A HISTORY OF THE AMALGAMATED TRANSIT UNION

by Amalgamated Transit Union Staff

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This book is dedicated
to the officers and members of the
Amalgamated Transit Union

FOREWORD

Shortly after the founding convention of the Amalgamated, William D. Mahon, a great leader of the Amalgamated for over five decades, said, "We find ourselves together from the natural adhesive force of affinity of common interest."

No less today than in 1892, the common interest of working men and women— our members— binds us together in the ATU.

Many of the battles we are fighting today are similar to those our members fought, and sometimes died for, 50, 75 and 100 years ago. The health benefits, wage rates, retirement protection, and the amount of free time we have to spend with our families and friends all have their roots in the sacrifices and foresight of the leaders and members who came before us.

They fought and won for us safer equipment, shorter workdays and workweeks, and the contractual rights to resolve disputes through arbitration. They secured for us in the halls of the legislatures and parliaments the great social and worker legislation of the twentieth century. They provided us with dignity in our work places and security in our homes. To the wisdom of these men and women who came before us we owe the funeral and disability benefit fund and the defense fund.

The struggles and achievements chronicled in this history make us proud to be a part of this great legacy. Each of our past presidents—William D. Mahon, Abraham Lincoln Spradling, John M. Elliott, Daniel V. Maroney, and John W. Rowland—have performed well the duties of their office. They have contributed much to the growth of the ATU and to the increased living standards and well being of our members.

But these great leaders did not act alone. Our history has many heroes and heroines—rank and file members and local union officers who took significant risks and dedicated their lives to the cause of the ATU.

Today, we face different, but equally compelling, challenges. It is the spirit of these leaders and members that must be sustained within all of us if we are to continue to progress toward a better world for ourselves and our children.

This history is written for the ATU members. The ATU would not survive without the contributions of its members. Thousands of men and women have stood in solidarity to make a better life for themselves and their co-workers. It is their persistence and belief in the ATU that has made this Union great.

When you read this book, we are sure you will feel the same pride we have always felt in our accomplishments. You will quickly learn that "Proud to be ATU" is far more than a simple slogan.

James La Sala
International President

Ellis B. Franklin
International Executive
Vice President

Oliver W. Green
International
Secretary-Treasurer

September 1992

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Artist's rendering of a ten-passenger omnibus in Toronto around 1850.

CHAPTER ONE *1892-1905*

When Horses Were Valued More Than Men

When the first horse-drawn "omnibuses" were put on the streets of New York City in 1827, few would have anticipated that an industry was being born.

And when the first horse-drawn street railway opened for business in that same city in November 1832, few would have thought that the seeds of a labor union were being planted. But that is, in fact, what happened, and this is where the history of the Amalgamated Transit Union begins.

As the urban areas of nineteenth century North America became increasingly industrialized, the demand for cheap labor in all segments of commerce grew. This was no less true in our industry which moved people to and from work in the cities.

Great numbers of people were needed to transport urban workers. But while their labor was essential to U.S. and Canadian business interests, transit workers reaped none of the benefits of the labor they conveyed to those businesses.

Transit workers received no better treatment on the job than their counterparts in the factories, and the movement toward forming a labor union for transit workers paralleled that of the rest of labor.

Transit company barons were far more interested in making quick profits than they were in providing an important public (albeit commercial) service.

Chester Wright, an early chronicler of the labor movement, made this point when he wrote: "From the moment that the first great transit financiers discovered that there was a rich field of exploitation in municipal traction systems, those financiers have been preparing the operating field for the Amalgamated."

The horses that pulled the streetcars were treated better than the men who drove them. Drivers were on duty from the early morning hours until they returned to the barn late at night—more often than not putting in 18-hour workdays. The horses, by contrast, worked 4-hour days or less. "After all," a street railway boss once explained, "it costs money to replace horses."

As the future long-term international president, W.D. Mahon, once put it, "To have spoken of wanting an 8-hour day at that time would have caused your sanity to have been questioned by a good many."

As late as 1917, in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, non-union transit workers could be required to work as many as 20 hours at a stretch, and "extra" workers

Management mistreatment of transit workers led to strikes such as this four-day walkout in Indianapolis in January 1892. The scene shows the mule car off the track and surrounded. Indianapolis transit workers later joined the Amalgamated.

could be required to work 25 hours straight. Of that 25 hours they could be required to sit and wait for hours at a time with no pay.

"That is what makes slaves of streetcar men," Wright explained. "That is what breaks up their homes and robs them of all but a passing acquaintance with their wives and children [but this]...has never been one of the great cares of the men who operated the financial and managerial end of electrical transit."

Transit workers had no benefits and no job security, no holidays, no vacation, no pension, and no health care. The failure to report for work, no matter what the reason, often cost them their jobs. Streetcar conductors received a daily wage of $1.00 to $1.50 per day regardless of the number of hours worked.

There were some crafts that were better treated at the time. But that of the transit worker was not among them, according to Mahon, "because we failed to follow the only avenue that opens itself to the working people...*namely, organization.*"

As might be expected, the living conditions of transit workers were just as bad. Mahon once described these conditions saying: "Their lot was a sad one; poverty prevailed, the children were not properly housed, clothed, or fed. Their homes were poorly furnished, they had to live in the cheapest districts of the cities and towns in which they worked. As a group they were ignored; the press paid very little attention to them, politicians sneered at them, and the general public gave them very little consideration."

"These troubles," Amalgamated Board member Magnus Sinclair later recalled, "were of great concern to all of us then and, unable to obtain redress as individuals, we lent eager though somewhat fearful ears to the whispered admonition to organize.... We were held together in desperation, realizing things couldn't be worse, for if they were we wouldn't be alive."

Early Attempts to Create a Union

Describing the business practices that led up to the formation of our union, Wright wrote: "Perhaps nothing has done more to prepare street car men for union than such masters of finance as [the] old group...of early exploiters....From city to city this group went, tossing traction systems about in financial jugglery, taking from each a rich toll and leaving wreckage behind."

And with regard to our union he asserted, "Few organizations of labor in this country have come up out of such struggle or look back upon victories gained over such terrible odds...."

And yet, even under such adverse conditions, courageous young men started organizing transit workers just prior to the U.S. Civil War.

Dissatisfaction with workers' conditions led to the formation of the first union for workers in the transit industry in 1861. John Walker, a driver on New York City's Third Avenue Line, is credited by historians as the moving force behind the union's development.

Known as a benevolent association rather than a union, the workers' organization attempted to achieve recognition from the Third Avenue Line company without a work stoppage. When the company shunned their attempt and continued to cut workers' wages, the men were forced to go out on strike. Little else is known about Walker's attempt which probably faltered due to the outbreak of the Civil War.

More than 20 years passed before streetcar workers attempted to organize again. Once more, New York street railway employees took the matter in hand. They formed Local Assembly 2878 of the Knights of Labor with an initial membership of over 600.

The apparent success of this organizing attempt was thwarted when a company spy infiltrated the organization. Three officers and about 20 members were soon fired. Workers were followed home from the job. Those found attending meetings or gathering in groups of any size were summarily dismissed. Management's tactics quickly demoralized the fledgling union's membership. In less than three months, its rolls shrank to 13.

Against all odds, Local 2878's leaders persevered and rebuilt the organization. On December 18, 1885, they presented a proposed contract to the Third Avenue management. The company took some time to consider the offer, but soon accepted the proposed contract.

The workers also presented a list of grievances to the management of the Sixth Avenue Railway, but these were ignored. After waiting three weeks without a response, the workers staged a strike. It ended five hours later when management bowed and signed a contract.

On the Broadway Line, a 10-hour strike resulted in management's agreement to recognize the workers' organization.

A strike was also staged against the Vanderbilt-owned Fourth Avenue Line and the company quickly agreed, at least orally, to negotiate with the workers to resolve the differences. But the company did not live up to its word and broke the agreement within two weeks. When the workers struck again, the management of the Fourth Avenue Line held out for just 16 hours before it acquiesced to their demands.

The successes achieved against the larger companies prompted smaller operations in New York City to fall into line and to recognize the new union.

Word of the workers' achievements in New York City spread rapidly. Transit employees throughout the U.S. rallied to organized labor's cry for the 8-hour workday. By 1886, employee organizations had been organized in most major U.S. cities.

Through the efforts of these and similar groups representing other crafts, the 18-hour workday that had been applied universally soon gave way on some properties to the 12-hour day—still a long day but far better than 18 hours.

Unfortunately, this first major success also sounded a death knell for many of these new transit worker organizations. Many workers left the union thinking it no longer served any purpose. Having joined only to fight for a shorter workday, many street railway workers were not aware of or dedicated to the overall aims and objectives of the labor movement.

Still others who continued their interest became dissatisfied with the way in which the Knights of Labor handled grievances. The Knights dealt with all local grievances at a district assembly, where a committee composed of perhaps a baker, a shoemaker and another tradesperson generally unfamiliar with the occupation of the street railway employee, would study the grievance and meet with the company to resolve the matter. This obviously produced far from ideal results, and dissatisfaction with the system led to the disbanding of several local transit employee organizations.

Mansbur's Hall in Indianapolis, Indiana, was the site of the founding convention of the Amalgamated on September 12, 1892.

Samuel Gompers and the letter that launched a union.

New York, July 11, 1892.

To Drivers, Conductors, Motormen and all other Street Car Employes' Unions of America:

Fellow Workers, -A Convention for the purpose of forming a National Union of all Drivers, Conductors, Motormen and other Street Car Employes will be held Monday, September 12th, 1892, in the City of Indianapolis, Ind.

Many efforts have been made to organize the men who are employed by the Street Railroad Companies, but only to a very limited extent have they been successful; and then mainly upon the lines of local interests. Experience has demonstrated that singly and alone Unions have too often been defeated in the contests with concentrated capital and that if the toilers are seriously inclined to disenthral themselves from the slavery of long hours of burdensome toil, to improve their condition and participate in some of the progress and advantages of modern life, it is essential that they must not only organize Unions of their respective localities, but to have these Unions formed into a National Organization, thus enabling all to concentrate their efforts upon a given point to obtain success, where otherwise by isolated action defeat would necessarily ensue.

For this and other reasons too numerous to mention in this circular, a Convention has been called to form one compact National Union of all Street Car Employes.

The Convention will be held in Manshur's Hall, cor. Washington and Alabama Streets, Indianapolis, Ind., at 12 o'clock Monday, September 12th.

Representation in the Convention will be upon the following basis: All Unions numbering 100 members of less, two delegates, and one delegate additional for every 100 members. Each delegate should be furnished with a credential signed by two officers and the seal of his organization attached.

When delegates are elected, notify Mr. J.P. Rigg's, No. 5 Grove St., Indianapolis, Ind., of the election, aud also the projected time of arrival. Special rates of $1.50 per day have been secured at English's Hotel.

In the name of our great cause I earnestly appeal to every organization of street railroad employes to be represented at this convention. To the men interested in furthering the labor movement, the request is made to use every possible endeavor to make this convention a success, by persuading every organization of street railroad employes to send delegates. The perpetrating of the crime of long hours of burdensome toil must cease.

Fraternally yours,

SAM'L GOMPERS,
President
American Federation of Labor.

--Labor and friendly papers please copy--.

Gompers Calls the First Convention

"...[A]s it is with individuals, so it is with organization....Individuals of a like class...see the same advantage in amalgamation as [a]...single craft organization...in this we find that which inspired the institution of the Amalgamated....We find ourselves together from the natural adhesive force of the affinity of common interest."

W. D. Mahon, 1909

Serious organizing of street railway employees did not resume until mid-1888. This time it was the American Federation of Labor (AFL), under the leadership of Samuel Gompers, which undertook the task.

The AFL's approach to organizing the street railway workers was different from the Knights of Labor. Unlike the Knights, the AFL tried to fully explain the principles of trade unionism and the benefits to be gained from organizing. This approach, which planted the seeds of the Amalgamated, was far more successful than the Knights' well-intentioned, but short-sighted, dependence on one or two "issues."

Preliminary successes in organizing street railway employees attracted the attention of the AFL's December 1891 convention. The delegates gathered for that meeting in Birmingham, Alabama, decided to intensify efforts to organize workers in the industry. To implement the plan, AFL President Samuel Gompers was instructed to call a gathering of street railway organizations in the following year for the purpose of uniting all of the major transit labor groups into one union.

The AFL chose to organize a union of transit workers amidst labor's struggle for a shorter workday and better working conditions for all workers. And so it was that a new amalgamated union of transit worker organizations was created.

Approximately 52 delegates representing the AFL and the Knights of Labor joined with Samuel Gompers to open the founding convention at noon on September 12, 1892, at Manshur's Hall in Indianapolis, Indiana. Some 2,400 transit workers were actually represented by the delegates.

Following a welcoming speech from the mayor of Indianapolis, the seating of the delegates, and the election of J.M. Callihan of New Orleans as convention chairman and James P. Riggs of Indianapolis as secretary, Gompers was given a vote of thanks and three rousing cheers for the work he had done and the first convention settled down to business.

An initial order of business for the group was the question of whether to affiliate with the AFL, the Knights of Labor, or remain independent. The decision reached was swayed by the significant deception of a single delegate.

Delegate Mortimer O'Connell of New York claimed to represent some 32,000 workers of New York's Brotherhood of Surface Car Employees. O'Connell declared that his members would not join an organization affiliated with the AFL but would support the new union if it remained independent.

O'Connell's claims, along with a similar position taken by a Knights of Labor group who claimed to represent some 3,000 Chicago employees, convinced the delegates to form an independent union.

Later, a disappointed Samuel Gompers would return to the convention and tell the group that he thought the action would be regretted.

Another delegate deeply disappointed by the decision not to affiliate was a strapping young man from Columbus, Ohio—William D. Mahon.

The delegates' decision would have serious consequences. AFL affiliation would have offered the money and manpower for continued organizing. Without this support, the fledgling union was almost wrecked in its first year. Its decision to remain independent was made more atrocious by the later discovery that, at the time of the founding convention, O'Connell represented no one but himself.

To add insult to injury, after the convention accommodated them, the "Brotherhood" decided not to join the new amalgamated union.

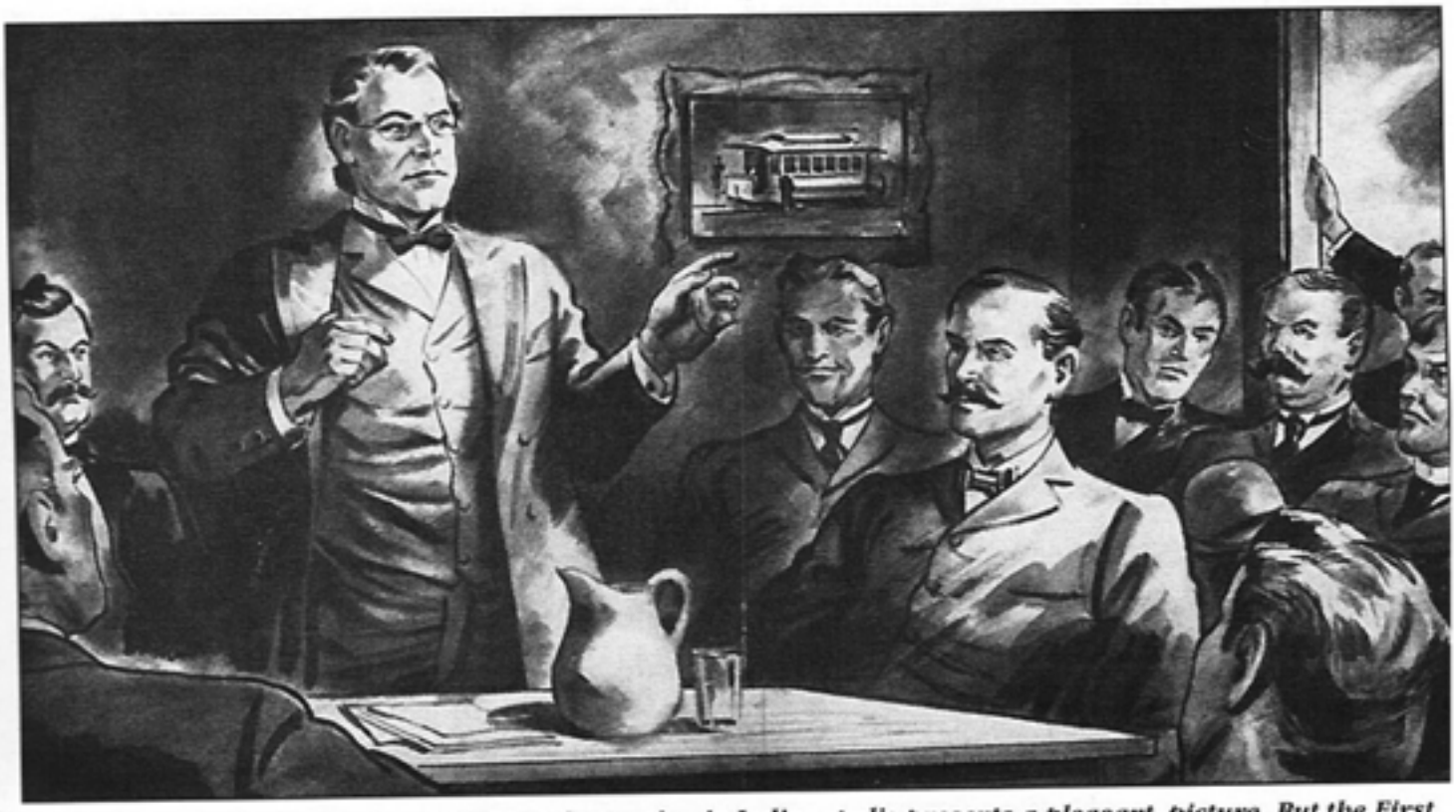
Consideration of the proposed Constitution went smoothly until the morning of the third day when the first discussion of per capita taxes took place.

Two per capita taxes were proposed in the Constitution: a 5-cent membership tax and a 10-cent tax to support strikers.

A motion was made to reduce the striker support tax

William J. Law, the first president, served only one year.

J.C. Manuel, a Canadian from Ontario working in the U.S., was the first secretary-treasurer.



Artist James West's rendering of the First Convention in Indianapolis presents a pleasant picture. But the First Convention was far more acrimonious than this depiction would seem to indicate. AFL President Samuel Gompers is seen standing. William D. Mahon, the future international president is seen behind Gompers to his right, and delegate Rezin Orr, who would later be elected secretary-treasurer is seen seated at the table to Gompers' left.

to 5 cents—the same as the membership tax.

Samuel Gompers, who just happened to have returned to the floor, was asked his opinion.

Gompers "spoke very strongly against low dues; cheap unions usually had cheap results. No one could expect something from nothing, he said. After his years of experience he had come to the mature conviction that it was not merely a mistake, it was a crime to start with low dues." The motion to reduce the strike fund per capita tax failed.

It was decided that, while the membership per capita would be sent to the national office, the striker support per capita would be deposited by local divisions in local banks, subject to the call of the Executive Council. This would later prove a costly decision by the young union.

That same day the convention chose a name for the new union: the *Amalgamated Association of Street Railway Employes of America*.

Later that afternoon, the delegates designated Indianapolis as the site of the headquarters.

It was decided that the Union's Executive Council (later called the General Executive Board) would include a president, five vice presidents, and a secretary-treasurer. The vice presidents were also to serve as organizers. In addition, three trustees would audit the books of the Amalgamated and prepare reports for presentation at the conventions. The salaries of the president and secretary-treasurer were set at $900 per year.

The delegates moved on to the election of officers. The candidates for president were J.W. Newhouse of Indianapolis, J.E. Husted of Toledo, and William J. Law of Detroit. Law, who had been very vocal at the convention, probably lost votes because he was inexplicably absent during the all-important balloting.

Husted was elected by a 10-vote margin. J.P. Riggs of Indianapolis was elected secretary-treasurer. In his absence, Law was elected chairman of the group of three trustees and a committee was formed to go find him.

Vice presidents were elected from Tacoma, New Orleans, Youngstown, Wheeling, and Topeka.

With the election behind them, several delegates went home early. Some, like Fort Wayne delegate Rezin Orr, had to leave to get back to work.

The contest for offices had been bitter, and even though some delegates had left, many were not content to accept the voting results.

Law reappeared during a final evening session to lead the opponents of the newly elected officers.

The opponents moved to reconsider the votes by which the new Constitution was adopted and the headquarters site was determined. Law and the opponents were vigorously opposed by the defeated presidential candidate and rules committee member, John Newhouse:

"Delegate Newhouse thought it unfair to reconsider the matter in the absence of some of the delegates. He proceeded to attack Delegate Law."

But many, including Mahon, supported the move. The motion carried by a small majority of the 46 delegates still in attendance.

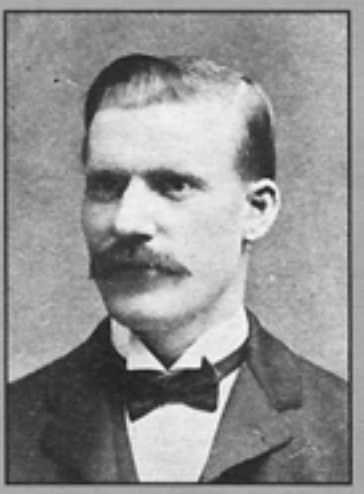
The next motion was to replace Indianapolis with Detroit as the headquarters site. Proponents of this move

'It Was a Long and Bitter Fight...'

by Magnus Sinclair

When I began my labors in the street railway industry I faced the stern end of an equine beast which was supposed to propel a sort of a pill box set on four small wheels and seating from twelve to fourteen passengers at most.

We had no union then in Toronto. It seems the horse had more sense than his so-called master, because he at least knew when he had enough. If the car became overloaded wise old dobbin simply refused to pull. It was the usual thing in such situations for the passengers to get off the car and push, as it was usual for them to give the horse a lift up a grade. The driver stood out in front, exposed to all kinds of weather, and in Canada that term "weather" takes you down to the bottom of the thermometer. About every two hours the horse or mule was taken from the car and a fresh one put on. The two-legged critter, the human mule, had no such release. If the company overworked an animal and it died it cost them about $75. In the overworking and killing of a man it cost them nothing. They could get a new man and at less wages.



Magnus Sinclair

These horse cars and the electric cars which succeeded them were without vestibule protection either in front or rear. Men stood on the open platforms twelve or fourteen hours a day and often longer in rain, in sleet or subzero weather. No heat was provided in a street car in those early days. It was customary for the driver to take an armful of straw from the stable yards and spread it over the floor of the car to keep the feet of the passengers from freezing.

Next to the cold and the long hours on the job the trolley pole was the greatest curse, at least for the conductor. He was held responsible for all breakages whether they occurred on a curve or on a straight track. Inasmuch as the conductor was inside the car

argued that the new organization did not have the funds to defray expenses. But the Union's division in Detroit, whose local president happened to be William Law, offered its already established office as the Amalgamated's headquarters. Law also volunteered his free services as president until such time as the organization could afford to pay him a salary. Law further proposed to turn over the local division's monthly journal to the Union as its official publication.

J.E. Husted, who had every reason to expect that he would lead the Amalgamated as president during its first year, offered some feeble resistance. But he was supported by only two other delegates.

Law's offers persuaded the delegates to approve his recommendations in spite of the strenuous objections of Newhouse. Husted and Riggs resigned their positions, and Law was nominated president by Mahon and another delegate—and won. Delegate J.C. Manuel, a native Canadian working in Detroit, was elected secretary-treasurer. At midnight on September 15, 1892, the founding convention finally adjourned.

The First Convention will perhaps be best remembered for the approval of an important policy that would guide the Amalgamated throughout its history and ensure relatively stable labor-management relations in the transit industry.

The policy promoted the resolution of labor disputes through *arbitration* rather than by strikes or other job actions. The preamble to the first Constitution advocated "*the principle and practice of conciliation and arbitration in the settlement of all differences between labor and capital....*"

Our First Year

Even with all its problems, in our first difficult year the Amalgamated became a beacon of hope to many transit workers. Chester Wright, writing about its effect, stated: "The flag of the Amalgamated was a banner of liberty to the carmen. They flocked to its protecting folds. It had been a punishable offense to talk unionism. Freedom of expression had been a thing long forgotten in...traction circles. But the Amalgamated—magic name—opened mouths long sealed, brightened eyes long dulled, and put the fire and flame and passion of zealots into men who had been only what the organizers call wage slaves."

Within a year, some 28 local divisions were formed and on September 28, 1893, the Amalgamated became an international union when the first Canadian local was chartered—Division 30 in Toronto.

Following the convention, President Law returned to Detroit. For a few months he paid close attention to the business of the newly formed union. He printed the proceedings of the convention and the Constitution. He established the official journal, the *Street Railway Employes Journal*, the name of which was soon changed to the *Street Railway Employes Gazette*.

But Law soon abandoned his responsibilities to the International Union when he became embroiled in a dispute within his local division in Detroit. This split within his own local division absorbed most of his time and attention.

It was at this time that the Great Panic of 1893 hit the

a good deal of the time, collecting fares in his tin pot, the trolley would fly off and break of its own momentum or on a cross wire, the pole being made of cheap, brittle wood.

Seventy-five cents was charged to the conductor for the breaking of one of these poles, though we were at a loss to figure how they could have cost more than a quarter. Never a pay day came around but conductors were docked for these broken poles.

While these troubles may seem trivial nowadays, they were of great concern to all of us then and, unable to obtain redress as individuals, we lent eager though somewhat fearful ears to the whispered admonition to organize. Unionize we did, despite company opposition and boss-inspired oppressions. We were held together in desperation, realizing things couldn't be worse, for if they were we wouldn't be alive.

One of the first battles engaged in by the Amalgamated Association against the street railway companies was to force them to put a shelter in front of the motorman. It was a long and bitter fight. We pleaded before municipal authorities and legislative bodies in provinces and states. The companies used every wile and financial influence they could summon, to beat the demands for vestibules.

I can still hear ringing in my ears the oratorical efforts of company spokesmen as they pictured the dangers, the madness, the criminality of putting a glass in front of the motorman. The glass would become "opaque" (that word made many an old street car man hunt up his dictionary), dust would gather on the glass; an impenetrable mortar; snow would gather, ice would form and the whole front of the street car would be like Mount Hood, a frozen glacier. Such

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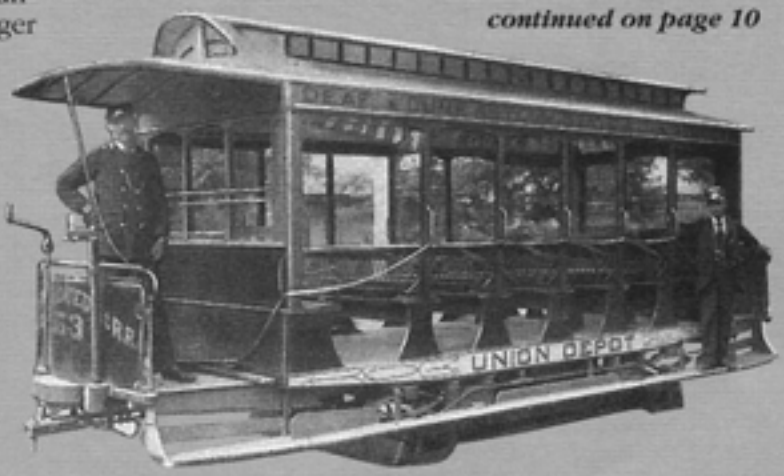

United States, bringing down many banks and businesses. These bank failures and tough economic times caused the demise of many Amalgamated local divisions.

Most divisions had not been sending in their membership per capita taxes, and the striker support taxes were put in local banks. So most per capita tax funds were lost in the bank failures.

Despite the drastic downturn in the U.S. economy, the new union managed to survive its first year. Local 19 in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and Local 22 in Worcester, Massachusetts, the oldest local unions still active today, were chartered.

And the transit companies took notice of the new union. According to Wright, they "used every weapon they had to quench this rising spirit. They threatened, they cajoled, and shrewdest—as well as most revealing—of all, they raised wages" in their efforts to stop the Amalgamated.

Important strikes took place during the first year in New Orleans; Columbus, Ohio; Fort Wayne, Indiana; and in Minneapolis-St. Paul.

The First Vestibule Act

Early streetcar drivers were required to stand in the open front platform of the car where harsh weather could hit them full force. By the late 1800s, several transit drivers had lost their lives due to exposure to some relentless winters. It was inevitable that the fight for enclosed vestibules should become an important priority for the young union.

This is a reversed picture of a car without a vestibule taken in 1905.

Sinclair, continued

were their ponderous arguments.

"You might as well blindfold a motorman and ask him to operate a street car," these pompous gentlemen would thunder. "Gentlemen of the courts: gentlemen of the legislature, if ye should enact this evil legislation you will be responsible for the wholesale killing of our wives and children who go upon the streets."

But the militant Amalgamated Association fought back and the result was the vestibule as we have it—with improvements—today.

Streetcar men pose in Toronto's freezing temperatures in 1888.

The struggle for the seat or stool on which the motorman might rest his tired limbs and sit at attention, instead of standing at "tired" attention, was another phase of our early history. Many a street car man in those times was put on the scrap heap because his feet and legs gave out from the strain of long hours standing rigid by the controller. The fight for seats was begun and won by the organized street car men, ably backed by the aid and influence of organized labor in general.

It may be difficult today to evaluate properly the benefit to our pioneers that these reforms brought about, but we enjoy the fruits of their struggles. Not only that, our demands for safety equipment and improved vehicles and right of way bettered working conditions and at the same time increased the confidence of the public in this mode of transportation. Traction barons for the first time began to look upon their properties as something besides the "window dressing" for stock promotion and sales.

Another peril of street car work in the early days was the "running board," as it was called. This was a narrow plank step which extended the length of the car on the outside, the car being open and the seats being cross set the entire width of the vehicle.

The conductor had to swing along this running

The first vestibule act was crafted by Division 9 in Columbus headed by W.D. Mahon. The local asked Mahon to present the bill to the state legislature. The bill was vigorously opposed by managements of streetcar railway companies throughout the state. Nevertheless, due to Mahon's tireless efforts, the bill was passed in 1893 and signed into law by then-Governor William McKinley (who would become a U.S. president).

Refusing to give in to the upstart union, a company in Springfield filed a lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of the new law, which was eventually upheld by the state supreme court. Similar legislation was soon enacted in Minnesota and Maryland.

The Election of William D. Mahon

By the time the Second Convention opened in Cleveland on October 9, 1893, the Amalgamated was barely functioning.

Mahon would later remember: "As though to aid the employers in their work of destroying our union, the industrial panic of 1893 came down upon us and the result was that before the panic was over, the organization was almost destroyed."

The harsh times limited convention participation to 19 delegates representing 14 local divisions.

On the evening of the first day of the convention, the Central Labor Union of Cleveland hosted a meeting of the delegates and local street railway employees for the purpose of promoting the Amalgamated.

It is recorded that President Law gave a rather long speech. Next, Delegate Samuel Massey of St. Paul and Board Chairman E.S. Ingram spoke. Perhaps more significantly, the gathering next heard from the delegate from Columbus who had earned a reputation for his successful effort to pass the nation's first vestibule bill:

"Bro. W.D. Mahon, with his forceful way of telling things, roused the audience to enthusiasm. He told how the little ball had been set rolling way out in the Hoosier State [where the Amalgamated was founded] and is still rolling. He was also opposed to strikes as a means of settling up differences between employee and employer. He spoke of the interests of the association, telling how the victory had been won in securing vestibules for the motormen. The speaker was very bitter against the treatment of many corporations to their employes, showing the

William D. Mahon, elected international president at the Second Convention, would serve in that post for over half a century.

board, which often was no more than six inches wide, to reach the passenger who had entered, to collect the fare. Thus the conductor was constantly swinging along this narrow footboard all day, with a fare box in one hand, a punch and a bunch of transfers in the other, trying to keep his balance, like a goat on a narrow precipice.

Many of our conductors met their death by being thrown from this precarious footing onto the street. Indeed, so dangerous was this type of car that our membership rose up in rebellion and denounced it, bringing some companies into court on charges of manslaughter. The treacherous and lethal running board has long since been abolished by legislation.

An entire book could, and perhaps should, be written on the human and inhuman sides of street railway life, the tragedy, the comedy, the trials and tribulations the pioneers encountered. But that will have to come from an abler pen than mine. I have here set down a few recollections out of the dusty and dim archives of memory at the importuning of my good friend the editor. If his searching pencil has spared any of it you may then pass judgment; if not, at least I have fulfilled my bargain.

Sinclair became a charter member of Local 30 (later 113) in 1893 and was elected to the General Executive Board in 1903. He served on the GEB until his retirement in 1944. This article is excerpted from the May 1939 Motorman and Conductor.

Even though they won the right to have stools, motormen were required to purchase them themselves.

uncertainty of the latter's position even while doing his duty to the best of his ability. He gave some excellent advice to the men as to their duties as members of the union."

Mahon's words were followed by those of Fort Wayne Delegate Rezin Orr, "and at the conclusion a large number of members were initiated into the Amalgamated Association."

The following day, the first order of convention business was whether to affiliate with the AFL. Mortimer O'Connell again appeared on the scene, still claiming to represent railway employees in New York City. This time he was not seated, but in communications on behalf of the "Brotherhood" he was now making just the opposite recommendations from those he made at the First Convention—demanding that the Amalgamated affiliate with the AFL as a condition for the Brotherhood's participation.

A motion to affiliate with the AFL, however, had already passed by a vote of 17 to 1, with 1 absent, so it is doubtful that O'Connell had much influence on this important decision.

The "Brotherhood," by the way, did join the Amalgamated in 1894.

The Second Convention also voted to accept the recommendation of a committee on which Mahon served, "that each Local Division be requested to set apart one-half hour each meeting for a school of instruction." Thus, an early emphasis on education was established that would grow and evolve over the next century.

Lacking funds for even the barest essentials, this convention voted to pay the secretary-treasurer only for work actually performed—as it paid the vice presidents. The delegates reduced the annual salary of the international president to $800, and they even voted to consider their mileage charges as "loans" to the Union for the coming year. The Union's books showed a balance of just $172.36.

Delegates voiced strong opposition to the leadership of President Law and elected the promising delegate from Columbus, W. D. Mahon, to the top office by a vote of 11 to 8. Mahon would more than fulfill the hopes of the delegates who first elected him. He was destined to lead the Union for the next 53 years, bringing transit workers out of poverty in American and Canadian societies.

Samuel Massey was elected secretary-treasurer, and a Milwaukee delegate, John Kennedy, was elected to the office of first vice president.

No one observing the Amalgamated in its second year of operation would have predicted the significant role that the organization would play in the emerging U.S. and Canadian labor movement, or that its president would become such a major figure in that movement.

Indeed, Mahon would later write: "...all kinds of pledges and promises were made, but, I am sorry to say, the great majority of them were never fulfilled. Many of the delegates returned to their homes and dropped out of sight, never to be heard from again. Those who accepted the offices had to struggle alone. Those who have not had this experience can never appreciate what the effort cost those who were elected to offices in that dark

We Have Seen Millions of Men Thrown Out of Employment

by Samuel M. Massey

Samuel M. Massey

During the year just past and gone, our country has experienced one of the most distressing periods of financial depression that has befallen it since it sprang into existence. We have watched with pain and anxiety the frightful havoc it has created in labor circles. We have seen millions of men thrown out of employment. We, in our imagination, have followed them on their restless journey seeking employment. We have gazed on the emaciated form, the pinched and wasted features, the starved expression and the threadbare garments. We have observed, with no little concern, the various instances in which the employers themselves have taken advantage of this demoralizing state of affairs, and have cut deeply and cruelly into the wages paid their employes. In many cases this was done when there was no just reason or excuse for such action. Large armies of unemployed men have marched from the uttermost portions of our nation, to the fountain head of our government, endeavoring to attract the attention of the congress of our country and persuade them to do something—to enact some laws that would relieve the country of the dreadful state of convulsions from which it was suffering. Terrible strikes have taken place, covering vast areas of territory and involving thousands of men, women and children. Nearly every strike, if not all, has been fought on the lines of justice and as a protest against unjust oppression. Men have stood out in the face of hunger and want fighting nobly for those rights which heaven approves and hell sneers at. They have called loudly and repeatedly on the administrators of law within our land to come to their assistance by interpreting the laws in accordance with their reading and on the basis of justice and reason. They have sought the judicial ermine in their time of need. What was the result? Justice slumbered, but the fitting tools of the grasping corporations that disgrace our judicial benches issued arbitrary and unjust injunctions, obstructed the flow of the clear rivers of legal decisions, and contaminated and polluted even the pure waters within the judicial pool.

Massey was secretary-treasurer of the Amalgamated from 1893-1894. The above is taken from his report to the Third Convention in 1894.

hour back in 1893."

And what became of President Law?

Almost as a consolation prize, Law was elected fourth vice president. But this was not the end of the story for Law. The evidence suggests that Law had foreseen what was coming as early as February 1893.

After the Second Convention, Mahon and Massey hurried to Detroit to try to resolve the rift in Local 3 that they had heard about. There they found that Law had absconded with the Division's treasury of $1,600 and formed a new independent union—seven months prior to the just completed Second Convention!

Mahon, showing the decisiveness that would characterize his presidency, immediately revoked Division 3's charter, dealt with the internal dispute, and established a new and successful Division 26.

In 1894, Law was formally "expelled" from the Union "as a traitor and an impostor," and "debarred from becoming a member or affiliating with the [union] for a period of 99 years." Law's "debarment" will expire in 1993.

The Third Convention

President Mahon described the Amalgamated's Third Convention, held in Milwaukee in 1894, as "without question the most gloomy convention ever held by our Association, coming as it did at a time when the effects of the panic of 1893 had reached its high tide, and was being most sorely felt by the entire country."

Only eight locals, represented by 12 delegates, were in attendance at the convention. They reelected Mahon as international president, and elected Miller D. Moore of Cleveland as secretary-treasurer.

The delegates decided that the *Street Railway Times of Cleveland,* owned by some Amalgamated members, should be endorsed as the Union's official paper. They also decided to continue to designate Detroit as the official site of the international offices.

The delegates directed the officers to intensify their efforts to have vestibule bills enacted in all the states and provinces.

Referring to this Third Convention, Mahon would later add that it was "one of the most important conventions ever held by the association.... It is to this little band of men that our membership today owe their thanks for the wages, hours and other conditions that the organization has established for them."

In 1894, a strong effort was made for the passage of vestibule legislation in Wisconsin. But it was not until one cold winter's night, when tragedy befell the Amalgamated and the industry, that sentiment swung to the Union's side.

Reports show it was nearly 18 degrees below zero the morning that the Amalgamated's first vice president, John Kennedy, reported to his job. Kennedy was ill, but because there was no relief operator, he had to work. He ran his car through a drawbridge and into the water. Kennedy and three passengers were killed.

The coroner's report confirmed that Kennedy had frozen to death at his post and the accident might have been avoided if he had been protected by a vestibule.

STREET RAILWAY EMPLOYES GAZETTE

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE

Amalgamated Association of Street Railway Employes of America.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY.

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The first publication of the new Union, the Street Railway Employes Gazette, was published in November 1892.

The Wisconsin vestibule bill was enacted at a very dear price. Kennedy's death, however, was only the first of many that the Amalgamated would mourn over the coming century.

The Motorman and Conductor

In the year 1895, *The Motorman and Conductor,* predecessor to the Amalgamated's current publication, *In Transit,* made its first appearance.

While the 1893 convention had endorsed the *Street Railway Times of Cleveland* as the official paper, the management had since ceased publishing the paper. President Mahon decided that the Amalgamated should have its own paper which he would edit himself.

The first issue was printed as a 12-page pamphlet. *The Motorman and Conductor* became an important tool in organizing street railway employees. The publication was used in organizing efforts throughout the United States and Canada.

First International Vice President John Kennedy froze to death on an open platform car in Milwaukee in 1893. His death led to the passage of Wisconsin's vestibule bill.

According to Mahon, "*The Motorman and Conductor* in those days did as much to agitate the question [of trade union representation] and to bring about the organization of the street and electric railway workers of the U.S. and Canada as any other medium, if not more.... As soon as the paper began to be distributed and the workers realized that there was a movement of this kind, communications began to roll into the general office from the remotest parts of the countries and from that time on agitation was continued through the medium of the journal and by communications which brought a number of organizations into the fold."

In January 1895, Secretary-Treasurer Moore resigned. He was replaced by the acting secretary of Detroit Local 26, James G. Grant. Grant served only three months before resigning to accept a management position. When this occurred, the Amalgamated's Executive Board appointed Vice President Rezin Orr to fill the post. He was elected to that office at the following convention and held the position until his death in 1917.

A Decade of Growth

The Amalgamated's 1895 convention in Detroit, though sparsely attended, kicked off a decade of growth and progress for transit workers. Only six locals were represented. Other divisions had notified the International that they were either too afraid of employer retribution or too poor to send delegates.

The delegates who did attend endorsed *The Motorman and Conductor* as the Amalgamated's official publication. The delegates also recorded a "first" for organized labor by establishing a Funeral and Disability Fund for the beneficiaries of deceased or disabled Amalgamated members. The fund provided $50 upon the death or permanent disability of anyone who had been a member for a year. Two members received benefits during the fund's first year. Today, that fund has paid out millions of dollars covering hundreds of thousands of claims.

The 1895 convention also marked the beginnings of what would become the Union's Women's International

Amalgamated Women Pioneer In New Union

As the correspondent for Local 308 in Chicago correctly noted in the March 1904 issue of *The Motorman and Conductor*, "[T]he only active lady membership of our association is enrolled upon the roster of 308." Indeed, the first women members did come from Local 308, which was organized in 1902 to represent the employees of the Chicago Elevated Service. In addition to operating crews, track crews and maintenance employees, the work force included station agents who were primarily women.

Josephine Casey, the first female Amalgamated local officer, was a delegate to the Eighth Convention in 1903.

One of these women was Josephine Casey. Casey, the daughter of a deceased union mason, was the Amalgamated's first female local union officer (recording secretary of Division 308) and our first female convention delegate (the Eighth Convention in 1903). Casey was active in the affairs of the local union and served as a delegate to the AFL's Chicago Federation of Labor.

Another founding member of Local 308, Clara Murphy, was a steward in the local union. When her funeral benefit was paid in 1904, it was probably the first time a death benefit was paid to a woman member.

A third founding member of Local 308, Lela Scott, was a delegate to the Ninth Convention held in Chicago in 1905. She was appointed a member of the Committee on Resolutions and Thanks and was the first woman member to be nominated to international office, as one of three candidates for the office of fourth international vice president. According to the convention proceedings, she withdrew her candidacy.

At the 1905 Chicago convention, the issue of gender-neutral language was also first raised. A delegate from Local 308 called attention to the fact that since our union now included ladies in its membership, the distinctive pronouns "he and she" should be inserted in our Ritual. His suggestion was never made into a motion. It was not until after the 48th Convention in 1986 that the Constitution was revised to insert gender-inclusive language.

In 1904, a spirited debate in *The Motorman and Conductor* took place over the issue of women members. In an article entitled "Women's Place," a correspondent from Pennsylvania stated that the majority belief was "a woman's place is at home, where she reigns supreme in undisputed power...." and lamented that women should not be taking men's jobs. It concluded that: "Women, no matter how competent, cannot command the same salary as men, and if they engage themselves in our occupation to a large extent, we certainly would be compelled to consider them our enemies."

In the next issue, a response appeared from Josephine Casey, the Local 308 officer, which pointed out the law of self preservation governs all Amalgamated members and that for men and women, married and single, working is a necessity.

At our Eleventh Convention in Toronto in 1909, a delegate from Lowell, Massachusetts, introduced a resolution that the Amalgamated place itself on record as favoring "women's suffrage as a means of their emancipation."

The Committee on Resolutions reported favorably on the resolution and recommended its adoption. This triggered a fiery debate upon the floor of the convention with opponents arguing, "Women have been well cared for by men. To give them the ballot and its power will fill the courts...so full of divorce cases that they would have no time to try the criminals." Supporters of the resolution argued that women who successfully direct their home should have "equal rights with men, who are brought into manhood under their guidance." The resolution supporting suffrage was passed by the delegates.

The Amalgamated accepted its next group of women members in 1912 when the employees of the Boston Elevated Railway Company were organized. There were approximately 7,000 to 8,000 employees working on the Boston system, more than 2,500 of whom signed up when the charter was issued to Local 589 on May 22, 1912. Within two weeks, the company had discharged 80 union activists and supporters. When efforts to bring about their reinstatement failed, the local declared a lockout.

