



NEWSLETTER

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Janet Nortrom, Editor

February 13, 2004

FROM THE PRESIDENT

We are still without a contract. Negotiations began over a year ago! There is no reason that these negotiations should have dragged on for so long. This administration introduced significant takeaways 6 months after negotiations began, thus making these the most problematic negotiations in recent MATC history. The administration sought these concessions after publicly claiming to have a balanced budget and after rejecting \$1.3 million dollars in property tax revenue. If the college's finances are as sound as Dr. Cole has claimed, why is he demanding draconian cuts in summer time and internet pay and threatening layoffs?

Either the Cole administration did not tell the truth when it claimed to have balanced the budget or it has a political agenda geared to appeasing enemies of the college who do not support joint governance and who despise unions!

The attacks on 212 by the Cole administration have been detrimental to MATC and the students that we serve. They have damaged relations between Local 212 and the administration and wrecked havoc with employee morale.

The morale problems have intensified as the Cole administration has abandoned the long established practice of joint grievance.

When Dr. Cole was hired, he decided to exclude Local 212 from the president's cabinet and also eliminate monthly meetings with 212's leadership. He said that he would develop other appropriate forms of partnership, but he has not done so. No forms of discussion between partners, other than those that are contractually mandated, exist.

The administration's unilateral and arbitrary approach to managing the college includes the following:

- The decision to totally change the cleaning of our classrooms and offices with informing 212;
- Hiring outside consultants to evaluate the IT function without any employee participation;
- Dr. Cole's failure to answer my December letter asking whether he intended to extend the MOU or fill full-time positions;
- The unilateral, uncalled for and ultimately unsuccessful efforts to eliminate the adult high school;
- The attempt to unilaterally increase parking fees by fiat;

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**LOCAL 212 ENDORSES THE
FOLLOWING CANDIDATES IN THE
FEBRUARY 17TH ELECTION:**

**HOWARD DEAN
FOR
PRESIDENT**

**TOM BARRETT
FOR
MAYOR, CITY OF
MILWAUKEE**

**DAVID RIEMER
FOR
COUNTY EXECUTIVE**

ALDERMAN – CITY OF MILWAUKEE

**MICHAEL D'AMATO – DISTRICT 3
BOB BAUMAN – DISTRICT 4
T. ANTHONY ZIELINSKI – DIST. 14**

**MILWAUKEE COUNTY BOARD
OF SUPERVISORS**

**GERRY BRODERICK – DISTRICT 3
MARINA DIMITRIJEVIC – DIST. 4
JIM MCGUIGAN – DISTRICT 6
JOHN F. WEISHAN, JR. – DIST. 16
DAN DEVINE – DISTRICT 17**

FROM THE PRESIDENT CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

- The decision to willfully and blatantly violate the existing labor agreement concerning TV college class load;
- The decision to exclude the unions on a hiring committee for a new college attorney.

The Cole administration doesn't respect academics or even members of its own ranks. Recently it took money from academic accounts without even consulting the academic deans.

The sad and simple truth is that through all of these actions, as well as negotiations, this administration has made it clear to the faculty and professional staff that it does not value our contribution to the college. One wonders if this administration ever believed that we have a contribution to make.

Despite the administration's insults and assaults, Local 212 remains committed to growing the college and to educating our students. Just recently we learned that the Milwaukee Fire department wanted to take over some of MATC's EMS training. Local 212, EMS faculty and staff met with the Milwaukee Firefighters and the Milwaukee Fire Chief, Mr. Bill Wentlandt, Jr., and worked out an agreement that will allow the college to keep the work.

Local 212 has attended both Senate and Assembly hearings in the last two weeks to oppose bills that would undermine the district board's authority and our collective bargaining agreement while reducing public accountability. While the MATC administration has not joined us in testifying against these dangerous bills, Governor Doyle, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Libby Burmaster, MATC board members and WTCS president Richard Carpenter have been supportive.

If we work together we can grow MATC and serve the thousands of students who walk through our doors for who MATC is a last and best hope. But if the administration continues to treat this college's most valuable asset, its employees, as pariahs, morale will continue to plummet and so will the college's ability to serve this community.

When the first semester began I suggested that negotiations could be acrimonious or professional, depending on the approach the administration took. Unfortunately Dr. Cole chose the latter attacking us at the bargaining table and in the media while abandoning joint governance! The option is still there. If the Cole administration treats us like valued partners and honors its rhetorical commitment to joint governance, MATC will flower. If it attacks us as if we were an enemy, we will have no choice but to defend ourselves and our college.

