils ont fui la famine en Irlande, un pays souffrant sous le joug oppressif de la domination britannique. Selon la loi britannique (la Sharia de cette époque), ils ne pouvaient ni voter, ni siéger à un jury, ni parler leur propre langue dans leur maison, ni fréquenter le collège ou épouser un protestant. Tout cela, parce qu’ils étaient catholiques.

Obstins jusqu’à l’âme, les Irlandais catholiques se cramponnaient à leur foi, du moins en partie, comme expression de la volonté humaine de ne pas être gouvernés par les autres et de se rebeller contre les mauvais traitements et l’oppression. Et, oui, certains d’entre eux ont eu recours à ce que l’on appellerait aujourd’hui le terrorisme.

Cependant, aucune analyse juste ne permet de conclure qu’ils étaient les agresseurs. Tout cela s’est produit en Irlande, là où les Britanniques étaient, comme dans bien d’autres pays, les envahisseurs étrangers.

Ils ont riposté

Ils n’ont jamais tiré les premiers. Mais ils ont riposté, toujours en essayant de chasser les envahisseurs hors de leurs terres. Ils n’étaient pas tous des terroristes, mais tous étaient suspects.

Lorsqu’ils sont venus ici, comme les Italiens, les Juifs, les Allemands et beaucoup d’autres, ils ont été confrontés aux insultes, aux attaques et au rejet. Sur les sites d’emploi, ils se faisaient dire : « Nous n’embauchons pas les Irlandais ». Leurs églises ont même été brûlées, ici, dans le pays de la liberté.

Aujourd’hui, en Amérique, nous ne sommes pas les seuls à être impopulaires. En écoutant au moins un candidat à l’élection présidentielle, il semblerait que la voie évidente vers la popularité réside dans la dégradation et dans l’attaque de la prochaine vague de gens pauvres et sans espoir qui débarquent ici.

Oh, regardez, ils ont leur propre religion – ce qui rend le tout plus facile et, bien sûr, ils viennent d’un pays comme l’Irlande, où les gens ont riposté et se sont engagés dans des actes terroristes très inhumains. Ainsi, il n’est pas « politiquement correct » de leur ouvrir nos bras, pas même aux enfants impuissants et affamés qui se trouvent parmi eux.

Trudeau – un symbole mondial de la compassion du Canada

Mais, à travers ce vacarme arrive le premier ministre canadien, Justin Trudeau, embrassant les réfugiés alors que de nombreux pays autour du monde les rejettent, faisant appel à sa nation pour qu’elle se lève et qu’elle accueille ces victimes. Il est devenu le symbole mondial de la compassion du Canada.

Je désire saluer (et je sais que ce ne sera pas populaire) les Canadiens qui mettent de côté la politique et, le plus important, la peur de se connecter à leur humanité.

Partout au Canada, les gens préparent des foyers pour ces victimes. Les sections locales canadiennes du SUT se sont associées pour offrir gratuitement le transport en commun aux réfugiés, le temps qu’ils s’acclimatent à leur nouveau pays. Voilà exactement ce dont le monde a besoin – de l’amour et de la compassion – pas davantage de haine et de meurtres.
Beaucoup d’entre nous entendront ce message dans nos églises, nos mosquées et nos temples ce mois-ci. Mais aurons-nous la grâce et la compassion de nous tourner vers ces gens qui ont maintes fois subi le rejet, partout à travers le monde?

Si nous sommes fidèles à nos valeurs, nous y parviendrons. 💥

Il y a un moment pour tout...
« Il y a un moment pour tout et un temps pour chaque chose sous le ciel. »

Jeudi 5 novembre, 18 h 20

Mon bureau est emballé, les meubles étiquetés, et il est temps de partir. Le dernier appel téléphonique de la journée est à Jim LaSala, président retraité de l’International. Partir me laisse un sentiment doux-amer. Certains de nos employés ont travaillé ici pendant plus de 25 ans.