A boycott of the Boston system was called by AFL affiliates. After a difficult seven weeks, a settlement was reached with the management.

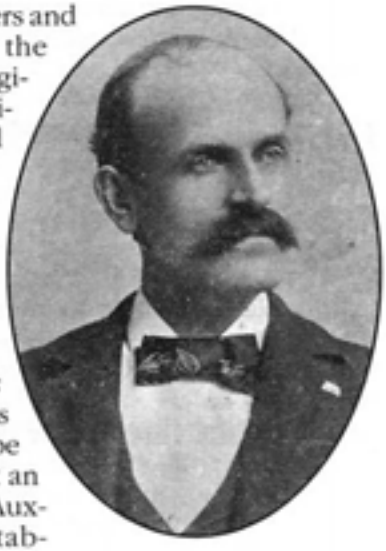
In reporting on the strike, Local 589's correspondent to *The Motorman and Conductor* lauded the support of women employees for their active participation in the union meetings. When the local held its first election in October 1912, the women voted 100 percent strong.

At our Thirteenth Convention in 1913 in Salt Lake City, there were women delegates representing both Local 308 in Chicago and Local 589 in Boston. The delegates were also privileged by the appearance of

continued on page 16

Auxiliary. Wives, daughters and sisters of members of the streetcar workers in Saginaw had formed a local division auxiliary and told the convention they desired to extend its influence and work throughout the United States and Canada.

Their requests were honored and a *General Constitution and Laws* for the Auxiliary was adopted. It would not be until 1937, however, that an International Women's Auxiliary was formally established. The Auxiliary would contribute substantially to the lives of Amalgamated workers until its dissolution in 1990.



Rezin Orr was elected international secretary-treasurer at the convention of 1895.

-THE-

Motorman and Conductor

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE AMALGAMATED ASSOCIATION OF STREET CAR EMPLOYES OF AMERICA.

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EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES.

OBJECTS OF THE AMALGAMATED ASSOCIATION.

Section 1. The objects of this association shall be to organize Division Associations.

Sec. 2. To place our occupation upon a high plane of intelligence, efficiency and skill; to encourage the formation in Division Associations of Sick Benefit Funds; to establish schools of instruction and examination for imparting a practical knowledge of modern and improved methods and systems of transportation and trade matters generally. To encourage the settlement of all disputes between employees and employers by arbitration; to secure employment and adequate pay for our work; to reduce the hours of daily labor, and by all legal and proper means to elevate our moral, intellectual and social condition.

This paper is the property of the Amalgamated Association of Street Railway Employes of America, issued and controlled by the National office. Each Division should at once assist the motorman and conductor and realize that it is your property and official organ, and do all in your power to make it a success. The paper will from time to time be enlarged as circumstances will permit and will be made a semi-monthly as soon as possible. Secretaries of different divisions will receive instructions as to advertising and subscriptions. Let every member try his best to boom it along.

Secretary Treasurer M. G. Moore was born at Anthony, N. J., July 20th, 1869, and at the age of 11 years his parents moved to Middle Valley,

M. G. MOORE, Sec.-Treas.

N. J., where he attended the public schools until he was 14 years of age. At the age of 16 years he entered the employ of the N. J. C. R. R. as telegraph operator at Clifton, N. J. After one and one-half years he drifted west and went sailing on the lakes for two seasons. When he entered the employ of the Detroit Citizens' St. Ry. Co. as a conductor on July 31, 1893, he was elected secretary treasurer of Div. 26, Detroit, and was re-elected January 1st, 1894, at the National Convention in Milwaukee, Wis. October 8th he was elected Secretary Treasurer of the

The first issue of The Motorman & Conductor published in March 1895.

In an attempt to save money, the 1895 delegates extended the period between conventions to one and a half years.

First Interest Arbitration Negotiated

It was in 1896 in Toledo that the Amalgamated first attempted to secure a contract provision requiring arbitration in the event of an impasse in negotiations for a renewal agreement. Although the local division was at first unsuccessful in this effort, it continued promotion of the arbitration issue until the Toledo contract was renegotiated in 1897 and the local division achieved the long-sought arbitration provision.

Several other "firsts" for the Amalgamated were also won in the Toledo contract, including leave for union officers, seniority rights, the right to have disciplinary investigations completed within 48 hours and a top pay rate of 18 cents per hour for motormen with a 9-hour workday.

Also, in 1896, organizing efforts in Canada created local divisions in London, Ontario; Winnipeg, Manitoba; and Vancouver, British Columbia.

These cities still retain active unions today, although the original charters were withdrawn and new charters issued over the years. The longest running Canadian charters were issued in 1899 to Local 107 in Hamilton, Ontario, and in 1893 to the Amalgamated's largest local, 113 in Toronto (the successor to Local 30, chartered in 1893).

Establishing Biennial Conventions

At the 1897 convention in Dayton, Ohio, the delegates adopted a policy to hold international conventions biennially due to the Union's lack of financial resources. This 2-year convention cycle remained in effect until 1983, when the 47th Convention approved a 3-year cycle. The delegates also divided the duties of secretary-treasurer with the duties of secretary being given to the president.

Louisville was selected by the delegates as the site of the Sixth Convention in 1899 so that an attempt could be made to organize the streetcar workers there. In spite of some progress in labor-management relations, many transit companies still remained violently opposed to the Union.

Mahon would later recall: "The employers used every means possible to destroy us. Men were bribed, detectives and spotters were used and, in some cases, strong-arm men were employed. Yet in the face of all this opposition the determined few kept up the battle....The company officials saw to it that these men could not get employment if it was in their power to stop it."

The antagonism of some employers was so great that the 1899 convention proceedings omitted the names of the delegates in order to protect the participants from

Amalgamated Women, continued

the legendary Mary "Mother" Jones, who spoke to the gathering as a special representative for the Western Federation of Miners to make a request for a loan of $1,000.

The convention quickly complied, and the Chair responded, "Mother Jones may carry back a message from this Convention....Say to them our sympathies financially, morally and every other way, are with the miners." Jones "extended hearty appreciation" for the action.

Mother Jones, one of the great labor leaders of history, spoke to the 13th Convention in Salt Lake City.

For many years in the United States, Mary Jones was the "mother" of the modern labor movement. When she died at the age of 100, W.D. Mahon paid her an elegant tribute when he stated: "Her every heartbeat was for humanity....She could soothe and wipe away the tears of a weeping and discouraged wife; caress and encourage children; inspire the crowd and denounce the police and Pinkertons in the same breath. Her life's work and struggle for humanity will live and illuminate the pages of the labor history of America...."

By 1918, 500 women were members of Local 308 and 200 were members of Local 589.

As the men went off to fight in World War I, there began a two-year debate in *The Motorman and Conductor* about whether the women should be able to replace the male transit workers during the war. It was not a debate about women's rights. It centered on protecting womanhood from barbaric and ruthless employers—the very same who oppressed the men. The suggestion by street railway companies to employ women as conductors was viewed as an attempt to send women back to the days of the savages. The magazine referred to these efforts as unpatriotic and tyrannical.

Two months later, Local 589, which had been founded with women members fighting in the recognition strike, reported that it had adopted a resolution opposing women as conductors on the Boston elevated system because this work degraded American womanhood.

At the Fifteenth Convention held in Providence,

Rhode Island, in 1917, there was one woman delegate, Anna Dolan, from Local 308. The delegates adopted a resolution "absolutely opposed to the employment of women as motormen, brakemen, or conductors upon the street railways in the United States or Canada." The sole dissenting vote was cast by Anna Dolan.

Shortly after the convention, a correspondent from Local 22 in Worcester, Massachusetts, reported that the newspapers in that city had begun discussing the hiring of female operators and stated that the local union was "solidly opposed to the idea." Finally, in August 1918, the General Executive Board recognized that due to the war many companies would not survive unless women were employed and adopted a policy on women. The policy stated that if it became necessary to employ women, local divisions would not oppose such plans as long as the employer met the following conditions:

1. *Where women are employed as conductors, they shall be employed and enter the service the same as men were employed.*

2. *They shall take their seniority at the foot of the extra list and work up like men.*

3. *They shall be entitled to the same guarantees, wages and conditions as men.*

4. *They shall have the same membership requirements and shall be entitled to the same contract protections as men.*

The position taken by the GEB in 1918 was meant only for the duration of the war. At the same time as the GEB took its position, the trade union movement, including the Amalgamated, had been at the forefront of the legislative and political arenas to assist the suffragettes in obtaining for women the right to vote, to pass 10- and 8-hour-day legislation for women workers, and to pass child labor laws. After the war, the labor union leaders were surprised and dismayed when the League of Women Voters aligned themselves with the employers in arguing that women should retain the conductor and motormen positions on the street railways.

As World War I came to an end, the General Executive Board passed a motion opposing legislation to employ women as operators on the transit system. "[I]t is the sense of the Board that the Association is unalterably opposed to the enactment of any law ...providing for employment of women as motormen and conductors...."

When the war ended, men mostly replaced women in the jobs they had held during World War I. Women workers on transit systems (other than in Chicago and Boston) were virtually nonexistent.

later retaliation by management. Of the 36 active locals at the time, only 12 were represented at this convention, including Local 26 in Detroit, Local 85 in Pittsburgh and Local 89 in New Castle, Pennsylvania.

The 1899 convention focused on the long workday problem. The effort to overcome management's ability to dictate almost unrestricted hours of work had stalled. The international officers were directed by the delegates to seek legislation to establish 10-hour workdays in the U.S. and Canada.

Shortly after the Louisville convention adjourned, a local division was chartered in that city.

Violence in Cleveland and St. Louis

In 1900, Cleveland became the site of the first blood shed during an Amalgamated strike. A young child was killed by a stray bullet of a company-hired "strong-arm man" while she played in her yard. Another bitter Amalgamated strike occurred in St. Louis that year. On June 10, 1900, 11 unarmed strikers returning from a union picnic were brutally massacred by company agents.

Despite these tragedies, 56 divisions were organized during 1900, including Local 192 in Oakland, California, Local 212 in Burlington, Iowa, and Local 215 in Aurora, Illinois—each still active today.

By the end of 1900, a total of roughly 175 divisions had been created. The exact number is hard to pinpoint since some went out of existence after a short period of time, perhaps to be rechartered in a year or two, or never to be heard of again.

The first noted interest arbitration proceeding conducted under enabling provisions included in a labor contract also took place in 1900. The award included a 15-percent pay increase, a 9-hour workday and grievance arbitration for Reading, Pennsylvania, workers. The arbitrator also ordered the reinstatement of those employees discharged because of their membership in the Amalgamated.

Organizing a Power Base

By the time of the Seventh Convention in Buffalo, in 1901, there was an impressive $5,240.78 in the treasury and membership had reached 8,000. The delegates voted to increase the funeral and disability benefit from $75 to $100. The first Canadian member of the Executive Board was elected, Alexander Montgomery from Local 113 in Toronto.

In 1902 we celebrated a decade as a union, and in that year alone, 82 new locals were organized, including Locals 241 and 308 in Chicago. The Amalgamated was now recognized as the dominant transit union in North America.

The Pittsburgh convention in 1903 had the greatest attendance since the founding of the Union—148 delegates representing 84 local unions in the United States and Canada. Local 308 in Chicago, representing the employees of the Chicago Elevated Service, sent the first woman

This is a picture of an actual U.S. Mail Car. Some employers would arrange to carry mail hoping to thwart organizing by their workers who feared being accused of interfering with the mail—a federal offense.

delegate ever to attend a convention, Josephine Casey.

Casey was selected by President Mahon as "chairman" of the Committee on Rules and Order. She was also selected as head of a committee to draft a message to U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt protesting the use of streetcars for carrying the U.S. mail.

In those days employers would arrange to carry U.S. mail and post its symbol on their cars whether or not the car was actually carrying any mail at the time. In that way employers hoped to thwart any employee attempts at organizing that might be construed as interfering with the delivery of mail—a federal offense.

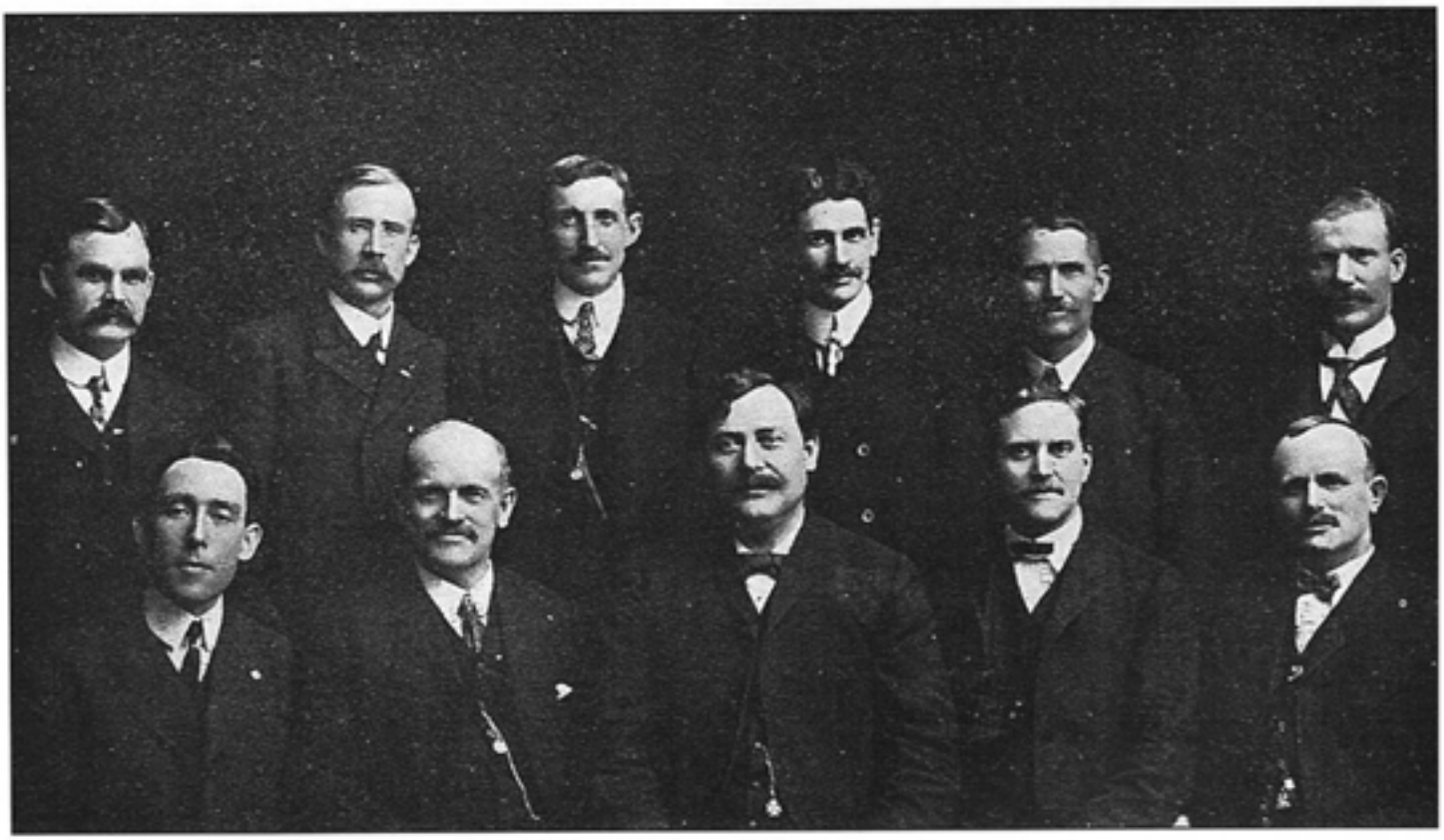
The Pittsburgh convention will perhaps be best recalled for the delegates' wise decision to establish a separate Defense Fund in the Constitution. As adopted, members received $5 per week after two weeks on a strike. In order to build the Defense Fund, all members were assessed 25 cents per quarter.

The Defense Fund would be used over the next several decades not only to support members on strike, but to help defray the costs of interest arbitration and, later, non-binding fact-finding.

In an effort to keep abreast with the changing technology which now included the ever-increasing use of the electric trolley car, the name of the Union was changed to the *Amalgamated Association of Street* **and Electric** *Railway Employes of America.*

Magnus Sinclair, then secretary of Local 113 in Toronto, was elected to the General Executive Board at the 1903 convention. His election marked the threshold of a great career with the Union spanning 40 years of service. Sinclair would later state that the Amalgamated was a movement that recognized no national boundary lines and that Canadians and Americans would be found working shoulder to shoulder in the struggle for transit workers.

Nothing came easy for the young organization. No



The members of the General Executive Board pose for this 1903 picture. Seated, left to right, William B. Fitzgerald, Rezin Orr, Mahon, R.L. Reeves, Fred Fay. Standing, left to right, David Reed, Richard Cornelius, Daniel Dilworth, C. O. Pratt, William Jacobs, and Magnus Sinclair.

Officers and delegates to the Eighth Convention in Pittsburgh, May 4, 1903.

sooner had the delegates established the Defense Fund than benefits had to be paid out.

The first strike benefits were paid out in 1904. A strike in San Antonio ended up defeating the local after 81 days through the company's use of the Texas anti-trust laws.

More successful strikes were waged in Houston, Texas, and Bloomington, Illinois.

Two of the major work problems confronting the Union by 1905 were the hours of work under the three-shift system so prevalent at the time and the matter of company consolidations which were increasing and costing union members their jobs.

The Union argued that any shift system must equally divide the work hours and that employees must be allowed to *follow their work* in the event of consolidations. This was the first articulation of what would become an important principle in a rapidly changing industry.

The Union ended its first 12 years having built a strong organization to fight the battles which lay ahead.

"The Organization over which you preside has done so much for the improvement of conditions of the street and electric railway employes that it is a standing monument and tribute to its history and excellent work."

Letter to W.D. Mahon
from Samuel Gompers, 1906

CHAPTER TWO *1906-1918*

Coming of Age Amidst Strikes and Bloodshed

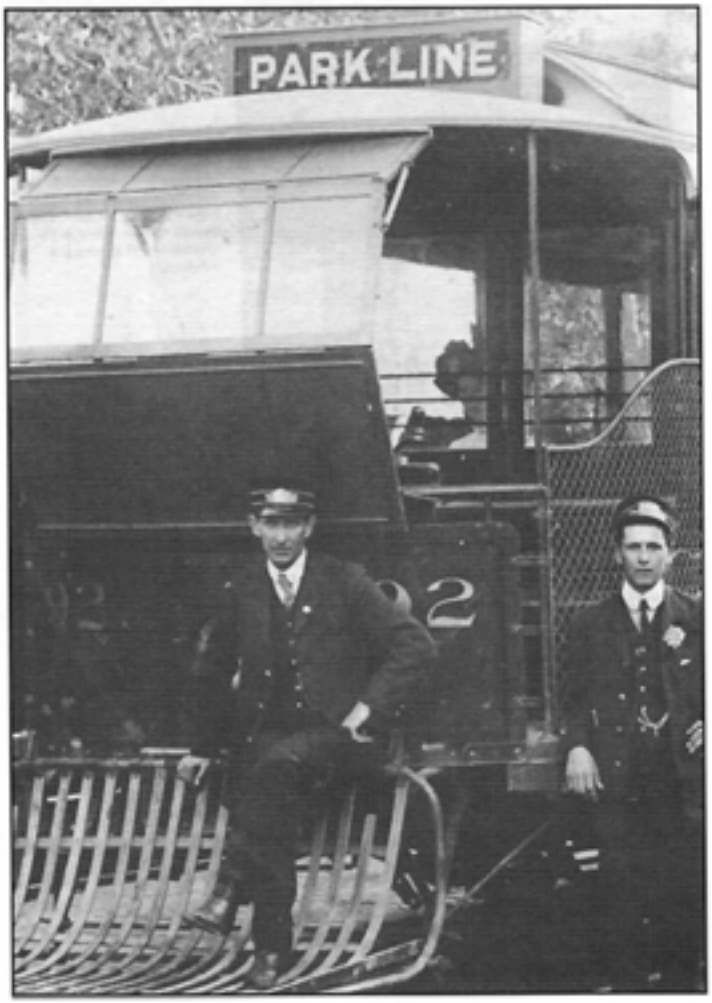
By 1906, the Amalgamated and its leader, W. D. Mahon, were widely acclaimed for the contributions they had already made to the labor movement. But the young union was not about to rest on its past laurels.

Despite some distressed economic conditions and a world war, during the next 12 years the Amalgamated continued to grow and make great strides in improving the wages and working conditions of its membership.

The policy established at the founding convention to promote the use of arbitration instead of strikes as a means of resolving contract disputes proved a wise, far-sighted decision. On numerous occasions the arbitration of new contracts proved successful for the members.

Even in proceedings before the War Labor Board, established to prevent strikes in the U.S. during World War I, the Union continued to achieve significant wage and benefit increases.

This period saw a trend toward multi-year agreements with employers, as opposed to the traditional one-year pacts. The era would also be remembered for bitter strikes to establish local unions in the U.S. and Canada.



Drivers such as these men posing in front of the open vestibule of a Park Line Streetcar in Winnipeg went on strike in 1906.

Strikes in London, Ontario & Winnipeg, Manitoba

Management refusal to arbitrate precipitated a major strike in 1906 in London, Ontario. The officers of Division 107 thought they had successfully negotiated a new contract providing a top rate of 20 cents per hour, with a 2-cent per hour overtime provision. But the Hamilton Street Railway Company refused to honor the signed agreement.

Under the guidance of Executive Board Member Magnus Sinclair, the union proposed to arbitrate the issue of whether the parties had in fact reached agreement on a new contract. The company agreed to arbitrate. But, when the arbitrator sided with the union, the company refused to honor the award.

Further attempts by Sinclair to convince the company to abide by the agreement failed, and on November 4, the company declared a lockout.

The company quickly hired strikebreakers and imported Pinkerton detectives from Chicago. It fired any employee who refused to resign from the union and return to work.

Division 107 members not only persevered but managed to rally tremendous community support. When the mayor and chief of police attempted to read the city's "Riot Act" to 10,000 union members and supporters who had gathered in front of the company's entrance, the angry crowd refused to disperse. Without provocation, the police then charged into the crowd of supporters, injuring about 100 people.

After 28 days, President Mahon began intense negotiations with the company's president which resulted in an agreement. The parties agreed that the union members could return to work as soon as the cars damaged in the strike were returned to service.

The Hamilton Street Railway, however, remained hostile toward the union. Within a year, the president of Division 107, an 18-year employee, was discharged on trumped up charges. Although the discharge was finally arbitrated after the union threatened another job action, the arbitrator upheld the company's action.

In March, 1906, a strike occurred in Winnipeg, Manitoba, after the company had its first major confrontation with its employees who were seeking to form a local union. The Winnipeg Electric Street Railway not only refused to recognize the new union but attempted to head off any trouble by granting an immediate 1-cent per hour wage increase. The workers saw through this ruse and

preparations for a strike began.

On March 29, the strike was called by a vote of the union's members. The company tried to keep the cars running, bringing in 150 strikebreakers from Eastern Canada. The public, however, supported the strikers and those who normally rode the cars took to the streets sporting "*We Walk*" tags pinned to their lapels and hats.

Violence broke out by the tracks near the city hall when a car rolled in carrying strikebreakers with axe handles. The altercation began when a rock was thrown from a gathering crowd. The crowd broke the car windows and then sought out other cars being operated by the company. The city's transit system came to a halt.

Within two weeks, however, the strike began to lose support when employees started to return to work. On April 9, the strike ended when the employees accepted the company's 1-cent per hour increase and a 10-hour day.

Although the union was not recognized, the strike had won new benefits for the workers which laid the groundwork for the eventual recognition of a local union. (Today the Winnipeg employees are represented by Local 1505.)

Opposition to the Amalgamated's strikes frequently came not only from non-union strikebreakers, but also from a "rival" organization, the Brotherhood of Interurban Trainmen.

This group started to attract Amalgamated members into its ranks in the early 1900s by offering to work for the companies at a lower wage rate as it did during strikes in Detroit (represented by Division 26) and on the Third Rail System of Elgin and Chicago (represented by Division 215, in Aurora, Illinois).

The activities of the Brotherhood of Interurban Trainmen became such an issue for the Amalgamated that President Mahon sent a letter to AFL President Gompers complaining bitterly about their tactics.

Gompers wrote back and assured Mahon that the renegade union was not an organization recognized by the AFL, and that, "[t]he Amalgamated...is the only bona fide organization of street and electric railway workmen, and so officially recognized by the labor movement of our continent."

The San Francisco Earthquake

Perhaps the greatest disaster to rock the Amalgamated in 1906 did not come from a ruthless management bent on union destruction, but from a natural disaster—the great San Francisco earthquake on April 18.

Reports received at the International's headquarters by President Mahon and the General Executive Board advised that the quake and subsequent fires had left over 300 members' families homeless. As a consequence of the extensive damage done to the streetcar system, 1,600 of our members had no work.

Mahon immediately forwarded $1,000 from the International treasury to aid the members and their families. He sent out an appeal to all local divisions asking them to forward assistance to the local in San Francisco. More than 100 locals swiftly responded with over $9,200.

The San Francisco Earthquake of 1906 had a devastating effect on members of the Amalgamated in that city. The Union raised funds to send in relief to Amalgamated members there. This picture was taken on Mint Street in San Francisco, where Local 1225 has its office today. (Picture courtesy of the San Francisco Chronicle.)

Advocating Advancing Technology

The delegates attending the 1905 convention in Chicago echoed the concern of the entire membership by adopting a resolution to make legislation outlawing the use of running boards a priority.

At the time, most streetcars had no center aisle. Instead, the conductors were required to walk along narrow sideboards on the outside of the vehicles to collect fares and attend to passenger problems.

This subjected the transit workers to possible injury from passing vehicles, street lights and pedestrians. In bad weather conditions, a dangerous job became treacherous. Numerous members were injured or lost their lives due to running board accidents.

In 1907, GEB Member Sinclair successfully obtained the first center aisle legislation which was enacted by the Ontario Parliament. But it took a long time to eliminate the cars with running boards.

In 1912, the Amalgamated still lamented their use in Chicago, referring to the aisle-less cars as "ambulance wagons."

In Ohio, where the nation's first vestibule act had been passed in 1895, the Amalgamated secured an amendment to the law in 1906 requiring companies to provide heaters for the enclosed drivers' cabs during winter months. In 1907, similar legislation was introduced, although not enacted, in the Illinois and Iowa legislatures.

With the technological advancement of air brakes (as opposed to the less reliable hand brakes) on the electric streetcars, the Amalgamated became one of the major proponents of their use. The Union argued that air brakes were safer because the cars could be stopped quicker, smoother and with less effort.

Not too surprisingly, Detroit, Michigan, the home of the International's headquarters, was the first location to mandate the use of air brakes on streetcars by city ordinance. Similar laws quickly followed in other locations.

Many companies, noting the success of the Detroit experience, voluntarily installed air brakes.

The increased use of air brakes not only provided a safety benefit to the members, but increased their clout at the bargaining table.

Since air brakes permitted companies to use larger cars at increased speeds, the transit operator developed new skills for which no ready substitute was available. The introduction of air brakes effectively discouraged the use of inexperienced strikebreakers who could no longer be easily pressed into service during strikes and lockouts.

By the time the 12th Convention convened in St. Joseph, Missouri, in 1911, air brakes had replaced hand brakes on most systems' cars and heated cars were commonplace.

In 1912, Division 113 in Toronto was successful in

Edward McMorrow (second from left in the middle row) joined the GEB in 1905. Pictured here from left to right, upper row, are Ben Commons, New Orleans, Richard Cornelius, San Francisco, Magnus Sinclair, Toronto. Middle row, D.S. Fitzgerald, New Haven, Ed McMorrow, Chicago, Wm. B. Fitzgerald, Troy, N.Y., R.L. Reeves, Detroit. Lower row, Fred Fay, Ypsilanti, Mich., C.O. Pratt, Welshfield, Ohio, W.D. Mahon, International President, and Rezin Orr, Treasurer, Detroit.

One important innovation in use by 1911 was the "nearside car" which permitted passengers to enter and exit only by the conductor. This allowed the conductor to stay in one spot and still collect fares.

obtaining legislation providing for a 10-hour day in 12 consecutive hours and a 6-day workweek. The Massachusetts legislature passed a "9 in 11 Hour" bill in 1913.

The Amalgamated took up the battle to secure an 8-hour workday law in the U.S. In 1916, the goal was achieved when both houses of the Congress passed legislation limiting the standard workday to 8 hours for employees of public utilities.

As the *Union Leader* editorialized, "the legislators...have not only paved the way for better conditions for the workers, but they have made a more intelligent, a more virile manhood and womanhood....They have enacted into law the spirit of the time." It would be many years, however, before an 8-hour day was achieved for transit workers.

In 1914, the Louisiana legislature enacted the first law providing seats for street railway operators and conductors.

Organizing the Unorganized

The year 1912 will be remembered as the year the Amalgamated brought the 4,000 workers on the Boston Elevated System into the Union, but the year was also marked by failed organizing campaigns such as that in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

When Amalgamated GEB Member Edward McMorrow began organizing in Milwaukee, he found the workers suffering inhuman hours at low pay, being forced to operate defective equipment and make up any fare shortages out of their own pockets.

For just one week in 1911, a carman's reported hours of duty were: 13 hours, 25 minutes (November 10); 12 hours, 45 minutes (November 13); 12 hours, 10 minutes (November 14); 11 hours, 25 minutes (November 15).

McMorrow had seen conditions such as this before. He was one of the young men who had originally taken on Chicago's tough traction barons in 1902—and won. He was elected to the GEB in 1905.

The International moved into this new building at 104 High St. in Detroit which it purchased in 1912.

Amalgamated officers who took on the "Elevated" in Boston: Left to Right: J.H. Reardon, Chairman of the Executive Board; Fred Fay, National Organizer; Alexander Smith, Chairman, General Committee of Massachusetts; P.T. Sheban, International Vice President; W.H. Garvey, Chairman, Division 6; W.H. Fabey, Chairman, Division 1; P.J. O'Brien, President of Springfield Division 448.

Organizing the Boston Employees

Organization of the 3,800 employees of the Boston Elevated Street Railway was a major victory for the Amalgamated in 1912. Few strikes during the period were more dramatic than that staged in Boston.

During this period, local divisions were first established to seek out workers to join as part of an ongoing organizing campaign. In most cases, when the company learned their workers had attended an organizational meeting or joined the union, they would immediately be discharged.

On the heels of the announcement by the employees of the Boston Elevated Street Railway that they had organized Division 589, the company posted a notice putting into effect an immediate 10-percent raise for the workers.

By June 1, only a month after the organizing had begun, 39 men had been discharged because of their activities in soliciting membership in the new union.

After a stormy 3-hour meeting of the newly organized union on June 7, the workers voted to strike for recognition by the company:

"During the following hours scab-run cars were stoned, trolleys were disconnected and tied down, police reserves clashed with strikers at a score of points in Boston, Cambridge, Roxbury, Charlestown and Somerville and many arrests were made."

The strikers reported 3,800 men among their ranks while the company reported 2,000 employees continued working and joined the company

union—the "Loyal Federation."

The strike was organized by GEB Member Fred Fay. Within hours of its inception, President Mahon arrived in Boston to support the workers' efforts. The *Union Leader* outlined the Boston campaign:

"The men are fighting for a minimum wage of $1.75 a day for conductors and motormen, $1.65 a day for guards and $1.60 a day for brakemen. The men now get 23 cents an hour during the first year of service and a chance of a raise to 26 cents an hour after sixteen years. If one is lucky enough to have a steady run of ten hours he can make $2.60 a day. If one works shifts he can make $12 or $13 a week for about eighteen out of twenty-four hours' work daily."

By June 23, the power of the strike was apparent. In a demonstration held in support of the strike at the Boston Common, 50,000 trade unionists and sympathizers appeared in "the greatest [gathering] ever witnessed on the historic old parade ground."

GEB Member Fay eloquently described what occurred during the strike:

"Hounded by the police and subjected to the brutal persecution of the courts in their imposition of long jail sentences for minor offenses, the 4,000 striking street carmen of this city are as firmly united today as when they first struck, one month ago.

"Never before in my experience as national organizer have I witnessed such glaring persecution of union men as the strikers are subjected to in this city by the Boston police, seconded by a judiciary so servile to the Elevated management that simple justice under such conditions is impossible.

"Law abiding men, guilty of no other crime than holding membership in a trade union, have been beaten up by the police while walking along the streets peacefully.

"Convicted on the perjured evidence of the patrolmen who placed them under arrest, others have been sentenced to long terms of imprisonment, despite the fact that they had reliable witnesses to prove their innocence....

"And, through it all, there has been such a profound silence upon the part of men holding high offices in the city and the state....

"But police or no police, courts and politicians to the contrary notwithstanding, the street carmen of this city are going to win."

Within weeks of the Boston Common demonstration, the State Board of Arbitration began to look into the strike and heard extensive testimony from the union.

The city council, which was under siege from the public for its silence, passed a resolution demanding the mayor take some action in the strike and scathingly "scored" the Elevated officials for their refusal to allow their employees to organize.

When the Board of Arbitration issued its report,

continued on page 28

In Milwaukee he found that operators were so exhausted they were forced to make arrangements with the conductors "to pull hard on the bell just before an intersection point is reached in order to make sure that the motormen will be awake and not run into danger for the passengers in the car."

Following the establishment of Division 457 in late 1911 (today the Milwaukee workers are represented by Local 998), the Milwaukee paper editorialized, "the organizing of the carmen was a political boost for the Socialist party and the street railway company was being made the victim of shrewd political tricksters."

McMorrow retorted: "The Amalgamated Association of Street and Electric Railway employees is a trade union, organized to improve the conditions of the street railway workers. It has no political affiliations, and under no circumstances can it be used to further the interests of any political party. 'Freedom Through Organization' is our slogan, and in freeing the street railway workers from the slavish conditions which surround them on unorganized systems, we do not propose to chain them to any political belief or party."

Words were inadequate to express the attitude toward the Amalgamated depicted on the cover of the 1912 M&C.

As the labor dispute grew, the state industrial commission, for the first time in Wisconsin history, came to investigate street railway conditions in the city.

Worker after worker testified about the inhuman work hours, the defective equipment, the lack of time off.

Although the reports of the commission's hearing moved the public to support the workers, the company would not budge.

By April 1912, 67 men had been discharged "for the good of the service" and detectives followed the workers to report to the company on their activities.

Five employees sought a meeting with the company president in an effort to open negotiations. They were promptly discharged.

The mayor attempted to mediate by proposing arbitration with the union. The company replied that arbitration would mean recognition and they would never recognize a union among their employees.

The strike began on April 29, 1912, during the evening rush hour. The result was the complete tie-up of the city. Within three weeks, however, the strike was

Boston, continued

the strikers achieved an important victory. The unanimous report clearly indicated that the employees of the Elevated had been discharged because of their membership in the union and for attempting to organize a union in violation of the Commonwealth's laws.

On July 29, Massachusetts Governor Foss and Mayor Fitzgerald of Boston jointly intervened in order to secure a strike settlement. Representatives of the union and the company, along with their attorneys, met in separate rooms.

Finally, due to the company's recalcitrance, the governor let them know that he meant business: "The men are right and you people have got to give way."

The company recanted and the strike was settled on the following basis:

"1. The company agrees it will not discriminate against members of the union and will meet with its employees for the discussion of grievances whether they come as individuals or as representatives of the union.

"2. Any committee to adjust differences with the company will have the right to a reasonable leave of absence for that purpose.

"3. The State Board of Conciliation and Arbitration will determine what men will be taken back by the company and their back pay and benefits.

"4. In the future, grievances or difficulties concerning wages or conditions of labor which cannot be adjusted between the company and the union will be referred to the State Board of Conciliation and Arbitration."

The strike was then called off and the Boston system has been organized ever since.

lost because the railway workers began returning to work.

While the union did not succeed in achieving recognition, it won important rights for the workers. The May 15 *Union Leader* reported the company gave the workers increases amounting to $50,000 when the strike ended.

The Amalgamated pledged the next achievement in that city would be a full-fledged active division of the Amalgamated—and so it was when Division 998 was chartered in 1933.

In August of 1913, another important local division was established—Local 627 in Cincinnati, Ohio.

When the workers at the Cincinnati Traction Company began organizing, they were paid 20 to 25 cents per hour with a 16-year progression to the top rate. Many runs took more than 18 hours to complete, but the motormen were only paid for 7.

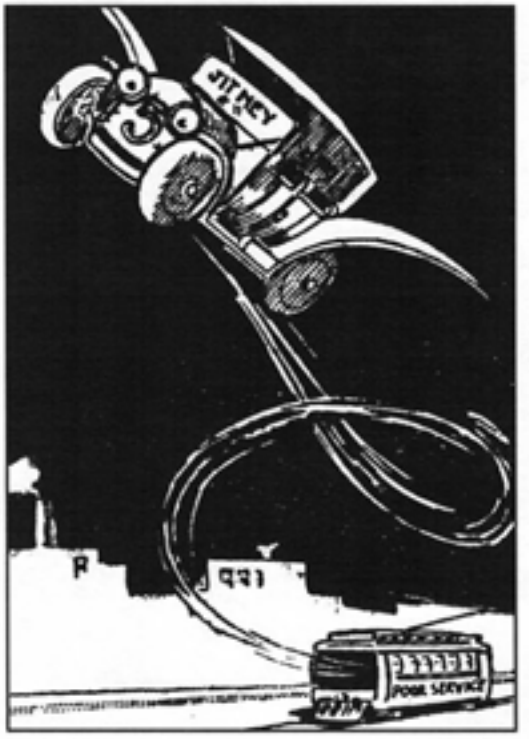
On May 10, the workers went on strike with International Secretary-Treasurer Rezin Orr leading the campaign. When the company finally succumbed to arbitration, the result was a 10-percent increase in wages with a maximum progression of seven years.

Two important arbitrations took place during this period.

In an arbitration hearing for the Chicago Street Railway workers in 1912, President Mahon successfully argued that the union had the right to examine the company's private books when the Chicago Street Railway asserted that it could not afford an increase in wages.

A 1913 arbitration award in Detroit gave the workers 32 cents an hour after 12 months of service. The union's case was eloquently presented by President Mahon.

When the award was issued, it reaffirmed the



1914 cartoonist's view of the jitney bus.

Members of Div. 99, Winnipeg, Manitoba, who were enlisted for overseas services in 1914.

Amalgamated's long-standing view that "the principle of arbitration, administered fearlessly and with the one motive of establishing justice as nearly as possible...has again demonstrated its effectiveness in elevating conditions for the street railway employees."

A Growing Union

By 1914, 22 years after its establishment, the Amalgamated was a powerful part of the labor movement. It had 207 local unions, 88 of which had written contracts with the employers.

The International employed 26 persons to look after its affairs.

At the Union's establishment in 1892, the maximum wage was 14 cents an hour; in 1914, it was as high as 45 cents an hour (Div. 381, Butte, Montana) and averaged between 25 to 30 cents per hour. Most miraculously, the efforts of the Union had reduced the 12- to 18-hour day to an 8- to 12-hour day.

A strike by the members of Divisions 241 and 308 in Chicago for higher wages in June 1915 brought the "City of Big Shoulders" to a standstill.

To bring pressure on the traction companies to settle, the city council passed an ordinance barring the importation of strikebreakers by providing that motormen must have 21 days' training and 3 years' service on the Chicago line to work during the strike.

By July 15, through mediation efforts by the mayor's office, the company and the union agreed to a 2-year contract. The practice of hiring men for single trips only during rush hour was abolished. All other areas of dispute were submitted to arbitration with the mayor chairing the arbitration panel. The workers returned to service on July 17.

By 1915 the U.S. entry into the Great War (World War I) was looming and Canadian members were already going off to Europe to fight.

At the 1915 convention in Rochester, New York, President Mahon noted the effects of the war: "When we closed our convention two years ago at Salt Lake City, we were full of enthusiasm and had great hopes and aspirations for the future that was before us at that time, but little did we dream of the European war coming on and the distressing industrial effects that would follow...."

At that convention Mahon also addressed a problem that would plague the Amalgamated throughout its history—uncontrolled operation of the jitney bus. After making a close study of the issues, he recommended that the organization should lobby for local ordinances to regulate jitney operators:

"I would recommend that the secretary of this Board be instructed and outline ordinances for the use of our Local Divisions that would require city authorities to grant franchises and specify the rates of fare, establish the routes to be operated upon and bring these jitney buses under police control and regulation, the same as any other conveyance that is now operated, like streetcars, for hauling of the public."

Mahon also recommended that the jitneys be required to be bonded and that operators be uniformed and badged.

Establishing Local Divisions in DC & NYC

In 1916, a battle fought and won over a 1-week period brought about recognition of the union for transit workers in Washington, D.C.

International Secretary-Treasurer Rezin Orr was dispatched to the capital city to organize the workers.

On March 1, Orr sent a committee into each of the four companies to submit an agreement. Those men were summarily discharged and the companies began to discharge other known members of Local 689.

Orr attempted to meet with the companies but they refused, and on March 5, the workers went on strike.

The strike caused a massive tie-up in the seat of government, and after just two days, the companies agreed to recognize the union and take matters in dispute to employee committees at each company and, failing agreement, to submit the disputes to arbitration.

The workers ultimately secured a 2- to 4 1/2-cent increase and Division 689 was well established.

The outcome of organizing in New York was not as successful. In August 1916, 10,000 workers in New York City entered the Amalgamated fold.

This is how International President W.D. Mahon appeared to a cartoonist when he was delivering his closing argument to the Board of Arbitrators in the Chicago strike of 1912.

The Amalgamated had been trying to organize the workers at the five companies in New York for many years, but the companies had an elaborate spy system and the workers were afraid to join a union.

When confronted by increased organizing activity, the five surface line companies, including the largest, the Interborough Rapid Transit Company (IRT), signed agreements with the Amalgamated.

But the IRT soon broke the agreement and compelled each of its employees to sign 2-year agreements under wage and hour conditions imposed by the company. Those who refused were discharged.

The company's actions precipitated a strike on the elevated, subway and surface lines in New York, the likes of which had never been seen.

The Frame-up of Tom Mooney

Top picture shows Tom Mooney in 1916, when he was charged with the bombing. The bottom picture shows Mooney in San Quentin prison, two decades later.

During 1916 and into 1917, the Amalgamated led the battle to organize the workers of United Railways in San Francisco. Perhaps the hardest and most outspoken worker on the campaign was AFL organizer, Tom Mooney, a young man who fought tirelessly for workers' rights, including those of the motormen and conductors in San Francisco.

The organizing occurred during a period of strong isolationist tendencies in the U.S. toward entering the "Great War." Many Americans thought that the war being fought in Europe was not being fought for any cause other than larger profits for the already monopolistic American corporations. To engender public support, advocates of a large army and navy launched a "preparedness movement."

The campaign was designed around a series of parades to soften Americans' opinion against entry into the war under the guise of increasing the size of the army and navy just in case—just to be prepared.

Huge "preparedness day" parades were held in New York, Chicago and San Francisco. The parades slowly began to foment a backlash against the labor movement with strikes being declared unpatriotic.

As the result of one such preparedness day parade in San Francisco on July 22, 1916, one of the worst labor frame-ups in all of American history was carried out. A bomb was thrown at the parade, killing 9 and wounding 40. Without putting it into words, the employers who had supported the parade, including United Railroads, managed to make the bombing a symbol of "labor violence."

On the day following the parade, Tom Mooney and his wife Rena, and others, were charged with the preparedness day bombing.

They were convenient suspects. Mooney, who had just led the bitter strike of the San Francisco streetcar workers, had the bombing fastened upon him by the United Railways-oriented district attorney, Charles M. Fickert.

Based upon totally perjured testimony, Mooney was convicted and sentenced to death. The verdict

was quickly appealed to the California Supreme Court, which upheld the conviction and the death sentence.

Clarence Darrow

The delegates at the Amalgamated's 1917 convention passed a resolution to petition the President of the United States to use his best efforts to secure a stay of execution and urged the retrial of Mooney.

Mooney's attorney, W. Bourke Cochran of New York—supported by a defense committee including the well-known advocate, Clarence Darrow—traveled the country without compensation trying to convince the public of Mooney's innocence. In Cochran's talks, he declared that "there was not a scintilla of evidence linking Mooney with such a conspiracy or the bomb explosion." He noted that the traction interests in San Francisco had openly announced their intention of "getting Mooney" because of his activities in attempting to organize the streetcar employees. Cochran argued that "If [Mooney] is hanged, the shadow cast by his body will darken the sky over the country. Were the laws made an instrument by which one class can subjugate another, the nation which countenances it is doomed to destruction."

