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// It is from (the) convergence of struggles and enlightened ideas that a new frontier of democratic sovereignty will emerge from this new era of globalization. //

Luis Inacio Lula da Silva

President of Brazil, in a message to the 2005 USW Constitutional Convention



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ONTHECOVER

Cover art by Fred Carlson

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USW@Work (ISSN 0883-3141) is published five times a year by the United Steelworkers AFL-CIO-CLC Five Gateway Center, Pittsburgh, PA 15222. Subscriptions to non-members: \$12 for one year; \$20 for two years. Periodicals postage paid at Pittsburgh, PA and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: **USW@Work**, USW Membership Department, 3340 Perimeter Hill Drive, Nashville, TN 37211

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USW@Work

Volume 02/No.3 Summer 2007
Official publication of the United Steelworkers
Direct Inquiries and articles for **USW@Work** to:

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Pittsburgh, PA 15222**
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Speaking Out

USW active and retired members and their families are invited to "speak out" on these pages. Letters should be short and to the point. We reserve the right to edit for length. Mail to **USW@Work**, Five Gateway Center, Pittsburgh PA 15222 or e-mail to editor@usw.org.



Merger positive

I just read about the USW reaching across the pond for a possible merger. The American Flint Glass Workers joined forces with the Steelworkers a few years back and I believe it has been a positive move for us all. Now, the USW has proved to me we are ahead of the curve. With leaders such as International President Leo W. Gerard, I think things are looking good for labor unions.

*William Braun
Local 892-1, Burlington, Wis.*

Buy American, drive American

As I watch American car dealerships closing all over the United States, I wonder why we do not patronize our own car manufacturers. We as Americans should patronize our own auto, clothing and electronics companies. Doing this would create more jobs and income for our people.

*Gust G. Douglas
Canton, Ohio*

I'll never scab

Thank you for putting the steelworker wearing the "I'll never scab" hardhat on the cover of our magazine, *USW@Work*. Since Goodyear/Dunlop won't let us wear "anti-scab" shirts at work to get our message across, we leave the magazine in the break room with the cover up for all to see. We figure the USW is too big for them to mess with.

*Mark J. Cullens
Local 135, Buffalo, N.Y.*

Fight back

I am a retired Steelworker from Local 2243 in Warren, Ohio. In the U.S. Mail, at taxpayers expense, I received a large envelope from U.S. Sen. David Vitter, a Republican from Louisiana, encouraging me to complete a questionnaire and support his "Right to Work" movement. The content slammed our rights to unionize, condemned the actions of our union, and faulted the Democratic Party.

I am appalled that any member of our government would take such a stance, and I am furious that he would use tax dollars to send such propaganda to voters across the country.

It seems to me that we, as members of a Democratic society and a union that has brought so much economic gain and safety to this country and its workers, should wage a national campaign against this senator, these expenses and tactics.

*Michael G. Visnich
Conway, S.C.*

Stop jobs giveaway

We must help our young people find proper paying jobs. We need to stop sending jobs overseas. President Bush, our politicians and bankers are the only people who want or need foreign aid. I retired from U.S. Steel's Waukegan plant, Local 1115, and encourage our brothers and sisters to be members of SOAR, the Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees. If it wasn't for our union, I wouldn't be getting a pension and health benefits.

*Richard Vogt
Waukegan, Ill.*

For us or against us?

Why don't we use the President's own words against him? This spring, when the courts ruled that carbon dioxide could be regulated, Mr. Bush complained that the undue burden on industry would lead to job loss. I laughed out loud when I heard President Bush say he is "concerned about the working men and women of this country". If he's so concerned he should back the Employee Free Choice Act.

At the onset of the war on terror, President Bush said to the rest of the world, "You are either with us or against us." So with the 2008 political season upon us, I propose a slogan to get our point across to the politicians who are courting us, "American Unions: For Us or Against Us."

*James Schneider
Local 2-0187, Wisconsin Rapids, Wis.*

Working hard at 80

I worked for a company for 39½ years until they sent the factory overseas, knocking hundreds of people out of work. I had enough years to retire but many did not. There are no jobs here. It sure does upset me. I'm 80 now and have been back to work for the past two years. I work in a café four days a week. It is hard work.

*Dorothy Coffey
Charleston, Mo.*

Romney's background

The main reason for this letter is simply to point out to not only Steelworker members nationwide but to their families, friends and anyone within hearing distance, what kind of a guy (former Mass. Governor) Mitt Romney is. When Mr. Romney gets his (Republican) Presidential campaign in full swing, we don't want him telling lies about all the good things he did for the state of Massachusetts. In our opinion, the actions we describe below, are just a small sample of the little regard he has for working people.

In the spring of 2006, Massachusetts put \$25 million into the budget for the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority rate relief and debt services assistances. Gov. Romney vetoed the line item.

Through a lot of hard work by the unions, we were able to get the legislature to override the veto. But then, on Nov. 10, 2006, Gov. Romney invoked a little-used law to take back \$425 million of budgeted money, including funds for the authority. Just a month later, a newly-elected Democratic governor, Deval Patrick, restored \$383 million.

We've dodged a bullet this time, but the actions of Mr. Romney need to be pointed out. This was a purely politically motivated act with little regard for the authority and the effects of his actions on the working people.

*Bob Roussel
Local 9360, Boston, Mass.*