Lundi 9 novembre, un peu après midi

J’arrive au nouvel emplacement. Il y a des boîtes à déballer et des meubles à placer. Je trouve un coin tranquille près d’une fenêtre de deux étages et, avec le soleil qui réchauffe mon visage, je regarde vers le campus. Admirant la pelouse vallonnée et les arbres matures, je repense aux nombreuses classes tenues ici pour le SUT; à l’obtention de mon diplôme ici, au Centre Meany, et à la cérémonie de remise des diplômes dans la chapelle. Souvenirs...

Jeudi 12 novembre, milieu de l’après-midi

Le président Hanley nous fait venir, Oscar et moi, à son bureau. Il nous montre une capsule temporelle trouvée dans notre désormais ancien bâtiment. Nous avons forcé l’ouverture. Son contenu : des bulletins précédents, des magazines et de la correspondance. Et également une épinglette intéressante. L’emblème au centre est fissuré et illisible. Il sera nettoyé et nous en apprendrons davantage. Encore plus de souvenirs...

Vendredi 13 novembre, vers 18 h 30

Ceux qui me connaissent savent que depuis les deux dernières années et demie, ma mère a souffert de la maladie d’Alzheimer. C’est un type de démence qui provoque des problèmes de mémoire, de pensée et de comportement.

L’Alzheimer est une maladie qui interfère avec les « souvenirs de la vie d’un individu, comprimée entre les pages de l’esprit. » Les anciennes photographies craquées, à certains moments, ne représentent rien de plus que cela pour les victimes de l’Alzheimer. J’ai vu ma mère passer de 125 à 73 livres au cours des cinq derniers mois qu’elle a passés dans un hospice. Les médecins disent que les ombres de la mort convergent. « Aucun homme ni aucune femme née d’une femme » n’échappe à la mort.

Les membres des familles discutent souvent des événements d’actualité avec les résidents et le personnel. Ce soir était différent. Nous pensions tous que cela aurait été merveilleux de partager le diner avec les résidents quand ils étaient au sommet de leur forme. La plupart des membres des familles se sont rappelé les bons moments et ont décrit les vies précises et motivantes vécues par leurs proches.

Découvrir un sens à sa vie

Dans son livre Découvrir un sens à sa vie, l’auteur Viktor Frankl raconte l’histoire d’un prisonnier juif dans un camp de concentration nazi. L’homme a survécu parce que quelles que les atrocités qu’il a vécues, il les a endurées pour pouvoir un jour revoir sa famille. Il a trouvé sa raison d’être dans les situations les plus désespérées et l’a poursuivie.

SUT

Nos prédécesseurs se sont donnés comme mission de jeter une base solide, et de construire sur cette base le grand Syndicat que nous sommes aujourd’hui. Ils ont énoncé cette mission dans le préambule de notre Constitution du SUT :

« Pour sécuriser et défendre nos droits, pour promouvoir nos intérêts en tant que travailleurs, pour créer une autorité dont le sceau constitue une attestation de caractère, d’intelligence et de compétence, pour mettre en place une organisation où tous les membres travailleurs de nos métiers peuvent participer à la discussion de ces problèmes pratiques pour une solution sur laquelle dépend notre bien-être et notre prospérité. »
Cette semaine, nous avons ouvert nos nouveaux bureaux. Tout en honorant notre passé, et avec un engagement indéfectible envers notre raison d’être, nous donnons un nouveau souffle de vie à l’âme de cette structure de briques et de mortier que nous appelons désormais notre maison, et nous sommes fiers d’être le SUT.

Veillez visiter le www.atu.org pour de plus amples renseignements et les plus récentes nouvelles du SUT.