The trial had scarcely ended when key prosecution witnesses confessed to perjury and it was proven that others had been paid for their testimony. A star witness in the Mooney trial was shown to have been a perjurer and the one who attempted to make another prospective witness testify falsely. Another key witness came forward several years later and admitted to committing perjury. It was also established that the chairman of the jury which convicted Mooney was working hand in glove with the district attorney.

The labor movement again appealed to President Wilson to look into the Mooney case. A U.S. government investigation soon proved conclusively that Mooney had been framed due to his activities with the labor unions.

A government commission headed by later-Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter concluded:

"In the spring of 1916, Mooney and his wife were the leaders of a bitter and unsuccessful fight to organize the carmen of United Railways in San Francisco. The utility sought 'to get' Mooney. Their activities against him were directed by Martin Swanson, private detective. It was Swanson who

Continued on page 32

On two separate occasions, Amalgamated officials led by International Secretary-Treasurer Orr, met with U.S. President Woodrow Wilson to convince him to intervene on their behalf in the New York strike. Wilson refused.

The strike continued into 1917. By summer, however, the companies enticed the workers to return by granting a substantial wage increase.

Division 726 was established at that time, and the Amalgamated would come to represent other workers in New York City, where today we also have Locals 1056, 1179 and 1181.

Commons Attacked in Memphis

Organizing in the South was a particularly difficult task. In 1916, newly-elected International Vice President Ben Commons was dispatched to Memphis, Tennessee, to organize a union. He barely arrived in town when he realized he was being trailed by company spies and company-hired private detectives.

On June 27, Commons was followed into a restaurant where company thugs attempted to beat him up. It seems surprising to us today, but the restaurant proprietor actually had Commons arrested and he was subsequently informed by the judge that they "would get him if he did not leave town."

Commons continued his organizing, but the next day, on leaving his hotel, was beaten with a blackjack by officers and others in the employ of the Memphis Street Railway Company.

Commons would not be intimidated and continued his efforts to organize Division 713.

But the company refused to deal with the committee representing the division and began discharging the men as soon as it learned that they had become members of the union.

Later, the company's campaign against the union was broadened to include assaults against the members. On the night of July 17 one of the members was killed—shot twice in the back.

Ben Commons

A strike was called on Saturday, July 22, at 2 p.m., and by 5 p.m. all cars had stopped.

The killing and beating of the members had backfired, and the sympathy of the public was aroused. A settlement was reached at 3 p.m. the next day.

The price paid for organizing was high, not only for those who were beaten and killed, but also for men like Ben Commons.

The GEB minutes from 1917

Led by its marching band, members of Local 587 in Seattle parade down Fourth Avenue past the courthouse during a 1917 organizational strike.

report that Commons went on courageously to organize other cities in the South, but later had to discontinue his work:

"Brother Commons reported his arm was in very bad shape, it having been previously injured, and it was thought at that time, it would have to be amputated." Commons returned home to New Orleans to recuperate only after being advised to do so by the GEB.

Mahon requested sick benefits for Commons, who eventually left organizing work and the International due to ill health.

The War Years

By 1917, the Amalgamated had over 8,000 members throughout the United States and Canada called to arms and over 3,000 already at the front. One of the first victims of the war was a member from Division 241 in Chicago.

At the Fifteenth Convention in Providence, Rhode Island, in 1917, the delegates discussed how to treat returning soldier members after an eloquent speech by President Mahon on the Union's patriotic spirit:

"We are not made up of flashy patriotism; our patriotism won't wash off; it will stand the test of the acid. This organization at the present time shows that out of 300 local organizations, over 3,000 members from 84 of these have already shouldered their guns and gone to the front. That expresses where we stand."

Mooney, continued

engineered the investigation which resulted in Mooney's prosecution."

Organized labor around the country and around the world sprang to Mooney's defense. The Amalgamated and other unions raised money and continued to lobby President Wilson for Mooney's release.

Finally, Wilson intervened and convinced the governor of California to commute Mooney's sentence to life imprisonment.

Mooney, then 35 years old, spent the following 22 years in jail for a crime he never committed. During all this time, the unions continued to fight for him. On January 7, 1939, he was finally freed by New Deal California Governor Olsen.

The story of Tom Mooney illustrates more graphically than most the high price organizers paid for going up against the traction interests in the early part of this century.

Division 518 Executive Board Member and brother of Tom, John B. Mooney, standing at left, was a member of the Amalgamated's "Mooney Petition Committee" which also included, standing to his right: William Quinlan, President, Div. 241 in Chicago, G.H. Nelson, President, Div. 694 in San Antonio, and seated from left: J.H. Cookman, Business Agent, Div. 689 in Washington, D.C., and J.E. Green, Div. 382 in Salt Lake City.

The delegates reaffirmed a decision made in 1915 that the enlisted men would continue to accrue seniority and be relieved from dues and per capita payments while at war so long as they paid the back per capita upon their return.

On October 21, 1917, shortly after the Providence convention, came the sudden and untimely death of International Secretary-Treasurer Orr, a man who had dedicated his entire career to the Union. At a special meeting of the GEB, L. D. Bland was appointed international secretary-treasurer. Bland had previously served as editor of the *Union Leader*.

By the end of 1917, the northwest United States had been totally organized with locals in Seattle, Tacoma, Spokane, Aberdeen and Hoquiam in Washington and Portland, Oregon.

In San Francisco, the Amalgamated conducted a protracted campaign to organize the workers at United Railroads—a notoriously anti-union employer.

In order to assist in a strike that was called on August 11, the GEB asked for contributions from the membership.

The Amalgamated spent almost $11,000 assisting the strike. After the bitter dispute could not be resolved, it was called off on November 22.

Our own William Fitzgerald and AFL organizer Tom Mooney led the organizing campaign. Shortly after the lost campaign, Mooney became the victim of one of the greatest frame-ups in labor history.

The year 1917 was also difficult for the Union. The continuing strike by 11,000 members in New York had strained its resources. For the first time since it was established, the Amalgamated found there were so many sanctioned strikes it could no longer pay the weekly strike benefits required under the Constitution.

The International was forced to get a $100,000 loan to assist it until it made an appeal to the locals. Newly established local divisions were advised that strike benefits would not be available.

As a result, Mahon recommended a laws change which was adopted, giving the GEB power to suspend strike benefits when it felt it was necessary—a provision that remains in the Constitution today.

The War Labor Board

By March, 1918, the war was reaching its peak and the General Executive Board adopted a wartime policy to avoid strikes if at all possible:

> "We hold it incumbent with all factors in industry, both employers and employees, to bear their share of the burdens of war with the same devotion and determination that is shown by the men who are bearing the battle's brunt, and who stand ready to give the full measure of sacrifice in order that the principles we hold more sacred than life itself may be perpetuated.
>
> "As members of the Amalgamated...and workers in an occupation that millions of our fellow workers depend upon for transportation to and from the various industrial locations where war necessaries are being produced, it becomes our duty to carefully guard our actions, and to exhaust all the resources of our Association to bring about adjustment of differences with employing companies without cessation of work."

By June 1918, the National War Labor Board had been established in the United States. The Board, headed by William Taft, would be used to adjust contracts. By governmental decree, there were to be no strikes or lockouts for the duration of the war.

Above, Rezin Orr just prior to his death in 1917. At left, the laying of the cornerstone of a school named after him in Chicago in 1918.

In that year alone, the War Labor Board rendered decisions affecting 23 Amalgamated local unions.

The cases were argued by President Mahon and the general counsel of the Amalgamated, James H. Vahey, from Boston, Massachusetts.

It was the War Labor Board that set the initial terms and conditions for the newly organized employees of the New Jersey Public Service Corporation (Divisions 819, Newark; 820, West Hoboken; 821, Jersey City; 822, Paterson; 824, New Brunswick; and 825, Edgewater). From their inception, the New Jersey divisions banded together to form a Joint Conference Board. Today, these local unions comprise the New Jersey State Council and the workers they represent are employed by New Jersey Transit.

The New Jersey award provided a wage scale from 41 to 45 cents per hour.

Chicago Mayor William Hale Thompson is seen in the picture at the left, holding a copper box containing various records which he placed in the cornerstone of Chicago's Division 241 headquarters. When it was completed in 1918, the building was said to be the largest labor temple of its kind in the world.

The Influenza Epidemic

The war was not the only plague taking a toll on Amalgamated members. By November 1918, hundreds of members had fallen victim to the Spanish influenza epidemic in the U.S. and Canada.

Just in the month of November 1918, by the sixth day, over $50,000 in claims had been filed with the International Union. As a result, the GEB took action to assess each member $1.00 so the Amalgamated could pay the claims.

By the end of World War I, the Amalgamated had weathered some hard times but was thriving and well-prepared to enter the era of postwar reconstruction.

"What has been accomplished...both in dignity and standing, in strength and in wages, in happiness in the home, home life and treatment, only those in the future, who are further removed than we are from the struggle, will write the history and the growth and the development."

Samuel Gompers, 1921 ATU Convention, Atlanta, Georgia

CHAPTER THREE *1919-1931*

Fighting for Advancement

This is one of the first motorized buses which traveled New York State in 1921.

The post-war era produced inflationary conditions generally unfavorable to transit labor. These conditions were soon aggravated by the onset of the Great Depression, which hit the transit industry even prior to the great stock market crash of 1929.

While postwar inflation was cutting buying power, employers in the industry made opportunistic use of the influx of labor caused by soldiers returning to the job market to force reductions in the wage rates. The Amalgamated reacted by seeking to reduce the workweek and the workday without cutting pay.

In 1921, in city after city the Amalgamated was already struggling with management attempts to reduce wages. Despite these pressures, which continued for some years, the Union by 1931 had achieved important "firsts" at the bargaining table, including premium pay for one-man cars, vacation pay, sick pay, life insurance and pensions.

Labor's progress in the pre-depression period was also delayed by management's court injunctions (usually obtained without notice) to thwart organizing attempts and strikes.

In 1924, the Amalgamated mourned the loss of the great leader of the AFL, Samuel Gompers, who died at 74 years of age. His last words were said to be "God bless our American institutions. May they grow better day by day." The reins of power passed to William Green.

The Six-Day Workweek

Prompted by Local 113 in Toronto, the province of Ontario was the first in Canada to pass a 6-day workweek law in 1912.

Not surprisingly, President Mahon's own state of Michigan was, in 1919, the first in the U.S. to enact a 6-day workweek law for employees of street railway systems. It was estimated that the law would increase employment on street railways by 15 percent; a figure which inspired vigorous management opposition to its passage.

An employee of the Grand Rapids Railway, claiming the law interfered with his "pleasure to work seven consecutive days" challenged it in the Michigan courts. Ultimately, the state supreme court upheld the law. But the lengthy appeals process produced lower court injunctions stalling the law's enforcement for many years. Detroit did not benefit from the law until 1930.

The 6-day workweek significantly lowered the number of streetcar accidents. In Michigan alone, 80 percent of the reported accidents determined to be the fault of the motormen or conductors were traced to individuals who were working in violation of the 6-day law.

The number of locals with a 6-day week increased to 67 by April 1931. Other locals, such as 618 in Providence, Rhode Island, and 85 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, bargained for a shorter workweek to alleviate job losses due to the introduction of the one-man car.

The Eight-Hour Day

"When the war was over and the readjustment period set in, we again took up the question of the 8-hour workday," Mahon reported to the 1919 convention in Chicago. Many manufacturing companies had already changed to the 8-hour day having seen the benefit in increased production.

By 1920, 27 states and many cities had passed 8-hour laws for government employees. Street railway employers found it disadvantageous to conform to that standard and were among the last holdouts. During the 1920s the Amalgamated's battle cry became: "Eight hours for

Los Angeles Division strikes for shorter hours in 1921.

work—eight hours for education and recreation—and eight hours for rest and sleep."

Once again, Canada won the first victory in 1919. Division 279 in Ottawa petitioned the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada to help pass legislation prohibiting companies from working their employees "more than eight out of the 24 consecutive hours."

That same year, Division 113 in Toronto successfully struck for 12 days to establish an 8-hour day and increased wages. By the time of the 1919 convention, the locals in Chicago, Boston and nine other cities had achieved 8-hour days.

Reports of tragic accidents continued to fuel the battle for restricted hours in other cities. In one fatal incident, a Chicago bus bound for Minneapolis crashed and killed the driver and four others when the driver fell asleep at the wheel after having driven nearly 18 hours.

Fighting the One-Man Car

Improved technology and the constant drive for increased profits fueled the industry's push for one-man streetcars. Companies using the one-man cars claimed a nearly 50 percent reduction in costs. The Amalgamated vigorously fought this development due to the attendant loss of employment and the widely held belief that such one-man cars could not be safely operated.

By April 1919, 89 companies in the U.S. and Canada had already begun operating one-man cars. Nearly half of these companies paid a differential rate to the single operator.

At the 1919 convention President Mahon expressed his views to the delegates: "[T]he one-man car is here, and in my opinion, here to stay and instead of opposing something that we cannot hope to prevent, it seems to me the wisest course for us to pursue would be to recognize the situation and then outline our plans to meet and deal with the situation as it actually is...."

Despite a heated debate between Mahon and the delegates, the convention went on record as "opposed to the extension of the one-man car." Even the delegates

Spectators and railway officials and crew gather at the crash site of a one-man streetcar in Calgary in 1919.

Mass demonstration of unionists during the Winnipeg General Strike.

The Winnipeg General Strike

In the spring of 1919, several Winnipeg employers refused to recognize the Metal Trades Council as bargaining agent for all metal shop employees, provoking a strike by these workers on May 2. Thereafter, the Metal Trades Council appealed to the Winnipeg Trades and Labour Council which held a vote on the question of a general strike in support of its affiliates. The vote strongly supported the strike action, and on May 15, 1919, over 30,000 Winnipeg workers left their jobs.

The Metal Trades shops closed, railway shops closed and construction came to a halt. The strike was supported by the Amalgamated members of Division 99 who operated the Winnipeg streetcars.

Transportation came to a halt. The strike quickly spread from industry to industry.

Reaction to the strike by the government and employers was immediate and vicious. A "Citizens' Committee" made up of 5,000 volunteers, including prominent business and professional leaders, complete with its own armed "home guard," determined to maintain law and order in Winnipeg.

The city council demanded that police and firemen return to work or be fired. Each such employee was ordered to sign a pledge that he would not support or favor the sympathy strike. The federal government ordered the postal workers back to work, demanding that they sign a pledge never to go on strike.

Confronted with these strikebreaking moves, the Winnipeg Council set up a central strike committee. The strike committee was able to mobilize its resources, as did trade unionists across Canada.

In British Columbia, 60,000 workers walked out, including those in shipyards, dock loading areas and streetcar operations. Local Division 101 in Vancouver joined the strike on June 3 in sympathy with the cause of the Winnipeg general strike.

In Alberta, unionists similarly walked out in support, including the members of Division 569 in Edmonton. Members of Division 615 in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, joined the strike on May 30.

In Winnipeg, strikers received unexpected support from Canadian soldiers returning from World War I. The Citizens' Committee had requested the soldiers to oppose the strikers. Instead, 10,000 ex-servicemen demonstrated before the provincial legislature demanding an immediate settlement of the strike, withdrawal of the ultimatum to the police and firemen, and enactment of legislation for collective bargaining.

In the face of the strikers' solidarity, all levels of government resorted to repression. On June 6, the Parliament amended the Immigration Act to extend to British subjects provisions permitting deportation by executive order without trial.

That same day, the mayor of Winnipeg banned all parades and the congregation of people and crowds. On June 9, the police commission fired the entire police force and hired special constables to replace them. On June 17, the Royal Northwest Mounted Police raided the homes of unionists and the labor temples and arrested ten strike leaders, including George Armstrong, a streetcar motorman and union member.

On June 21, 1919, with the main strike leaders in jail, after reading the Riot Act to demonstrators, 50 mounted men rode down Main Street, clubs swinging, and charged the crowd with guns drawn. Two deaths and 100 arrests resulted when 120 bullets were fired into a crowd of men, women and children.

Against these immense odds, the strikers reluctantly went back to work. The strike ended in defeat for the main demands of the workers. Amalgamated members in Winnipeg returned to work on June 28 when most of the trades returned to employment.

In agreeing to strike in sympathy, the local division in Winnipeg and other divisions across Canada had neither sought nor obtained approval from the International Union for their actions. In later correspondence between International President Mahon and the president of Division 99 in Winnipeg, Mahon questioned the loyalty of the Winnipeg division. In a response, the president of the division assured Mahon that the only reason the local division had participated in the strike was to support the Metal Trades Unions. He also asked Mahon to consider sending financial support to the local division to replenish their treasury after the general strike.

The International Union agreed to send $4,000 to assist the Winnipeg local.

Thereafter, despite the local division president's assurances, a majority of the members abandoned the Amalgamated and supported the One Big Union (OBU)—an all-Canadian union with the mission of

continued on page 40

recognized that Mahon was correct in that the one-man cars could not be stopped. They passed a resolution "that the policy of the Organization be to remain neutral and leave the question up to the local organizations to deal with."

The public did not accept the advance to the one-man car without protest. Accident reports involving one-man cars came in from all over the country. In 1922, 26 citizens were struck and five killed in Dayton, Ohio. Buffalo, New York, in 1924, reported that 12 deaths had been caused by the one-man car. The headline of the September 1924 issue of *Motorman and Conductor* read, "One-Man Car Makes Western 'Killer' Look Like a Piker."

Toledo, Ohio; Oakland and Sacramento, California; and Shreveport, Louisiana, passed ordinances against one-man cars. In 1925, Tennessee enacted a law prohibiting their use.

But the advance to the single operator could not be halted. In 1922, the Sacramento ordinance was repealed; other reverses followed. In 1930, the federal appeals court in New Orleans set aside the Shreveport ordinance. In 1928, Kansas City reported that "the last line with two men to a car was changed on July 15." Two-worker operations were becoming obsolete.

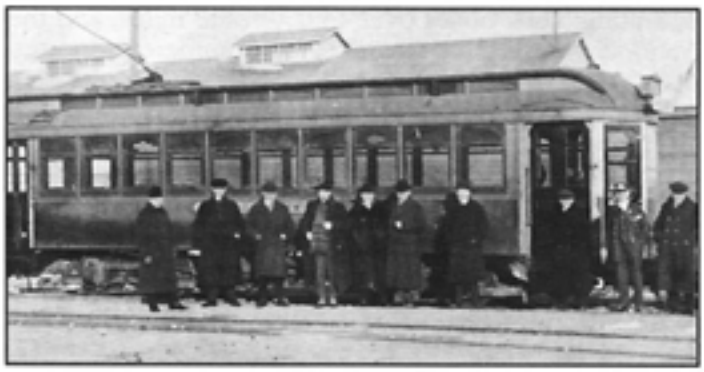
The Union did prevail, however, in establishing a differential wage rate for the new, more responsible position. As early as 1920, Mahon reported that Division 589 in Boston had obtained a 15-cent per hour differential for the one-man operator. By 1923, Detroit operators were receiving a 5-cent differential.

While the hoopla about one-man streetcars preoccupied the membership, the motorized bus was quietly taking its place in the industry.

It was the opinion of a special committee in St. Louis, contrary to the available evidence, that "Buses never will supplant street cars for mass transportation...." Other analysts argued that the new bus could be used for feeder service to electric railways but was simply not economical, nor did it provide adequate speed or capacity. These opinions proved erroneous on both counts.

In 1921, the 300 delegates at the Atlanta convention amended the Constitution to allow employees who drove buses operated in connection with street and electric railway systems to join the Union.

Widespread introduction of the motor bus soon led



First one-man car operated in Regina, Saskatchewan, by Division 588 members.

Winnipeg, continued

seeking members from the already established international unions. Its bold program captured the imagination of many Canadian unionists who left their established unions to join the OBU.

For two decades, the OBU grew and prospered in Western Canada, even penetrating into some industrial areas in Eastern Canada. A small group of the Winnipeg transit workers decided to remain in the Amalgamated and would, over the years, create strife in the unit.

It would be 38 years before the Winnipeg transit employees would rejoin the Amalgamated in 1957 and become members of Local 1505.

to a jurisdictional dispute between the Amalgamated and the Brotherhood of Teamsters over which organization should have jurisdiction of bus operators employed by streetcar companies. At the 1925 convention in Montreal, a committee was formed to study the issue. After reviewing its report, the delegates adopted "the position...that this is a line of transportation work over which [the Amalgamated] ha[s] always held jurisdiction, and it is their right now to follow their work in this change as they have done in the changes that have taken place in the past."

The delegates instructed President Mahon "to refuse to submit the question to arbitration, and to specifically say to the Federation of Labor...that the AASEREA, in their own way and through their own organization, [will] decide their jurisdiction rights in the world of labor."

The new president of the AFL, William Green, called a conference to discuss the matter within a month of the closing of the Montreal convention. As a result, an agreement was reached between the Amalgamated and the Teamsters that buses "operated by or in connection with any street railway" belonged to the Amalgamated, but those operated "by independent owners or companies not connected with any street railway company" would be under Teamster jurisdiction.

By early 1926, the American Electric Railway Association reported that 287 street railway companies were operating 5,600 buses over 13,000 route miles, and the National Automobile Chamber of Commerce reported that 70,000 motor buses were in operation in the U.S. covering 232,340 miles of route.

Interstate operations, especially in New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, were on the rise, and the number of motor buses had climbed to nearly 80,000 by 1927.

In 1928, the Union's official publication expanded its name, becoming *The Motorman, Conductor and Motor Coach Operator.*

The first transcontinental link up of motor bus operations was announced in 1928. Yelloway Pioneer System, Inc., linked 150 transportation lines to produce a service which would "traverse 70,000 miles of highway" and sell tickets for "any point between New York and San Francisco."

That same year, the Interstate Commerce Commission urged the U.S. Congress to bring interstate bus operations under ICC regulation similar to the controls that it was already applying to the railroads.

Beating Back the Unions

By 1919, wages for many Amalgamated members topped 50 cents per hour and reached as high as 60 cents per hour in some cities, but the workers earning these wages faced cost-of-living increases of 100 percent due to inflation.

The Amalgamated continued to combat the adverse affect of inflation at the collective bargaining table. Employers resisted these efforts and sought to curb the rising influence of labor by lobbying for legislative changes and using the courts as a weapon. Employers promoted adoption of state and federal anti-strike laws as well as laws outlawing closed shops.

A bill was introduced in the Massachusetts legislature to outlaw strikes for streetcar employees. Entitled "An act to secure continuity of service on street railways under public control," the measure forced unions to submit all disputes to a board appointed by the governor consisting solely of members from the Public Service Commission, whose decision would be final and binding.

First Amalgamated M&C to include motor coach operator in its title.

Mahon appeared before the legislative committee to express the Union's opposition to the bill. He argued that only a more stabilized dollar rather than legislation imposing involuntary arbitration could contribute to labor peace.

So many local unions were appealing to the General Executive Board for financial assistance in their legislative work that the Board passed a resolution encouraging local unions to set up state legislative conference boards with assessments of 10 or 15 cents per member.

The labor movement in Ohio was dealt a blow by a 1925 decision of the Cuyahoga Court of Appeals. The court ruled that Local 268's contract provision for a closed shop on the transit system in Cleveland was illegal. The court declared the entire agreement null and void.

In reaction to the Ohio Supreme Court's decision not to review the lower court decision, the Ohio Federation of Labor declared the ruling a "flagrant violation of public policy." However, later efforts to pass Ohio legislation validating the closed shop failed.

Employers increasingly made application for injunctions to forestall legitimate union organizing and strike activities and found that the courts consistently granted these requests, usually made without notice to the union.

Attempts to organize the workers in Indianapolis in 1926 were frustrated by an injunction obtained by the company with the help of the courts.

International Vice Presidents John Parker and Robert Armstrong had been sent to Indianapolis to assist the five locally hired organizers. The workers sought employer recognition of their union, a wage increase above their 42 cents an hour, as well as relief from their 10-hour, 7-day workweek, and reinstatement for those union members who had been fired for their organizing activities.

An injunction was issued shortly after the organizers arrived prohibiting them from advising union members to strike, counseling strikers, and interfering with the operation of the company.

International Vice Presidents Armstrong (who would later be the first executive vice president of the Amalgamated) and Parker were found guilty of violating the injunction. Although the Union appealed their convictions to the highest levels, even to the President of the United States, they eventually served 90 days in jail for their "crimes." The Union looked after them to the best of its ability during their imprisonment, "furnishing them with good food, cigars and clothing." Constantly harassed, these organizers in Indianapolis were arrested some 53 times, mostly on vagrancy charges. The *Union Leader* claimed the city should be named "Injunctionapolis."

These tactics indeed thwarted the workers' efforts. By January 1928 it was reported that only a 3-cent per hour increase was gained and the company refused to reinstate any of the strikers.

No use of injunctions was more flagrant than that of the Interborough Rapid Transit Company (IRT) in New York City which the Amalgamated again attempted to organize in 1926. Employees hired by IRT were forced to sign an agreement to join only the company union, a "yellow-dog contract."

Amalgamated International Vice Presidents John M. Parker, and Robert B. Armstrong, were jailed during an organizing drive in Indianapolis in 1926.

When the Amalgamated sent in organizers, the company was granted an injunction to prohibit any organizing from taking place. The AFL, because of its compelling interest in the legal questions involved, quickly joined in the Amalgamated's efforts to fight the injunction in the courts.

The AFL was instrumental in retaining New York Senator Robert F. Wagner and Representative Nathan D. Perlman to represent the Amalgamated in its appeal.

Even Mayor "Jimmy" Walker was involved. In response to the company's insistence that management would never recognize the Union, he was quoted as saying, "If you keep on that line long enough, you'll have the mayor and 16,000 policemen joining the Amalgamated."

The issue was finally resolved for the Union in early 1928 by a New York judge who was convinced by the Amalgamated's argument that employees should be permitted to join a bona fide trade union if they wished and that the company-dictated contract was unfair and should not be binding.

The injunction set aside in the New York case was but one of a long line of unfair injunctions which spurred labor demands for a federal "anti-injunction" law. Such a measure was introduced in Congress in 1928, but little support was generated for its passage in the face of strong management resistance.

The State of New York, however, under the leadership of then-Governor Franklin D. Roosevelt, pioneered anti-injunction legislation which had the effect of curbing the use of such improper judicial restraints in New York City. The bill Roosevelt signed into law provided that no injunction could be issued without advance notice to the parties and a hearing held in court.

The New York experience was very costly and caused the Union to take another look at its own fiscal situation.

By October 1930, there were 11,827 members on strike, 9,000 in Brooklyn alone. At a special board meeting that month, the General Executive Board developed a policy that no strike would be approved until the local union had exhausted all efforts to mediate and/or arbitrate the dispute with the employer.

This 1922 cartoon eloquently expresses a timeless sentiment felt by union workers throughout this century.

The problem of hiring scabs to replace striking union members is depicted in this 1923 cartoon.

Losses and Gains

The *Union Leader* reported in January 1921 that "without question the big issue with which the Amalgamated Association will have to grapple during the coming year will be the attempt of traction companies to reduce prevailing wage rates."

Indeed, the struggle was on. In Cleveland and Detroit, the companies cut wages for all non-union employees who were not protected by a contract. But contract protections did not stand in the way of the United Traction Co., which in January 1921 precipitously cut the wages of its employees in Albany and Troy, New York, by 33 percent. The company then locked out employees who protested the cut, ignoring the contract's arbitration procedure.

Fearing that if United Traction won out, other companies would impose similar reductions, other New York locals began sending relief funds to the members in Albany and Troy. Each of the 500 members in Schenectady contributed $5 a week to the cause. In Utica, Syracuse, Rochester, and Buffalo, each member donated $1 per week.

The delegates at the 1921 Convention in Atlanta, Georgia, passed a resolution assessing each member 50 cents to help their brothers and sisters in Albany and Troy.

Unfortunately, the situation was not favorably resolved. It ended November 22, 1921, with no wage adjustment and the installation of one-man cars. Arrangements were made for affected employees to return to work, but in general the strike had failed.

Of the eight strikes in progress during the latter part of 1921, six involved wage reductions, affecting the members represented by Local 580 (Syracuse, New York), Local 66[illegible] (now 1182, St. John, New Brunswick), Local 964 (now 1385, Dayton, Ohio), and Locals 891 and 910 (now 1177 and 1220, Norfolk and Richmond, Virginia).

The wage reduction issue was also the subject of a multitude of arbitrations during this period. Over all, Amalgamated members suffered from 95 wage reductions which took place during the last six months of 192[illegible] alone.

Outdated fare systems received much of the blame for managements' zeal in reducing wages. The public continued to pay a flat 5-cent fare, which had been handed down from the mule-car days. Rather than increase fares, the companies attempted to balance their budgets by slashing wages.

During 1922, over 130 locals reported wage reductions. Local 241 members in Chicago suspended service for five days in August when the company insisted on an 18 3/4-percent wage reduction and expansion of the workday from 8 to 9 hours. The union had offered to accept a 10-percent wage reduction, but would not consider expanding the workday that the workers had struggled so hard to achieve. The union's offer of arbitration was rejected.

Sister Chicago Division 308 was in contract negotiations at the same time, and although the members had not been asked to accept wage cuts or to extend hours, they saw the writing on the wall. They voted to support their fellow members and entered into a sympathy strike. The company finally accepted the union's wage proposal and dropped its demands for a longer workday.

By far the most notorious episode of the period involved company tactics to retard the advancement of streetcar employees in Buffalo, New York.

In 1920, the Buffalo transit system brought in a new manager to mount a campaign against the union. Thomas Mitten was infamous for having introduced his "Mitten Plan of Employment" at a previous property—a plan which incorporated

Mahon, Bland and other Amalgamated officers during a strike in Chicago in 1922.

a company shop committee to represent the employees and undercut the union with its members.

In Buffalo, his anti-union plan was promptly set into motion. His initial tactic was to fire employees for minor, often trumped-up infractions and then to offer them their jobs back in return for commitments to drop out of the union and join the "Co-operative Sharing Plan" he had established. He also reduced wages by 5 cents per hour when the union's contract expired in June 1920 and refused to negotiate or arbitrate a renewal agreement.

In August 1921, another 5-cent per hour wage cut was imposed. The union pleaded for a peaceful restoration of the contract, but this was not to be. A further 2.5-cent reduction was scheduled for July 1922.

The employees refused to accept the cut. Mitten management replied they would have no further dealings with the union and locked out the union members. Strikebreakers from Philadelphia, known as "vacationists," were brought in.

At the fall 1922 General Executive Board meeting, International Vice President William Fitzgerald reported that "[t]he Company is running about 200 cars and the people are practically unanimous in refusing to ride them."

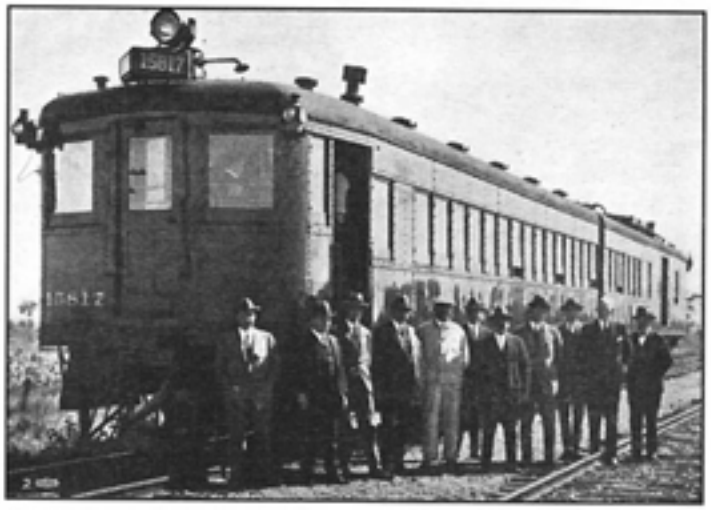
At the core of this Buffalo strike was not only wage restoration, but the very right to union representation. Members throughout the Amalgamated felt such solidarity with the members in Buffalo that an appeal sent by President Mahon for Christmas relief in 1923 raised nearly $35,000. The battle was to continue until 1928, when Mitten management and the Amalgamated reached an agreement to allow secret ballot representation elections.

"Riot Guns—Tear Bombs—for Pittsburgh" was the headline of the *Union Leader* on May 17, 1924. Its front page report was on Local 85's strike which began on May 9, affecting some 3,200 members. The major issue was wage rates, with the union asking for a restoration of the wages the members had lost in 1921.

Mayor William Magee called a special meeting of the city council to ask that an ordinance be passed authorizing the purchase of tear bombs, riot guns, gas grenades and tear tanks to protect the city's citizens and their property.

After a 3-day strike, a compromise was reached continuing the current wage rate but providing for the company to pay 50 percent of uniform costs and otherwise to improve working conditions.

The fight against wage reductions seemed to have ended by the time the Oakland, California, convention met in September 1923. President Mahon reported that during the first half of 1923 only four divisions had reported wage reductions,



Transit technology advanced with systems featuring new oil electric articulated cars such as this one operating between Ottawa and Montreal in 1926.

This 1926 cartoon illustrates union attitudes towards schemes such as the "Mitten Plan."

while 100 had increased their wage rates and 48 more had renewed their existing rates.

Mahon advised the leadership to extend the duration of their contracts for longer periods, "say of two years," believing that better contracts could be negotiated.

In Chicago, Division 241 adopted this approach, winning an increase in wages in the context of a two-year agreement. Through arbitration, the members gained back 5 cents of the 10 cents they had negotiated away during the 1922 strike. Though they had hoped to go back to a pre-strike rate of 80 cents per hour, they accepted the outcome of the arbitration knowing they were still the highest paid streetcar employees in the Union.

In areas aside from wage rates, the

Amalgamated won significant victories.

In 1919, Local 589 in Boston negotiated the first vacation pay provision in the Union—one week's paid vacation for members employed for one year or more.

In 1920, Local 192 in Oakland, California, negotiated an agreement which provided for union bulletin boards, payment for breaks of 45 minutes or less, 30 minutes pay for accident reports, instructors' pay premium and other special premiums, stools on all cars, mandated "sanitary arrangements," and a 5-cent premium for one-man operations.

In 1926, arbitration awards produced a 9-hour day and free uniforms for members of Local 685 in Brantford, Ontario, and longevity payments of 2 cents per hour for employees with 10 or more years of service for members of Local 846 in St. Catharines, Ontario.

In the states, Mahon personally intervened to avert a called strike by Divisions 241 and 308 in Chicago. With the assistance of the governor, an agreement was reached providing an 8-hour workday, with an 8-hour guarantee within a 14-hour spread, and time and one-half overtime pay.

In Newburgh, New York, the local union reached an agreement with the Public Service Corporation providing for sick pay of $15 per week and a death benefit of $1,000. This was the first report of such negotiated benefits by a local of the Amalgamated.

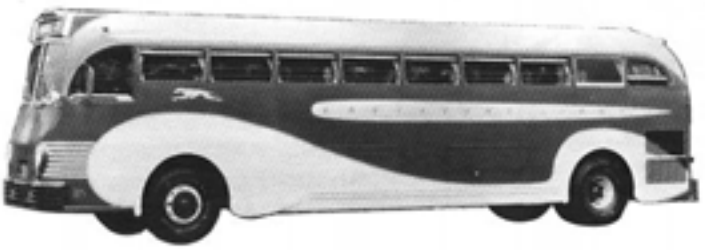
By the time President Mahon reported to the 21st Convention in Seattle, Washington, in 1929, 18 contracts of the Amalgamated contained provisions for paid vacations. But Mahon also reported that "the spectre that haunts the mind of the average worker today is the problem of what is to become of him when he reaches old age."

While the Union still paid the lump sum funeral, disability and old age benefit of $800 which had been established in 1911 by the St. Joseph convention in an era prior to government social security programs, the need for negotiated long range retirement benefits was becoming more evident to the membership.

From local union reports, Mahon found that only 8 to 10 companies were providing old age pensions. The Amalgamated must "continue its efforts to secure the adoption of the Old Age Pension by the employing companies wherever possible," Mahon urged the delegates.

This 1931 cartoon illustrates a depression-era problem that started in the early 20s in the transit industry.

"Over the road" interstate transit operations were underway with this 1930 Yellow Coach, and at right, this 1931 Greyhound.



Technology Advances

In what was publicized as "the first successful step in meeting motor competition," in 1925 the new "oil electric articulated car" made its appearance on the Canadian government owned railway between Ottawa and Montreal.

The run was made in "the fast time of two hours and fifty minutes," attaining a maximum speed of 65 miles per hour. The aim of the Canadian National Railway in developing the car was to curb the trend of motor highway traffic.

In August 1928, it was reported by the *Union Leader* that Motorman W.G. Waran of the British Columbia Electric Railway in Vancouver, B.C., a member of Local 134, invented "a headlight signalling device" which became the industry's first turn signal. According to the report, "Lights connected to the headlights, and also placed on the rear flash, tell the intention of the driver."

In 1930, the Chicago transit system began the first large scale introduction of the railless car or trolley bus. The new fleet was not used in replacement of streetcars,

however, but of motor bus operations.

There were only 173 trackless trolleys in all the U.S. in 1930, operated by some 12 electric railway systems. A decade later there would be over 2,800, with the real zenith being reached in 1950.

Helping Our Own

Considerable debate took place at the Oakland, California, convention in 1923 on the issue of raising the per capita tax by 10 cents to 75 cents in order to provide 50 cents rather than 40 cents to the benefit fund. (The funeral, disability and old age benefit remained at $800.)

In 1917, the per capita amount allocated for benefits was raised to 40 cents, but a review by the GEB showed that the age and length of membership was steadily increasing; 118 benefit claims had been paid out since the 1921 convention and funds were needed to continue the benefit.

The delegates, however, did not want to take an increase in per capita back to the membership at a time of rampant wage reductions.

Although the resolution was defeated, after a vote to reconsider, it was passed the next day because the delegates were not willing to see the benefit decreased or ended.

The number of locals providing sick benefits to their members increased each year. In 1922, Mahon reported that 113 divisions had established benefit plans and 42 more made donations to sick members. Nearly half the divisions provided something.

The matter was discussed at length at the March 1922 GEB meeting. The Board issued a recommendation that all divisions establish sick benefits.

Mahon investigated the costs and suggested that a plan be provided for 13 weeks after a 1-week waiting period. He found that such a plan could be established at a cost of 20 cents per member per month for every $5 per week the plan would provide.

Union Life Insurance

Organized labor entered the insurance field in 1925 with the formation of the Union Labor Life Insurance Company.

Some 40 national and international unions met in a conference called by AFL President William Green. They decided to form an insurance company because existing insurers were charging union-represented groups rates in excess of those charged to non-union groups.

President Mahon supported the formation of the new company and urged the local unions to support the Union Labor Life Insurance Company. The company issued its first policy in June 1927.

Canadian Pension Act

A significant achievement for the labor movement in Canada was the enactment of the Old Age Pension Act by the Dominion Parliament in 1927. This act, passed after years of agitation and education by trade unions, was administered by the Canadian Department of Labour.

Under the terms of the act, a pension of $240 per year was paid to all citizens who had lived in Canada for 25 years and who had reached the age of 70.

Matthew Woll, president of the Union Labor Life Insurance Company, presents William Green, AFL president, the second policy issued by the company. The first policy went to Mr. Woll. The presentations were a feature of the formal opening of the company's offices in Washington, D.C., in 1927.

Enabling legislation was necessary by each province before the pension system could be put in place locally. The first to act was British Columbia on September 1, 1927. Saskatchewan was next, on May 1, 1928, and Manitoba on September 1, 1928.

By October 1928, nearly 7,000 Canadians, residing in these three provinces, were receiving payments. The other provinces took longer but ultimately agreed to implement the measure.

Depression Hits Calgary

By 1929, Canadians were feeling the first effects of the depression.

The Calgary Municipal Railway purchased the last streetcars it was ever to buy. By 1931, the deteriorating

condition of the streetcar road beds had become critical. Conservative estimates put the cost of repair at over $100,000.

To raise the money, the city announced to Division 583 that there would be no wage increase that year and hours would be cut. Operators would take two days off per month, and shopmen four days off, without pay to save expenses. While repairs were being made, the city rented buses from the Brewster Transport Company. The trial lease arrangement proved so successful that the city purchased its own buses and permanent service was established by 1932.

Amalgamated Holds On

Despite the magnitude of the depression, gross earnings of electric railway companies decreased by a mere 6 percent in 1930 and wages for carmen showed a slight increase of 3 percent. This wage increase in a depressionary period was largely attributable to the fact that more people were using the transit systems rather than their private automobiles. Another factor was an increase in fares which produced larger revenues. By 1930, fares averaged nearly 8 cents, with the trend moving towards a 10-cent prevailing fare throughout the industry.

By the 22nd Convention in Boston, Massachusetts, in August 1931, 25 locals had secured vacation with pay, including Division 583 in Calgary, Division 588 in Regina, Division 615 in Saskatoon, Division 685 in Brantford, and Division 987 in Lethbridge.

Encouraging progress was also reported in the area of old age pensions. There were 75 companies, up from the 10 reported at the 1929 convention, now reported to have a pension plan established.

The Union held its own and made important gains in the 1920s, but the onset of the depression was beginning to be felt by the Amalgamated's members.

W.D. Mahon: "He Was Our Friend"

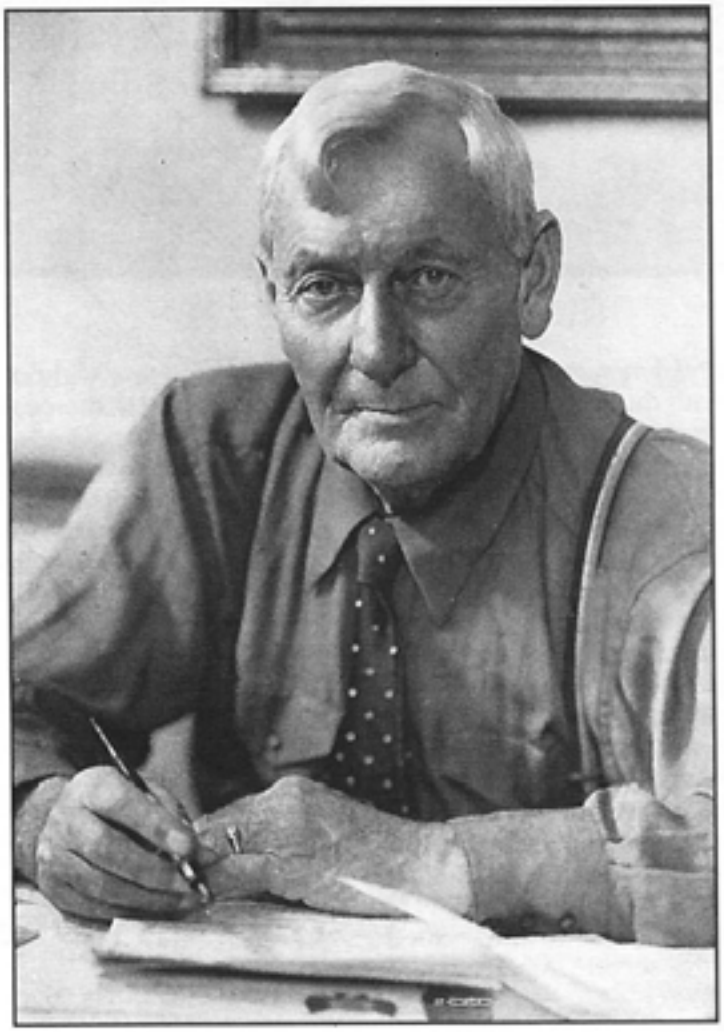
For more than half a century the character and personality of the Amalgamated was shaped by one man who served as its international president. William Daniel Mahon built and guided our Union for over half of its history, leading transit workers out of poverty in two countries.

Perhaps anyone at the helm for so long would have had such an impact, but those who knew Bill Mahon heaped praise on him in ways we seldom hear expressed in our "hero-less" age. It is hard to exaggerate the high esteem in which he was held in his own lifetime.

Mahon was a man of strong persuasions. He was a trade unionist through and through, yet he wasn't averse to departing from the common labor practices of his time. His espousal of concepts such as arbitration would prove visionary.

He became a leader of great influence who never lost the common touch. He could rouse members with magnificent oratory, but no one ever accused him of using those skills for self-promotion.

While he was an idealist who spent himself in the cause of the transit worker, he was also a pragmatist who hated to see men go on strike. And, while he did not "suffer fools gladly," he was known as a man of great compassion.