MICHAEL ROSEN, PRESIDENT



Presidential candidate, Dr. Howard Dean, receives Local 212's endorsement at a press conference held at the MATC Milwaukee Campus on Wednesday, February 11th.

TAX NOTICE REGARDING PORTION OF 2003 DUES THAT IS DEDUCTIBLE

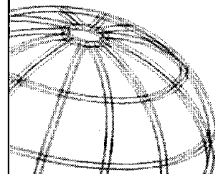
Local 212 does not have the ability to keep track of the total dues paid by each of our more than 1700 members. The total dues paid during 2003 should have appeared on your final check stub for the year.

In accordance with Internal Revenue Service code section 633 (e)(1)(A) we are required to report the amount of dues paid by members that relate to lobbying and certain political expenditures. Please be advised that 17.02% of the dues paid by you during 2003 related to lobbying and certain political expenditures and are non-deductible pursuant to Internal Revenue Service code section 162(e)(1). Please consult your tax advisor regarding your individual reporting requirements.

JIM BENEDUM, 2ND VP, BUDGET



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LOCAL 212 MEMBERS ATTEND SUMMIT ON IMMIGRATION

Faculty and staff from the English as a Second Language Program and the HEP Program (High School Equivalency for Migrant Workers) took part in the 2004 Summit "From Newcomers to New Americans: Building Immigrant Power."

Held in Arlington Heights, Illinois, on Friday and Saturday, January 23-24, the conference was organized by the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR), an umbrella organization of dozens of immigrant advocacy organizations, labor unions, religious, cultural, and community organizations, and funded in part by the Illinois Department of Human Services. Illinois has the fifth largest number of immigrants of any state today.

Immigration is once again a major topic on the nation's political agenda. Immigrants are once again pawns in a never-ending cycle, being used and abused for political gain. In President Bush's State-of-the-Union address in January, he proposed a new immigration plan that would give "undocumented" workers a three-year work permit, based on their employment situation, if no American workers can be found for those jobs. After the three years, the immigrants would have to return to their countries unless they can get a possible three-year and final extension. This "plan," however, would not put the immigrants on a track toward legal residency and citizenship.

Bush stated that he is "against amnesty." Read that to mean: when immigrants are needed to fill jobs during periods of economic growth, allow employers to exploit them; but during times of economic downturn, scapegoat and criminalize them for "taking jobs from Americans" and "lowering the wages and working conditions of all workers."

Fortunately, the labor movement has come to realize that immigrant workers are working people just like the rest of us, and that the exploitation of foreign workers is part of the exploitation of the total labor force. In recent years, immigrant workers have been a key part of organizing drives across the country, and are playing central roles in labor struggles such as the grocery workers' strikes in southern California.

The AFL-CIO has reshaped its official policy to recognize immigrant workers as allies, which was reflected in the number of labor leaders at the Illinois Summit--- including Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 1 and United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 881, as well as member organizations of the Illinois Coalition, such as the United Electrical Workers District 11, and United Steelworkers Sub District #1 Council.

CONTINUED NEXT COLUMN

IMMIGRATION SUMMIT CONTINUED

Speakers at the Summit, including US Representative Luis Gutierrez (D-IL), assailed President Bush for presenting himself as sympathetic to the plight of immigrants, while doing nothing to act on various bills in Congress at this time that would truly help the situation of immigrants.

Many people in attendance at the conference are working for the passage of the DREAM Act in the Senate, which would allow high school graduates who are the children of "undocumented" immigrants to apply for legal residency and pay in-state tuition at public colleges and universities. Instead, the Bush administration is trying to eliminate federal student grants like the Pell grants. Another bill, introduced by Senators Dashle (D-SD) and Hagle (R-NE), an opposition bill to Bush's temporary guest worker program, would go much further in recognizing the hard work of immigrants in this country and help them on the road to legal residency.

Yet another bill, the Agricultural Jobs bill (known as AgJobs) would provide relief to the thousands of undocumented workers who make it possible for us to have fruits and vegetables on our tables.

Especially alarming, we learned at the conference, is the fact that Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert, congressperson from Illinois, has scheduled a vote in Congress that would require hospital medical staff to report undocumented workers to the INS within two hours of treating them at hospital emergency rooms! Such action would not only risk the lives of immigrants, but would be a threat to the health of all. A campaign has been launched to contact Speaker Hastert's office to protest this proposal. For more information: ICIRR (312) 332-7360 or www.icirr.org

As we say in the union movement: "An injury to one is an injury to all!"