Nous devons en faire plus que jamais pour survivre

Eh bien, les choses commencent à revenir à la normale ici, au nouveau siège international situé dans notre campus du centre de formation de Silver Spring, au Maryland. Nous n’avons pas déménagé loin à seulement 14 km (9 miles) d’où nous étions, sur Wisconsin Avenue, mais nous avons avancé de plusieurs années-lumière en termes de ce que nous serons en mesure de faire pour vous servir et servir le mouvement syndical dans son ensemble.

Changement

Je ne peux m’empêcher de réfléchir sur la façon dont les choses ont changé depuis la fondation du Syndicat, il y a 123 ans, et combien de choses sont restées les mêmes.

Aujourd’hui, des personnes de diverses ethnies et des femmes occupent des postes de responsabilité dans ce bureau et dans l’ensemble de notre Syndicat, ce qui aurait été impensable en 1892. Et, oui, il reste des progrès à faire, mais il ne faut pas ignorer combien ont été accomplis par le sang, la sueur et les larmes de ceux qui étaient là avant nous.

Au cours du siècle dernier, le droit de se syndiquer a été reconnu par le gouvernement fédéral, et la journée de huit heures, pour 40 heures par semaine, est devenue la norme. Les soins de santé, les vacances, les congés de maladie, l’indemnisation des travailleurs, les lois sur la santé et la sécurité, les pensions, et bien d’autres font partie de l’emploi de tous les jours.

Le groupe, petit mais déterminé, qui s’est rencontré à Indianapolis en 1892 serait probablement étonné de voir tous les progrès qui ont été réalisés, ainsi que la taille et l’influence de l’International Union qu’ils ont fondée. Ils seraient certainement étonnés de voir ce nouveau campus du SUT.

Ils ne seraient pas surpris.

Mais, malheureusement, ils ne seraient pas du tout surpris de la campagne antisyndicale menée contre nous aujourd’hui par les entreprises américaines. Toutes les tactiques vicieuses anti-ouvrières et la rhétorique employée par les combines du 19e du début du 20e siècle ont été dépoussiérées et utilisées à bon escient dans le 21e siècle.

En moyenne, les travailleurs de la classe moyenne sont plus pauvres aujourd’hui qu’ils ne l’étaient il y a 35 ans. Les travailleurs ne peuvent plus compter sur aucun des avantages énumérés ci-dessus. De plus en plus de salariés de la classe moyenne glissent dans les rangs des travailleurs pauvres. Personne ne peut être assuré que le bon travail qu’ils ont aujourd’hui sera encore là demain.

Il ne serait pas exagéré de dire que les frères Koch et leurs alliés politiques et corporatifs versent des millions dans une campagne tous azimuts pour nous détruire. Et, si ces travailleurs du transport en commun qui ont fondé notre Syndicat pouvaient nous parler aujourd’hui, ils nous diraient que ce serait une terrible erreur que de nous penser à l’abri, en quelque sorte, de leurs efforts.

Franchement, nous avons besoin d’en faire plus que nous n’en ayons jamais fait auparavant afin que le SUT et le mouvement des travailleurs puissent survivre. Voilà pourquoi nous sommes ici, en ce nouveau lieu, pour continuer à répondre, comme le SUT l’a toujours fait, aux défis de notre temps.

Joyeuses Fêtes!

Je voudrais profiter de cette occasion pour vous souhaiter à tous une réjouissante période des Fêtes et une merveilleuse nouvelle année.

Veillez visiter le www.atu.org pour de plus amples renseignements et les plus récentes nouvelles du SUT.
In Memoriam

Death Benefits Awarded September 1, 2015 - October 31, 2015

1- MEMBERS AT LARGE
DONALD D BAILEY
JAMES W GOCHENAUR
WILLIAM N MC CONNHA
EDWARD W PEEL
RALPH LEON SHANK

25- DETROIT, MI
CEDRIC SALISBURY

85- PITTSBURGH, PA
JOSEPH F FREIDHOF
EDWARD W GRAHAM
ROBERT S HALLAM
LEONARD J HANKINS
ALFRED W HENKE, JR
FRED J JOHNSON
DAVID N LINKES
RONALD J LUCAS
JAMES E ROGERS
PAUL SCHMIDT
ROBERT W SMART
GEORGE M THOMAS