"It would take a man-sized book to tell how and why Bill Mahon is one of the figures to give meaning to the cause of labor and the mystery of democracy. His integrety and sagacity, his fidelity to the plain folks from whom he came, his modest needs and humble ways of living, are worth looking at...."

Carl Sandburg

Son of a Tanner

W.D. Mahon was born August 12, 1861, the grandson of a man who came to this country from northern Ireland and the son of an itinerant tanner. His paternal grandmother was of Dutch ancestry. In America the pronunciation of the name was corrupted to "mah-hone," with the accent on the last syllable.

His mother, the former Rebecca Whitehead, was descended from revolutionary American stock of British ancestry.

Mahon believed that the tactfulness which enabled him to negotiate the verbal minefields of organized labor could be attributed to the melting pot from which he sprung.

Since his father, Robert, moved from place to place when he was young, a formal education was denied to him.

After his father's death, Mahon and his brother, Arthur, both still boys, found work in the coal mines of the Hocking Valley in Ohio. It was during his time as a miner that Bill first witnessed union activism.

The inhumanity of the mine operators and the abject poverty of those who worked there made a lasting impression on the boy. Mahon would never forget his mining roots. And years later, he would be called upon to help organize the miners on behalf of the AFL.

On his own, the future labor leader started studying economics and civil liberties.

Mahon moved to Columbus in order to find more resources for his studies. There, his experience with mules in the mines secured him employment as a driver on a mule car for the city street railway company.

He continued his studies, becoming ever more enthusiastic about the ideals of trade unionism. Utilizing what he had learned, Mahon helped form the Columbus Street Railwaymen's Union around 1886 and served as its first president.

That same year, as fate would have it, the American Federation of Labor would hold its founding meetings in Columbus. There, Mahon became acquainted with the legendary Samuel Gompers, the leader of the AFL.

The crossing of Mahon's and Gompers' paths at this time would mark the beginning of a personal alliance between the two that was forged for the good of transit workers as well as all of labor.

It was in Columbus that Gompers became acquainted

1880

1893

1910

with the plight of the street railwaymen. And it was there that Mahon threw his lot in with the AFL.

At Gompers' instigation, the call went forth in 1892 to North American transit worker organizations that the time had come to band together and form an "amalgamated" association of local unions.

After the founding convention, Mahon went back to lead his union in Columbus—which had become Division 9. The affiliation with the Amalgamated led to management persecution of the members. As the new local pressed for a contract, the management sought to "bluff" its way through by offering to lay the whole issue before the mayor and abide by his decision.

To their surprise, young Mahon accepted the proposition immediately. He placed the facts before the mayor of the city, who upheld the members without qualification. Later, Mahon was successful in securing passage of the first vestibule act.

Having cut his teeth in Columbus, Mahon seemed ready to fill a larger role at the second Amalgamated convention in Cleveland in 1893.

Mahon did not seek to become president, but, as he explained it, "When it came to the question of electing officers, it was found there was strong opposition to [the current] President Law. The outlook was gloomy as the leading delegates conferred. After a thorough discussion of the situation, the majority decided I should stand for the office and attempt to build up the Association."

Mahon the Leader

Mahon's reaction to the first challenge of his presidency presaged the personal leadership he would provide. Hearing of trouble in the Amalgamated's largest division, Division 3 in Detroit, Mahon traveled to that city to see what could be done.

In Detroit, he found that religious factionalism was dividing the local, but even more ominously, the division president, William Law (who was also the just-deposed international president), had absconded with the division treasury and formed an independent union there.

Mahon, acting without hesitation, revoked the division's charter. He then called a meeting of the division.

The hall was packed—with each religious group sitting apart from the other on opposite sides of the auditorium. Mahon, then just 31 years old, spared no one in his denunciation of the intolerance of those who would bring the question of religion into a trade union.

Drawing again upon his oratorical skills, Mahon appealed to their judgment and good sense and pointed out the irrefutable loss that faced them without a unified organization. Before he had finished, the leaders of both sides came to the front of the room, and in a dramatic moment, shook hands and pledged their loyalty to a new united division—26.

Detroit would later become the permanent headquarters of the Amalgamated.

The Man in the Middle

In the early years, Mahon was forced to spend much time traveling, organizing, rallying members, and taking charge personally, anywhere he was needed. Mahon's monthly reports of his activities published in *The Motorman and Conductor* read like a travelogue.

The *Houston Daily Post* in 1903 illustrated this point when it described Mahon's itinerary:

> "President William D. Mahon, of the Amalgamated Association...arrived in this city at 7:35 last evening and leaves for Galveston this morning. President Mahon left Detroit...five weeks ago and has been to the Pacific Coast looking after the affairs of the street railway unions.
>
> "He is returning home by the Southern route and is taking advantage of the opportunity to visit a few of the cities along the way. The only stops he has made in Texas were at San Antonio, El Paso, Houston, and at Galveston tomorrow...."

The newspaper went on to describe the division meeting that Mahon addressed at 1:30 a.m. the next morning:

1922

1934

Circa 1949

The many faces of Bill Mahon: Like other great men of his time, the cares of managing a large organization were etched upon the face of "W.D.," but even in the later years of his life, the smile seemed ever ready.

"Seated near the door of Labor Hall last evening, puffing away on the stub of a cigar, he would pause in the midst of a sentence to push his big, broad-brimmed hat to the back of his head and, extending his hand, call the weary conductor or motorman who had trudged from the car barns long after midnight and wet from a night's work in the rain, by name. This was repeated again and again, and not once was the man at a loss for a name and no mistakes did he make.

"It was, 'Hello, Bill.' 'Henderson, how are you?'—a word for all.... "

Mahon never picked a fight, but he never walked away from one either.

Typically, Mahon had traveled to do battle in Toledo in 1916. There, a lockout was in progress, transit had come to a halt, and the company was about to be put into the hands of an anti-union, court-appointed receiver.

Mahon quickly put his imprint upon this situation by appearing before the court and persuading it not to appoint a receiver. Mahon's direct intervention resulted in the hammering out of an acceptable agreement under which the streetcars started running again and Division 697 was established. This was just one of many instances in which Mahon went directly into a crisis and came out a winner.

Mahon did not always encourage confrontation. In 1921, workers were taking pay cuts imposed by managements throughout the industry. Detroit transit workers were confronted with a demand for a similar cut in their own pay.

"I am with you to the finish if you go out," Mahon told the members, "but before you do, feel in your pockets. Realize that all the street railway corporations in the country are back of the [transit company] to beat you."

The men accepted the cut.

Mahon would later advise a young labor leader, "don't forget a fair compromise is always better than a long strike."

The Palmer House Speech

Mahon never tempered his message to make it more palatable to his listeners. In one famous 1907 speech he attained national notoriety by delivering an unvarnished message to America's millionaires.

The occasion was a meeting of the Civic Federation, an organization of wealthy industrialists, labor leaders, socialists, social workers and others formed to promote mutual understanding and do good works.

The speech was delivered at the grand estate of one of Chicago's wealthiest citizens, Mrs. Potter Palmer. Many wealthy men and society leaders in full evening dress sat throughout the audience.

"The laboring man recognizes," Mahon asserted, viewing the palatial surroundings about him, "that the title to the wealth of a great many [of those] present is as spurious as the titles of kings and lords."

When his audience greeted this remark with dead silence, Mahon explained, "We don't want to wipe out the wealth of the world. We want to dynamite the hovels. We want to better our condition. We want homes like this [the Palmer house], if we can get them."

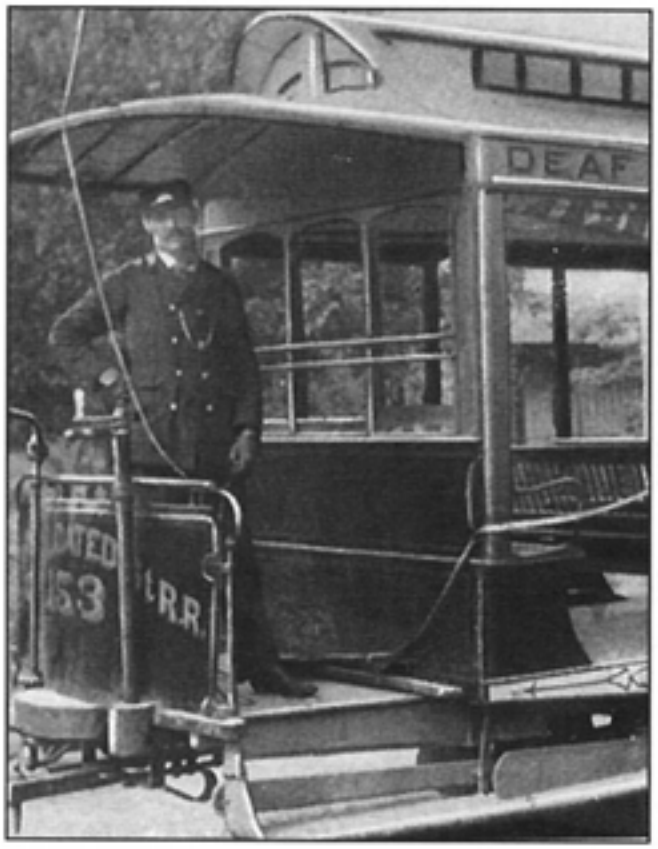
He continued, "The unions have made their mistakes, yes, lots of them, just as you capitalists have made yours—lots of them, but we are going on. We might as well make up our minds to come together to deal with one another and work in harmony and meet the conditions that are before us. For what is it? The battle of life, after all."

The Tireless Negotiator

Mahon was an intrepid negotiator who never lost his composure in the heat of battle. One impressive incident is enough to illustrate his unflappable technique.

The issue concerned a contract dispute with a streetcar company in which the members were unwilling to accept what the company was determined to pay. This is how Mahon described his participation in the event to *The Union Leader* in 1925:

The company officials called a conference, and Mahon came.



Mahon, the motorman, in 1891.

They laid a paper on the table. "That is our ultimatum," they said.

Mahon picked up the paper—straight-faced as a judge.

Pointing, as he did, with a long finger, at the first schedule, Mahon said, "Now, this first one is all right. We accept that. This next one is too low. We can't accept that. The next one we accept. The fourth one...."

"Now, wait a minute," said the spokesman for the employers. "That's an ultimatum. You can't do that. Don't you understand?"

"Yes," said Mahon. "As I was saying, we accept the first, we reject the second, we accept the third, we...."

"But, that's an ultimatum," broke in a company manager. "Don't you know what an ultimatum is?"

"Yes," replied Mahon, "I've had lots of 'em. Now let's start again. We accept the first. We can't accept the second...."

And on it went, back and forth with the company representatives getting ever more loud and indignant every time Mahon would stubbornly push on with his calm evaluation of the "ultimatum."

Eventually, the employers saw the humor in the situation. They forgot about their "ultimatum," and negotiated an agreement.

The Public Man

Whether he liked it or not, Mahon was a public man who was continually sought out to serve in many different capacities.

In 1908, Mahon was persuaded, against his better judgment, to run as a Democratic candidate for Congress from Michigan. Mahon did not win that election, but ran ahead of the party's presidential candidate.

Mahon was appointed to Detroit street railway committees in 1909 and 1914. In 1918, President Wilson appointed him a member of the Federal Electric Railway Commission.

In 1914, the AFL sent him to Europe to investigate street railway conditions there. In 1916, Mahon served as a "fraternal delegate" to the British Trades Union Congress and later to Mexican trade union meetings.

In 1917, he was elected to the Executive Council of the AFL. He served on the council until 1923, when he resigned to devote more attention to the Amalgamated. He was coaxed back on the council in 1935 and served there until his death.

Family Man and Friend

Mahon was a family man who was forced by circumstances to spend a lot of time "on the road."

Mahon was married to the former Ida Florence Neff from Basil, Ohio. They had a daughter, Ida, and three sons—Russell, Orley, and Eugene. Orley worked for the Amalgamated for 40 years, eventually becoming its comptroller. Mahon's youngest boy, Eugene, was named after Mahon's friend, the long-time head of the Socialist Party, Eugene V. Debs.

Mahon's wife, Ida, passed away on January 8, 1920, and that event may have forced Mahon to take some time out from his relentless schedule for a moment of reflection. At the next convention in 1921, Mahon addressed the delegates in an uncharacteristically brooding and introspective way.

"I think I have served long enough," he told the GEB. He wanted to retire.

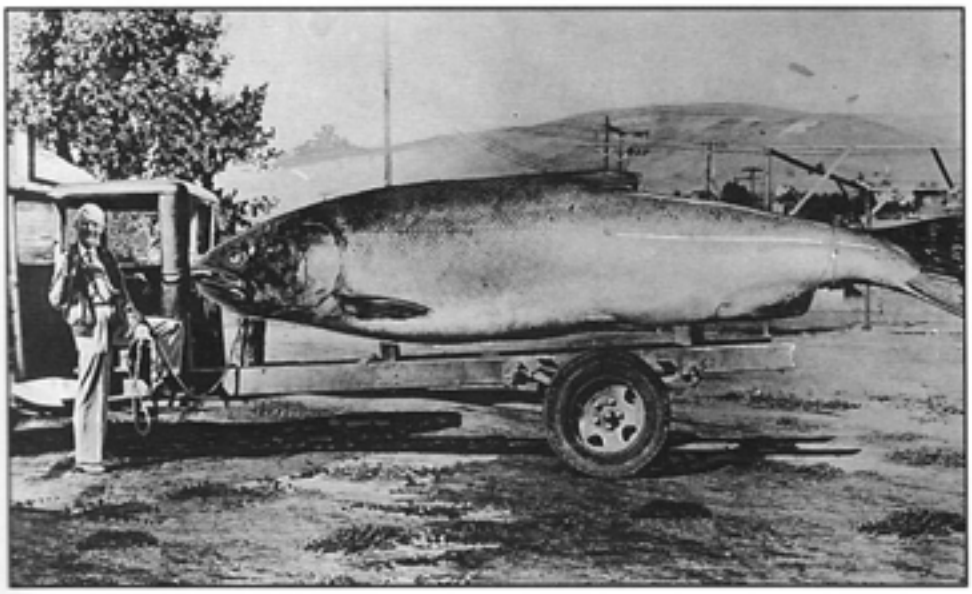
But, later, as Mahon told the delegates, "President Gompers while here asked me to take a ride with him that he might discuss the matter. I pointed out the same to him.... I thought it was time for me to retire. He said, 'No, it is more than your duty to remain, and we know it.'"

The 60-year-old civil libertarian continued, "My feeling was that I wanted to get away from the struggle of this work. Some people might think it is a snap and an easy proposition, but it is not.... I have reached the age where I felt that I wanted at least a year or two to get away where I could call myself a free-born American citizen."

Mahon finally relented and was re-elected international president, but not before being assured that he would get more help. Mahon also put them on notice that if anyone else wanted his job—they could have it!

It is not clear, however, that Mahon slowed down much. A picture from the following year shows him in the thick of things during a strike in Chicago.

In late 1926, still appearing to be as active as ever, Mahon accompanied Samuel Gompers to the AFL convention in El Paso, Texas. From there, Mahon went with



Mahon sent this "gag" photo to The Motorman & Conductor in 1942 with the note: "I am getting a bit tired of the boasting of these fellows [Sinclair and other GEB members] and I think it's about time to show them what a real fish looks like."

Gompers to attend the inauguration of the president of Mexico, where the AFL leader fell deathly ill. Gompers was sent back to San Antonio, where efforts to save his life failed. Mahon accompanied the labor leader's body by train from Texas to Washington, D.C., and then finally to New York where his long-time friend and ally was buried.

Fish Stories

Apart from labor, the only thing for which Mahon seemed to have a passion was fishing. It was his avid hobby, and in later years *The Motorman & Conductor* would publish letters displaying the genial rivalry between Mahon and his international vice presidents wherein each claimed to be the most accomplished at the sport.

By 1930, Mahon, now approaching 70 and heralded as the longest-serving union head in history, told one reporter, "I am getting along in years. My family has grown up and I am alone...." Mahon then was said to "find peace" working in the garden at the home of his daughter, Ida.

This description of Mahon as an old man puttering around in the garden was premature. Mahon continued to serve the Union as international president until his retirement in 1946 and as president-emeritus until his death in 1949.

During this time labor leaders, poets, and presidents lauded him and sought his advice.

As late as 1935, at the time of his 75th birthday, Mahon traveled to New England for meetings with the divisions in that part of the country.

In 1940, Mahon was still active, writing, for example, an appeal to the Amalgamated's members to support the war in Europe which had already involved Canadian, but not U.S., members. And on May 8, 1941, at the age of 79, Mahon married the former Freida Goderick in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida.

By 1945, it seems clear that Mahon's day-to-day involvement in the Amalgamated was more limited. However, he kept up a regular correspondence with international headquarters from his home in Florida.

He Was Our Friend

Mahon died in Detroit on October 31, 1949. He was 88.

At his funeral, it was recalled that some 50 years earlier, Mahon had written his own epitaph, which he well fulfilled: "I would rather go down to my grave as poor old Bill Mahon, without a dollar, and leave a legacy of improved conditions for the street railwaymen of the country, than to have all the wealth of the Morgans—rolled into a pile and doubled ten thousand times.

"My only hope is that when my life's work is done and I am laid away I will have earned the epitaph: 'He was our friend.' " That epitaph was published above his picture in the 1949 *Motorman & Conductor* that celebrated his remarkable life and mourned his death.

"The fundamental quality of the Amalgamated Association, as I see it, is its interest in the individual member. With us the saying 'The injury to one is the concern of all' is no mere phrase; it is a living, moving, testament, the credo of the Amalgamated Association."

Abe L. Spradling, September, 1942

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CHAPTER FOUR *1932-1946*

From Rags to Riches

By 1932, the United States and Canada were in the midst of the Great Depression. Unemployment in the United States had reached nearly fourteen million. Few people believed that the depression had bottomed out or that the business cycle would soon turn up as U.S. President Hoover had proclaimed in his losing campaign.

When Franklin D. Roosevelt, a Democrat, assumed the U.S. presidency in 1933, he had stepped onto a sinking ship. The U.S. economy was failing and pulling down the rest of the world with it. Unemployment levels in the early 1930s grew to fifteen million in the United States, one and a quarter million in Canada, a million in Germany and Great Britain, and hundreds of thousands in Italy, Austria and Poland.

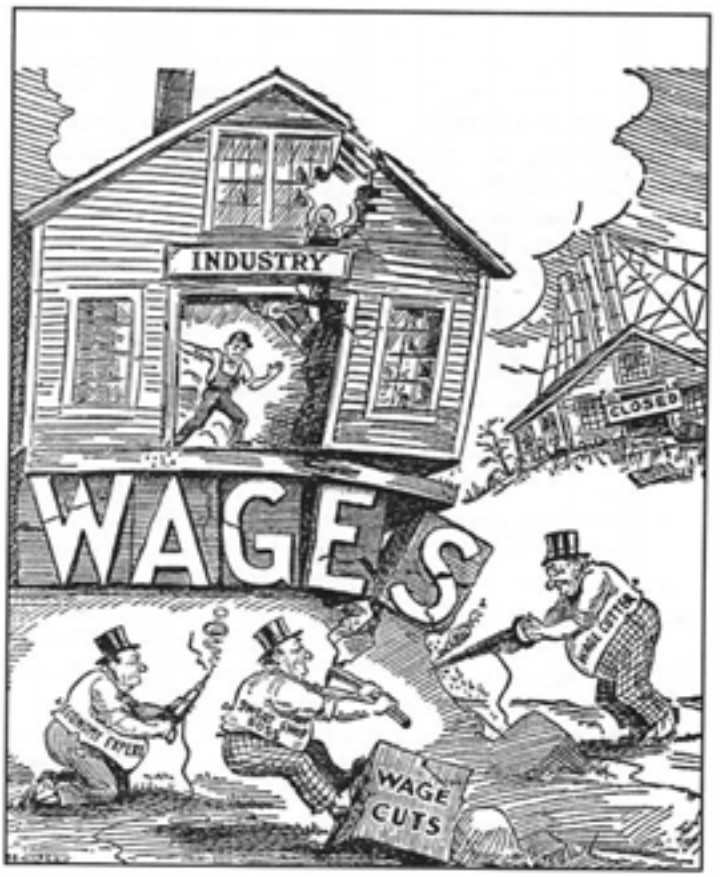
Bread lines formed in every city and town. Company bankruptcies were common throughout the U.S. and Canada. When the doors of a company slammed shut, workers lost all hope that their jobs or pensions could ever be retrieved.

The same year that Franklin Roosevelt became the 32nd President of the United States, Adolf Hitler was named German Chancellor. Hitler quickly purged any opposition to Nazism in Germany, setting in motion the events leading up to World War II.

Unemployment continued to rise in the United States until the New Deal programs finally began to take hold. Yet not until 1940, when the war in Europe was in full swing, did the U.S. and Canadian economies turn around and employment begin to rise.

In 1942, the Amalgamated celebrated its fiftieth birthday. On that occasion, Carl Sandburg, the great poet, biographer of Abraham Lincoln and close friend of President Mahon wrote:

> "So the Amalgamated now comes fifty years old. 'Well and good,' say those familiar with its record, the main trend of its policies and programs. It is an occasion to give salutations to Bill Mahon, his able leadership, his scrupulous accounting, his sagacity and plain ways of living that might to advantage have more and better imitators here and there in the American labor movement."



Depression era labor cartoon.

In 1946, President Mahon, who had molded the Union for over five decades, retired and General Executive Board Member Abe Spradling assumed the position of international president.

Members of Division 382 in Salt Lake City, Utah, waged a depression era campaign to stop motorists from picking up hitchhikers.

Supporting Unemployed Members

The depression caused an immediate decline in transit ridership which, in turn, threatened Amalgamated members' jobs. By 1933, transit ridership was down over 10 percent in the United States and nearly 10 percent in Canada. With so many people out of work, riders began walking rather than using their meager funds to pay the fare.

In sympathy with their fellow members facing layoffs, and to save as many transit jobs as possible during the depression, many full time employee members voluntarily reduced their work hours. The extra work hours kept other members off unemployment lines.

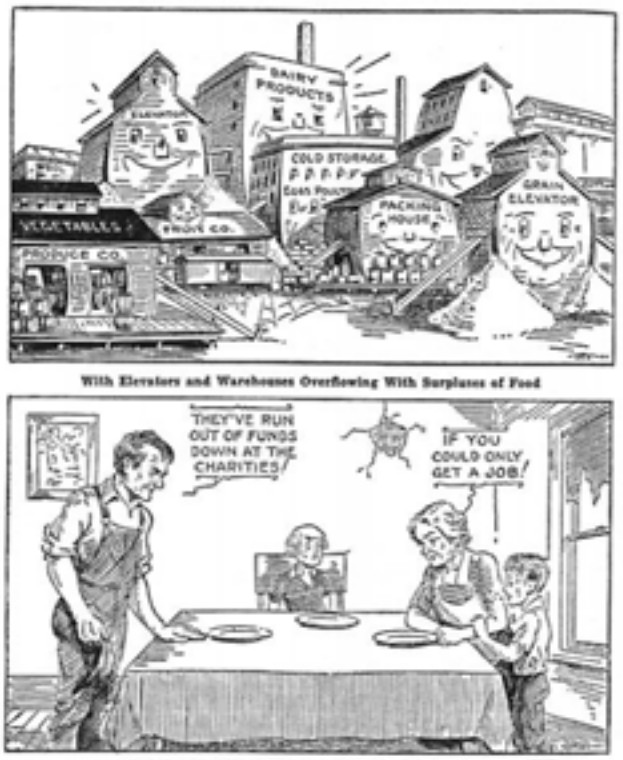
In 1931, Local 694 (San Antonio, Texas) negotiated an 18-month contract reducing the workday in order to create 30 more regular runs for the members (which "will keep just that many men from being laid off...."). Later in 1932, in order to save the jobs, the members voted to work a 5-day week. Division 966 (Thunder Bay, Ontario) also voted to shorten the workday to preserve jobs and wage rates.

In 1932, Local 113 in Toronto had regular operators take off an extra day per month which provided about 1,250 days of work per month for the extra operators. Later in 1932, when the Toronto management informed the union that it would still have to lay off 200 drivers, the regular drivers voted to take off four extra days per month.

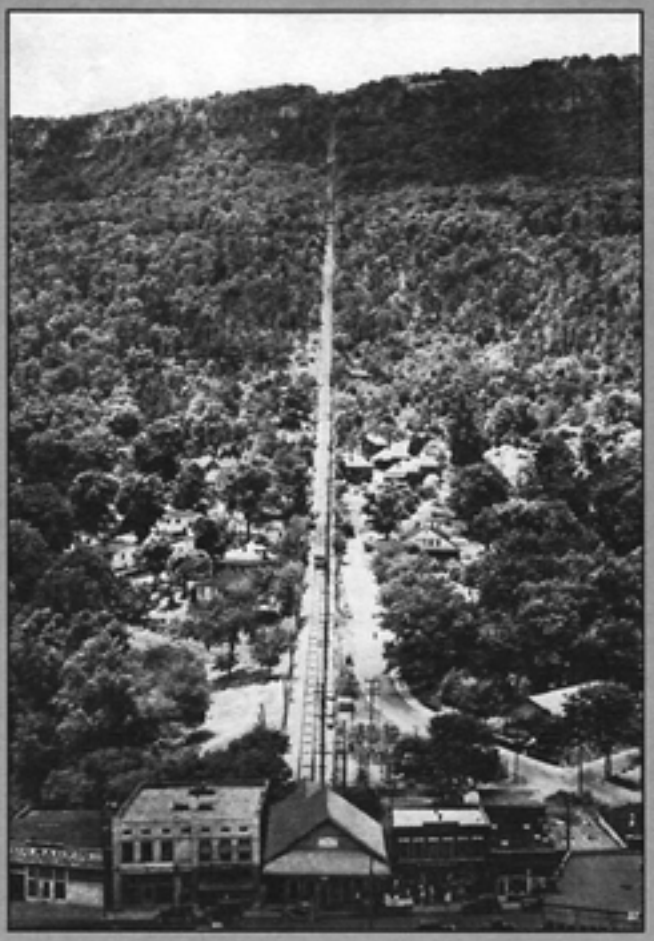
In 1933, Local 732 in Atlanta adopted a 5-day week to assure their jobs for another year, and the members of Local 618 (Providence, Rhode Island) took the same action "to assist a goodly number of their brother members who...had been unemployed for some time."

That same year, Local 329 in Dubuque, Iowa, voted "that the regular men should work from 117 to 120 hours steady and then take a rest, the remainder of the pay period to be worked by the extra men." Similar action taken by Local 441 in Des Moines created 134 working days each month for the unemployed.

Many local unions set up relief funds to keep out-of-work members and their families off the public welfare rolls. Members of Local 113 in Toronto and Local 192 in Oakland, California, voted to put an amount equal to



As more members' jobs were threatened, local union members worked shorter hours to create more jobs and began relief funds.



Lookout Mountain Incline in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Organizing the Inclines

After the Amalgamated had organized Division 1212 in Chattanooga, Tennessee, the local reached an agreement with the Tennessee Electric Power Company to represent the workers on the Lookout Mountain Incline.

The line, run by specially built cable cars, travels to the top of Lookout Mountain, a distance of 4,750 feet. As Division 1212 reported:

> "There are a lot worse jobs than wheeling up and down a gorgeous mountainside, meeting people from all over the world in their daily trips. They're 100 percent organized, so there's no feudin' with the company. There's plenty of peace, sunshine, and southern cookin'. What Ho, for the life of a trolley mountaineer!"

Local 627 (Cincinnati, Ohio) represented the operators on the Mt. Adams Incline. This incline was literally a railway lift which actually transported the streetcars themselves, carrying them on trucks which raised and lowered the streetcars and their

passengers on a 28.9 percent grade for a distance of 980 feet.

By far the most employees operating inclines were represented by Local 85 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. At one time there were 15 inclines operating in Pittsburgh. Today, the only one still operated by Local 85 members is the Monongahela Incline.

The Monongahela Incline first opened on May 28, 1870. It hauled passengers and freight to Mount Washington, high above the city. It was originally driven by steam, but the cars were converted to electricity in the 1930s. The cars on the Monongahela Incline travel to a height of 370 feet at an angle of 38 degrees. They have carried an estimated 62 million passengers.

The Monongahela Incline was consolidated into Port Authority Transit in 1964 and has been declared a historical landmark.

Mt. Adam's Incline in Cincinnati, Ohio.

1 percent of their monthly earnings into a relief fund.

The Local 241-Chicago Surface Lines Employes Relief Plan was heralded as one of the finest in the country. All 15,000 members contributed 1 percent of their wages into a relief pool for employees out of work due to the depression or unable to work because of a lengthy illness or disability. By February 1936, the fund had paid out over $1 million and not a single member of Local 241 was forced onto the public charity rolls.

Division 308 in Chicago was the first in the Amalgamated to set up a credit union for its members.

The Fruits of Legislative Action

The depression brought renewed political involvement by Amalgamated members. President Mahon led the battle for such landmark economic and social legislation as the Industrial Conditions Act, the National Industrial Recovery Act, the National Labor Relations Act, the Social Security Act, the Railroad Retirement Act, the Motor Carrier Act, and the Fair Labor Standards Act.

In no other period, until perhaps the 1960s, would the Amalgamated achieve so many legislative gains. The level of cooperation between the Union and the Democratic Administration of Franklin Roosevelt, which included Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins, was without any precedent in the Union's history.

Within his first year in office, President Roosevelt had created dozens of new programs and agencies, sweeping aside all opposition. The National Industrial Recovery Act (NRA) created the National Recovery Administration, responsible for generating labor code language for various industries, and the National Labor Relations Board to enforce the law.

An earlier precedent was influential in the drafting of the labor code for transit. During the 1920s President Mahon had been named by U.S. President Wilson to be a commissioner on the Federal Electric Railway Commission. The Commission issued a report recommending that:

> "[E]mployes...should have a right to deal collectively with their employers through committees or representatives of their own selection. In all contracts and working agreements made between them and the employing companies, there should be an arbitration provision under which all labor disputes...shall be submitted to boards of arbitration composed of disinterested persons."

As the depression squeezed the life out of the Wheeling (West Virginia) Traction Company, the members of Division 103 got together and purchased the company, renaming it the Cooperative Transit Company.

When the National Industrial Recovery Act was being drafted in 1933, the same language protecting the right to recognition and collective bargaining was taken from the Railway Commission's recommendations and embodied in Section 7(a) of the NRA.

President Mahon and an Amalgamated committee were called to Washington to aid in formulating the NRA Transit Code. In a meeting attended by some 150 transit executives, Mahon was described as "relentless" in ensuring that both the right to recognition and the right to arbitration were written into the Code. The employers ended the meeting by giving Mahon an oral commitment to accept collective bargaining.

Unfortunately, the NRA had a "bark but no bite." No remedy was provided to enforce the "rights" set forth in the Act. Most employers rebuffed union efforts by refusing recognition and collective bargaining. Some employers even created company unions and agreed to "bargain" with them.

The employers contended that Section 7(a) was unconstitutional and that the Board lacked the authority to enforce any orders compelling compliance. In the face of such tactics, the legislation proved unworkable, and in 1935 the NRA was declared unconstitutional.

Congress and the labor movement had tired of employer flaunting of the laws. The AFL sought the enactment of a law which would better protect the right of workers to organize

Many employers set up a company union to avoid Amalgamated organizing campaigns.

Carl Sandburg salutes the Amalgamated in the continent-wide radio broadcast.

A Golden Jubilee Celebration

On its fiftieth anniversary, the Union produced a "Golden Jubilee" edition of its magazine. The edition included a history by President Mahon and an article by each member of the General Executive Board.

But the real celebration was aired over continent-wide radio on the Blue Network on September 15, 1942. The program opened with a rousing rendition of "Stout Hearted Men" by Metropolitan Opera baritone Thomas L. Thomas.

The Amalgamated was honored in the broadcast by President Roosevelt; Joseph B. Eastman, Director of the Office of Defense Transportation; AFL President William Green; and Carl Sandburg, the noted poet, biographer and life-long friend of Bill Mahon.

Sandburg gave a moving tribute to the Amalgamated and its leader, Mahon:

> "I have known Mahon and the Amalgamated leadership for thirty years—and if anybody thinks I am saying they are a set of angels with nice white wings they had better go roll a peanut around the corner and think again. What I am saying and stressing is that in this time of storm and in the more stormy days to come, human betterment and the dignity of the common man are not going to lose out if there is enough of decency and plain dealing, a readiness to fight against inequity and

injustice—along with a sense of responsibility and a spirit of accommodation."

The climax of the broadcast was an address by President Mahon, then 81 years old, in which he graphically detailed the early struggles of the Union:

"The men of today owe to these [Amalgamated] pioneers great consideration and respect, for it was due to their determined struggle that the foundations of this splendid organization were laid, which today reflect its good work in wages, hours of labor, working conditions and the environment of the homes. Today we see well fed and clothed and well educated children when fifty years ago poverty prevailed. And all of this work has added to the benefits of mankind, to the elevation and betterment of humanity."

It was indeed a celebration of progress!

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

September 4, 1941

My dear Mr. Mahon:

Will you please extend to the officers and members of the Amalgamated Association of Street, Electric Railway, and Motor Coach Employees of America my congratulations and best wishes upon the occasion of the twenty-seventh International Convention of the organization at Atlantic City.

Your organization has my best wishes for a worth-while convention and for success in all its constructive undertakings during the coming year.

Very sincerely yours,

Franklin D. Roosevelt

Mr. W. D. Mahon,
President,
Amalgamated Association of Street, Electric
Railway, and Motor Coach Employees of America,
260 Vernor Highway,
Detroit, Michigan.

Congratulatory letter from U.S. President Roosevelt.

Two friends of the Amalgamated: Senator Robert LaFollette (left), Democrat from Wisconsin, chairman of Senate Civil Liberties Committee, converses with Senator Robert Wagner, Democrat from New York, father of the Wagner Act. (Acme Photo)

and bargain collectively. In 1934, Democratic Senator Robert Wagner from New York (who had previously represented the Amalgamated in its appeal of the New York injunction in the 1920s) introduced a bill in the U.S. Congress establishing the National Labor Relations Act (otherwise known as the Wagner Act).

The Amalgamated's general counsel, Charlton Ogburn, testified in support of its passage before the U.S. Senate. On July 5, 1935, the bill, with some revisions, was passed by large majorities in both the U.S. Senate and House. It was signed into law by President Roosevelt despite determined opposition by the National Association of Manufacturers and employers.

For the first time in their history, under the new federal law unions were accorded the legal right to organize and represent workers, negotiate their collective bargaining agreements and protect them against employer discrimination and coercion.

The Amalgamated was the first union to present a case before the National Labor Relations Board under the new law. The Union was also involved in one of the

Robert Watts (left), counsel to the newly created National Labor Relations Board and Charlton Ogburn, the Amalgamated's general counsel, argue the first case before the NLRB in a charge against Pennsylvania Greyhound Lines.

initial cases before the U.S. Supreme Court which sustained the constitutionality of the Act against an employer challenge.

President Roosevelt signed the landmark Social Security Act in 1935 providing guaranteed retirement and disability allowances and state run unemployment compensation benefits.

The business community was increasingly unhappy with labor's legislative victories. Strike related violence, provoked by management, was at an all-time high. A 1937 Memorial Day demonstration held by striking Republic Steel workers in Chicago turned into a bloody massacre when police, responding to company allegations that the strikebreakers were in danger, opened fire on the crowd.

The country was outraged and Democratic Senator Robert M. LaFollette, Jr., from Wisconsin, launched a full scale investigation which exposed the ruthlessness of the employer and its strikebreakers.

During 1936, the provincial legislatures in Alberta and Nova Scotia enacted "Wagner-type" laws specifically providing protection to workers to organize and collectively bargain. In February 1944, the Canadian Parliament finally fashioned national legislation which was designed to safeguard workers' rights to unionize, to impose collective bargaining and a grievance procedure, and to curb unfair labor practices.

George Bennett, president of Division 616 in Windsor, Ontario, became mayor of Greater Windsor in 1935.

Union security rights were reinforced by a Canadian court decision in 1945 establishing the "Rand Formula." Named after its author, this formula imposed a form of agency shop. This decision resolved a long battle over the enforceability of union security provisions in Canada.

Political Activity Rewarded

Union officers became increasingly active on the local, state and provincial levels. One of the most forceful and conscientious spokesmen for working people ever to sit in the Canadian House of Commons was Angus MacInnis, the business agent of Division 101 in Vancouver, British Columbia.

W. D. Robbins, treasurer of Division 113 was elected mayor of Toronto.

He was first elected a Labour member of Parliament in 1930.

Along with MacInnis, a group of supportive representatives formed a political party, the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF). At its first convention in July 1933, the CCF adopted the Regina Manifesto, which called for passage of a National Labour Code. MacInnis was re-elected as a CCF member on five occasions—in 1935, 1940, 1945, 1949 and 1953.

In 1944, a CCF government was elected in Saskatchewan (with the assistance of Divisions 588 in Regina and 615 in Saskatoon). The CCF government remained in power until 1964 and was instrumental in initiating the most advanced labour legislation and highest minimum wage in Canada as well as the first government-run medical plan in North America.

In 1931, Local 1005 in Minneapolis helped elect labor's candidate as mayor. The following year, declaring that open shop interests and big bankers were instigating a move to slash all municipal workers' wages by 10 percent, the mayor vetoed the legislation enacted by the city council.

In 1932, Ray Talbot, a member of Local 662 (Pueblo, Colorado), was elected lieutenant governor of the state while simultaneously serving as vice president of the Colorado State Federation. After two terms, Talbot received the Democratic Party's nomination for governor of Colorado, but unfortunately lost the 1936 election.

In 1933, the president of Division 313 (Rock Island, Illinois), Ed Wendell, was one of two Democrats elected alderman in a city-wide Republican landslide.

In December 1934, the president of Division 616 (Windsor, Ontario), George Bennett, was elected mayor of Windsor, the first Labour mayor of that town. In 1935, he went on to become mayor of Greater Windsor, then the fifth largest city in Canada.

In 1936, the treasurer of Division 113, W. D. Robbins, was elected mayor of Toronto.

Local 382 (Salt Lake City, Utah) took an active role in its state AFL meeting in 1932 where it submitted 28 resolutions which were unanimously adopted, including advocating the passage of the child labor law and the minimum wage for women.

Local 192 (Oakland, California) scored an important victory in 1935 when it successfully lobbied the city council to refuse a permit to a non-union bus company operating in direct competition with the lines of their employing company.

Canada Fights the One-Man Car

While the one-man car had been widely integrated into U.S. transit systems, a battle raged over its introduction on transit properties in Canada.

In 1932, a jury in Toronto held an operator of a one-man car responsible for the death of a woman who was knocked down by the operating car. The jury attached the following rider to its verdict: "We recommend that the Railway Board be asked to consider the advisability of doing away with the one-man car as they are a great menace to the public, seeing a driver cannot do several

things at once."

Division 279 waged a campaign against the cars in Ottawa after the transit authority proposed to go to 100 percent one-man cars in lieu of increasing the fares.

At its 1934 meeting, the Trades and Labour Congress passed a resolution urging abolition of the one-man cars and instructing its members to lobby within each province for legislation calling for their elimination.

Division 113 Business Agent Joseph Tomkins testified against the operation of one-man cars before the Ontario Cabinet in 1935. He supported an amendment to the then-current law providing for an application procedure for the operation of the cars on any line.

Despite the heated opposition, introduction of the one-man car spread inexorably across Canada. By the 1940s, the cars were in wide use on both sides of the border.

An organizing campaign in Chicago led to the indictment of officers of Division 241 on charges of conspiracy. They were acquitted in the widely publicized 1935 trial.

Depression Era Organizing

For the first time in the twentieth century, the depression presented employers with a golden opportunity to undo union gains. Amalgamated membership fell from a height of 101,300 in 1929 to 65,400 before gradually rising again in the mid-1930s. It would not be until 1944 that the Union would regain its 1929 membership level.

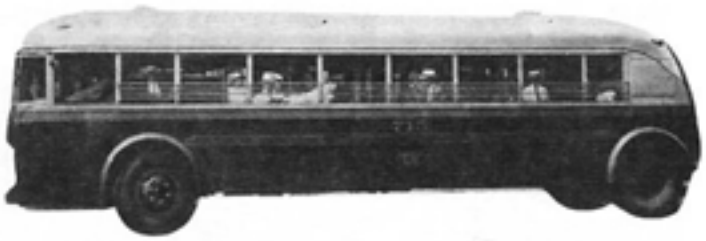
The greatest organizing victories were won in the young and growing over-the-road industry. By the end of this period, the Amalgamated had organized about 95 percent of the industry.

In 1934, the employees of the Denver Tramway Corporation voted for the Amalgamated by a slim margin over a "company representative committee" and Local 1001 was created. Division 1015 (Spokane, Washington) was established after four men were discharged for union activity.

That same year, a third attempt to organize the Milwaukee transit workers was finally successful and Division 998 was created. The workers had to strike several months amid discharges and repeated delays under the ineffective NRA. The will of the workers was supported by the citizenry of Milwaukee, thousands of whom demonstrated against the traction company. The *Catholic Herald* firmly supported the workers in its editorial:

> "We would fail in Catholic teachings if we spoke of demolished street cars and shattered buses first....First must come human beings, men, women and children.
>
> * * *
>
> "The worker has a right to join a labor union of his own free choice....Those who prevent a worker from exercising this God-given right are guilty of sin against justice and are morally wrong."

Since 1917, the transit workers at the Twin City Rapid Transit Company in Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota, had maintained a "company union," ousting an earlier Amalgamated local in the Twin Cities. But on July 5, 1934, a large majority of employees chose Division 1005 as their bargaining representative in a National Labor Relations Board representation election.



Bus operated on the streets of Birmingham, Alabama, by members of Division 725 in 1937.

One of the more dramatic organizing campaigns was conducted by the members of Division 725 (Birmingham, Alabama) who engaged in a several month effort to establish union representation for the black laborers on their property.

The local had first presented a proposal to the Birmingham Electric Co. for a contract covering the laborers. When the local offered to go to arbitration with the company, the company again refused. With no other recourse, the black workers struck on August 10, 1940. The white members of Division 725 refused to cross the picket line and bus service in Birmingham was completely tied up. By 6 p.m. the next day, the workers had a contract.

This period also saw the establishment of the Amalgamated Women's Auxiliary in 1937. The Auxiliary became the proverbial right hand of the Union. Until the organization disbanded in 1990, its members assisted the Union in strikes, lobbying, boycotts and other activities.

Regaining Lost Wages

At the height of the depression, local after local reported significant cuts in wages. Pay cuts averaged 10 to 15 percent in the early 1930s. The Union joined with management in an effort to encourage the public to ride the transit systems, but ridership had declined by over 11 percent by 1932.

In 1932, the Hull, Quebec, Division 591 suffered an 8-percent cut and Division 441 (Des Moines, Iowa) took a 10-percent reduction after the employer threatened to lay off 40 workers. In 1933, Local 618 (Providence, R.I.) agreed to lower wages by 10 percent in exchange for a company agreement to adopt a 5-day workweek.

At the height of the depression, several local unions reported significant wage cuts.

By 1934, although conditions remained depressed, the fate of the Amalgamated in negotiations took a decidedly upward turn. Division 558 (Shreveport, Louisiana) negotiated a 10-percent wage increase. Divisions 268 (Cleveland, Ohio) and 757 (Portland, Oregon) won 14-percent increases through arbitration awards.

Even larger increases were won in 1935. Local 627 (Cincinnati, Ohio) reported a 46 2/3 percent wage improvement for bus operators.

By June 1936, the *Motorman, Conductor, and Motor Coach Operator* related that almost all local unions had reported "partial or complete restoration of wage scales in effect before the depression. The article contained the following editorial comment: "However, voluntary increases still are as rare as hoof marks on an elevated track. We wonder what the story would be if there was no Amalgamated Association, and we are reminded of President Mahon's observation that no traction official ever died of enlargement of the heart."

By 1942, Divisions 587 (Seattle, Washington), 757 (Portland, Oregon) and 1055 (Portland, Oregon) topped $1 per hour on the operators' wage rate. By 1943, wages rose to over $1.10 per hour in an arbitration award for Local 85 in Pittsburgh. A top operators' rate of $1.15 per hour was obtained by Local 26 in Detroit.

By the close of the period, many Amalgamated contracts provided for paid vacations and time and one-half for overtime.

Organizing the Over-the-Road Industry

It was largely during the depression and World War II that the over-the-road industry began to develop in the United States and Canada. The industry quickly emerged as a vital network for traveling from city to city.