ALEXANDRA TOPPING, ESL INSTRUCTOR

FTAA LITE

On November 19th, 2003, a delegation representing Local AFT 212 went to Miami to join other unions and organizations in protesting negotiations for the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). Representing Local AFT 212 were Frank Shansky (who was joined by his son Joe), Michael Rosen (who was joined by his daughter Gina), Andrew Berns, Sue Ruggles and Veronica Neumann. We were part of Wisconsin's delegation.

The FTAA seeks to expand the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) to the rest of Central and South America (with the exception of Cuba). Approximately two months prior to the FTAA meeting in Miami, the World Trade Organization (WTO) held a similar meeting in Cancun, but talks collapsed when representatives from developing countries walked out.

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FTAA LITE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Supporters of the FTAA argue that a free market economy will create jobs while protecting the rights of workers and the environment. Critics feel that like NAFTA, it just won't work: human rights abuses at Maquiladoras continue to occur, unemployment in North America has increased dramatically with jobs going to even lower-paying countries such as China, and in Mexico incomes have fallen and poverty rates increased.

The diversity of people attending the rally was very impressive—people from Canada, the US, Latin America, unionists, retirees, environmentalists, church groups, students and anarchists. The AFL-CIO march mobilized over 20,000 union members, led by the Steelworkers in red caps and white t-shirts emblazoned with "FTAA Sucks!" We found out later that 18 busloads of retirees were turned away by the police and not permitted to join the march. In a sense there were two tiers of globalization present in Miami: one on the streets made up of workers, and a second tier made up of politicians catering to the interests of the wealthy.

I wasn't quite sure what to expect at the rally, some clashes between protesters and the police perhaps. What I didn't expect was an overwhelming police presence. At times there appeared to be equal numbers of protesters, police and reporters. The protests were very low-key and more subdued than I had expected which made me even more outraged at the way we were treated.

I never thought I would experience what seemed like martial law in an American city. Shops were closed and boarded up. Barricades were up so that individuals couldn't walk or drive freely. We were herded like sheep. Police officers were everywhere—on foot, on bikes, on horses, in armored personnel carriers and helicopters. They were stationed on streets and rooftops. They came armed with pepper spray, tear gas and rubber bullets.

It was all very dramatic, and I got some small sense of what it must be like to be a nation under occupation by the armed forces of another country. Only this time the enemy was us. In fact, \$8.5 million of the \$87 billion war on Iraq were used to fund police forces in Miami.

Because of the way we were herded, anyone on the streets was in danger of exposure to tear gas, pepper spray or being hit with rubber bullets. I was touched by the solidarity within our own delegation—at times we had to run from tear gas and pepper spray, but we always made sure to re-group. Although I'm sure that Michael and Frank have always made sure to be at the forefront of any rally, they always kept a protective, watchful eye on their children. Sue's Photojournalist instincts took over, and she was always to be found in the thick of any action.

CONTINUED NEXT COLUMN

FTAA LITE CONTINUED PREVIOUS COLUMN

Hundreds of people were arbitrarily arrested and detained by the police, including about 60 who organized a sit-in the next day to protest police misconduct. More than a hundred were injured, including a dozen who were hospitalized.

The mayor of Miami called the police actions a "model for homeland defense"; the Steelworkers called it "a massive police state," and demanded a Congressional investigation. The AFL-CIO, Steelworkers, ACLU, and National Lawyers Guild are preparing a class-action lawsuit against the city of Miami for violations of the Bill of Rights.

In the end, trade talks ended one day earlier than planned with participating FTAA members claiming success, but it has been called "FTAA Lite" because many issues were postponed for negotiation at a later date. The two strongest critics of the FTAA were Brazil and Venezuela, countries whose worker-friendly policies have not been in line with American interests. Unfortunately, still in the works is the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA). Proponents of CAFTA hope it will provide the foundation for further expansion of the FTAA.

VERONICA NEUMANN AND SUE RUGGLES

**LOCAL 212 WEB SITE**

<http://www.local212.org>

CONDOLENCES TO . . .

Jim Anderson, Social Sciences instructor at North Campus, on the death of his mother last week.

Al Brotton, Guidance Counselor, whose mother recently passed away.

Olga Horton and Mary Waedekin, Printing instructors, on the passing of their mother.

Kathryn DenDooven, Visual Communications instructor, whose brother recently passed away.

Elliott Schnackenberg, Photography instructor, whose mother passed away on January 9th at the age of 100.

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