113- TORONTO, ON
CLIFFORD JOHN ASH
THOMAS W BRASSEUR
SANTINO CANNITO
PETER BILLIAN CLEMENT
MICHAEL DAWK
WILSON HOLMES
JAMES FERRIE
VINCENT GENTILE
ROHAN HARVEY
WILLIAM JOHN Hool
VICTOR KILMINSTER
ROBERT LANG
PIETRO MARCHESE
ORLANDO MARIANI
PATRICK J O'HAGAN
MILTON PERSRAM
ROBERT J SINGLETON
CHARLES TOLEDANO
DONALD FRANCIS WOLFE

128- ASHEVILLE, NC
DONALD STEVEN PARRIS

268- CLEVELAND, OH
HARRY MAGALSKI

269- CLEVELAND, OH
JAMES LEONARD

416- PEDRO, IL
BYRON P BROWN SR
FRANK E LAMBIASO
MARGARITA SALAZAR

540- TRENTON, NJ
JOHN PURCELL JR

568- EDINBURGH, AB
BRIAN A BEXSON
CHARLES M FERGUSON
STEVE ZURAWELL

268- CLEVELAND, OH
HARRY MAGALSKI

540- TRENTON, NJ
JOHN PURCELL JR

627- CINCINNATI, OH
KENNETH GARY

628- COVINGTON, KY
ERVIN L BRUIN
RICHARD P PIPER
DWIGHT C ROBERTS

639- LEXINGTON, KY
DANA SALTERS

689- WASHINGTON, DC
WILLIE J CARTER
BRUCE F DUMMING
WALTER B FOSTER
ERIC C LAW
LEROY E LUCIUS

704- SAN ANTONIO, TX
WILLIAM D MURPHY
WILLIE J PATRICK
ROBERT E WARD

714- LONDON, ON
JACK M ATKINSON
WILLIAM J CARTER
BRUCE F DUMMING
WILLIE J PATRICK
ROBERT J ROACH

777- NEW YORK, NY
WILLIAM J CARTER
BRUCE F DUMMING
WILLIE J PATRICK
ROBERT J ROACH

788- ST. LOUIS, MO
KATHLEEN J EWING
HARRY E GREEN
ROBERT L JOHNSON

819- NEWARK, NJ
ANTHONY THORBOURNE

842- MILFORD, OH
CHARLES A PRESCHEL

846- ST. CATHARINES, ON
EDWARD B FARRELL

880- CAMDEN, NJ
MANUEL FELICIANO
RAFFAELE V SIMONE
SAMUEL VACARELLA

998- MILWAUKEE, WI
WILLIAM J CARROLL

1181- NEW YORK, NY
CAREY ALEXANDER
KARL M TABLER

1277- LOS ANGELES, CA
MANUEL BANUELOS-CARDOZA
ELARIO M BANUELOS
DAVID W GOMEZ
GIUSEPPE MILITO
GERALD S GROHOSZ

1338- DALLAS, TX
WILLIAM DESIMONE
JACK K HASBROOK
TERRY A HORN

1374- CALGARY, AB
KATHLEEN J EWING
HARRY E GREEN
ROBERT L JOHNSON

1436- HARRISBURG, PA
WILLIE T JOHNSON
ROBERT F LYTER

1505- WINNIPEG, MB
TERRY KORBA
STEVE E OGRODNIK
JAMES P RYAN

1572- MISSISSAUGA, ON
GEORGE BAXTER
BLISS WILLISTON
WILLIAM YEE

1591- BROWARD COUNTY, FL
SUSAN MEYERS

1724- VANCOUVER, BC
STEPHEN RUTH

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ATU General Executive Board holds first meeting at new International Headquarters