Spurred by the new economic opportunities in the timber country of the Pacific Northwest, the iron and copper ranges of Minnesota, the oil fields of Texas, the rich agricultural lands of California and the vast open spaces of the Canadian provinces, a much needed intercity system began to develop.

Buses had an advantage over the thousands of miles of railroad track that had developed between the population centers—they could keep pace with the rapid growth in population and commerce in these new frontiers.

Many small, generally poorly financed companies entered this new field. But the competition was fierce and the field would narrow considerably by the end of the period.

Many of the survivors were organized by the Amalgamated and remain in operation today—Greyhound, the independent Trailways network, Frank Martz Coach Company (Local 1119), Peerless Stages (Local 1225), Southeastern Stages (Local 1493), Gray Coach Lines (Local 113, now 1630), Illini-Swallow Coach Lines (Local 1211, now 1493), Jefferson Lines (Local 1498), and KG Lines (now Local 1498).

Cartoon depicting Pennsylvania Greyhound before and after organization.

Exposing General Motors

In 1936, the Amalgamated helped expose a scheme of the giant General Motors Corporation to operate transit services in competition with local transit companies throughout the United States using its rubber-tired vehicles. These services were to be offered by the GM subsidiary, Motor Coach Company.

The plan was first exposed in Portland, Oregon, when the General Motors affiliate came into town with a proposition to operate transit services at a 5-cent fare, well below that of the unionized Portland Traction Company. General Motors, then notorious for its open shop and anti-labor policies, was run out of Portland and exposed by the local press as having "a well laid plan in anticipation of forming the largest monopoly of all times."

After cooperating in the fight against GM, Division 757 was instrumental in convincing the Portland voters to favor a 20-year franchise for the Portland Traction Company. As the *Oregon Journal* later reported:

> "One happy result of the franchise voted to the Portland Traction Company is the retention in service of the employees.
>
> * * *
>
> "The accommodating attitude of motormen and other employes weighed heavily in the balance in favor of the franchise. It is a service by the workers that the company doubtless fully appreciates. Portland is outstanding in the fact that its street car men render service with a smile."

Division 628 (Covington, Kentucky) rebuffed a BRT raid attempt in a 1941 strike settlement.

Raids and Reds

Establishment by John L. Lewis of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in 1935 created problems for the Amalgamated, a long-time AFL affiliate.

In 1937, the CIO chartered the Transport Workers Union of America (TWU) which immediately began seeking to entice members from the ranks of the Amalgamated. The TWU originally drew its membership by

At the celebration of the Union's fiftieth anniversary in 1942, General Executive Board Member Sam B. Berrong (who would later serve as executive vice president) described the status of the industry and its union organization:

> "The highway bus industry has had a mushroom growth and its success has been phenomenal. There is hardly a city of any size on this continent that is not served by this means of transportation today. Buses tap places hitherto untouched by the interurbans and steam railroads. And the Amalgamated...today is recognized as the collective bargaining agency for...95 percent of the men and women who work at the occupation."

Greyhound Lines

Greyhound Lines, originally conceived as Motor Transit Corporation in September 1926, began on the Iron Range in Minnesota. Searching for a name, as the story goes, one of its owners, E.C. Eckstrom, heard someone say that his speedy vehicles ran "like greyhounds." By 1928, there were 325 buses operating under 12 different company names in the Motor Transit Greyhound system.

The same year, Greyhound began buying up other companies and consolidating them into its operation. It quickly bought up routes in California and the Midwest. The western operation became known as Pacific Greyhound Lines. The company signed an agreement in the 1920s to operate routes in coordination with the Pennsylvania Railroad. The jointly owned operating company became Pennsylvania Greyhound Lines.

In the early 1930s, through further purchases and consolidations in the South and Mid-Atlantic states, Greyhound gained a substantial stock interest in Consolidated Coach Corporation and was able to change the company's name to Southeastern Greyhound Lines. Southeastern was not controlled by Greyhound until it was purchased by the corporation after World War II. Through ticketing arrangements made by Greyhound in 1931, the National Highway Transport Corporation, which extended to Atlanta and Jacksonville in the South, was renamed Atlantic Greyhound Lines. Greyhound held no financial interest in Atlantic until it purchased a substantial portion of shares in 1934.

But the greatest boost to Greyhound's solidification in the marketplace was the Motor Carrier Act in 1935, which extended the regulatory powers of the Interstate Commerce Commission to interstate motor carriers. The law had the immediate effect of restricting

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"raiding" members from the Amalgamated and other unions.

The Amalgamated's first brush with the TWU occurred after its president, Michael Quill, attended an Amalgamated GEB meeting in 1935. He informed the GEB that the TWU represented a majority of New York's transit workers. At that time, prior to the TWU's affiliation with the CIO, Quill requested acceptance as a division of the Amalgamated. After an investigation, the GEB refused his request. Shortly thereafter, the TWU affiliated with the Machinists Union, another AFL affiliate.

Quill returned to New York and his union began signing up Amalgamated members. Mahon protested to AFL President Green, who advised the TWU that they "were invading the field covered by the Amalgamated...and they should confine their organizational efforts to machinists...."

Mike Quill (left), TWU leader in New York, meets with John L. Lewis (right), head of the CIO.

When the TWU changed its affiliation to the CIO, its efforts to raid Amalgamated members in New York accelerated.

In 1937, all CIO unions were hit from within and without the AFL-dominated labor movement as "Communists" and Communist sympathizers. The Amalgamated followed suit in its publications, labelling Quill and CIO head Lewis as Communists.

In 1938, the U.S. House Un-American Activities Committee began hearings under direction of Congressman Martin Dies. The government initiated blacklists of union men, and Quill and the other officers of the TWU were listed. A witness claiming to be the first president of the TWU labelled Quill and the other officers as Communist Party members.

Despite the "Red-scare," the TWU successfully captured the IRT contract in New York. Although the TWU —claiming a membership of 100,000 by the end of World War II—did damage to the Amalgamated in some cities and attempted to take away the Pennsylvania Greyhound workers, their base was primarily confined to New York City.

An important victory was scored in 1942 when Division 1171 (now Local 1493) won a Labor Board decision ousting the company dominated TWU local union from the Ohio Valley Bus Company in Huntington, West Virginia.

Over the Road Industry, continued

entry into the system, thus granting a virtual monopoly on bus transportation to the existing carriers.

Following the Motor Carrier Act, the Greyhound Corporation began a long process of consolidation leading toward the unification of the separate Greyhound companies into a national bus network. To redress the complications of having so many operating subsidiaries in the United States, 20 operating subsidiaries were merged into their regional companies in 1936. Each of these regional companies was in turn controlled by the Greyhound Corporation.

A similar pattern of merger and acquisition was taking place in Canada. U.S. Greyhound had a subsidiary which ran north into Canada as far as Winnipeg. In 1940, a Canadian company called Trans Continental Coach Lines reached Winnipeg through the purchase of another company. Through its affiliate Central Canadian Greyhound Lines (which had no connection with the U.S. company), Trans Continental had routes stretching all the way to Vancouver and Prince George. From the initial interchange of passengers in Winnipeg, Greyhound formed a subsidiary called Western Canadian Greyhound Lines (now represented by Local 1374) and bought out the two Canadian companies.

As far back as 1931, Greyhound had an alternate route from Buffalo to Detroit through Canada. Joint service

Northland Greyhound based in Minneapolis was successfully organized by Division 1150.

Throughout the period, the Amalgamated continued its decades long battle against the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen (BRT). In a lengthy strike in Terre Haute (Local 1064) and Anderson, Indiana, precipitated by management's refusal to honor an arbitration wage award, the BRT circulated petitions stating that strikers who would join the BRT and accept the lower wage offered by management would get their jobs back. The Amalgamated prevailed in its demands against the company after a 63-day walkout and its members repudiated the BRT.

The BRT raided several Greyhound properties with promises on which they never delivered. In a 1940 raid on Pacific Greyhound, an Amalgamated member was brutally murdered. BRT officials were indicted, but never convicted.

In 1938, the Amalgamated took its raiding complaints against the BRT to AFL President Green. In response, Green issued a statement declaring that jurisdiction over bus lines had been awarded by the AFL to the Amalgamated and that the BRT had no right to represent such employees.

The World Goes to War Again

In 1939, events were occurring in Europe making the onset of war inevitable. Adolf Hitler and his Nazi party were in power in Germany. He had built strong ties to Italian dictator Benito Mussolini and Spanish dictator Francisco Franco. On September 1, 1939, Hitler directed his air force to attack Poland. Britain and France declared war on Germany. This was the start of World War II.

Canadian members were vital in transportation efforts during World War II.

On September 3, members from Division 26 (Detroit) and Division 282 (Rochester, N.Y.) were aboard the S.S. Athenia when it was torpedoed in the Atlantic Ocean.

On September 10, 1939, Canada joined the fight against Hitler and the Canadian local unions sprung into action. The war caused transit business in Canada to improve and wages went up.

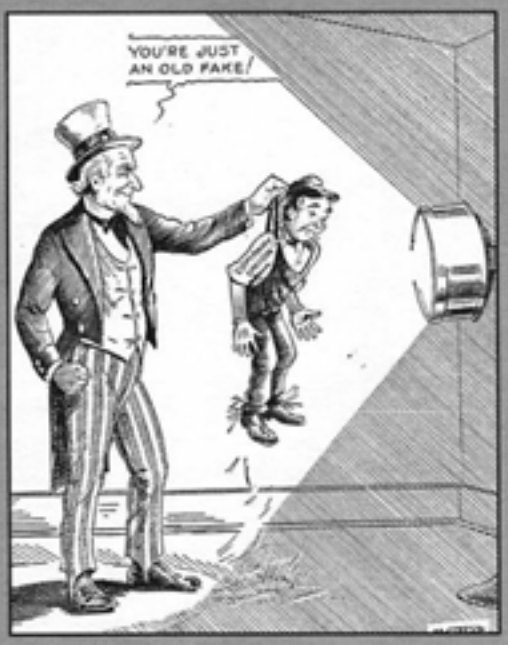
From the outset of the war, transit was considered a key industry and our Canadian members were largely

with Gray Coach Lines between Toronto and Detroit was the impetus to establish Toronto Greyhound Lines in 1937. After the war, Toronto Greyhound became Eastern Canadian Greyhound Lines (now represented by Local 1415).

National Trailways

The Motor Carrier Act tied railroad-owned bus companies to their existing routes and blocked the type of amalgamation Greyhound had developed. Thus, in order to preserve and extend their routes, several companies formed associations which were the beginning of the National Trailways Bus System.

The companies which began the system in the mid-1930s were Santa Fe Trailways, Missouri Pacific Trailways, Burlington Trailways, Frank Martz Coach and Safeway Lines. Many other companies quickly joined the Trailways network.



Faced with Amalgamated organizing campaigns, Greyhound attempted to form company unions.

In 1945, two formerly independent companies in the Trailways network formed the Continental Bus System, Inc., which quickly expanded through the Rocky Mountains and Southern United States.

Enter the Amalgamated

The Union's first foray into the burgeoning over-the-road system began in 1934 when it started with organizing portions of the Greyhound system. In 1935, the labor movement had obtained the passage of the National Labor Relations Act, popularly known as the Wagner Act (which was then touted as the "Magna Carta" for labor in the United States). This Act gave employees the right to organize and established the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) to administer the labor laws of the land.

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exempted from military service. Members found other ways to serve the war effort.

At the 26th Convention in Cincinnati in September 1939, the delegates took action to protect members who were called into service. The resolution, similar to that of World War I, stated that any member entering the service during the war was relieved from paying dues and per capita tax, and upon return would be reinstated to active membership with all rights and privileges and without loss of seniority.

At its fall meeting in 1940, the GEB voted to donate $2,000 to the Canadian government for defense purposes. In a thank you letter to the Union, Canadian Prime Minister Mackenzie King wrote: "It is with a large measure of satisfaction and encouragement that I learn of this practical expression of the sympathy of your membership in the cause to which the government and people of Canada are devoted."

With the war devastating Europe, the North American continent was called upon to increase production. Expanded industrial efforts quickly increased transit employment and led to higher wages.

The United States entered the war on December 7, 1941, when the Japanese sneak attack on Pearl Harbor destroyed part of the American Pacific fleet. Amalgamated members in Hawaii performed repeated acts of heroism that day.

Some twelve and a half million American men and women joined the armed forces. The AFL unions

Local unions and the Auxiliary supported the war effort.

Over the Road Industry, continued

Conditions for the Greyhound workers were poor. Drivers worked long hours over bad roads with run-down equipment. They had no job security—they never knew when they signed off a run one day whether they had another run waiting for them the next day.

In the early 1930s, the first organizational attempts among Greyhound workers were made under the National Industrial Recovery Act, the forerunner of the National Labor Relations Act.

While an international vice president, Executive Vice President Sam B. Berrong was active in organizing the over-the-road industry for the Amalgamated. Meeting with U.S. President Harry Truman, from left to right, are International Secretary-Treasurer O.J. Mischo, Berrong, Local 689 President Walter Bierwagen and President Truman.

Greyhound managements were vicious in their opposition. They did not hesitate to fire all the workers who had joined the Union, or even those who had talked about it. When this tactic failed, they attempted to form and operate company unions.

Management was not the only foe to organization. The Amalgamated had to battle with the Transport Workers Union, the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen and the Firemen and Engineermen for representation of the Greyhound workers.

Although passage of the Wagner Act gave workers the right to join a union of their choice, when the workers at Pennsylvania Greyhound Lines attempted to join Division 1063, they were immediately and summarily discharged. This set the backdrop for the first case ever argued before the new NLRB.

On December 7, 1935, Pennsylvania Greyhound Lines was found guilty of violating the new law and ordered to cease interference with the right of its employees to join the Amalgamated and to withdraw recognition from its "dummy union." This led to an NLRB conducted election and the first contract between the Amalgamated and Greyhound.

About the same time that the Pennsylvania case went to the NLRB, the employees of the Washington, Virginia and Maryland Coach Co. were attempting to

Draftees are transported by members of Division 241 in Chicago.

immediately pledged to work for an all-out victory. They agreed to forego the right to strike during the war, asked for creation of a War Labor Board, and sought a wartime cessation of jurisdictional disputes with the CIO.

As in World War I, a War Labor Board was established. The first case to be heard before the new Board involved employees represented by Division 1277 (Los Angeles, California). The Amalgamated local had been raided by the TWU and the BRT in an attempt to destroy a closed shop contract between the local union and Los Angeles Motor Coach Company. The Board ruled that the TWU and BRT were barred from soliciting or accepting Amalgamated members.

The War Labor Board issued several favorable decisions for the Amalgamated, including a 1942 decision setting the wage rate for Local 85 (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania) at $1.10, the highest in the United States.

As more and more members were sent overseas, women entered the industry in unprecedented numbers. During World War I, the Union had permitted women to work as conductors but had refused them membership. At a 1942 GEB meeting, the Board ruled that women employed as bus operators would be allowed to become members with the same rights and privileges as men.

Also, in 1942 Division 192 (Oakland, California) was the first to negotiate equal pay for women driving heavy buses.

With the war creating a shortage of transit workers, the Los Angeles railway advertised for more operators.

LABOR HERALD

TRANSIT MEN WIN!

AMALGAMATED STREET CAR UNION WINS GREATEST DECISION IN LABOR HISTORY

Headline in Labor Herald after Supreme Court victory.

organize into Division 1079. After the company dismissed several employees for their union support, the Union filed charges with the NLRB. As with Pennsylvania Greyhound, the NLRB found the company had violated the Act and ordered the workers reinstated to their jobs with back pay. But this company appealed the constitutionality of the new law all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court.

The result was a total victory for the U.S. labor movement when the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the Act. As AFL President Green proclaimed after the ruling: "[It] must be held as a triumphant achievement for the American Federation of Labor and its friends who fought so persistently and so hard to secure the enactment of the National Labor Relations Act."

Pennsylvania Greyhound was the tip of the iceberg. By July 1937, Pacific, Eastern and Dixie Greyhound were also organized. In 1940, there was a bitter raid on the employees at Pacific Greyhound by the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen. Although the raid was unsuccessful, one Amalgamated member was brutally murdered resulting in indictments of BRT officials.

In 1937, Division 1119 had signed an agreement with Frank Martz Coach Company, and Divisions 1042 and 1043 had organized Buckeye Stages and Penn-Ohio Coach Lines.

By December 1938, the drivers on Central, Illinois and New England Greyhound had given the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen "the bum's rush" and joined the Amalgamated. This resulted in the establishment of several new local unions, including Division 1202 in New York and 1205 in Boston.

In 1939, another election was held among the Pennsylvania Greyhound workers when the upstart young C.I.O. union, the Transport Workers, tried to gain representation. By an overwhelming margin, the workers voted to remain with the Amalgamated.

In 1941, Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins arbitrated her first contract dispute in a case between Pennsylvania Greyhound and the Amalgamated. The award included a ¼-cent per mile increase, time-and-a-half overtime for regular drivers, and 50 cents a night

continued on page 68

The war brought many women operators into the Amalgamated. Pictured here is a woman operator represented by Division 993 in Oklahoma City.

In an initial victory that would spawn three years of appeals, Division 1300 (Baltimore, Maryland) won an NLRB ruling ordering the Baltimore Transit Company to withdraw support from its "company union" and recognize the Amalgamated. The employees did not actually win an NLRB election until 1945, after the employer had lost its appeal to the courts.

In a landmark case, the United States Supreme Court ruled that the Virginia Electric Power Company violated the National Labor Relations Act by forming a company union to head off an organizing drive by Divisions 1177 (Norfolk) and 1220 (Richmond). The company then hastily signed a closed shop and checkoff arrangement with the inside union. The company was ordered by the court to repay $90,000 in dues to the employees.

Responding to President Roosevelt's request, the General Executive Board canceled the 1943 convention due to the war.

On May 9, 1945, Germany surrendered, but the war in the Pacific continued. After the death of President Roosevelt, Vice President and former Missouri Senator Harry S. Truman succeeded him.

On August 15, 1945, Japan also surrendered after the United States dropped atomic bombs on Nagasaki and Hiroshima.

The Reins of Power Pass

In 1944, a close friend of President Mahon's, P.M. "Paddy" Draper, died. Draper had organized the Canadian Trades and Labour Congress in 1897 and for 40 years served as its secretary-treasurer and president.

That same year Magnus Sinclair (from 113 in Toronto), who had served on the GEB for 40 years, and Edward McMurrow (from 241 in Chicago), the first international vice-president, retired. The old guard was leaving.

At their September 1944 meeting, the GEB appointed Abe Spradling as acting international president, since W.D. Mahon was spending his winter months in Florida.

Over the Road Industry, continued

for regular drivers held away from home terminals due to a suspension of service. The award failed to grant any increases for extra drivers and received mixed reviews from the Union.

When the Amalgamated attempted to organize the employees of Capitol Bus Company in Philadelphia, the company immediately discharged the union adherents. This precipitated a work stoppage in 1944. The company finally recognized Division 1184 (now 1195) after a ruling from the War Labor Board.

Down through the years, the Amalgamated was to have many hard fought battles in the over-the-road industry. As the Union emerged from World War II, 95 percent of the workers in the industry had been organized under the Amalgamated's banner. This strong position in the industry would remain for the next half century.

The Amalgamated later negotiated an agreement with Greyhound permitting union decals on the buses. Pictured here are Earl Cannon (left), chief negotiator for Greyhound, and International Vice President Ed Oliver, who became executive vice president in 1965.

Spradling, a former president of Division 627 in Cincinnati, was elected international vice president in 1927 and to the GEB in 1935. He had been an assistant to Mahon in the International office since 1936.

By 1945, over 92 percent of Amalgamated members were covered by vacation provisions and group insurance was provided in 268 contracts. The Union claimed 142,618 members.

At the 28th Convention held in Chicago in June 1946, W.D. Mahon officially resigned after 52 years of service to the organization he had built and dearly loved. Abe Spradling was unanimously elected to succeed him and the reins of power passed after five decades.

W.D. Mahon retires at the 28th Convention in Chicago on June 10, 1946.

Members of Division 1173 in Honolulu.

Heroics in Honolulu

When the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the 350 members of Amalgamated Division 1173, which represented the employees on Honolulu Rapid Transit, were heroic in the face of the devastation.

Many members were on duty operating their buses when the announcement of the attack reached them. As soon as they received the news, Amalgamated members rushed to report for duty wherever they were needed in the emergency.

Their first assignment was to aid in evacuating people from the bomb sites. Unmindful of their own peril, these Amalgamated members drove bus after bus of civilians to safer areas.

Other drivers volunteered for emergency work operating army trucks, thereby relieving soldiers for active combat duty to repel the air attacks.

The Amalgamated was the first union to negotiate a contract in Hawaii in February 1941.

Representatives for Division 85 in Pittsburgh argue a case before the War Labor Board.

"It is plain nonsense to say that our growing cities cannot afford better and more efficient public transportation, and first-class public transportation cannot be had with second-class wages and conditions any more than second-class equipment and second-class highways. Indeed, our growing communities cannot afford anything less than such first-class public transportation."

Abe L. Spradling, "Mass Transportation: Where Do We Go From Here?", 1956

Labor leaders meet with President Truman in 1949. Directly behind President Truman is Amalgamated President A. L. Spradling.

CHAPTER FIVE *1947-1958*

Tough Years For the Amalgamated

Abe Spradling assumed leadership of the Amalgamated at a time when events seemed to be conspiring against the Union. Although U.S. President Harry Truman's election in 1948 had been hailed as a great victory for labor in both the U.S. and Canada, a hostile Congress would not permit Truman to fulfill his promises to the labor movement.

Yet, the Amalgamated did manage to achieve one important victory in Congress, obtaining Social Security coverage for the Union's members transferred to public employment. Gains were also made during this period in pension, health plan and vacation benefits.

The Union would spend these years fighting the consequences of the Taft-Hartley Act, which was passed by the U.S. Congress in 1947. The law, which had been spearheaded by employers bent on impairing labor's gains under the National Labor Relations Act, created a new set of union unfair labor practices. These granted workers the right to remain non-union, outlawed certain kinds of strikes and boycotts, subjecting unions to injunctive and damage remedies, and otherwise set the stage for passage of state "right to work" laws. As implemented in many states, these state laws foreclosed all forms of mandatory dues payments to the Union (union security).

Although Amalgamated local unions reported significant contract wage adjustments, these increases failed to keep abreast with the soaring postwar inflation. Amalgamated members were actually losing ground (and purchasing power) due to the meteoric rise in the cost of living.

Private transit employers were in trouble. The public's love affair with the automobile, along with population migration into suburban communities not served by public transit, decreased transit ridership. These combined influences impaired transit operations and caused many companies to sell or abandon their systems during the 1950s.

The trend towards public ownership of transit operations had begun, but in many smaller communities, transit services were simply discontinued. Federal funding to assist public takeovers in the United States would not come until 1964.

Public ownership in the U.S. created problems for the

During the 1950s, wages could not keep up with postwar inflation.

Amalgamated because few governmental bodies had laws permitting public employee bargaining.

The year 1952 brought new leadership in Washington and Ottawa. Newly elected U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower was no friend of labor, but he did set the stage for passage of important civil rights legislation in 1957.

The labor movements on both sides of the border resolved longstanding feuds.

The AFL and the CIO merged to form the AFL-CIO in the United States, and the Trades and Labour Congress and the Canadian Congress of Labour merged to form the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) in Canada.

AFL President George Meany (left) and CIO President Walter Reuther agree to merge and form the AFL-CIO.

By the mid-1950s, streetcars and trolleys were rapidly disappearing. They had been replaced by the rubber-tired motorbus.

The Union mourned the loss of many of its pioneers during this period. The builder of the Union and its most dedicated servant, President Emeritus Mahon, died in Detroit on October 31, 1949. The year before, Magnus Sinclair, who had built up the Amalgamated in Canada and was a charter member of Division 113 in Toronto, passed away at his home. William Taber, who had served the Amalgamated as international treasurer from 1934 to 1946 and was financial secretary of Division 241 in Chicago for more than five decades, died in 1953.

Obtaining Social Security Coverage

In 1950, President Spradling spearheaded the drive to amend the Social Security Act. As the president/business agent of Division 241 would later recall:

> "Abe's greatest single contribution was probably the leadership he exerted which eventually brought about the coverage of employees of publicly-owned transit under the Social Security Act. Abe worked long and hard to bring this campaign to a successful conclusion and I know that members such as ours here in Chicago will, to their dying day, sing his praises for this alone."

Prior to this lobbying effort, Amalgamated members in the U.S. had lost the right to further participation and accrual of benefits under the Social Security programs due to public takeovers of private transportation systems. Benefits were lost in Cleveland in 1942, San Francisco in 1944 and Chicago and Boston in 1947. About 50,000 members on these systems were excluded from their former coverage.

As Spradling described the situation to a congressional committee in 1949, these employees, who had transferred from their covered private employment to exempted positions in the public sector, had lost their Social Security benefits under the Act even though they had paid into the system:

> "Ordinarily, if an employee leaves an occupation covered by the Act and enters employment exempted from its coverage, he does so with full knowledge of the consequences regarding his benefits under the Act. These employees, however, did not act of their own volition. They had no choice but to follow their jobs which were taken over by public agencies."

The last streetcar in Chicago, Illinois; Atlantic City, New Jersey; Altoona, Pennsylvania; Cleveland, Ohio; and Allentown, Pennsylvania.

Cartoon depicts the freezing of Social Security benefits before President Spradling led the fight for their restoration.

Under Spradling's leadership, the task was accomplished. Amendments to the Act effective in 1951 restored Social Security for those Amalgamated members transferred to public employment.

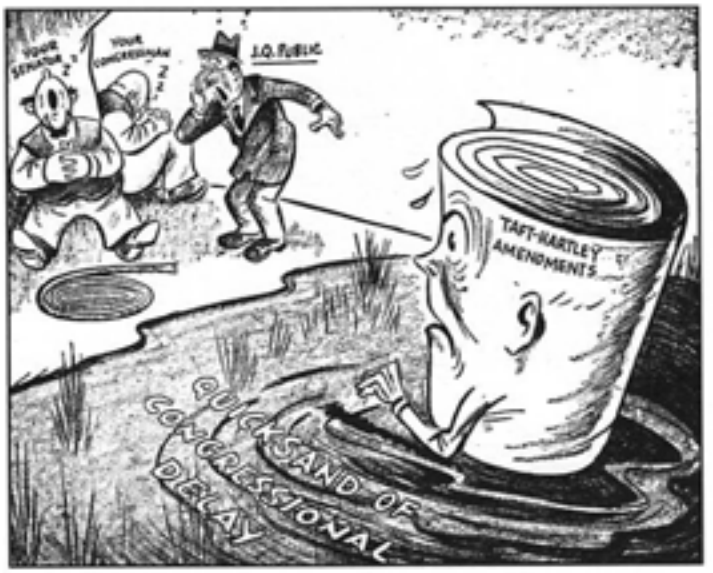
Legislative Battles on Taft-Hartley

The Taft-Hartley Act, passed by the U.S. Congress in 1947, amended the 1935 Wagner Act and imposed new and burdensome requirements on unions. These amendments were vigorously sought by the business community to strip away union workers' rights and advantages conferred by the original Act. During the congressional debates, business leaders used the anti-communist provisions written into the law to quell any debate on the law's numerous anti-labor provisions.

The Taft-Hartley Act imposed many new restrictions and duties on organized labor. It not only required union officers to take oaths that they were not Communists, but reinstituted injunctions, giving courts the power to fine unions for alleged violations; prohibited secondary boycotts and mass picketing; defined various forms of union activity as unlawful; denied unions the right to contribute to political campaigns; and outlawed closed shops while allowing states to impose further restrictions on union security by adoption of state "right to work" laws.

In the wake of Taft-Hartley, many states took full advantage of this opportunity to enact open shop laws and other union busting legislation. In 1947, 27 states enacted bills imposing restrictions on trade unions, including language outlawing strikes by employees of public utilities, which affected many Amalgamated members.

Under Spradling's leadership, the Amalgamated, along with the other unions in the AFL, vigorously fought for the repeal or revision of the Taft-Hartley amendments. But these efforts were unsuccessful. Although President Eisenhower vowed to seek amendments to promote healthy collective bargaining and strong unions, his commitments proved hollow.



By 1954, the Amalgamated's fight to repeal Taft-Hartley had given way to a battle to retain transit coverage under the amended Act, despite its problems. Tremendous pressure was being applied for amendments which would exclude public utility companies, including transit, from the Act's coverage.

Amalgamated members would then be subjected to state laws which President Spradling described as particularly vicious and anti-labor:

> "In Texas, for instance, it is practically impossible to organize a union today. New Jersey and Virginia have compulsory arbitration laws....
>
> * * *
>
> "You're placed in the position of taking the company's offer or else...and you cannot strike."

Despite Amalgamated efforts, in 1957 the National Labor Relations Board administratively removed 70 percent of transit systems from coverage under the Act by refusing to hear cases involving any transit employer whose annual gross revenues were less than $3 million.

Before the new rule was even final, the NLRB dismissed a case filed against the Charleston, West Virginia, transit system (now represented by Local 1493). In an

Vicious state labor laws were taking away the rights of working men and women.

appeal, the Union was successful in getting the decision overturned.

Meanwhile, the Amalgamated vigorously lobbied Congress and the NLRB to change the jurisdictional standard because large numbers of members were being denied the protection of the federal labor law. In 1958, these efforts bore fruit. The NLRB reduced the required annual revenue to $250,000.

The Battle Against Compulsory Arbitration

During the late 1940s and early 1950s, state after state passed legislation denying employees of public utilities the right to strike and requiring compulsory arbitration of new agreements. The Wisconsin anti-strike law provided for compulsory arbitration and made it a misdemeanor for public utility employees to engage in a strike.

In Milwaukee, the private transit employer of the members of Division 998 served the local union with a contract termination notice in October of 1948.

State laws denied our members the right to strike.

Months of contract negotiations followed. The company refused to reach an agreement and rejected the local union's request for voluntary arbitration in accordance with its contract. Instead, the company invoked the compulsory arbitration provisions of the Wisconsin law.

Division 998 unsuccessfully filed suit in Wisconsin Circuit Court to have the law declared unconstitutional. When the company petitioned the Wisconsin Employment Relations Board to compel compulsory arbitration under the state law, the local union members, in protest, engaged in a brief work stoppage.

The state-compelled arbitration concluded with a decision reducing the members' pay by more than $3 per week. Again, the local union mounted a legal challenge to the constitutionality of the law, taking the case all the way to the United States Supreme Court.

This time, the union prevailed. In February 1951, the Court ruled that the members of Local 998 were covered

President Spradling (far right) with International Secretary-Treasurer O. J. Mischo and Executive Vice President Robert Armstrong.

Abe Spradling International President 1946 -1959

Abe Spradling would attempt to convey to listeners that he was just an "old streetcar man"—nobody special. What made him special was his commitment and dedication to the Amalgamated.

In 1903, at the age of 17, he became a streetcar operator in Cincinnati. He made only 19 cents an hour. He joined the fledgling Division 627 in 1906 and was instrumental in the successful organizing of the streetcar workers in Cincinnati.

In 1915, Spradling became secretary of Division 627. Twelve years later he was elected an international vice-president but requested that President Mahon not utilize his talents because he wanted to continue serving his local union. Nevertheless, duty called and in 1934 he was made a full time international vice-president by acclamation.

A year later, he was elected to the General Executive Board. In 1936, he was summoned to work in the international office in Detroit. Due to the ill health of President Mahon and First Vice-President McMurrow, many of the administrative responsibilities of running the international office were assumed by Spradling.

Although he had already been doing a large part

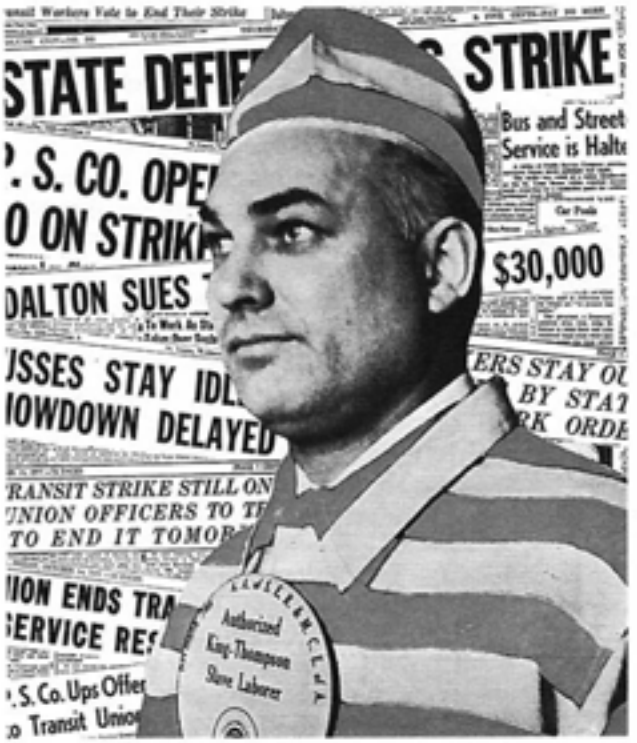
of the job, in 1944 Spradling was named acting international president by the General Executive Board. In 1946, he was elected international president upon Mahon's retirement.

When he retired at the 1959 convention in Miami, Florida, then-General Executive Board Member Ed Oliver (who would serve as executive vice president from 1965-1976) moved to make Spradling president emeritus. He more than adequately summed up the man and his dedication to the cause:

> "There is an office which the Amalgamated reserves for the truly great. There is an office for the man who stands above the crowd. There is an office we reserve for he who has led us in our struggles and asked no return but our victory. There is an office we hold open only to one who is a giant in his time of leadership...."

Spradling passed away in 1970 at the age of 84.

President Spradling with his wife, Mary.



The King-Thompson Law in Missouri was dubbed a "slave labor" law. President John Rowland of Division 788 (who would later serve as international president) appeared on the March 1956 cover of Motorman, Conductor, and Motor Coach Operator in prison garb to draw public attention to the plight of our members.

by the Taft-Hartley Act and that state law could not be used to prohibit them from organizing peaceful strikes.

Although President Spradling hailed the victory as "one of the most important...ever secured by labor," the Union would have to fight the battle again in the courts, the state legislatures and even before the U.S. Congress.

Overturning the King-Thompson Act

The next test of a public utility anti-strike law was the King-Thompson Act in Missouri.

Like the Wisconsin law, the Missouri act forbade work stoppages and lockouts in public utility disputes and provided for compulsory arbitration. It imposed severe penalties of $10,000 a day for violation, including the criminal prosecution of union officers.

In 1955, when the members of Division 788 in St. Louis, led by their then-president, John Rowland, refused to work under the conditions imposed by the compulsory arbitration award, they engaged in a three-day work stoppage.

The Governor immediately sued for money damages against the local union. The Union welcomed the suit because it wanted to test the constitutionality of the law. The members of Local 788 sported buttons proclaiming themselves "Authorized King-Thompson Slave Laborer."

At the last minute, however, the parties mediated an agreement and the law was not tested.

The same constitutional issue arose again six years later in Kansas City in a dispute between the Kansas City Public Service Company and Division 1287.

When the state court enjoined a peaceful strike, the Amalgamated once more appealed the case all the way to the United States Supreme Court. In a 1963 decision, relying on its prior Milwaukee ruling, the Court found the Missouri law unconstitutional and preempted by the Taft-Hartley Act.

In 1958, President Spradling testified against such state public utility compulsory arbitration and seizure laws before a U.S. Senate committee. In opposing such legislation, President Spradling distinguished the Union's commitment to voluntary arbitration from the inherent danger of compulsory arbitration imposed by state law:

> "The International Union has consistently followed the policy of encouraging reference of all disputes to voluntary arbitration when direct settlement has been impossible. Indeed, the principles of voluntary arbitration have been so deeply rooted in the philosophy of this Union that the Constitution and By-Laws provide that no strike will be approved until the local union has offered and the employer has refused arbitration."

Division 788 members display the victory sign when a contract is reached in St. Louis.

Spradling went on to explain that while voluntary arbitration encourages bargaining and good faith settlement efforts, the Union's experience under the state compulsory arbitration laws was just the opposite. Collective bargaining had broken down where transit employers could invoke such laws. Both parties were afraid to suggest bases for settlement lest the offer become a "floor" or "ceiling" in the compulsory arbitration proceedings. Spradling also noticed that the negotiators had no need to take responsibility for any settlement when there was always recourse to arbitration. In addition,

Toronto's new subway trains. The subway was bui to carry 40,000 passengers per hour.

Division 113 Follows Its Work

When Canada sought to put its first subwa into operation in Toronto, the members o Division 113 who operated buses along routes that would now be served by the subwa were concerned about layoffs and the ability of th bus operators to "follow their work" into the sub way.

Beginning in 1952, a committee of Division 11 executive board members began meeting with th company to discuss the operation of the subway an its effect on the employees. The topics of discussio included layoffs, surplus operators, job arrange ments for conductors who could not qualify as op erators or drivers and for other workers in the barn rates of pay and working conditions for subway per sonnel, and the training required for the operatio of the new equipment.

The initial problem was a surplus of 221 opera tors. The company and the union reached an agree ment by which the deficit was reduced to 30 opera tors through attrition and opportunities to transfer t

A 1951 strike by members of Division 689 brought the Capital City to a standstill.

the maintenance department.

They also agreed that operators with failing health would get the subway collector jobs.

The local union then negotiated wages for the subway operators, guards and collectors. The operators and guards received an 8-hour guarantee plus allowances.

The local union also negotiated a training program. During the training, the workers were guaranteed their regular rate for the day.

This first leg of the subway, which ran along Yonge Street, was the forerunner of the entire rapid transit system which operates in Toronto today and whose workers are represented by Local 113.

The Union would develop an expertise in negotiating agreements which allowed the members to "follow their work" with advancing technology. Such agreements would later be reached in Portland, Oregon (Local 757), Buffalo, New York (Local 1342), San Jose, California (Local 265), Seattle, Washington (Local 587), Sacramento, California (Local 256), Calgary, Alberta (Local 583), Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (Local 85), Washington, D.C. (Local 689), Baltimore, Maryland (Local 1300), Atlanta, Georgia (Local 732), and Los Angeles, California (Local 1277).

Approximately 250,000 came to view the first two cars of the Toronto Subway at the Canadian National Exhibition. The subway began operation on March 30, 1954. (Canada Pictures, Ltd.)

compulsory arbitration clogged bargaining because the parties multiplied their demands for submission to the arbitrator.

Defense Fund Woes

As employers increasingly refused to resolve contracts by voluntary arbitration, more and more local unions were forced to strike. During this period, Division 85 (Pittsburgh), Division 113 (Toronto), Division 732 (Atlanta), Division 1222 (Los Angeles), Division 1225 (San Francisco), Division 1277 (Los Angeles), and Division 1300 (Baltimore) were all forced to strike when their employers refused to arbitrate.

The longest railroad strike in the nation's history occurred when the members of Division 900 (Waukegan, Illinois) struck for 91 days against the North Shore Line.

The strike occurred only after a presidential fact-finding commission agreed that the union's demands were reasonable and justified, but the railroad refused to grant them. During the strike 15,000 commuters signed petitions supporting the strikers.

Ultimately, the strike settled with virtually every original demand included in the contract.

Although the BRT attempted to take credit, Division 900 won an important victory for the workers on the North Shore Railway.

These strikes put an incredible strain on the International Union's Defense Fund, which was allocated only 6 cents of the $1.20 monthly per capita tax. Not only were strikes more frequent than at any other time in the Union's history, they also seemed to last longer. By June 1948, the amount remaining in the Defense Fund was dropping toward $200,000.

At every convention, Spradling would plead for more money for the Fund. As a result, at the 1949 Pittsburgh convention the delegates voted to assess each member $1 per month not to exceed $3 per year to rebuild the Fund. At the 1953 Vancouver convention the delegates agreed to raise the per capita contribution to the Defense Fund to 36 cents, a 30-cent increase. In addition, minimum strike benefits were lowered by $5 to $15 per week. The benefit was to return to $20 per week when the fund reached $2 million.

Still, by 1958 the Defense Fund was once again dangerously low with only $500,000 remaining.

Labor Mergers in the United States and Canada

In two historic mergers which mended longstanding feuds in the labor movements in the United States and Canada, the AFL-CIO and the CLC were formed.

In 1952, the AFL Executive Council reactivated a committee to meet with leaders of the CIO to discuss

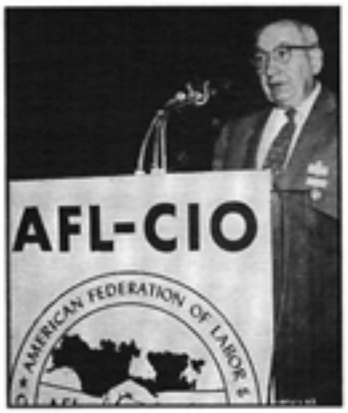
The AFL-CIO and the CLC are formed.

uniting the two groups. The first product of these discussions was a 1953 no-raiding agreement.

In 1955, the groups ended their 20-year split with an agreement to unite into the AFL-CIO with George Meany as president. The combined federation totalled 15 million members.

A similar split in Canada was also mended. The CIO unions in Canada had formed the Canadian Congress of Labour while the AFL unions remained affiliated with the Trades and Labour Congress.

In 1953, both groups appointed committees to draft resolutions urging the affiliates of each to refrain from raiding. Further discussions eventually led to the 1956 merger of the groups into the Canadian Labour Congress, which began with a membership of over one million.



As a former member of the AFL-CIO Executive Council, International President Spradling had the honor of nominating all 27 vice presidents at the 1957 convention of the AFL-CIO.

The Bitter Battle with Transcontinental Bus System and the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen

During the summer of 1953, the Transcontinental Bus System (TBS) acquired ownership of American Buslines, Inc., through a bankruptcy proceeding. At the time, TBS was the second largest over-the-road bus operator—only Greyhound was larger.

Three Amalgamated locals jointly represented the American Buslines employees. In 1957, with the expiration of the contract approaching, the BRT filed a representation petition for these employees with the National Labor Relations Board. But even after the Amalgamated handily won the election, the unions' efforts to secure a contract settlement failed. On July 1, 1958, the Amalgamated members began a strike which would last for more than a year.

On two other divisions of the TBS system, Continental Bus System and Continental Western Lines, other Amalgamated locals were also forced into long strikes in July 1958 when TBS failed to reach agreement on their contracts.

At the time of these strikes, TBS employees were earning $12 less per day than the Amalgamated-represented Greyhound drivers and had no health and welfare plan.

While these Amalgamated strikes against TBS properties were in progress, the BRT settled contracts with other TBS units with virtually no improvements for their members. In a contract with Continental Dixie, BRT agreed to a 7 1/4-cent mile, 3 1/2 cents less than Amalgamated members were receiving on Greyhound.

After more than a year on strike, the Amalgamated members employed by Continental Western Lines voted to go back to work under the company's terms for a negotiated settlement. The BRT quickly instigated a decertification campaign, and then became a party to the case in an attempt to raid the Amalgamated.

Although the Amalgamated's "raiding" charges against the BRT were sustained by the AFL-CIO and the BRT was ordered to withdraw from the NLRB proceedings, BRT officials refused to comply with the AFL-CIO directive.

In the resulting NLRB election among Continental Western employees, the BRT raiders prevailed. Shortly thereafter, they agreed to accept, without ratification, the same substandard contract they had previously negotiated for employees of Continental Dixie.

Executive Vice-President Position Created

At the 29th Convention in Los Angeles, California, in 1947, the Amalgamated elected its first executive vice-president, Robert B. Armstrong. As an international officer, Armstrong had once served a jail term in the 1920s because he refused to desist from legitimate union activities during an organizing campaign in Indianapolis.

Robert B. Armstrong was named the first executive vice president in 1947.

When Armstrong's name was placed in nomination by a union brother from his home Local 788 in St. Louis, Missouri, President Emeritus Mahon rose to speak:

> "Mr. Chairman and delegates, I arise at this time on this nomination to warn this convention that you are nominating a jailbird. It is a serious matter for a convention to consider and I want you to think about it and consider it....
>
> " I didn't want to take up your time, but just to say that Bob Armstrong stood firm and he got three months in jail for a promotion of this organization. That, I think, should certify to the character of Brother Bob Armstrong and therefore, I heartily second the nomination...."

When Armstrong died a year later, he was succeeded by Sam Berrong, a General Executive Board member from Division 900 (Waukegan, Illinois).

In 1957, after Berrong's retirement, the GEB appointed John Elliott to fill the office. He held it until he was elected international president in 1959.

Several other distinguished officers would hold the

The Winnipeg workers voted to return to the Amalgamated Association in a referendum vote.

executive vice president position including future International Presidents John Rowland and James La Sala. This position is presently held by Ellis B. Franklin.

Winnipeg Returns to the Amalgamated

After 38 years, the employees of the Greater Winnipeg Transit Commission voted by an overwhelming margin to return to the Amalgamated after an agreement was worked out with the rival representative, One Big Union (OBU).

The return was initiated in 1954 when an invitation was extended by the Amalgamated's Western Canadian Conference to the OBU to send delegates to the conference. OBU representatives continued to attend these annual meetings until the Winnipeg workers voted to return to the Amalgamated.

When the merger of the Trades and Labour Congress and the Canadian Congress of Labour occurred in 1956, the OBU was granted affiliation with the understanding that it would attempt to affiliate with a national or international union.

The OBU-represented Winnipeg workers quickly recognized that the only logical choice was with the Amalgamated. Shortly thereafter, the affiliation vote occurred and Division 1505 was born.

Raid in New Jersey

Throughout this period, the Amalgamated continued to suffer raids from the Transport Workers and the BRT. Bitter battles were waged with these two unions in cities throughout the United States. On occasion, even unaffiliated independents embarked on raiding forays.

During 1947, an independent union posing as the United Transport Workers of America attempted to raid Amalgamated members represented by the New Jersey State Council in Divisions 819 (Newark), 820 (Union City), 821 (Jersey City), 822 (Paterson), 823 (Elizabeth), 824 (New Brunswick), 825 (Oradell), and 880 (Camden).

In a brief filed with the NLRB, the Amalgamated exposed the rival "union" as a phony front, dominated by a single family. In an NLRB-conducted election at 51 polling places held on February 18, 1947, the members, by a 12 to 1 margin, retained the Amalgamated, which had represented them well for 55 years.

Jackie Gleason Becomes Honorary Member

On June 6, 1952, over nationwide television, Jackie Gleason, the comedian performer of "Cavalcade of Stars" and the popular comedy show "The Honeymooners," was made an honorary member of the Amalgamated.

Gleason portrayed the character of Ralph Kramden, a New York City transit bus driver. President Spradling presented Gleason a plaque making him an honorary member. Brother Gleason said he would wear his union button with pride.

When Gleason's television wife, Alice Kramden, played by Audrey Meadows, came to Detroit in 1956, Division 26 took the opportunity to meet with her and make her an honorary member of the Women's Auxiliary.

President Spradling presents Jackie Gleason with his honorary membership.

Mrs. "DSR" (Detroit Street Railways).

GEB Member Fred C. Powers (third from right) led campaign to drive the anti-labor transit firm out of Little Rock.

Union Owned Company in Little Rock

The transit system in Little Rock, Arkansas, was saved from abandonment in 1956 by the remarkable tenacity of the members of Division 704 and the solidarity of the local labor movement.

The story began with a strike in June 1955 when the employer, Capitol Transit, refused to agree to a neutral third member for an arbitration panel. The company hired a full crew of strikebreakers the moment the union members went out on strike.

The union remained solid, and the Little Rock public generally refused to ride the scab operated buses. After six months, Capitol Transit was in such bad financial condition that it could not pay its franchise tax and asked the city for a fare increase to stay in operation. The pro-labor mayor and city council turned down the request, and Capitol Transit surrendered its franchise.

General Executive Board Member Fred Powers approached the general manager of Des Moines Transit Co. and suggested he form a corporation to operate service in Little Rock.

After looking over the situation, the manager decided to organize a private stock company and the city granted a franchise to the new Citizens Coach Company.

The new company badly needed cash to operate, and the Division 704 members came forward and pledged their pension funds in the old Capital Transit Co., about $60,000, as well as personal funds. Sister unions in Little Rock also subscribed for stock.

On March 2, 1956, the first buses on the new all-union bus service began rolling with Division 704 members operating the equipment and owning stock in the company.

Little Rock's Mayor Woodrow W. Mann at the wheel of the first bus put into service by the union-supported Citizens Coach Co.

Public Relations Campaigns to Increase Ridership

Expanded industrial activity and fuel rationing during World War II caused transit ridership to soar to unprecedented heights in the United States and Canada. Ridership quickly plummeted in the 1950s, however, as cheap motor fuel encouraged prior riders to abandon buses for their automobiles. Rapid population movements into suburban areas further decreased transit usage and availability.

With transit employers facing tough economic times, several local unions decided that tough, aggressive action was needed to preserve members' jobs.

Division 313 in Rock Island, Illinois, had in five years lost over 50 percent of their operators and 75 percent of their mechanics due to the downturn in revenues and riders on the Rock Island-Moline City Lines.

In 1954, the local union outlined a plan including publicizing the seriousness of the issue through newspaper advertisements, editorials and direct mail appeals as well as through better public relations between the operators and the public.

Local businesses in Rock Island promoted the local division's campaign to increase bus ridership.

The plan was successful in increasing the passengers on the local buses and saving jobs.

Following Division 313's lead, similar campaigns were undertaken by other local unions.

Division 1093 in Kalamazoo, Michigan, conducted a passenger survey which resulted in increasing peak hour ridership.

Division 1145 (Binghamton, New York) took to the air waves and successfully portrayed the transportation woes as a "civic problem." They followed this up with a door-to-door city campaign. The result was a "healthy increase in ridership."

Advancement in Pensions, Health Plans and Vacations

While inflation kept real wages down, large gains were made in the areas of pensions, health plans and vacations.

An important milestone for the Union came in a 1949 pension arbitration award involving Divisions 241 and 308 in Chicago. The locals' pension proposal was presented by the International Union's General Counsel O. David Zimring. In a precedential award, the arbitration panel agreed with the Union that pension benefits under the established plan should be related to an employee's length of service and earnings, rather than provided as a flat pension amount for all retirees.

The Chicago award set off a round of arbitrated pension plans in major U.S. cities.

Health care issues entered more prominently into negotiations in this period. Many of today's plans are based on provisions fought for in the 1950s.

Division 689 (Washington, D.C.) negotiated a model health plan in 1959 with comprehensive coverage in a new labor management health center. Members, their families and pensioners received such benefits as regular physical checkups, specialists' services, surgical care, hospitalization, obstetrical care, lab services, x-rays, electrocardiograms, and physical therapy, along with sickness, death and accident payments.

Our divisions fought for employer funded plans or plans that required only a modest employee contribution.

In 1947, 492 local unions had obtained vacations with pay but only 19 of them had three weeks for senior employees. By 1958, 569 locals had vacations with pay, the majority had obtained three weeks for senior employees, and 49 local unions had negotiated four weeks of vacation.

The Amalgamated made important advances in benefits.

The labor management health center negotiated by Division 689 provided health care for the members.

In 1947, the highest U.S. hourly rates were in Chicago (Locals 241 and 308) at $1.55 per hour and Seattle (Local 587) at $1.50 per hour. In 1951, Division 616 in Windsor, Ontario, was the first Canadian local union to reach the $1.40 hourly rate for operators. A cost-of-living clause was also built into the contract.

Although wage rates rose substantially throughout the period, real wages fell because of the spiraling cost of living. While the cost of living was relatively stable in 1949, it began climbing rapidly in the spring of 1950. By May of 1951, consumer prices were 10.2 percent higher than in January of the prior year.

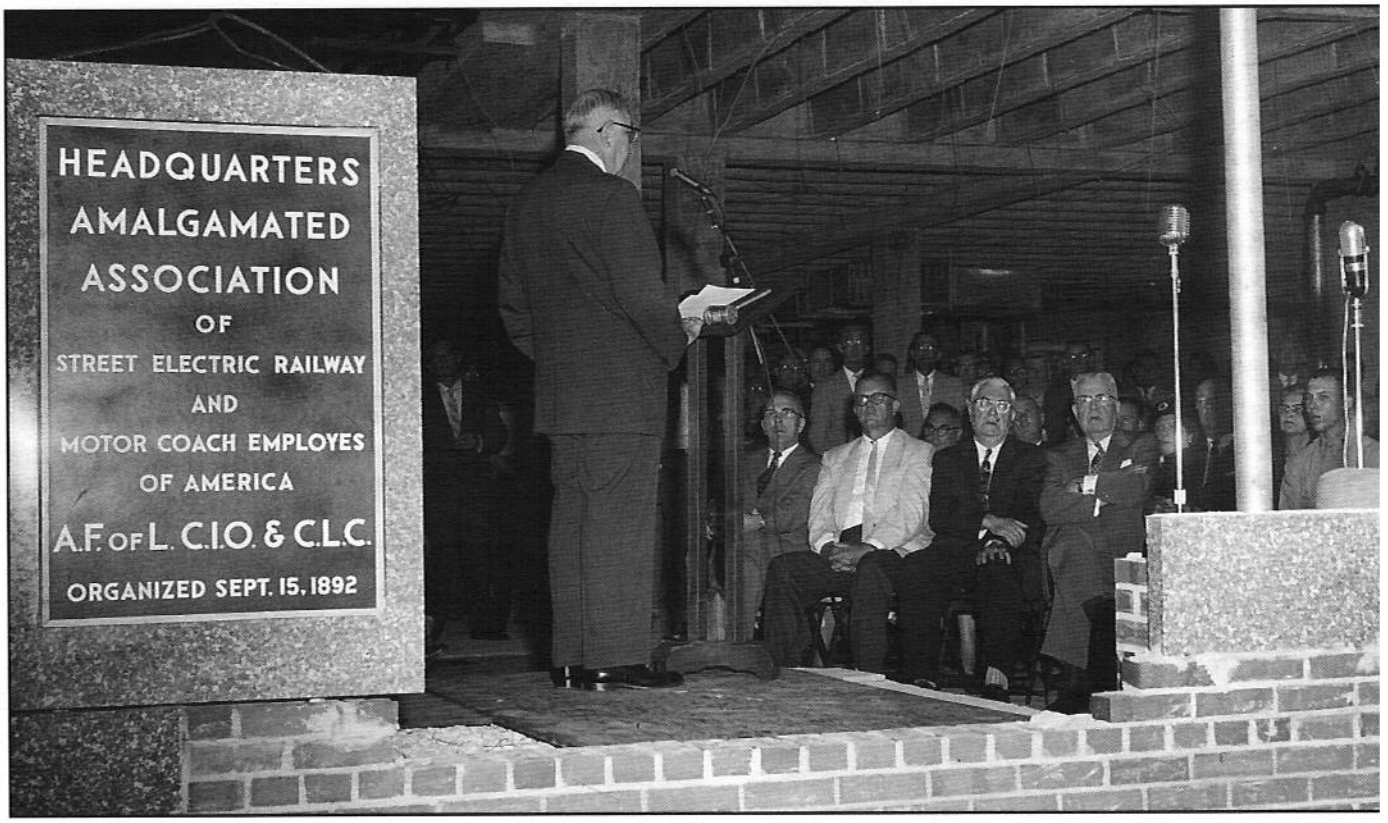
President Spradling repeatedly urged local unions to negotiate cost-of-living or escalator clauses in their contracts to protect their negotiated rates against rising prices. Such clauses were first negotiated on Greyhound and in Boston, Chicago, Milwaukee and Minneapolis-St. Paul.

By 1958, the largest local unions had such escalator clauses. The highest rate was obtained by Divisions 241 and 308 (Chicago)—$2.52 per hour (including a 10.5-cent COLA)—followed by Division 589 (Boston), Division 1005 (Minneapolis-St. Paul) and Division 85 (Pittsburgh).

In 1956, a new contract between Pacific Greyhound Lines and Divisions 1222 (Los Angeles), 1225 (San Francisco) and 1471 (San Francisco), which had the distinction of then being the only Amalgamated local union with a woman president, led to the claim of the "world's highest rates." The contract provided an over-the-road mileage rate of 9.65 cents and an hourly rate for local operators of $2.20. The minimum daily guarantee for all drivers was boosted from $16.20 to $17.64. The contract also included cost-of-living provisions.

International Headquarters Moved to Washington, D.C.

At the 1953 convention held in Vancouver, British Columbia, the delegates amended the Constitution to move the International's headquarters from Detroit to Washington, D.C. The General Executive Board was



President Spradling speaks at the ceremony to lay the cornerstone for the new home of the Amalgamated in Washington, D.C.

instructed to take this action as soon as possible.

By the 1955 convention in Denver, Colorado, the land where the international office stands today had been purchased and architectural designs for the building, estimated to cost $525,000, were completed. The delegates agreed to fund the new structure.

On the 64th anniversary of the Amalgamated's founding in 1956, the cornerstone of the new building was laid by President Spradling. Into it was encased the fifteenth anniversary issue of *The Motorman, Conductor and Motor Coach Operator*, a copy of the Constitution and General Laws, the Rituals, convention proceedings and other historical documents. In his prepared remarks on this occasion, President Spradling concluded:

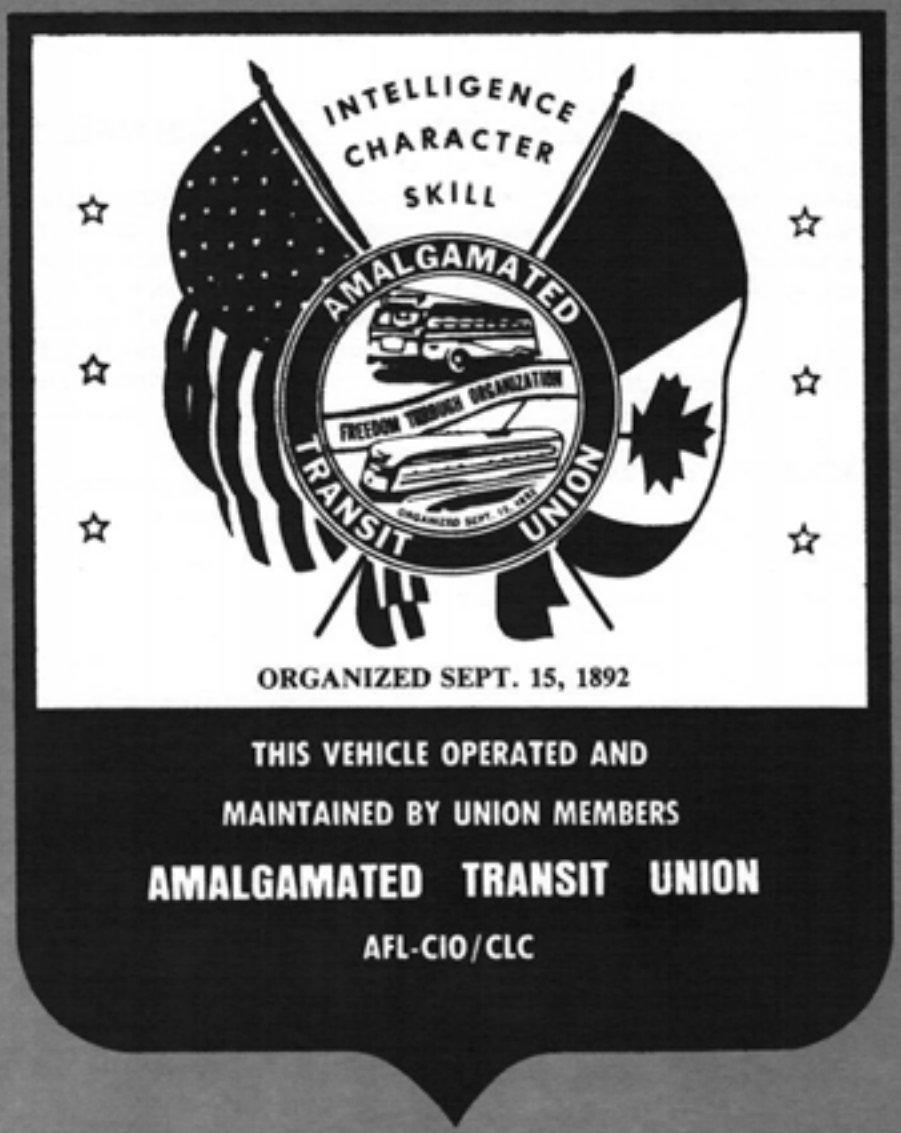
> "And so it is with our own Association; our urge for continued betterment and progress is greater than ever. We look forward to having our new home recognized as the home of good neighbors, as the home of a labor organization of men and women that is determined to maintain its place in the forefront of those in our nations who are fighting for the continuous bettering of life for all of us."

During the 1957 convention in Washington, D.C., the newly completed headquarters building was dedicated.

In 1959, Spradling would step down from the presidency and the mantle of leadership would pass to John Elliott.

"I desire to emphasize the importance, what it means to our members to not only adopt a legislative program that would protect the rights of our members, but to follow through on such a program....[Y]ou can bargain collectively, you can arbitrate until the cows come home, you can strike until there is nothing left and after you have done all of that, those in political power merely have to sit down, draw up a new set of rules, outlaw everything you have and you have lost everything."

John M. Elliott, 35th Convention,
Miami, Florida, September 1959



Through the Rapids Into an Era of Progress

Elliott Elected

The fourth president of the Amalgamated, John M. Elliott, was elected by acclamation in 1959 upon the retirement of President Spradling at the 35th Convention in Miami.

With admirable foresight, Elliott led the organization and its members largely unscathed through a sometimes perilous transition from private to public employment. The era saw the disappearance of most private transit companies and their replacement by publicly owned systems serving entire metropolitan areas.

The Amalgamated achieved much during the turbulent times of the 1960s and early 1970s—a period successively marked by high unemployment, skyrocketing inflation, and social and political upheaval. The Union's progress was remarkable.

Gearing Up for Battle

The situation in 1959 was not promising. Even as the convention was meeting in Miami, the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act, popularly known as the Landrum-Griffin Act, was being signed by President Eisenhower. All U.S. unions soon found their elections, trusteeships and internal democratic processes subjected to strict governmental standards.

The Union was enduring long and difficult strikes. Those on American Bus Lines, Continental Bus System and Continental Western Lines, which had begun in July 1958, were still in effect.

Don't Ride
CONTINENTAL TRAILWAYS
Bus System

Lines on Strike:

CONTINENTAL TRAILWAYS

July, 1958

Do Not Patronize Unfair Bus Lines
And Buses Driven by Strikebreakers!

These three separate parts of Transcontinental had engaged in many union busting and strikebreaking activities. Company instigated litigation against the strikers was used as a weapon.

Strike-related benefit payments and expenses so drained the Defense Fund that a $1 per member monthly assessment had been instituted. It would remain in effect, moreover, for 48 months until the Fund was finally restored to $3 million. In an attempt to prevent any recurring shortfall in the Defense Fund, the delegates to the 1961 Toronto convention agreed to raise the monthly per capita tax by 40 cents.

The Union's progress during the 1960s and early 1970s was remarkable.

The Amalgamated was also suffering from the effects of declining ridership and a retrenchment in the transit industry. It had lost some local unions due to strikes and others in private-to-public takeovers. Membership had steadily declined since 1948, and it would not be until 1965 that membership again began to rise.

In the face of these problems, President Elliott stressed the importance of undertaking legislative and political action to supplement efforts at the bargaining table. He warned delegates that municipal ownership was a "scheme to wipe us off the face of the earth," saying that the Union owed it to the members whose jobs were disappearing to see to it that transit played a major role in the life of every city.

Legal Department Established

Having moved its offices from Detroit to Washington, D.C., the Amalgamated could devote more attention to legislative and political activities.

President Elliott sought to accomplish these tasks. He established the first in-house Legal Department. Bernard

President Elliott and General Counsel Cushman confer.

Earle Putnam became general counsel in 1965 and has served in this capacity for 27 years.

Cushman, formerly with the law office of the Amalgamated's outside counsel, O. David Zimring, from the Labor Bureau of the Middle West, became the general counsel.

During his first term of office, Elliott made an initial round of visits to local unions throughout the United States and Canada. He urged the locals to participate in political and legislative activity, pointing out the need for state-level protections in the face of public takeovers.

Following the Toronto convention in 1961, the international president, with the assistance of the general counsel, held regional meetings for local union officers. The topics discussed included wage developments, cost-of-living clauses, problems of municipal takeovers, and the Union's role in metropolitan area planning.

Cushman left the Union to return to private legal practice in 1964. The Amalgamated's Legal Department continued to function under Earle Putnam, who became general counsel in 1965.

Early Public Takeovers

Many Amalgamated locals were already involved in state-level legislative activity. Local 1300 played a significant role in shaping legislation which was enacted in Maryland in 1961 providing for the establishment of a metropolitan transit authority to operate mass transit in the Baltimore area. The statute provided for the continued employment of workers on Baltimore's private transit system upon any takeover, protecting

In 1964, the Union changed its name from the Amalgamated Association of Street, Electric Railway and Motor Coach Employees of America to the Amalgamated Transit Union.

Elliott first became active in the Union when he attempted to organize the Philadelphia transit system drivers. The youthful organizer (standing, second from right) is pictured during that 1943 campaign with International Vice President Mischo (standing, third from left).

John Elliott International President 1959 - 1973

John Elliott began his working life as a truck driver in Philadelphia and at the age of 20 was already an organizer for the Teamsters.

He later became a streetcar motorman and then a bus driver for the Philadelphia transit system, where he was active in two unsuccessful Amalgamated campaigns to organize that property.

Elliott began his career with the Amalgamated as a union officer in 1942 as the first financial secretary, and then president, of Local 1195.

As a special organizer for the International Union, he quickly won recognition for his enthusiasm and success in persuading others of the benefits of union representation. These led to his selection as a full time international representative. By 1948 he had become an international vice president.

Following his election to the General Executive Board in 1955, he worked at the International's headquarters in Detroit, assisting President Spradling. He assumed the office of international executive vice president in 1957.

Elliott served Amalgamated as president between 1959 and 1973—some of the Union's most taxing years.

When Elliott died in 1988 at the age of 74, International President James La Sala expressed his appreciation for Elliott's leadership:

President Elliott "instructs" AFL-CIO President George Meany.

"John guided this organization through turbulent times in the 1960s, guaranteeing that our Union survived the transition of local transit service from private to public ownership. Many brothers and sisters are too new to the Union to remember him. But all owe much to Brother Elliott. His contributions to the ATU as we know it today were numerous and significant."

In 1960, Democratic presidential nominee John Kennedy met with the ATU executive officers and the General Executive Board.

the members of Local 1300.

That same year, local unions in Connecticut secured legislation permitting public acquisition and operation of transit systems with similar mandatory protections for employees of any private transit system which was acquired.

The members of Local 192 in Oakland, California, employed on the Key System also benefited from the foresight of their local leadership in obtaining state legislation protective of their rights. On October 1, 1960, after a five-year struggle, they went to work for a new public employer, the Alameda Contra-Costa Transit District, under a renegotiated contract with improvements in wages, benefits and working conditions.

Other Amalgamated locals managed to transfer their members to public employment without the benefit of protective legislation.

Tacoma, Washington, for example, assumed operation of the formerly private transit system there on February 1, 1961, with employees Local 758 had represented for many years.

In Savannah, Georgia, on July 7, 1960, a new transit authority took over the collective bargaining agreement and pension plan of the Savannah Transit Company, whose employees were members of Local 1324.

In Memphis, Tennessee, the transition to a municipally owned operation was accomplished on January 8, 1961. Since state law prohibited collective bargaining in

The first run by the city-owned Memphis Transit system was at 4:25 a.m. on January 6, 1961. The bus is driven by a member of Division 713.

public employment, the city entered into a contract with a private company to manage and operate the public system. The company, in turn, bargained a labor contract with Local 713, which had represented the employees of the former private company. This type of management company arrangement later became known as the "Memphis Formula."

Under the leadership of its then-president, John Rowland, Local 788 in 1963 negotiated the transfer of employees from private to public operation. The Bi-State Transit System took over the facilities of St. Louis

Public Service Company and 14 other private transit companies serving metropolitan St. Louis in Missouri and Illinois. The employees of these companies were merged into a single operation and employed by a private management company.

All the employees, both from Amalgamated locals and non-ATU unions, transferred representation to Local 788 and were brought under the Local 788 contract with their full seniority and wage increases which for many exceeded $1 an hour.

President Elliott congratulates Division 788 President John Rowland in overcoming the problems to formulate the Bi-State Transit System.

A year later, the members of Local 85 working for the Pittsburgh Street Railway and the employees of approximately 29 other private companies were transferred to public employment with the Port Authority of Allegheny County. State legislation won by the local union in 1959 established protective provisions for the transfer. As in St. Louis, the employees of the many companies had been represented by different labor organizations or in some cases were unorganized.

International Vice President Rowland was again instrumental in bringing these different groups under Division 85's then-current contract with preserved seniority. Some workers immediately received as much as $1.52 an hour wage increase. Thereafter, a new three-year agreement was reached except for wages, which were arbitrated. The award established a top rate of $3.31 per hour with a continuing cost-of-living clause.

The Amalgamated Loses in Miami

In stark contrast to what was occurring elsewhere in the industry, in Miami the Amalgamated suffered a bitter defeat which cost the members of Local 1267 their jobs and their local union its status as bargaining representative on the transit system. This painful experience brought home the need for federal labor protections, especially in those areas where the Union could not overcome the political clout of its enemies.

A public rally in Miami brought out 15,000 supporters of the striking members of Division 1267. Dade County was labeled "Scab County, U.S.A."

The arrangements for the Dade County public takeover of several transit companies previously owned and operated by W.D. Pawley had been on the drawing boards since 1960. Purchase of the system was to be financed by special revenue transit bonds issued by the County. Pawley was to retain substantial control over day-to-day transit operations pending retirement of the bonds.

In January of 1962, Local 1267, which represented three of the four companies, failed to reach a new labor contract with Pawley beyond the purchase date. The local's 700 members began a work stoppage.

When the County took possession of the system, it refused to employ the workers unless they surrendered their right to bargain and to strike. The members refused.

The County secured a state court order prohibiting any strike for the purpose of coercing the new transit authority to bargain with the union. It then began operating with strikebreakers, who had only two days of training.

For the next four months, the members of Local 1267 continued to refuse employment upon the County's terms and the Amalgamated paid lockout benefits. Meanwhile, Amalgamated attorneys litigated in the state courts and filed charges before the National Labor Relations Board. The Union contended that the County's transit operation, which was still substantially controlled by Pawley, remained subject to the National Labor Relations Act and not Florida law.

Although the litigation went on for several years, the

work stoppage was voluntarily terminated by Local 1267 members after four months. Ultimately, the legal challenges to the County's purchase arrangements for the transit system failed to establish continued coverage under the federal labor laws. The Union tried to take the issue to the U.S. Supreme Court, but it refused to hear the case. Dade was branded "Scab County, U.S.A."

The Federal Transit Legislation of 1964

Miami left no doubt that a public takeover orchestrated by anti-union forces could permanently deprive Amalgamated members of their jobs and completely eliminate bargaining and contract rights.

The Union's only recourse against another such experience was to lobby for protections under federal law. In 1963, the AFL-CIO's legislative director and Amalgamated General Counsel Cushman informed Congress that the labor movement would not support pending proposals for federal transit funding unless it included safeguards for collective bargaining. The AFL-CIO

Senator Wayne Morse (D-Oregon) sponsored the Amalgamated-drafted amendment that now appears as Section 13(c) of the Federal Transit Act. Here, Morse (right) meets with Amalgamated General Counsel Earle Putnam. President Lyndon Johnson signed the Urban Mass Transportation Act into law on July 9, 1964.

spokesman testified before the Senate committee: "We have seen in the Dade County situation not only the right to strike but the right to bargain go down the drain. This is the problem, among others...which is on the minds of every labor leader in America."

An Amalgamated-drafted amendment, sponsored by Senator Wayne Morse of Oregon, was attached to the mass transit legislation on the floor of the Senate in April 1963. Passed by a narrow vote of 52 to 41, the amendment would, in the words of ATU President Elliott, "preclude future Miami's with the use of federal funds."

During his five years in the White House, President Johnson signed 100 landmark legislative measures supported by the AFL-CIO. The pens used to sign these laws were donated to the AFL-CIO.

With only minor changes, the Senate provision found its way into the final bill which President Lyndon Johnson signed into law on July 9, 1964.

For the Amalgamated and its members, these provisions supplied the key to survival. These protections, which now appear as Section 13(c) of the Federal Transit Act, included guarantees that any time federal funds were provided to public transit systems, the workers would not see their wages and benefits, or other collective bargaining and job rights, jeopardized or curtailed.

The provisions were to become a lifeline for the Amalgamated and its members. Virtually all urban mass transit systems would go public with the help of federal dollars.

Implementing the Federal Protections

After the federal program was enacted, the Union prevailed upon the Secretary of Labor to publish guidelines requiring grant applicants to negotiate agreements with the union representatives of the employees which would set out the protections.

During the following years President Elliott periodically reported to successive conventions upon the International Union's efforts to implement the statutory protections.

At the time of the New Orleans convention in 1967, 36 local unions had signed Section 13(c) agreements negotiated through the International Union. An additional 62 local unions signed such agreements prior to the New York convention in 1969.

By the 1971 convention in Las Vegas, President Elliott could report that practically all local unions representing local transit employees in the United States enjoyed some form of Section 13(c) arrangement.

These agreements spelled out in detail the protections

An early 13(c) agreement was signed between Division 713 and the management company operating the transit system for the Memphis Transit Authority.

When the San Diego (California) transit system was acquired by a non-profit corporation, Division 1309, representing the operators, and the IBEW, representing the maintenance employees, negotiated a 13(c) agreement.

Signing a 13(c) agreement between the ATU and the State of New Jersey are the officers of the New Jersey local unions. Among those pictured are General Executive Board Member Charles D. Cicchino (third from left); Frank A. Carroll, Business Agent, N.J. State Joint Conference Board (third from right); and current International President James La Sala, then president of Division 824 (far right).

afforded to the employees affected by a particular grant. There were provisions protecting the members' jobs and assuring them of the continuation of their collective bargaining, arbitration, and pension and contract rights. Monetary allowances, retraining and priority of employment rights were also extended under certain circumstances.

While the Amalgamated succeeded in retaining its members in the private to public takeovers, there were notable exceptions. Locals in Mobile, Alabama; Elgin, Illinois; and Tampa, Florida, could not protect their members when anti-union public officials chose to forego federal funds in order to take away bargaining and pension rights and benefits of Amalgamated members.

In Macon, Georgia, ATU collective bargaining and seniority rights were destroyed and the president of Local 898 was denied employment when the city acquired the private system with local funds. Similarly, in Dallas, Beaumont, and San Antonio, Texas, local money was used to purchase the private transit systems. The members of Locals 1338, 1031 and 694 were then converted to public employment under a state law that did not allow for full scale collective bargaining. They lost their negotiation rights.

The Union also found it could not maintain employment guarantees on new systems being built with federal funds. A newly constructed high speed line between Lindenwold, New Jersey, and downtown Philadelphia was built by the Delaware River Port Authority with local toll bridge financing in lieu of federal funds. Operation of the Lindenwold line had harmed members of Local 880 employed by the competing private transit company, Public Service Coordinated Transport. The Lindenwold line was evidence that the Section 13(c) protections could be bypassed if transit management eliminated employees' job rights before making application for federal funds.

These experiences reinforced President Elliott's repeated warnings that state and local protections comparable to Section 13(c) were indispensable if the membership was to be protected against circumventions of the federal program.

Division 788 and Bi-State signed a 13(c) agreement in 1968.

The Push for State-Level Protections

Local union officers heard the message. In state after state, they lobbied and persuaded legislatures to adopt labor protections in laws which created public transit bodies to acquire and continue operating the many private transit systems which were finding it so difficult to compete with the private automobile.

Through the Amalgamated's efforts, these new laws included job and pension guarantees and provided for the continuation of collective bargaining and arbitration on the publicly owned transit systems. The protections in the federal law often gave local unions the ammunition to convince state legislators that comparable provisions should be enacted on the state level.

BART Resists Preferential Hiring Principles

The 1960s and early 1970s saw the start-up of new transit rail systems, mostly constructed with federal funds, in such cities as Washington, D.C. (Local 689), Sacramento (Local 256), Buffalo (Local 1342), Baltimore (Local 1300) and Atlanta (Local 732). In each instance, 13(c) protections insured that Amalgamated members "followed their work" to the rail jobs.

The new rail system constructed by Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART) to serve the Oakland and San Francisco areas, on the other hand, presented somewhat unique circumstances. The rail system was being constructed by a new transit district with jurisdiction only over the rail service. Pre-existing bus services would remain under separate control. BART was to become a bellwether test for the Amalgamated.

Construction of the BART system with state bond funds was already well underway in 1964 when the federal transit program was first enacted. It was the Amalgamated's view that career transit employees in the area should be allowed to follow their work onto the new system with all their union representation, seniority, contract wages and pension benefits.

It was not until 1968, as BART was rapidly completing its system with federal assistance, that Section 13(c) arrangements for existing transit employees in the Bay Area were jointly negotiated by the Amalgamated and other unions in the area.

The agreement did not spell out what jobs on the new system, if any, BART would have to extend to employees of Peerless Stages and Greyhound (represented by Local 1225), AC Transit (represented by Local 192), the San Francisco MUNI system and the Southern Pacific Railroad, all of which would be affected by the BART start-up.

Under the 13(c) agreement, any jobs received by Amalgamated and other union members on this new system were to be determined by further negotiations and, if necessary, arbitration.

In the spring of 1968, the Amalgamated and other unions reached an interim preferential hiring plan with BART. Employees of the existing transit systems would be given notice of, and the first opportunity to fill, the available operating and maintenance jobs under standards set by BART.

Despite this agreement, BART had already hired office and technical employees in its pre-operational phases from outside the industry. The hiring of these unorganized workers created an organizing opportunity seized upon by the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), which had not previously represented transit workers in the Bay area.

SEIU demanded recognition from BART and insisted that the SEIU would protect the newly hired employees against any assault by the workers in the other transit systems who might later be hired for the jobs, despite the Section 13(c) arrangement BART had reached with the other unions.

From the spring of 1968 until June 1972, when an arbitrator's award under the Section 13(c) agreement finally set out the order of priority for filling BART jobs, every new hire became further grist for the SEIU organizing mill.

Some 1,105 employees of existing systems made applications under the terms of the arbitrator's award. By November 1972, however, only 73 ATU-represented employees had reported to work on BART out of a total employee group of almost 600. To complicate matters even further, SEIU threatened a strike if the priority hiring and recognition of seniority under the arbitrator's award impacted any of the employees it was seeking to organize.

Although no strike occurred, the Amalgamated and other unions representing Bay Area employees were forced into representation elections for the BART system conducted by a state labor agency. By sheer force of numbers, the SEIU had

An artist's rendering of the Bay Area Rapid Transit system.

the upper hand in these elections.

Nevertheless, an effective organizing campaign led by International Vice President John Rowland produced a partial victory for the Amalgamated. With 16 unions competing, the ATU won the operating subunit of the five separate units established and Local 1555 was born. But the Amalgamated was unable to prevail over the SEIU among the maintenance and clerical employees.

President Elliott (right) testifies before BART Board of Directors as General Counsel Putnam and local union attorney Stanley Neyhart listen.

Robberies and Assaults upon Bus Drivers

In 1965, the Richmond, California, chief of police lamented to the ATU convention delegates: "Bus drivers in our area should get hazard pay. No matter how many ways we try, it seems we just cannot stop the robberies of the bus drivers." This was an accelerating problem, not only in California but in many metropolitan areas.

In 1961, reports from Washington, D.C., told of "a wave of holdup men and hoodlumism that has been hitting the city's transit system on late-at-night lonely runs." A member of Local 1001 in Denver, Colorado, received gunshot wounds in a holdup attempt. The bullet lodged in his spine.

As time passed, concerns grew even more urgent. In January of 1967, a Toronto bus driver and member of Local 113 was the victim of an attempted robbery during which he was viciously attacked and stabbed 11 times, once in the lung, with two other stab wounds grazing his heart. Fortunately, he recovered and his assailants were imprisoned.

Other victims did not survive. In 1961, a Birmingham bus driver and member of Local 725 was shot and killed over $63.00 which the murderer took from the farebox. A driver-member of Local 268 in Cleveland was killed in March 1967 in a holdup attempt where the loot totaled only $54.00. In Seattle, one assailant received the death penalty and two others life imprisonment after being convicted of the robbery slaying of a Seattle transit driver, a member of Local 587, in May of 1967.

The ATU met with a professor of criminology (center) to discuss effective methods of reducing assaults and robberies of bus drivers.

Felonious Assault Insurance Coverage Negotiated

Local and international officers throughout the Amalgamated were diligently searching for solutions to the robbery and assault problem.

Until some way could be found to prevent these crimes, the International's first response was to obtain a $50,000 felonious assault insurance policy. The insurance coverage could be negotiated with transit industry managements at a reasonable premium.

Local 788 and the St. Louis transit system were the first to negotiate such insurance coverage in October 1967. Other transit systems soon followed and the insurance program quickly spread throughout the United States. The maximum available benefit under the policy would be increased to $100,000 in 1981.

The Union also offered to help finance a federal transit research grant to explore methods of reducing the risks of bus driver assaults and robberies.

Still, the Amalgamated recognized that the problem could not wait for studies. Confronted by the daily increases in the number of robberies and assaults upon its members, the Union came up with its own solution.

Exact Fare Proves Effective

In May 1968, the safety issue came to a head after members of Locals 689 and 1300 were killed in robbery attempts. President Elliott, taking bold action, promptly announced that union drivers would refuse to carry cash on night runs in Washington, D.C., and Baltimore.

The management of the Washington transit system first ridiculed the Union's proposal, calling it a harebrained scheme. But the system of ready cash fares put into locked fareboxes won the approval of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Commission, which ordered that passengers without exact fares be given a script (voucher) refund.

Within weeks, some form of ready or exact fare system as proposed by the Union was put into effect in many other cities throughout the United States.

By the New York convention in 1969, Elliott reported that exact fare was then in effect in 39 cities and would be extended to nine more cities, including New York and Chicago, by January 1970.

STATEMENT OF THE AMALGAMATED TRANSIT UNION

John M. Elliott, International President

May 17, 1968

It is the position of the Amalgamated Transit Union that public transportation is a vitally needed service to any community, especially this community. Any thoughts about suspending service after any hour of the evening, be it 6 p.m., 10 p.m., or midnight, is unthinkable. It is the position of this union that night service, as well as day service, should be improved rather than reduced.

Our membership, however, can no longer expose themselves to the risk of being held up, beaten and shot solely for the company's money which they are compelled to carry on their person. The exposure is far too great in present day Washington.

The problem we confront is how do we maintain this essential public transportation during evening hours under conditions which would guarantee not only the safety of the general public but that of our members, the drivers who are to provide this service.

The solution to this problem must be found now, before there is any further loss of life or injury suffered at such tragic cost to the victims and their families. We believe that at least a temporary solution is available and that it is available now.

It lies in eliminating the source of the danger which is obviously the driver's possession and handling of cash sums, including tickets and tokens. Therefore, until a more permanent solution can be worked out for the D. C. area, and to provide the general public the uninterrupted service that is required, we are recommending that our members continue to provide night service but that after 6:30 p.m. they should not handle or accept from the company the cash, tickets and tokens they normally carry. This means that they will be operating night service by accepting only the exact fare from the general public.

We believe that the riding public, if it knows the facts, will cooperate with us in arranging to have the exact fare ready which, as usual, will be dropped into the locked farebox on the buses. In this way, our members will never, at any time after 6:30 p.m. in the evening, have in their possession, any cash, tokens or tickets or other items of value which could be stolen.

At the moment, we have no other satisfactory answer to this problem. Any driver carrying cash sums is a ready target to the holdup artist and any driver who thinks he can adequately protect himself by carrying a gun or other weapon is making a tragic mistake. Several of our members around the country who may have thought otherwise, are now dead or suffering from injuries received in defending themselves in holdup attempts.

If it proves that the program we recommend should result in a loss of fares to the D. C. Transit System, we believe the remedy is clearly to make up this deficit with public funds provided in the interests of maintaining an essential service to the community. We shall look to city officials, to other community leaders, and, if necessary, to the President and Congress of the United States to see that these funds are provided and that adequate public transportation continues to be operated in the Nation's capital.

Elliott's statement on exact fare.

New York Governor Rockefeller proclaimed to the 1969 convention delegates: "The exact fare plan is a terrific idea. It has just been adopted here in New York City. [H]ow many measures are there that can cut time, improve safety and preserve a bus driver's sanity all at the same time? You hit the jackpot on that one."

Canadian ATU members first saw the introduction of the exact fare system in Vancouver in April 1970 and in Calgary in May of the following year.

The final report of the U.S. government's robbery and assault study issued at the end of 1970 confirmed that exact fare had largely solved the robbery problem and had gained widespread acceptance from the riding public, bus drivers and management.

Division 109 officers in Vancouver were instrumental in the introduction of an exact fare system in that city.

Adoption of the ATU exact fare program was far from universal, however, and it was often resisted by management. (Twenty years later, for example, the officers of Local 717 would still be urging the Manchester, New Hampshire, transit authority to use exact fare.)

By the time President Elliott left office in 1973, the ATU's drive for exact fare was all but complete. Senseless robbery deaths and assaults on transit drivers did not entirely cease. A Chicago driver, for example, was killed in a robbery attempt in September 1973.

For years to come, ATU leaders would continue to work with transit managements and public officials addressing the problems of assaults and other violence still experienced today on metropolitan area transit systems.

ATU Promotes Transit as a Tax-Supported Public Service

In the early 1960s, the Amalgamated was on the defensive in almost every situation where its members' jobs, pensions and union contracts were at stake. By the end of the 1960s, however, those rights and interests were largely secured by federal and state legislation, and negotiated employee protective arrangements were in place. This enabled the Union to think more positively about what could be done to revitalize the industry and to enlarge its role so as to create new job opportunities.

In March 1970, Elliott appeared before the U.S. Congress to urge that all city transit systems become publicly owned and operate on a

The Move Toward Racial Integration Within the Union

Reflecting racial employment patterns in the society at large, the private transit industry generally remained closed to the employment of black and other minority job applicants except in menial jobs. But in the last years of World War II, at the urging of President Roosevelt's Committee on Fair Employment Practice, many transit companies began to integrate operating jobs and make them equally available to blacks and other minorities, especially in the northern industrial cities.

Included among this group were the three private transit companies in Chicago, which later combined into the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA). They offered available employment opportunities to all qualified applicants regardless of race. As openings occurred, many blacks were hired as operators.

This change to open employment practices took place without any opposition from the leadership of Local 241. The local refused to allow debate on the subject at union meetings and insisted that all citizens had the right to equal job opportunities regardless of race.

Still, against the backdrop of increased racial disturbances in urban areas in the late 1960s, the Amalgamated was confronted with charges that its black membership was being unfairly denied election to

union leadership positions.

In a few cities, such as Detroit and Cleveland, blacks had been elected to local union office but the International Union lacked minority representation in any of its elected positions. In 1967, some black officers and members met in New Orleans, Louisiana, and conducted the first meeting of what was to become the ATU Black Caucus.

In the summer of 1968, a battle for political control of Local 241 broke out among the membership employed by the Chicago Transit Authority. The local president, James J. Hill, had announced that he was resigning his local office to assume the duties of international secretary-treasurer effective October 1, 1968.

This spurred a group composed mainly of minority members calling itself the "Concerned Transit Workers" (CTW) to begin a carefully conceived campaign to take over the local, or if that failed, to substitute their own organization as the CTA drivers' bargaining representative.

CTW supporters staged a five-day wildcat work stoppage beginning July 2, 1968, demanding that the local union deprive pensioners of the right to vote in

General Executive Board Member John Rowland directed the affairs of Local 241 when it was placed in trusteeship by the International Union.

local union officer elections. These rights were guaranteed by both the Constitution and the local union bylaws.

The CTW contended that "white, conservative, retired members controlled the union." It was true that the pensioned members accounted for 25 percent of the total 12,000 members, but no more than 600 votes had ever been cast by the retirees. When President Hill refused to deny the pensioners' voting rights, the CTW leaders negotiated a guarantee of no reprisals from the CTA management and allowed their followers to return to work.

Later, the CTW succeeded in blocking the local union officers' recommendations that a special election be held to fill the office of president and nine other vacant leadership positions. This forced the local union leaders to fill these offices by appointment. President Hill offered to appoint black members to seven of the ten union posts available, including two full-time paid positions. These proposed

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"fare free" basis supported by general tax funds. The ATU announced it would favor public ownership provided employee rights were protected and would oppose any further fare increases pending establishment of a fare free system.

As President Elliott first formulated the policy objective of the Amalgamated:

> "We are firm in our conviction that revitalization of our industry should be predicated on better service to the public and equitable cost sharing by all those who benefit from mass transit. We want to go beyond fare-stabilization or even fare-reduction to a totally different theory of publicly financed transportation in our metropolitan areas—to no-fare transit under public ownership, supported entirely by public funds."

In the following months, the International and its local unions repeatedly filed statements and testified in opposition to proposed transit fare increases in Washington, D.C., New Jersey, Chicago and St. Louis.

Meanwhile, the Union aggressively campaigned for tax supported public operation of an expanded system. The 1971 convention in Las Vegas, Nevada, adopted a comprehensive resolution outlining the no-fare concept.

When the ATU blanketed members of the U.S. Congress with copies of the proposal, a majority of the legislators voiced favorable interest. Soon after, U.S. Secretary of Transportation John Volpe was compelled to

admit in a letter to Elliott that a demonstration of no-fare transit might well be worthwhile.

Early experiments with reduced fares showed that they were an effective means of increasing ridership. When the Atlanta system reduced fares to 15 cents in 1973, a 60-percent reduction, the number of patrons transported by Local 732 members jumped by more than 21 percent. Similarly, Local 1064 witnessed a doubling of ridership when the Terre Haute, Indiana, bus fare was reduced from 25 to 15 cents in 1972.

Perhaps the biggest success story would come in 1974 in Salt Lake City. There, the voters approved a dedicated

sales tax which had been lobbied for by members of Local 382. The fare reduction which followed brought a phenomenal increase in ridership of more than 200 percent.

Computer-Based Dial-a-Bus Advocated

Furthering the Amalgamated's philosophy that transit was a public service which should be available to all, the Union also supported computerized paratransit operations manned by Amalgamated members to extend service into the suburbs and other low density areas.

In an open letter to the industry in July of 1970, President Elliott urged managements to explore the potential of fare-free transit with federal funding and to push for a comprehensive computer-based dial-a-bus experiment to enable the industry economically to extend the reach of its services to all taxpaying citizens.

Wherever he went and spoke, Elliott sought to generate political support for these concepts of transit as a public service both within the Union and among public and industry officials. The goal was not only to preserve existing jobs, but to change the industry itself and provide expanded work opportunities for Amalgamated members.

Organizing Activities

In the period after 1959, the Union achieved only limited success in organizing. It regained bargaining units in Hull, Quebec, where the employees of the Hull Transportation Company retained their membership in Local 591, and in Lansing, Michigan, where employees of Lansing Suburban Lines remained members of Local 1039. Victories in representation elections, however, were a rare occurrence.

Initial organizing efforts among Trailways employees of Queen City Coach and Smoky Mountain Stages failed in this early period. A breakthrough occurred on the Transcontinental Trailways system before the 1967 convention met in New Orleans. The International Union

International Secretary-Treasurer Mischo, and President Elliott meet with BRT President Luna and Vice President Parks to discuss joint representation of the Transcontinental bus system. Unfortunately, the NLRB rejected their idea of a national joint bargaining unit.

Integration, continued

appointments were immediately rejected by the CTW. It continued its efforts to seize outright control of the union through a second wildcat strike, on the eve of the Democratic Party's 1968 Convention in Chicago.

In the face of this 22-day stoppage and at the local officers' request, the International trusteed the local, placing it under the direction of General Executive Board Member John Rowland.

During the second stoppage, the courts ordered all strikers back to work and the CTA fired over 300 of the dissident drivers who refused to comply. The discharges of 100 drivers who filed grievances were later sustained in arbitration proceedings. Meanwhile, the CTW's campaign to become an independent union and win a representation election as the workers' bargaining representative replacing the ATU failed to overcome the legal difficulties presented by

After the election, the new officers of Local 241 dedicated themselves to local union harmony. Pictured from left to right are Recording Secretary Daniel McFadden, Second Vice President Ernest Hill, President Warren Scholl, First Vice President William Larsen, Financial Secretary James Pate and Warden Edward Barry.

the absence of any federal or state labor agency with jurisdiction over the CTA.

During the trusteeship, the local negotiated a new contract with the CTA. Notwithstanding a CTW-mounted campaign to reject the proposed contract settlement, it was approved by the membership in a secret ballot vote. The economic package was the largest in the history of the local, making it the first in the industry to achieve a $4 hourly wage for operators.

After approval of the contract, an election of all local union officers was successfully conducted for a regular three-year term beginning July 1, 1969.

The election was hotly contested. Many of the offices had far more candidates than ever before. There were 6,300 ballots cast, resulting in the election of an integrated leadership, including the first black full-time officer, Jim Pate, who was elected as the local's financial secretary-treasurer.

After installation of the newly elected officers, all

the litigation which had been brought against the local union by the CTW was dismissed and the trusteeship of Local 241 was terminated.

Since 1969, Local 241 has continued to function on a basis of racial equality and has again emerged as one of the Amalgamated's strongest locals.

In the aftermath of the racial crisis in Local 241, the international officers went to Las Vegas in 1971 for the Union's 41st Convention convinced that the International Union would also benefit from broadening the racial composition of its leadership.

President Elliott and the General Executive Board recommended to the delegates that a new position of tenth international vice president be created with the intention of electing a qualified black representative to it.

This proposal was overwhelmingly accepted by the delegates. Upon the recommendation of the international president, the convention then unanimously elected one of the delegates, Bruce Foster, president of Local 268 in Cleveland, to fill this position. Foster became the first black ever elected to serve as an international officer.

In the subsequent years, many others have followed in Foster's footsteps to serve as International Union officers.

In 1971, Bruce Foster became the first black elected to serve as an international officer.

had succeeded in affiliating an independent labor organization and brought approximately 400 employees of Continental Southern Bus Lines into a new Local 1534 in Alexandria, Louisiana.

The Union began to focus on organizing school bus drivers, especially in New York, West Virginia and Colorado.

Local 1181 took the lead organizing the employees of numerous school bus transportation companies in the New York metropolitan area. By the 1971 convention in Las Vegas, school bus drivers represented by Local 1181 received the same hourly rate as paid to bus operators on the New York transit system—then $4.93 per hour.

In 1966, another campaign was undertaken in the over-the-road industry on the Transcontinental bus system, which was second in size only to Greyhound.

To overcome company resistance and problems of compliance with the complaints of raiding before the AFL-CIO, the Amalgamated and Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen put aside their long rivalry and agreed to seek joint representation in a national bargaining unit which would combine Amalgamated-represented segments of the system with other segments which were then either represented by the BRT or unorganized. Unfortunately, a 1969 NLRB decision rejected the appropriateness of the joint national bargaining unit.

Determined to turn defeat into victory, the Union thereafter announced an all-out drive to organize the remaining non-union Transcontinental properties. By 1971, the five Continental Trailways southern bus companies had been brought under contract with Local 1531.

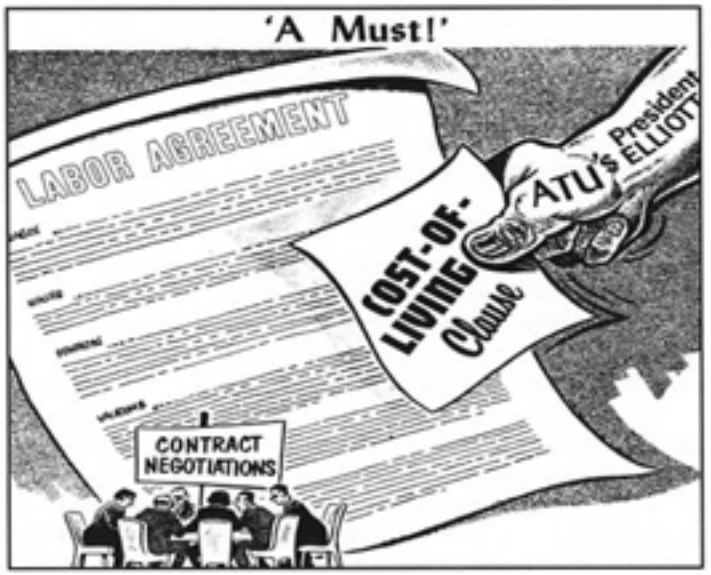
The Amalgamated also began to aggressively organize transit system office and other salaried employees. Many of these employees saw the value of union membership and voted for Amalgamated representation, for example, in Local 1309 (San Diego, California), Local 587 (Seattle, Washington) and the locals comprising the New Jersey State Council.

Bargaining for Cost-of-Living and Wage Improvements

Like Spradling before him, Elliott did whatever he could to encourage Amalgamated locals to negotiate cost-of-living protections into every labor contract. He told local unions to strive for additional increases beyond the cost of living which alone would bring Amalgamated members real wage improvements, boosting their standard of living.

During these years, the Amalgamated and its locals worked incessantly to force employers to agree to full percentage cost-of-living protections and to include additional wage improvements in their contracts.

At Elliott's urging, the General Executive Board first announced a policy that all international and local union officers should "insist on cost-of-living protection in all future agreements." Then, in April 1968, the Board went a step further and announced that international officers would not recommend contracts for a period of more than one year without full cost-of-living protections.



In city after city, local union officers placed cost-of-living protections at the forefront of their economic demands. In many instances, when managements refused, local unions stayed with these demands until they were won either through a negotiated strike settlement or in an interest arbitration award.

In January 1970, when such an award reduced the full percentage cost-of-living clause in the Local 689 contract citing the company's deteriorating financial

On the 25th birthday of the first negotiated cost-of-living clause, the ATU had achieved this protection in over 146 cities.

During the strike, Local 583 members had to turn in all city possessions including their hats, badges and ticket floats.

The Municipal Transit Strike in Calgary

In Canada, Amalgamated members, unlike their U.S. counterparts, have long had the right to bargain with their public transit employers. But they have sometimes found a strike the only available means to back up their legitimate demands for a fair contract. So it was that in 1961 the members of Local 583, employees of the Calgary city transit system, were forced to engage in one of the longest municipal transit strikes in Canadian history.

The local's strike against the city's mayor and city council lasted 37 days. It was 43 days before the Calgary transit system was back on the streets.

Calgarians had earlier elected a new mayor, an arch-conservative who ran on a campaign of reducing the city's expenses despite continuing high inflation. To the mayor and the city council, the local's bid for higher wages in the face of the city's budget problems was totally unjustified.

Like everyone else, the members of Local 583 were looking for higher wages to keep up with increasing prices, even though the unemployment rate among Canadian transportation workers had reached 17 percent and transit ridership in Calgary was down by more than seven million passengers over the prior 10 years. The transit system certainly wasn't going to pay for itself and other jobs were scarce.

The local, led by its president, Leo Newman, made plain to the city council that the city transit workers had no intention of going along with the mayor's request for a no wage increase contract. The local asked for an 8-percent raise, but the mayor again said no increase.

After three months, the union applied to the Department of Labour for a strike vote and the wage talks collapsed. The mayor was reported to have stomped out, stating, "I'll see you all in hell before you get another penny."

Local 583 members were incensed at the mayor's belligerent and uncompromising attitude. They registered an almost 87-percent vote in favor of an immediate strike which began the week of the Calgary Stampede, severely reducing attendance. Declaring that the city was prepared to "hold out for six months," the mayor flatly rejected further meetings.

The local responded in a public statement that the mayor was refusing to negotiate a contract "on any terms but his own." President Newman said his members failed to understand how the mayor could hold the line on transit while at the same time water rates, electricity, taxes and gas under his administration had increased considerably.

The union, too, was preparing for a long strike. Many of Calgary's residents, including members of other unions, pledged their support and sent in contributions.

By August 4, 1961, with the strike then in its fourth week, city officials called for the appointment of a three-member commission. This commission would operate transit independent of the city council with the express mandate of getting transit service operating in the black, mainly by cutting nonpaying routes regardless of other considerations.

The local responded that its members would be "vitally interested" in any plans "providing better service for the traveling public." After the city council had tentatively approved the reorganization plan, the local's negotiating committee and the city commissioners returned to the bargaining table.

Progress was made towards a settlement when the local was offered fringe benefit improvements including increased longevity and holiday pay, along with job classification changes which gave a large number of members extra pay. Finally, the commissioners offered 8 cents an hour across the board for 1962 but refused any rate increase at all for 1961. For the members, this seemed to negate any other gains, and on August 15, a substantial majority rejected the city's offer.

This rejection spurred another outburst of ill will from the mayor, the commissioners and members of the city council. They began calling for the firing of all transit employees and the hiring of replacements to take their positions, giving priority to former employees who agreed to leave their union. President Newman charged that the mayor was more concerned with "breaking the

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condition, the International's leadership reacted by revising its traditional arbitration policy.

The General Executive Board issued a new directive stating that no local should arbitrate a contract longer than one year "unless an acceptable cost-of-living clause has already been provided and guaranteed." Whenever such guarantees could not be obtained, the GEB's action freed local unions from any duty to offer to arbitrate under the Constitution, and if they struck, their members could receive strike benefits.

In San Diego, Local 1309 engaged in such a strike after the San Diego Transit Corporation refused to arbitrate. Although unable to obtain continuation of its cost-of-living clause, the local became the first in the United States to set a $5 hourly rate for bus drivers under a 1971 three-year renewal agreement, with the top rate increasing to $5.28.

The favorable impact of these cost-of-living clauses on Amalgamated wage scales was already evident. The wage rates in Amalgamated contracts had gone up significantly since the 1959 convention, when $2.50 was the top hourly pay in the U.S. transit industry.

As of January 1, 1971, senior Amalgamated bus operators in the United States were receiving more than $4 an hour in at least 30 cities, with Local 241 in Chicago

Division 101-134 signed a 1969 contract with the first $4 per hour rate for operators in Canada.

leading the pack with a $4.78 rate. In Canada, the $4 barrier had been broken by Local 101-134 in Vancouver, with a top rate of $4.06.

By July of 1971, on the 25th anniversary of the ATU's first cost-of-living clause, President Elliott could report that 146 local unions had already negotiated such clauses into their agreements.

By the 1973 convention in Miami, the Union had negotiated a $6-plus top hourly rate for operators in Local 589 in Boston, Local 1309 in San Diego, Local 1179 in New York, and Local 757 in Portland, Oregon. In Local 1555, the BART wage rate for train operators was projected with cost-of-living protections to approximately $8 per hour by the contract renewal date in 1976.

In Canada, top operators' rates above $5 an hour had

been reached by Local 101-134 in Vancouver, by Local 107 in Hamilton, Ontario, and by Local 113 in Toronto.

In the over-the-road bus industry, top ATU mileage rates with cost-of-living protections in excess of 19 cents per mile had been negotiated on the Greyhound system, on New England Trailways, and on Canadian Coachways.

Because of the combination of relatively favorable times and the determined leadership of the International Union officers, the economic progress made by the Amalgamated for its members during the Elliott era was far greater than at any other period of its history.

Just as President Elliott had envisioned, for the 10-year period ending July 1, 1973, Amalgamated members and their local unions had outstripped inflationary advances in the cost-of-living index. Average hourly rates in the larger U.S. transit properties had advanced from $2.65 per hour in 1963 to $5.04 an hour 10 years later. More significantly, real, after inflation, wages were up each year for the entire 10-year period.

Amalgamated members, unlike other unionized workers and those still unorganized, had been able to achieve during this period significant improvements in their standard of living.

This In Transit graphic in 1969 displays the ATU's achievements in 1968.

Calgary, continued

union than with settling the strike."

Fortunately, cooler heads on the council prevailed and a tentative agreement was worked out for the period from January 1, 1961, through December 31, 1962. The settlement, although including only modest increases in four fringe benefits for 1961 and a 9-cent across the board wage increase effective in 1962, was indeed a victory for the members and officers of Local 583. They had taken on the entire forces of city hall under adverse economic and budgetary conditions and negotiated the best settlement available consistent with the times.

The officers of Local 583 with International Representative George Morrison (second from right) after counting the strike votes in July 1961.

"At times it has almost seemed as if our current problems are due to those very successes we have had in representing our members compared to the results obtained by workers in other fields in both public and private employment....Yet, by and large, we prevailed in resisting these schemes to undermine our hard-won collective bargaining agreements and labor protections."

Report of International President Daniel V. Maroney, Jr., 44th Convention, Washington, D.C., 1977

CHAPTER SEVEN *1973-1981*

Holding Our Own

Largely as a result of the foresight of John Elliott, the ATU had emerged as strong as ever from the difficult era of private to public transit ownership.

By 1973, the transition of city operators and mechanics to public employment was virtually complete. There were in excess of 160 publicly owned transit systems in the U.S., a more than 40 percent growth in less than five years. Only 45 privately owned operations remained in the 153 American cities with populations in excess of 150,000.

The public systems accounted for more than four-fifths of all transit riders and more than 80 percent of all transit employees. It was, then, in many respects a new world for the Amalgamated.

And under new leadership, the ATU in the 1970s would prove that it could not only persevere in the face of such a rapid and drastic industry transformation but emerge as a renewed and invigorated defender of work place justice.

At the 1973 convention in Miami, Florida, Dan Maroney accepted the gavel from outgoing President John Elliott.

The officers elected at the 1973 convention. From left to right: International Secretary-Treasurer Jim Hill, International President Dan Maroney and Executive Vice President Ed Oliver.

Maroney Elected

When the 42nd Convention opened in Miami, Florida, many delegates were convinced that ATU members and locals would require even more services from the International in order to play an effective role in the new collective bargaining climate which had been created. A sense of change was in the air.

Several months before the 1973 gathering convened, International Vice President Dan Maroney, who originally came out of the ranks as a Greyhound driver, had announced his candidacy for international president. Maroney pledged in his campaign to develop new ATU services and programs.

When a third candidate, GEB Member Walter J. Bierwagen, announced for the office in the pre-convention period, the International made arrangements for voting machines and booths to be placed on the convention floor. This was to be the first contested election for the Amalgamated's top office since its founding in 1892.

After the initial balloting of the convention delegates failed to produce a majority for any candidate, Bierwagen withdrew from the race, throwing his support to Maroney. On the second ballot, Maroney was elected to succeed Elliott by a margin of only 13 votes out of a total of 419 cast. In a demonstration of its commitment to democratic principles, the Amalgamated had chosen new leadership to guide it through the next decade.

Research Department Established

Shortly after his election, Maroney moved to implement his campaign platform, stressing future growth through the development of research, educational and leadership training capacities. Research services, including preparation of a monthly Research Bulletin and creation of a contract and pension data bank, were initially contracted for. They were later brought in-house.

In the fall of 1975, a Research Department was re-established at the international headquarters. In subsequent

In 1980, Joe Jaquay was hired as the ATU director of research. He continues to serve in this capacity.

years, the Research Department, with its full-time professional staff, would provide invaluable assistance to ATU locals in negotiations and arbitration proceedings.

First Education Program Developed

Maroney also moved to design training programs for local union leaders. The Amalgamated conducted its first round of educational conferences under Maroney's direction in 1976. Each local was invited to send representatives to one of three regional seminars. The first was held in Denver, Colorado. Seminars in Atlanta, Georgia, and Toronto followed.

Workshop topics included collective bargaining in the public sector, Section 13(c) employee protections, and transit legislation. A special section for local secretary-treasurers was presided over by International Secretary-Treasurer Ray Wallace. Other workshops were led by professional instructors and ATU staff members.

Another major training program was born at a 1975 gathering of local officers representing employees of the ATE Management Company.

Under questioning from union members attending the meeting, speakers from the U.S. Transportation Department admitted that training funds were available but

Maroney addresses the delegates attending the Union's educational seminar in Denver.

The Amalgamated's Triumphant Return to New Orleans

Following Dan Maroney's election as international president at the 1973 convention, the Amalgamated rededicated itself to unionizing unrepresented transit workers. Scores of organizing campaigns were undertaken across the U.S. and Canada.

Without a doubt, one of the most significant of these campaigns was fought in New Orleans, Louisiana.

As the 1970s opened, New Orleans was the home of the only major urban transit company in the U.S. without a unionized work force.

It had not always been so. New Orleans transit operators had been one of the driving forces behind the original formation of the Amalgamated back in 1892.

But in 1930, the membership of Local 2 had been beaten down in a walkout that began on July 2 of the prior year. Scabs broke the strike and a company-dominated "union" was formed.

For many years, the New Orleans company avoided true unionization by touting to its employees that they were the top wage earners in the South. And in fact they were as late as 1970. In that year, New Orleans exceeded the $3.40 hourly rate of Local 732 members in Atlanta by 4 cents.

But the story quickly changed. Over the next four years, Local 732 won an hourly rate increase of more than $2 while the operator rate in New Orleans increased by only 70 cents. New Orleans drivers also lagged behind in fringe benefits.

Discontent among the New Orleans workers was quick to surface. In 1974, the incumbent company union was threatened by separate organizing drives of the Auto Workers, the Teamsters and the Marine Engineers. The ATU soon joined the fray and was quickly able to secure a place on the ballot in the representation election scheduled by the National Labor Relations Board.

Despite a late start, the Amalgamated made a strong showing and was able to force a run-off with the Auto Workers.

The organizing campaign in a sizeable unit of approximately 850 drivers was an important undertaking for the Amalgamated. True union representation in a major U.S. city was at stake.

The ATU drive was headed by International Vice President Bruce Foster. General Executive Board Members John Rowland (who later would serve as

Family members join striking members at a rally of the newly organized New Orleans Local 1560. More than 800 bus operators walked off the job in mid-December of 1974. A contract settlement was reached 81 days later.

international president) and Ray Wallace (who would become international secretary-treasurer in 1976) traveled to New Orleans to provide invaluable assistance. Officers of other ATU locals, including Oliver Green, who was then Local 1300 secretary-treasurer (before becoming an international vice president and later international secretary-treasurer), also contributed to the effort.

The ATU won more than 55 percent of the vote in the late August 1974 election. Local 1560 was promptly chartered. But the battle had just begun.

Even with the expert help of Ray Wallace, the new local found it impossible to negotiate an initial labor contract with New Orleans Public Service, Inc. (NOPSI).

NOPSI was a subsidiary of Middle South Utilities, a giant conglomerate with vast holdings including not only the New Orleans transit system but its gas and electric utilities as well. NOPSI feared that an equitable settlement with the transit drivers might lead its gas and electric employees to seek similar increases. The conglomerate also apparently hoped that the City could be persuaded to purchase and operate the system, ridding NOPSI of its considerable transit deficits. So the company simply dragged its feet in negotiations.

When several months of bargaining still left the local without any real hope of a contract, the members took to the streets. The strike action began on December 18 of 1974. It was to be a long struggle.

NOPSI responded to the job action by threatening employees and making strike-breaking enticements. It took out newspaper advertisements urging that a regional public authority be established to take over the system. Essentially, it did everything but try

continued on page 108

Representatives of AFL-CIO Appalachian Council visited the international headquarters to meet with ATU officers. The ATU representatives pictured here are, from right to left: International Vice President Charles Penman, International Vice President Walter Bierwagen, President Maroney and, at the far left, ATU General Counsel Earle Putnam.

had not been spent due to the lack of a grant sponsor.

That circumstance was rectified when the ATU approached the AFL-CIO Appalachian Council, a group composed principally of the state labor councils in the 13 Appalachian states and organized to train unskilled workers for union-oriented skilled employment. Working with the ATU, the Council obtained a three-year, $3 million grant from the Urban Mass Transportation Administration to train bus operators, mechanics and other employees for transit industry jobs.

With the help of field coordinators selected on the ATU's

Participants at the first course under the Transit Training and Technology Innovation Project. In the front row are President Maroney (fourth from right), International Vice President Bierwagen (third from right), ATU General Counsel Earle Putnam (third from left) and Gene O'Neill, ATU coordinator for the project (far left).

recommendation, programs were developed to train instructors throughout the Appalachian region. By the time UMTA funds dried up in 1981 and the new Administration of U.S. President Reagan denied a request for further funding, 540 instructors had been trained at 110 transit properties. These instructors in turn had trained more than 3,700 workers for transit jobs.

A second U.S. government grant contributed significantly to the training of ATU members during the 1970s. In informal discussions with government officials, the

ATU urged a need for greater employee involvement and input in response to changing industry fortunes. Building on these discussions, the ATU proposed that the Amalgamated, the Transport Workers Union, the United Transportation Union (formerly the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen), and the AFL-CIO establish a research and training organization to address labor-management relations in the mass transit industry.

Initial funding for the newly created National Institute on Transit Technology and Innovation came in the fall of 1979. Over the next two years the first phase of the program, designed to provide intensive week-long training sessions for local union officials, was completed.

More than 23 sessions were conducted across the United States, focusing on employee representation, including grievance arbitration. Reflecting the Amalgamated's lead role in the program, nearly two-thirds of the 502 union representatives attending the sessions were ATU members.

Unfortunately, the budget cutting of Reaganomics brought this program to a quick close as well.

Organizing Efforts Expand

Immediately on the heels of the 1973 Miami convention, the General Executive Board adopted a Maroney proposal to expand organizing efforts beyond the transit industry. The resulting representation campaigns brought many previously unorganized workers into the Amalgamated family.

Probably the most significant campaign took place in Tampa, Florida. As the 1970s opened, the picture looked bleak for the Amalgamated in Tampa. City transit services had been furnished by a subsidiary of National City Lines for almost 30 years. When Local 1464 and the company failed to reach agreement on a new labor contract in early 1971, a strike was called. This was a job action doomed to fail from the outset.

The company refused to budge from its final offer and pronounced that it would simply close its doors unless the City volunteered to subsidize its operations. The City, in turn, had no interest in union suggestions that a federal transit grant be used to take over the system. Only a day after the strike began, the mayor publicly announced that any city takeover of the services would be with local funds to avoid the continuing bargaining obligations required under Section 13(c) of the federal transit funding law.

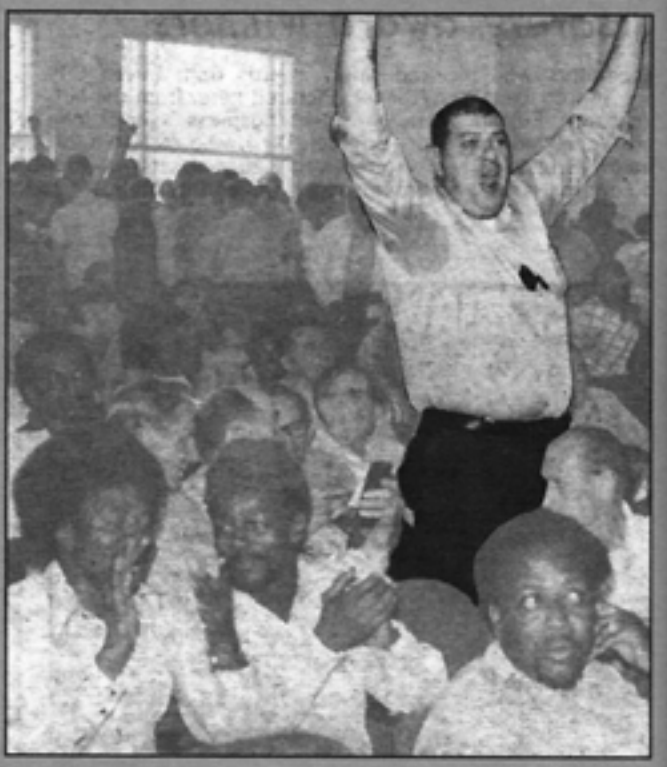
Local 1464's problems went beyond its lack of friends within the city administration. Labor support for the job action never materialized, no doubt because Local 1464 was not affiliated with the Central Labor Council and State Labor Federation, as required by the Amalgamated's Constitution.

Five weeks into the strike, the City purchased the assets of the company and began direct operation of the services. All but two of the striking Local 1464 members were hired, but the City refused to recognize the union. It discontinued any prior employee rights and benefits that it chose.

New Orleans, continued

to negotiate a settlement. Federal mediators were brought in but were unable to convince NOPSI that it should agree to any settlement.

ATU members, on the other hand, demonstrated unparalleled determination. Even in the course of their strike, the drivers and their new union developed a positive reputation with the public and city officials. And in the end, the Amalgamated solidarity paid off.



This picture was taken at the meeting in which it was announced that the members had voted to accept the contract. The members' joy is evident.

Still, the members of Local 1464 refused to allow the City to have the last word. A local campaign was undertaken to win bargaining rights under the state's public employee labor relations law. Gathering support

A rally was held before the vote was taken in Tampa, Florida.

With late night prodding from the City, NOPSI finally agreed to settle the strike in early March of 1975.

After 81 days on the picket lines, the members overwhelmingly ratified a return to work agreement.

The settlement included an immediate retroactive wage increase plus the essential terms of an initial labor contract. Other, still disputed, union demands for spread time, vacation, holidays and an additional wage increase were finally resolved when the company agreed to submit them to final and binding interest arbitration.

Eight years after the New Orleans strike an interesting epilogue was written. The walkout led public officials to realize the true importance of reliable transit services. They had learned that continued transit operations were too important to be made the pawn of an intractable management focused primarily on its other electric and gas utility interests. In 1983, a regional transit authority was created and purchased the NOPSI transit operations.

The 1983 acquisition of NOPSI and the public takeover of New Jersey Transport three years earlier brought to a close the era of conversion to public ownership which had dominated the 1960s.

It would be nearly a decade before such a conversion would again be witnessed. On the eve of the Amalgamated's 100th anniversary, Duke Power Company ceased its public transit operations in Greensboro and Durham, North Carolina.

In 1991, the Durham transit workers represented by Local 1437 followed their work to a newly created public transit authority. Local 1312 chartered a similar course when the City of Durham took over Duke operations there.

South Carolina Electric & Gas, whose employees are represented by Locals 610 in Charleston and 1337 in Columbia, was left as the only remaining privately owned public utility in the U.S. operating transit services.

among the workers, who had continued as dues paying members of the Amalgamated, was no problem. But the state labor board ruled that the organizing could not be limited to the City's transit department. The union would have to win a representation election in a unit involving virtually all city employees.

Rising to the challenge, Local 1464 did just that. In June of 1978, it won the right to bargain on behalf of more than 3,000 Tampa employees, including those in the sanitation, parks, and transit departments, along with many city clerical classifications. In a somewhat ironic epilogue, three years later the transit workers were taken out of the bargaining unit when the system was transferred to a new regional transportation authority, whose employees have since been represented by Local 1593.

In 1981, the Amalgamated similarly won an election to represent more than 1,000 office and clerical workers

ATU wins run-off election for 3,000 Tampa employees

This headline appeared in In Transit after the ATU victory in Tampa.

employed by Broward County, Florida, and promptly chartered Local 1591.

There were other significant organizing efforts during this period which did not involve the traditional transit operator and mechanic classifications. Amalgamated's 1977 success in an election brought 325 Cleveland office employees of Greyhound Lines into the Union. In the mid-1970s, Local 732 was also successful in gaining the right to represent more than 200 office employees of the Atlanta transit system.

AFL-CIO Ties Strengthened

President Maroney also moved quickly to involve the ATU more fully in the many legislative and other activities of the AFL-CIO. With the approval of the General Executive Board, he affiliated the ATU with the Industrial Union Department and with the Public Employee Department (PED) which was created in 1974. One of the initial organizers of the PED (with which more than two million unionized U.S. public employees were affiliated), Maroney was soon elected a member of its Executive Board.

In 1975, AFL-CIO President George Meany sent greetings to the 43rd Convention's delegates gathered in

A successful organizing campaign was conducted in Hamilton, Ontario, for the dispatchers, inspectors, garage foremen, and office personnel of the Hamilton Street Railway. This resulted in formation of Local Union 1585.

Maroney was elected a member of the Executive Committee of the PED. He urged stepped-up organizing among public employees.

Calgary, Alberta, heralding the ATU's renewed and ever-increasing role in the labor movement. This was further confirmed when Maroney was elected to the Executive Board of the Industrial Union Department in 1979 and selected that same year to serve as an AFL-CIO vice president.

At the close of 1974, James Hill announced his retirement after six years as international secretary-treasurer. At the recommendation of Maroney, General Executive Board Member John Rowland was elevated to that post effective January 1, 1975.

After serving as international secretary-treasurer for just shy of two years, Rowland was tapped for the post of international executive vice president in 1976, succeeding Edward Oliver, who retired after 36 years with the Amalgamated, the last 12 in the executive vice presidency. At the same time, Ray Wallace of Memphis Local 713 was elevated from international vice president to international secretary-treasurer.

Maroney confers with AFL-CIO President George Meany during Meany's visit to an ATU-TWU legislative conference in June 1978.

Constitutional Changes Strengthen Organization

Several significant changes were made in the Amalgamated's Constitution and Laws during the 1970s, including several which would help insure the financial stability of the ATU in future years.

The delegates to the 1975 convention in Calgary needed little convincing that more funds were required to offset inflationary cost increases and to finance the expanding services of the International. The subject of their considerable, and at times difficult, debate was over how much the first increase in the per capita tax since 1969 should be. In the end, a $1.35 per month addition, to be phased in over two years, was unanimously adopted, bringing the monthly per capita tax to a total of $4 by 1977.

In 1977, Washington, D.C., convention delegates made several noteworthy constitutional changes in the ATU Constitution. One such amendment mandated that terms of officers of local unions be established at three years.

At the 45th Convention in Los Angeles, California, Maroney was reelected along with John Rowland (right) as executive vice-president and Ray Wallace (left) as international secretary-treasurer.

The delegates further voted to combine the offices of president and business agent in the approximately 20 local unions which still had separate such positions.

An even more definitive response to the future financial concerns of the Amalgamated was provided by the 45th Convention. Meeting in Los Angeles, the 1979 delegates adopted a minimum dues program to insure financial stability of ATU locals.

Initially set at two times the average hourly pay rate, as determined by reference to U.S. Labor Department statistics, the structure included a percentage formula for automatic annual adjustments. The per capita funds owed to the International were in turn pegged at a percentage of the minimum dues to active members.

Architects' sketch of the new ATU headquarters building.

New Headquarters Building

In 1978, due to the headquarters building's deteriorating condition and the Union's need for greater space, the General Executive Board, at 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. The international officers and staff first moved into the new building from the Union's temporary headquarters in March of 1982.

Further Reductions in the Workweek

The mid-1970s saw the opening of another chapter in the Amalgamated's determined struggle to win a workweek reasonably accommodating the personal needs of the transit worker. Victories were seen on two fronts. In Canada, the 40-hour week was broken. In the States, federal legislation to end transit workweeks in excess of 40 hours was at long last enacted, although the struggle to enforce it would carry on for more than a decade to follow.

The transit workers of British Columbia Hydro & Power Authority (who are currently represented by Local 134) were the first to break the 40-hour barrier when the ATU negotiated a workweek reduction to 37 1/2 hours without any loss of take-home pay. Two years later, in 1975, the members of Local 1505 on the Winnipeg Transit System reaped the benefits of a similar achievement.

Yet it was apparent that the shorter workweek would not become prevalent, even in Canada. True, four weeks later the employees of the Edmonton Transit System represented by Local 569 would join the ranks of those working 37 1/2-hour workweeks. But it had taken a 50-day strike to win that benefit. This was a particularly difficult job action given the sub-zero temperatures which limited picketing to 14 hours a day with each individual walking the line for only two hours each.

Meanwhile, in the United States 5 percent of the ATU's city transit system members still worked under labor contracts with weekly requirements in excess of 40 hours.

The year 1974 brought a promise for change. In that year, amendments to the Fair Labor Standards Act removed the prior exemption of transit operating personnel from federal requirements of overtime pay after 40 hours. When President Nixon signed the amendments into law, it appeared to bring to a close a decades-long legislative campaign of the ATU. Since the law was first passed in 1938, the Amalgamated had sought transit coverage beyond the 1961 application of minimum wage requirements for overtime pay after 40 hours.

With the 1975 amendments, the overtime requirements were now to be phased-in to the U.S. intracity transit industry over a period of three years.

Members of Local 569 picketed in sub-zero temperatures.

ATU Takes 40-Hour Case To Supreme Court

Unfortunately, enforcement of the 1974 FLSA extension became a separate years-long campaign of the Amalgamated. Representing local municipalities, an organization known as the National League of Cities quickly brought a legal challenge against the law. Pending the outcome of this litigation, a number of public transit employers refused to pay overtime in compliance with the statute. Then, in 1976, the U.S. Supreme Court held it would be unconstitutional to apply the overtime requirements to state and local employees performing any "traditional governmental function."

The ATU responded by filing a claim with the

Department of Labor, on behalf of Local 694 in San Antonio, Texas, challenging the withholding of overtime pay based on the Supreme Court's test. The Union argued that the provision of mass transit was not a "traditional" governmental function. In 1979, the Department of Labor agreed.

Still, a small number of transit systems refused to give in. The San Antonio management initiated yet further litigation, this time challenging the Labor Department's conclusion. The San Antonio case was to spend years winding its way through the courts.

When a decision was finally obtained from the U.S. Supreme Court in 1985, the ATU had scored a victory not only for its members, but for the entire labor movement. In its decision, the Court was not content to merely rule that the overtime requirements could constitutionally be applied to mass transit. It also overturned its prior decision and reinstated coverage for more than 13 million other state and local public employees.

No-Fare Tested But Falters

Citing positive experiences with reduced fare experiments in Atlanta, Georgia; Terre Haute, Indiana; and Salt Lake City, Utah, the ATU prompted Congressional authorization for a full-fledged no-fare demonstration project assisted by federal funds. During the presidency of Gerald Ford, the U.S. Department of Transportation refused to carry out the program, despite a 1975 federal study which reported that "no-fare transit would produce the largest increase in transit ridership of any action that has been considered" and that "no other action could produce such large-scale results so quickly."

Experiments with fare-free transit during the 1970s were very limited in duration. Typical was the experience in Cleveland, Ohio, where the demonstration of "no fare" lasted all of three hours on a December night in 1972. An estimated 31,000 patrons took advantage of the totally subsidized services, which required extra buses manned by volunteer drivers. Pictured are Local 268 President Bruce Foster and other officers greeting boarding passengers.

But a year after the election of Democrat Jimmy Carter in late 1976, the government's receptiveness to the demonstration idea had changed dramatically.

The new Secretary of Transportation, Brock Adams, solicited proposals for a no-fare experiment. Within weeks, the federal government was supporting year-long demonstrations of fare-free transit during off peak hours in Mercer County, New Jersey, and Denver, Colorado.

Both experiments, the first system-wide tests of any duration, lured significant numbers of new riders. The operators represented by Trenton Local 540 quickly saw a jump in ridership of more than 35 percent. In Denver, Local 1001 members transported an additional 46,000 daily, bringing the total patronage figure to 146,500 and marking the city's highest transit ridership since the end of World War II.

Not all results were positive. In Denver, bus vandalism soared until the system launched an anti-vandalism program in area schools and began assigning plain clothes security personnel to certain buses. Several operators also objected to overcrowding of the buses, scheduling problems, and difficulties with joy-riding juveniles.

High inflation and concerns with growing public deficits were the main culprits in ending progress of the "no-fare" experiments.

By the late 1970s financial considerations had propelled several transit systems, including those in Washington, D.C., and Chicago, to increase fares. In 1979, operators represented by Dallas Local 1338 found themselves collecting fares 50 percent higher than those of the year before.

Not long thereafter, all talk of fare reductions was quieted when the newly elected Reagan Administration threatened to make significant cuts in federal transit funding and pledged to shift federal program costs to local governments.

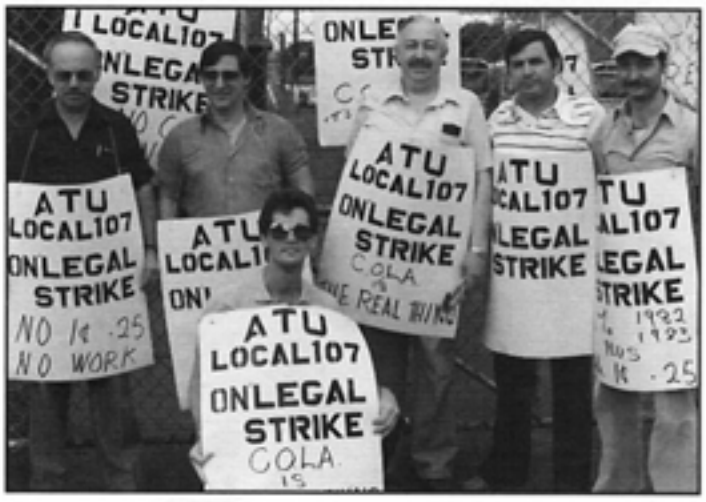
Inflation Hits Canada

As the 1970s opened, provisions for automatic wage adjustments tied to increases in the cost of living (COL) were common in ATU labor contracts with systems in the larger metropolitan areas of the United States.

Canadian locals, on the other hand, had not pressed as hard for COL protection. While the Canadian inflation rate had climbed steadily throughout the 1960s, it was not as rampant as in the U.S.

That was to change, however, both quickly and dramatically.

At the start of the decade, Canada recorded a moderate inflation rate of 2.8 percent, a five-year low. But by the middle of the decade, Canadian workers were suffering the effects of a double digit increase in the consumer price index.



One local that struck for cost-of-living protections was 107 in Hamilton, Ontario. Pictured here are local union officers with ATU International Vice President Arthur Burke (third from right).

Amalgamated locals did their best to keep pace. And for the most part they succeeded. One example was Local 113, which in the late summer of 1974 waged a successful nearly month-long strike against the Toronto Transit Commission for higher pay consistent with the times. In the first such walkout by the local in more than two decades, 5,500 members took to the picket lines.

Management had simply refused to budge from its two-year contract offer calling for a wage increase of only 19 percent—less than half that sought by the Union, which also proposed an improved cost-of-living allowance.

In early September, the Ontario Legislature met in special session and enacted a law ordering a return to work with an interim 12-percent wage increase and a

When Canada's inflation rate rose above 10 percent, the Trudeau Government imposed wage and price controls in 1975, only a year after Trudeau won reelection on a platform opposing Conservative calls for wage restrictions. Under the controls program, many Canadian ATU locals saw negotiated wage increases "rolled back" by the government's Anti-Inflation Board.

mandate that the new contract be determined through compulsory arbitration. The final arbitration award brought a 31.8 percent increase.

Other ATU locals won similar pay boosts. As 1974 came to a close, Local 1462 in St. John's, Newfoundland, negotiated a one-year contract with a 41 percent wage increase as well as a lump sum $700 cost-of-living payment. Local 279 in Ottawa, Ontario, negotiated an 18-month agreement with a 30-percent pay increase.

Local 616 in Windsor, Ontario, negotiated a two-year contract in early 1975 which called for a 16-percent wage hike in the first year and another 12-percent increase in the second year. A COL clause was also included in the

settlement reached under the threat of a scheduled strike.

Local 591 in Hull, Quebec, shortly thereafter negotiated a three-year contract which provided for a phenomenal 48.8-percent wage increase in three stages during the first two years.

Wage Controls Impact Bargaining

Predictably, wage and price controls were soon imposed. After campaigning for reelection only the year before on a platform that included opposition to such constraints, the Liberal Trudeau Government in 1975 enacted the Anti-Inflation Act and adopted a mandatory controls program.

Over the next three years, these wage restrictions seriously impacted contract negotiations throughout Canada. Attempting to reach a new labor agreement with the Halifax Transit Corporation in 1976, the president of Local 508 complained: "We are negotiating with the anti-inflation board as [management]...we are back and forth to the board continually."

ATU labor contract provisions for wage adjustments based upon increases in the cost of living proved their worth in the 1970s when inflation ran rampant.

Yet the Amalgamated continued to persevere. In late 1972, Local 113 had been the first Canadian local to negotiate a $5 top hourly rate, just 24 hours before a strike deadline. By the time the Trudeau Government was ousted in 1979, Local 134 in Vancouver, British Columbia, negotiated a contract calling for a top operator rate of $11.37, a wage even higher than the top U.S.

President Maroney meets with Jimmy Carter, at the time the Democratic nominee for U.S. president, at the fall 1976 meeting of the AFL-CIO Executive Council.

Daniel V. Maroney, Jr., International President 1973 - 1981

In 1973, Dan Maroney successfully challenged John Elliott in the first contested election for the office of international president.

Maroney first joined the transit industry in 1947 as a bus driver with the Charleston, West Virginia, transit company. In 1948, he went to work for Atlantic Greyhound Lines and was active in the organizing campaign among the employees of both Atlantic Greyhound and Charleston Transit. He helped organize Local 1493 and was subsequently elected president of the local union.

As an active local union president representing Greyhound employees, he was soon elected chairman of the Southern Council of Greyhound Local Unions, and later served as chairman of the National Council of Greyhound Local Unions.

While chairman of the National Council of Greyhound Local Unions, Maroney was successful in leading the pension negotiations that established the first cost-of-living payment to retirees in Amalgamated contracts.

At the Union's 38th Convention in San Francisco, California, in 1965, Maroney was elected international vice president. His name was placed in nomination by Ellis B. Franklin, then chairman of the National Council of Greyhound Local Unions and currently international executive vice president.

Shortly after his elevation to international president, Maroney was tapped to serve on the AFL-CIO's Executive Council in November 1979. He also

served on executive boards of the AFL-CIO Public Employee Department and Industrial Union Department. He served on the board of directors of the Union Labor Life Insurance Company, a position he continued to hold even after leaving the international presidency.

During his years as international president, Maroney continued to oversee the implementation of the Urban Mass Transportation Administration's program, initiated sustained experiments in no-fare transit, successfully negotiated a "no-raid" pact with the Teamsters Union, and merged the Western Greyhound Council and the National Greyhound Council into a single council—the Amalgamated Council of Greyhound Local Unions—to negotiate a single national contract.

AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland (right) congratulates President Maroney who was elected unanimously to the AFL-CIO Executive Council during the Federation's convention in 1979.

Maroney was well described by delegate William Creech from his home local, 1493, who placed his name in nomination at the 1975 convention in Calgary, Alberta.

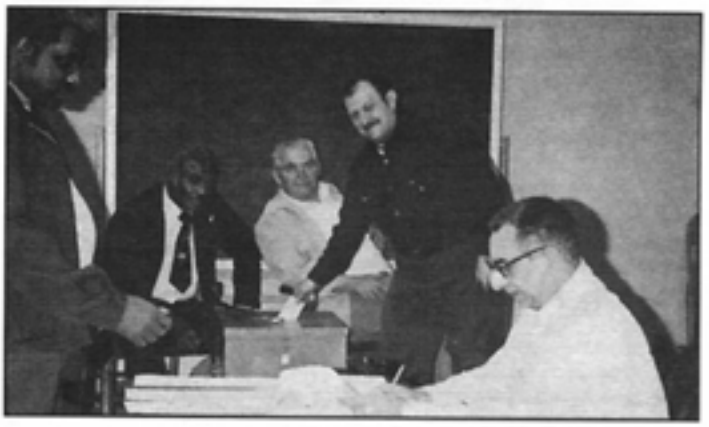
> "Dan is dedicated to the principle of the trade union movement, dedicated to the ATU. He wants nothing but what is best for the organization. He is motivated primarily by his zeal to advance the immediate goals and hopes of our members."

After an unsuccessful reelection bid, Maroney left office in 1981. Although now retired and living in West Virginia, Maroney has never hesitated to assist the ATU when called upon.

rate of $10.58 then negotiated by Chicago Local 241.

Wage restrictions soon returned to the U.S. as well. Not long after taking office, U.S. President Carter adopted wage and price guidelines limiting wage increases to 7 percent. Unlike the mandatory wage and price controls which had been imposed by the Nixon Administration and which complicated U.S. contract negotiations at the start of the decade, the Carter guidelines were billed as "voluntary." But they carried a significant stick in the form of a threat that federal contracts would be withheld for those who violated the limitations.

Faced with a potential loss of federal transit grants, managements throughout the U.S. invoked the voluntary controls as an excuse to avoid wage and benefit increases badly needed by ATU members to keep up with inflation.



Local 788 members vote on a 1976 contract which provided a $1.28 an hour wage increase and an improved cost-of-living formula.

COLA Protections Challenged

The protections of cost-of-living escalator clauses proved their worth during the inflationary 1970s. Figures collected by the U.S. Department of Transportation showed that transit workers more than kept pace with inflation and actually earned an increase in "real" wages. In fact, based on a survey of municipal employment and payrolls, it was reported that transit employees had the highest average monthly earnings of any public sector group in 1975.

It was not long before transit managers began to rally against the ATU-developed and promoted COLA protection. Faced with uncontrollable inflationary rises in fuel and other non-labor expenses, systems sought to offset these increases with equivalent reductions in payroll costs. Throughout the latter half of the 1970s, Amalgamated locals across the U.S. witnessed a determined effort to eliminate or cap COLA provisions.

Many managements were simply unable to negotiate away COLA clauses seen in prior contracts. One popular gimmick in such circumstances was to "front-load" an initial wage boost in return for a delayed COLA

trigger. The cost-of-living clause would be continued in the new labor contract but with a limitation that no wage adjustment would be made over the contract term unless Consumer Price Index increases outpaced the up-front pay increase. The COLA clause thus would provide protection only after, and to the extent that, the independently negotiated wage hikes were negated by inflationary changes in the COL index while the agreement remained in effect.

Some locals could not avoid elimination of cost-of-living clauses. Members of Local 732, for instance, lost their COL protection in the first year of a three-year contract with the Atlanta, Georgia, transit authority under the terms of a 1976 arbitration award resolving a negotiation impasse. The same year, more than 4,000 ATU members in eight New Jersey locals lost their cost-of-living allowance under a return to work contract. Transport of New Jersey effectively broke the 15-day strike of these members by claiming that the two-year pact's wage increase of 84 cents was actually a "guaranteed cost-of-living adjustment." The members voted to accept the company's offer despite the recommendation by the officers of the New Jersey Council that they reject the contract.

In 1975, Frances DiLorenzo, a member of Local 268, was honored by the Cleveland transit system as the first female in the U.S. to qualify for the "Million Mile Club."

The Introduction of Part-Timers

Another bargaining issue prevalent in the U.S. during the latter half of the 1970s was an industry-wide initiative to reduce overall labor costs by hiring part-time employees, principally to cover morning and evening peak hour operations. In an address to the ATU's 1977 convention delegates, Richard Page, a former head of the Seattle transit system and then the U.S. transit administrator, voiced the government's support for the use of part-timers on split runs in order to cut down expenses on urban transit systems. The Amalgamated immediately announced that it would oppose management's introduction of a part-time work force as no more than an ill disguised effort to dilute bargaining unit strength and to avoid the costs of providing fringe benefit packages.

But within months, Page's brain-child had been negotiated into the Seattle renewal agreement of Local 587 without objection by the International Union. Under the terms of the two-year pact that was otherwise described in the *In Transit* as an "excellent" contract, Seattle Metro earned the right to hire up to 100 part-time rush hour drivers. In return, Local 587 was able to negotiate several limitations and also won a management pledge to maintain a work force of at least 900 full-time operators.

The Seattle contract set a precedent for the U.S. transit industry. As 1978 drew to a close, separate arbitration awards establishing new contract terms for Local 689 in Washington, D.C., and for Local 1300 in Baltimore, Maryland, also authorized the introduction of part-timers. As in Seattle, a cap was placed on the total who could be hired and guarantees were made that full-timers would not be displaced.

The use of part-timers quickly spread and within a few years was to be seen in most U. S. cities. As the 1970s came to a close, the thrust of ATU negotiations on the part-timer issue turned to establishing pro rata fringe benefits in such areas as holidays, vacation, health and welfare coverage, and in at least some instances, pension benefits.

In a somewhat different bargaining climate and with less pressure from public officials, Canadian locals were far more successful in thwarting the push for part-time drivers. Indeed, more than 10 years after the Seattle settlement, Local 113 again emerged from its 1989 contract negotiations with an agreement rejecting the Toronto Transit Commission's proposal to hire part-timers.

U.S. Secretary of Labor John Dunlop looks on as ATU International President Dan Maroney (left), Matthew Guinan, president of the Transport Workers Union, and two officials of the industry's American Public Transit Association sign the National Section 13(c) Agreement in 1975. It was Dunlop's personal involvement which brought to a close more than 15 months of negotiations over terms protecting the job rights and status of U.S. transit employees.

Resistance to 13(c) Protections Overcome

It was not only at the bargaining table that the Amalgamated found itself confronting coordinated industry campaigns challenging previously won and hard-earned rights. The 1970s also witnessed an escalating resistance orchestrated by the transit associations to the U.S. transit employee protection program.

The industry was particularly incensed that the Amalgamated had been able to extend the protections to ensure that the members of Local 1225 in San Francisco, and 192 in Oakland, California, could follow their work to the newly created Bay Area Rapid Transit system. But at each turn, under the leadership of Dan Maroney, the International Union continued to make maximum beneficial use of the Section 13(c) protections.

The initial skirmish with the industry concerned the extension of the labor protections to a new category of federal grants covering generalized operating expenses. When Congress first passed the federal transit funding bill, its focus was on the acquisition of ailing systems and their rejuvenation with new equipment and facilities. Yet it soon became apparent that help was needed to offset the expenses of maintaining and operating the new public systems.

The Nixon Administration's initial reluctance to go along with congressional proposals for operating assistance grants was overcome by late 1973. Transit industry groups then sought to exempt such grants from labor protection requirements. After a series of meetings with ATU representatives, the U.S. Transportation Department reconsidered its initial stance on the issue and protections were included in the proposed legislation.

On the heels of a subsequent letter-writing campaign by ATU members, the U.S. Congress in late 1974 authorized a six-year aid program including $4 billion in operating assistance and capital grant programs totaling twice that amount.

Two years later, the outgoing administration of Gerald Ford delivered a parting shot at the ATU by proposing regulations intended to emasculate 13(c) job rights and protections.

U.S. Transportation Secretary William Coleman announced the plan at a 1976 meeting of the industry's principal trade group, the American Public Transit Association. Just two days before the inauguration of new U.S. President Jimmy Carter, the federal government advertised new 13(c) regulations which would become effective after public hearings. Under the proposed "guidelines," the Secretary of Labor would be given the discretion to effectively freeze 13(c) protections in place and bypass any further union bargaining.

The ATU quickly organized a campaign to defeat the suggested regulations. With invaluable support from U.S. Senator Harrison "Pete" Williams of New Jersey and the full backing of the AFL-CIO, the Amalgamated successfully pressed its case before the Department of Labor. In the end, over the objections of the U.S. transit industry, the guidelines were adopted with revisions eliminating the most seriously offending provisions.

Local 725 signed a 13(c) Agreement with the Birmingham-Jefferson Transit Corporation in 1973. Looking on (standing at left) is then-General Executive Board Member Ray Wallace.

Even as it was fighting off the proposed regulatory emasculation of Section 13(c), the ATU-headed transit labor coalition managed to extend the scope and coverage of the worker protection program to new types of service. After letters of protest blanketed the offices of elected officials, the U.S. Department of Transportation abandoned a late 1976 proposal that 13(c) not apply to federal funding for "paratransit" services. These encompassed alternative types of transportation such as vans and taxis, operated principally on a door-to-door,

U.S. President Ford signs the National Mass Transportation Assistance Act of 1974. Looking on are (from the left) Sen. Harrison Williams, Jr.(D-NJ), the chief sponsor of the bill along with Rep. Joseph Minish (D-NJ), Sen. John Tower (R-TX), UMTA Administrator Frank Herringer, Transportation Secretary Claude Brinegar, and Reps. John Anderson (R-IL) and Jim Delaney (D-NY).

demand-responsive basis. The Union was thus able to police the development of paratransit in an effort to ensure its use as a "feeder" for conventional transit in lower density areas and not as a substitute for fixed-route services.

In 1978, a battle was also waged in connection with a major new program providing transit assistance for rural and small urbanized areas in the U.S. The National Association of County Officials lobbied extensively to prevent application of 13(c) protections to such grants. Initial successes in a congressional subcommittee were quickly reversed, however, when faced with a countering effort led by the ATU.

13(c) Issues Go to U.S. High Court

Unable to engineer the undoing of Section 13(c) by political means, U.S. transit systems increasingly turned to court challenges in the late 1970s to resist compliance.

In 1976, when Local 580 invoked its negotiated right to binding arbitration of new labor contract terms, management of the Syracuse, New York, transit system simply refused to abide by the 13(c) agreement. To assist Local 580, the International filed suit seeking enforcement of its contract arbitration right in federal court.

After extensive litigation, the Syracuse judge dismissed the complaint, concluding that federal courts did not have jurisdiction to hear the matter. The Union appealed. Before the appellate court could rule, the parties reached a contract settlement and the case was dismissed.

News of this litigation and its uncertain result spread through the industry like wildfire. Soon transit systems all across the U.S. had embarked on a deliberate campaign to force further test cases by reneging on their obligations to arbitrate or to comply with their previously executed 13(c) agreements.

By 1981, the list of 13(c) federal court cases was long indeed. Uncompromising managements had forced litigation on Local 1285 in Jackson, Tennessee, on Local 519 in La Crosse, Wisconsin, on Local 714 in Portland, Maine, on Local 1287 in Kansas City, Missouri, and on Local 1309 in San Diego, California. Other cases still pending initial lower court rulings involved Local 589 in Boston, Locals 1037 and 174 in New Bedford and Fall River, Massachusetts, Local 1039 in Lansing, Michigan, Local 276 in Stockton, California, Local 732 in Atlanta, Georgia, and Seattle, Washington, Local 587.

A split of jurisdictional authority quickly developed

The ATU organized a campaign to defeat the suggested regulations with invaluable support from U.S. Sen. Harrison Williams of New Jersey and the full backing of the AFL-CIO.

A district court in Kansas City had ruled that the federal courts could properly hear and rule upon 13(c) matters. The court of appeals upheld the lower court's ruling. Although the U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear this case, the victory was short-lived. In 1982, it ruled that federal courts did not have the right to enforce negotiated 13(c) arrangements.

in the lower federal courts. The district courts in Portland, Maine, and Jackson, Tennessee, agreed with the Syracuse judge that they had no jurisdiction. But the district courts in Kansas City and La Crosse ruled that federal courts could properly hear 13(c) matters. From there it was on to the courts of appeals. Upon management's Kansas City appeal in 1978, the court upheld the lower court judge's finding of federal jurisdiction and ordered arbitration. It wasn't long before appeals courts hearing the Portland and La Crosse cases agreed and ordered the transit managements to abide by their 13(c) contracts.

But the tide turned back against the ATU when the federal appeals court in Atlanta ruled against the ATU in the Local 732 case. The issue of federal versus state jurisdiction then went to the U.S. Supreme Court as the 1980s opened. The highest U.S. court ruled in 1982 after hearing arguments in the Jackson Transit Authority case that the federal law requiring labor protections did not also give federal courts the right to enforce negotiated 13(c) arrangements. Instead, the justices unanimously concluded that 13(c) agreements were to be treated like routine contracts. Thus, with only rare exceptions, Section 13(c) enforcement cases could be heard only by state court judges.

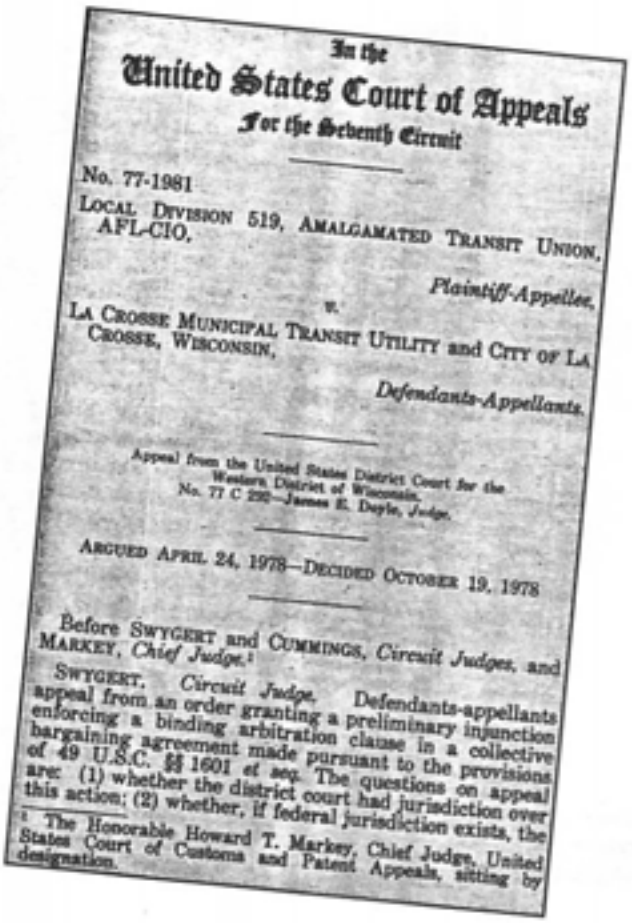
ATU Braces for Reaganomics

Transit management's challenge to the contract arbitration and bargaining rights of ATU members was not limited to courtroom actions. State legislatures were also called into the fray. The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) in Boston was the first to make a breakthrough.

Over the strong objections of Local 589 and the International Union, in 1978 Massachusetts adopted an amendment to the MBTA law which placed significant restrictions on arbitration, including a prohibition on any award requiring the accrual of cost-of-living adjustments during negotiations between contracts. Two years later, a second amendment excluded various traditional subjects of negotiations, such as work assignments, subcontracting, overtime, and the hiring of part-timers as subjects for bargaining and arbitration between the MBTA and its employees. These were declared "inherent management rights." Similar bills were soon introduced in other state houses across the United States.

In the media, transit management and elected politicians mounted a strident cry of anguish not only against arbitration, but against allegedly overpaid transit union labor. Local officials took to publicly proclaiming that the industry's financial and productivity problems were a product of escalating labor costs traceable not to inflation or mismanagement, but to unjustified wage increases awarded by arbitrators not concerned with the taxpayers' ability to pay.

In cities such as Washington, D.C., Atlanta, Boston and Chicago, charges of excessive ATU wages were plastered and blasted across newspapers and television screens. It was insinuated that long-suffering taxpayers had been duped into paying transit's higher than average public employee wage through bad laws and government dictated agreements forcing arbitrations of new contract terms.



In the
United States Court of Appeals
For the Seventh Circuit

No. 77-1981

LOCAL DIVISION 519, AMALGAMATED TRANSIT UNION, AFL-CIO,

Plaintiff-Appellee,

v.

LA CROSSE MUNICIPAL TRANSIT UTILITY and CITY OF LA CROSSE, WISCONSIN,

Defendants-Appellants.

Appeal from the United States District Court for the Western District of Wisconsin.
No. 77 C 292—James E. Doyle, *Judge.*

ARGUED APRIL 24, 1978—DECIDED OCTOBER 19, 1978

Before SWYGERT and CUMMINGS, *Circuit Judges,* and MARKEY, *Chief Judge.*[1]

SWYGERT, *Circuit Judge.* Defendants-appellants appeal from an order granting a preliminary injunction enforcing a binding arbitration clause in a collective bargaining agreement made pursuant to the provisions of 49 U.S.C. §§ 1601 *et seq.* The questions on appeal are: (1) whether the district court had jurisdiction over this action; (2) whether, if federal jurisdiction exists, the

[1] The Honorable Howard T. Markey, Chief Judge, United States Court of Customs and Patent Appeals, sitting by designation.

Court decision enforcing the 13(c) agreement in La Crosse, Wisconsin.

As reflected in the public debate, hostile attitudes towards organized labor were clearly developing in North America and throughout the industrialized world. Just as Margaret Thatcher was assuming power as Great Britain's prime minister with an anti-labor union program, Americans were electing an anti-labor Republican, Ronald Reagan, to the presidency of the United States.

As Reagan assumed office, a decade-long upward trend in transit ridership slid into reversal. After rising at an average annual rate of 1.1 percent during the 1970s, ridership began a new decline in 1980. Increased fares were principally to blame. In June of 1981, fares were already almost 18 percent higher than only a year earlier.

The Reagan Administration proposed to treat transit as a local industry beneath federal concern. In a frankly stated attempt to shift transit funding burdens to states and local governments, it quickly proposed significant cuts in federal funding of capital transit projects and a phased elimination of operating assistance by 1985.

Faced with declining ridership and threatened cuts in federal funding, public transit systems made demands upon the ATU membership very similar to the earlier pleas of the failing and almost bankrupt private industry in the 1950s and early 1960s. Everywhere, the Union

The election of Ronald Reagan to the U.S. presidency in late-1980 ushered in an era of anti-union public sentiment. Only months after taking office, Reagan summarily fired more than 15,000 federal air traffic controllers when they engaged in an illegal work stoppage.

confronted talk of contract reopeners and give-backs, wage freezes and reductions, elimination or restriction of cost-of-living protections, part-time operators and other provisions to cut back the market price of labor. In each case, the ATU member was being urged to subsidize transit services by accepting lower wages for an even greater workload.

Similar economic concerns were also mounting in the over-the-road bus industry. Historically profitable, the intercity transportation sector suffered reversing fortunes in the 1970s. By 1981, revenue passenger traffic was down 17 percent and profit was off by 40 percent. And the "deregulation" of the U.S. over-the-road bus industry begun by the Carter Administration threatened its economic stability and growth potential even further.

Serious Challenges to the Union

The future seemed bleak indeed in 1981 when the delegates gathered in Hollywood, Florida, for the ATU's 46th Convention. Earlier that year, it had taken a 15-week strike against Windsor Transit for Local 616 members to win a contract preserving their established cost-of-living clause and a wage increase equaling inflation over the two prior years.

A tried and true practice

And 1981 saw transit layoffs spread throughout the U.S. More than 250 members of Local 589 were furloughed in Boston. In Fresno, California, some 55 drivers represented by Local 1027 were laid off. The Chicago Transit Authority, employing some 11,000 members of Locals 241 and 308, was operating on a day-to-day basis.

There were even outright system shutdowns. Sixty-six members of ATU Local 228 (now part of Local 241) were put out of work in late May of 1981 when the Joliet Mass Transit District in Illinois temporarily closed operations. West Towns Bus Company shut down at the same time, putting some 250 Local 241 members on the streets. And when the Birmingham, Alabama, system resumed limited service in June after a February shutdown, nearly half of the 200 drivers and 9 of some 53 mechanics represented by Local 725 remained in layoff status.

Only 10 days before the Amalgamated gathered for its 1981 convention in Hollywood, Florida, more than a quarter million American trade unionists converged on Washington, D.C., for the first AFL-CIO-sponsored Solidarity Day. Approximately 1,000 ATU members from across the U.S. joined their brothers and sisters to protest the anti-union policies of the newly elected Reagan Administration.

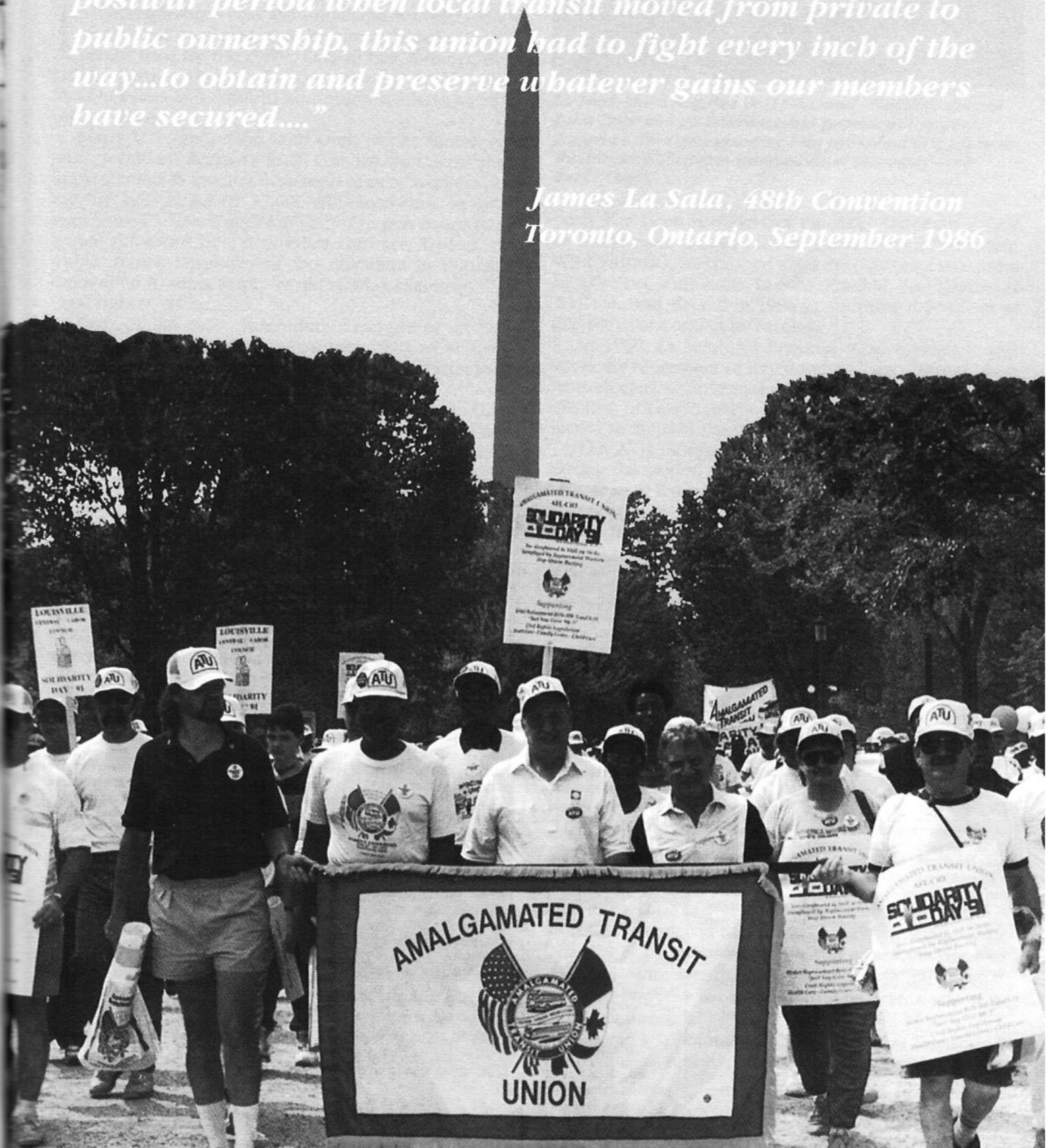
In 1981, ATU members led by International Vice President Arthur Burke (center, light coat), Canadian Director Bert King (to Burke's left) and International Vice President Jim Daley (next to King) took part in a march to Parliament Hill to protest the government's policy of exorbitantly high interest rates.

Further employment declines seemed almost inevitable. Threatened funding cuts promised even more rapid fare increases with accompanying drops in ridership. Fare hikes as high as 50 percent were implemented or otherwise scheduled.

It was apparent that after surviving the near total collapse of the transit industry 20 years before, the ATU was again facing serious challenges. Once more, however, the solidarity and determination of Amalgamated members offered hope and promise that their Union would still have the strength needed to protect their future.

"Nothing has ever been handed to us on a silver platter. From the days in the 1890s when this union first fought to obtain a vestibule to protect streetcar drivers from the elements, through wars and depressions, through the hectic postwar period when local transit moved from private to public ownership, this union had to fight every inch of the way...to obtain and preserve whatever gains our members have secured...."

James La Sala, 48th Convention
Toronto, Ontario, September 1986



CHAPTER EIGHT *1981-1992*

Surviving Difficult Political Times

In 1981, the same year John Rowland was elected international president, U.S. President Ronald Reagan set the tone for the 1980s. During that summer, Reagan fired approximately 12,000 striking federal air traffic controllers and ordered non-union workers hired to replace them.

Many U.S. companies, and even public transit systems, followed Reagan's lead. Greyhound Corporation implemented its threat to hire replacement workers during the 1983 strike by 12,000 ATU members. In 1989, after Local 757 lost a decision in the Oregon courts to arbitrate the terms of a new labor contract, Tri-Met, the public transit employer of the members in Portland, threatened to replace any workers who exercised their legal right to strike.

Perhaps the most horrendous example of an "attitude" towards union workers came in 1990, when Greyhound Lines, Inc., hired replacement workers after locking out 8,000 ATU members.

Following the lead set by Margaret Thatcher in Great Britain, the Reagan Administration in the United States and the Trudeau, Clark and Mulroney Administrations in Canada sent their underlings to the drawing boards to effectively depress workers' wages through various ruses including wage controls, funding cuts, the use of part-time employees, privatization and competitive bidding.

The deregulation of industry which began during U.S. President Carter's Administration continued. Despite intense opposition by the ATU, Congress passed the Bus Regulatory Reform Act of 1982. The new law relaxed government regulation of the intercity bus system, providing over-the-road carriers with more freedom to determine their own rates and routes under far less federal control. The result wreaked havoc on the industry—by the end of the decade Trailways no longer existed and Greyhound had become a considerably smaller operation.

In 1984, John Rowland announced that he would step down from the presidency on May 1, 1985. James La Sala, then executive vice president, was approved by the General Executive Board to fill out the unexpired term.

Ellis Franklin became international executive vice president in 1985.

Ellis Franklin, who had served as an international vice president since 1975 and previously had been president of the ATU National Council of Greyhound Locals and of Local 1493 (Charleston, West Virginia), was tapped to fill the executive vice president's post. This team, La Sala, Franklin and Raymond Wallace, was elected in 1986 to the three top offices at the 48th Convention in Toronto.

In 1981, the delegates in Hollywood, Florida, elected John Rowland as international president (center), James La Sala as executive vice president (right) and Raymond Wallace as international secretary-treasurer (left).

In 1989, La Sala and Franklin were reelected, and upon the retirement of Raymond Wallace, Oliver Green was elected as international secretary-treasurer. The election of Green marked the first time a black was selected as an international executive officer in the ATU.

The ATU mourned the loss of several great leaders during the period including former President John Elliott, former Executive Vice President Sam Berrong, former Secretary-Treasurer Othmer "Rip" Mischo and First International Vice President Charles Yelkey.

Delegates in Anaheim, California, in 1989 congratulated Oliver Green upon his election as international secretary-treasurer.

Attacks on Transit Labor

The election of conservative governments in the U.S. and Canada placed the Union in a defensive posture. No sooner had Ronald Reagan taken the oath of office than his Administration began proposing initiatives to weaken support for mass transit programs and long standing transit labor protections.

Reagan's appointees to the Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA) and the Department of

land negotiated the contract along with Mike Quill, the colorful president of the TWU. Quill wanted a strike in order to embarrass New York's new Republican mayor, John Lindsay.

When the workers went out on strike, a New York judge ordered them back to work and, as Rowland tells it, Quill told the judge to "drop dead in his black robes." As a result, Quill, Rowland and the local union presidents spent ten days in jail but "got a nice contract and a fine pension plan."

John Rowland stepped down from the presidency on May 1, 1985. Upon his retirement, a commentary in the *In Transit* read:

"In looking back at Rowland's nearly 40 years with the ATU—and particularly the last four years as international president, it honestly can be said that he brought much to the job and took little from it. He provided an inspired form of leadership; he was intuitive and creative and, perhaps most importantly, he cared about the ATU and its members."

John Rowland and his wife, Virginia, reside in Florida.

Upon his retirement, John Rowland was presented with a farebox by the West Coast local unions. International Vice President Charles Yelkey made the presentation. Yelkey passed away in November 1986.

remained intact and, with a modest reduction, the operating assistance program was funded.

When the Reagan Administration failed to accomplish incursions on Section 13(c) protection through the legislative process, it sought, more than once, to use the regulatory process to amend the Section 13(c) guidelines and gut ATU bargaining rights.

Through intensive legislative efforts, the Union was able to secure widespread congressional support with invaluable assistance from U.S. Representatives James Howard (D-New Jersey), Glenn Anderson (D-California), Bud Shuster (R-Pennsylvania) and Claudine Schneider (R-Rhode Island), and Senators Alan Cranston (D-California), Frank Lautenberg (D-New Jersey), William Proxmire (D-Wisconsin) and Donald Riegle (D-Michigan). As a result, the regulatory proposals were withdrawn.

Because of Reagan's "voodoo" economics and his decision to cut taxes for wealthy Americans, the U.S. deficit rose dramatically. The combined effect caused sharp cutbacks in federal funding for mass transit. By 1990, federal funding for mass transit had declined by 50 percent from its peak of $4.5 billion in 1981.

In late 1991, through intensive ATU and AFL-CIO lobbying efforts, the tide turned when the U.S. Congress approved a landmark $151 billion highway/mass transit bill. The new 6-year act called for an average annual increase of 64 percent in mass transit funding. Despite vigorous opposition from the Bush Administration, not only did the ATU obtain unprecedented increases in transit funding, it also retained the Section 13(c) collective bargaining and job rights and weakened the Department of

Transportation's ability to review and control state and local privatization decisions.

The fight against Administration attempts to slash the transit budget would continue despite the 6-year bill. In defiance of the expressed intent of the U.S. Congress, the proposed Bush budget for fiscal year 1993 sought transit funding levels not only significantly below those in the highway/mass transit bill but even lower than those appropriated for 1992.

Taking ATU Jobs

What President Reagan, and later President Bush, could not gain on Capitol Hill, they sought to effect in other ways. "Privatization" became a code word for the wholesale loss of ATU jobs through a campaign carefully designed and implemented by Urban Mass Transportation Administrator Ralph Stanley.

The federal law had always provided a role for private transit operators. But it had long been the ATU's view that the function of a private operator in a local mass transit system should be left to decision making at the state and local level.

Beginning in 1984, UMTA issued a series of directives to local transit agencies receiving federal assistance. Through these directives and other methods, UMTA applied not-so-veiled threats of funding reduction if the transit agencies failed to "privatize" and to select private operators for some of their service.

As a result of UMTA pressures, together with reduced federal transit funding and the general anti-union climate, employers sought concessions from the local unions such as the removal of work guarantees from the 13(c) agreements and labor contracts, the increased use and number of part-time employees, and the establishment of two-tier wage systems.

Both locally and nationally, ATU officials and members worked together to oppose these privatization policies. The ATU was successful in including language in the fiscal 1987 transit bill which restricted UMTA from conditioning, delaying or giving preference to transit grant recipients based on their increased use of private operators and competitive bidding. The report accompanying and explaining the bill emphasized the ATU view that decisions regarding privatization should be made on the local level and not dictated by UMTA.

Not to be outsmarted by Congress and even while proclaiming to comply with congressional wishes, UMTA issued another set of guidelines which included a multitude of documentation, reporting and review requirements on local privatization plans.

The problem was more than just the contracting out of a few bus routes or some new service. Bills were introduced in several state legislatures to undermine hard-won ATU bargaining rights and to engage in wholesale privatization of existing public transit service.

A victory over privatization was achieved in New Orleans, Louisiana, through the efforts of Local 1560. Pictured here, from left to right, 1560 Financial Secretary Smith Crocken, Mayor Sidney Barthelemy, International Vice President Rodney Richmond and 1560 President Eugene Camese.

The ATU worked to oppose Administration backed privatization policies.

The issue came to a head in 1988, when a bill was introduced in the Colorado legislature requiring privatization by the Denver Regional Transportation District (RTD). As originally introduced, the bill would have required the RTD to contract out all of its service.

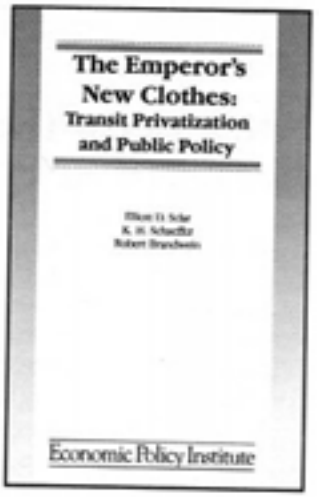
A massive effort to defeat the bill was undertaken by the officers and members of Local 1001, along with International Vice President Melvin Schoppert and Legislative Director Robert Molofsky. While these efforts did not defeat the bill, they did succeed in limiting the amount of privatization to 20 percent and including language permitting the reduction of RTD operators only by attrition.

The Colorado law was the first attempt to go beyond the privatization of new or revamped service to apply the policy to existing service. There was little question that the impetus behind the Colorado bill was UMTA sponsored research promoting privatization.

A real success story was played out in California.

There, the state legislative conference board led an effort to defeat a wide range of bills in the state legislature to mandate fixed privatization requirements and increase competitive bidding. The California locals killed a bill that would have required transit agencies to contract 3 percent or more of their transit services to private operators annually. They also banded together to defeat the sponsor of a series of privatization bills in the state legislature. Through this victory, the ATU in California sent an important message regarding its political power.

The ATU was finally provided with an effective weapon in its battle against privatization when a September 1989 report was issued by the Economic Policy Institute (EPI), a Washington, D.C., think tank.



A 1989 study by the Economic Policy Institute refuted the Reagan-Bush claim that privatization saves money.

The study, entitled *The Emperor's New Clothes: Transit Privatization and Public Policy*, found that the Reagan and Bush Administrations' policy of using federal transportation funds to force communities to privatize their mass transit systems produced profits for private contractors, but caused deterioration of urban transportation services and hindered the freedom of choice of local public officials in their efforts to reduce traffic congestion, save energy, reduce pollution, and promote economic development.

The study effectively challenged the fundamental premise of the Reagan-Bush policy that privatization saves money. Through examining various case studies, including the effects of the Colorado statute, the authors concluded that privatization did not increase competition and that private contractors are usually unable to attract experienced and dedicated workers, thus making their service less reliable.

The authors found the Colorado experience represented their entire criticism of transit privatization:

> "The basic problem with the Colorado law is its heavy-handed ideological approach to a complex public policy issue. Some purchasing of transportation from private providers by the larger public agencies has always made sense....But the agency should have the right to make a reasonable make/buy decision. Agencies should not have an important economic decision dictated by arbitrary ideological and political considerations. Contracting might be thought of as we think of aspirins: two can cure a headache, but the whole bottle will kill you."

By the 1989 convention in Anaheim, California, the

fight against privatization was a major concern of the ATU leadership and delegates. An address by Democratic Congressman William Gray of Pennsylvania criticized the wholesale privatization of U.S. mass transit:

> "[T]he only thing we know so far, with the privatization experiments in transit, is that there are more accidents. It costs more money, the workers get paid less. There are less benefits, and somebody goes to the bank with a whole ton of money, and, believe me, brothers and sisters, it ain't you!"

The delegates acted. They unanimously passed a resolution calling for an educational conference on priva-

ATU privatization seminar participants met in Washington, D.C., in December, 1989.

tization to explore the experiences of local unions and to develop a national campaign against the Reagan-Bush initiative.

President La Sala responded immediately. In December 1989, the International Union conducted a four-day privatization conference for 45 union officers. At the conference, La Sala pledged the International's full efforts to meet the privatization challenges in the states, provinces, the U.S. Congress and the Canadian Parliament. Through a combination of discussions, case problems and lectures from the authors of the EPI study and others, the participants focused on the skills necessary to understand and oppose privatization in their local areas.

As predicted by the EPI study, the Denver experiment

Less Than Meets the Eye:
Colorado's Costly Experience
With Transit Privatization

Elliott D. Sclar, Ph.D.

Economic Policy Institute

A study by Elliott Sclar demonstrated the hidden costs of the Colorado legislation.

proved more costly to taxpayers than the legislature had predicted. When the state legislators considered privatizing another 20 percent of the system in 1991, Local 1001 and the International Union were ready.

One of the author's of the EPI study, Elliott D. Sclar, testified before the state transportation committee that the actual cost of the program to the taxpayers had been $9.1 million. He also urged the legislators to consider the hidden costs of privatization when private companies provide public transportation with poorly paid workers.

The legislature rejected the expansion of privatization in the RTD system.

For the most part, privatization projects which transit systems designed to please UMTA involved the subcontracting of new or expanded transit operations. Thus, there were no layoffs of ATU members. Transit systems simply let bargaining units shrink through attrition.

One battlefront for privatization became the so-called "sole provider" clause of the National 13(c) Agreement for operating assistance. This provision requires that if there is not a prior practice of subcontracting, the grant recipient, usually the transit authority, must directly provide the service which benefits from the federal assistance.

The International Union mounted a series of arbitration cases claiming that the decision of the transit authority to contract out bargaining unit work was in violation of the sole provider clause. These cases met with mixed results. In Nashville, Tennessee, the members of Local 1235 kept their work when an arbitrator ruled that contracting out was a violation of both the labor contract and the National Agreement. In other cases, the arbitrators ruled that if there were no prohibitions on subcontracting in the labor contracts, they would not find such a prohibition based only on the National Agreement.

Partially as a result of the ATU's limited success in these arbitrations, a small number of transit authorities withdrew from the National Agreement and the Union was forced to renegotiate separate 13(c) operating assistance agreements with each of these transit authorities.

The ATU mounted a series of arbitration cases to fight the subcontracting of bargaining unit work.

Attacks on the Collective Bargaining Process

Ever since the founding of the Union, a major tenet of the ATU had been the resolution through arbitration of disputes over the terms to be included in a new labor contract, a process commonly referred to as interest arbitration. Retaining this right became a major battlefront for the ATU in the 1980s.

When the Union began negotiating 13(c) agreements in the 1960s and 1970s, these agreements were viewed as protecting and preserving those rights our members had enjoyed in private employment, including the right

State courtrooms became the battlefront for preserving our rights to interest arbitration.

to arbitrate the terms of a new labor contract if negotiations failed. Yet, the same transit managements that were all too willing to agree to the inclusion of interest arbitration in 13(c) agreements to receive federal funding in the 1970s, began refusing to honor these obligations in the 1980s.

The ATU was repeatedly forced into state courts in an attempt to preserve local union rights to interest arbitration. The Union was successful in many of these cases. In 1982, a California court ruled that Local 276 and the Stockton Metropolitan Transit District must arbitrate proposed changes in a retirement plan.

A major victory was achieved for Local 1309 in San Diego, California, when a federal court found that the transit system was a private employer (and therefore an exception to the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling, discussed in Chapter 7, that 13(c) must be enforced in state courts) and ordered the employer to submit to interest arbitration under the 13(c) agreement.

Similar successful rulings were obtained in cases between Local 1333 and the Rockford (Illinois) Mass Transit District, Local 682 and the Fort Wayne, Indiana, transit district, Local 993 and Central Oklahoma Transportation and Parking Authority, and Local 587 and the Seattle Metropolitan Transit District.

A landmark victory for the Union occurred in a case brought in Boise, Idaho, on behalf of members of Local 398. There the city attempted to contract away its transit system to a non-union employer. The state trial court upset the city fathers when it ruled that the Local 398's 13(c) agreement was enforceable against the new employer, who would be obligated to hire the union members and continue their labor contract.

Another newsworthy win occurred in a 1991 New Jersey Supreme Court ruling which rejected New Jersey Transit's attempt to severely restrict the subjects over which it would bargain with the New Jersey State Council. The court held that when enacting the New Jersey Public Transportation Act, "the legislature intended to confer such rights on NJT employees as would place them in the same position they had in the private sector...."

In a case affecting the ATU's three Kentucky local unions (Local 639 in Lexington, Local 628 in Covington and Local 1447 in Louisville), the Kentucky Supreme Court declared all Section 13(c) interest arbitration rights in violation of the state constitution.

Another disappointing decision came in a case between Local 757 in Portland, Oregon, and the Tri-County Metropolitan Transit District of Oregon (Tri-Met), where the courts refused to order Tri-Met to arbitrate, because public employees in Oregon have the right to strike. Yet when the members of Local 757 threatened to exercise their right to strike, Tri-Met vowed it would continue to operate with striker replacements. At the last minute, the parties reached agreement on a new contract.

Numerous transit systems simply sought removal of interest arbitration from their 13(c) agreements. In each instance, the ATU maintained that the omission of interest arbitration provisions from the 13(c) agreements would violate the statutory command to "preserve and continue collective bargaining rights."

When negotiations between the Union and the transit authorities broke down, the U.S. Department of Labor would simply uphold the position of the transit authorities and remove the right to interest arbitration from the 13(c) agreements. It was most often replaced with a nonbinding fact-finding procedure—an often unworkable and ineffective process.

Several state legislatures also introduced, and sometimes passed, legislation severely limiting or eliminating arbitration rights. By forging a combination of local union leadership and rank-and-file participation through write-in and phone-in campaigns in 1982, Local 1300 in Baltimore and Local 689 in Washington, D.C., defeated bills that would have eliminated or severely curtailed contract arbitration rights for employees of the Mass Transit Administration and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.

ATU locals, along with the International Union, successfully expanded the collective bargaining rights of the members through the passage of state public employee bargaining laws in Illinois and Ohio.

By 1992, either through litigation, legislation, or the development of new 13(c) agreements, the ATU lost the right to interest arbitrate the terms of new labor contracts on over 30 transit properties.

Increasing Political Involvement

The political challenges posed by the Reagan Administration produced both a need and a desire to become politically active on the part of the leaders and members of the ATU in the United States.

The ATU's Committee on Political Education (COPE), which had been created several decades earlier to

Local 1256 in El Paso, Texas, helped elect that city's first woman mayor in 1989. Local 1256 Vice-President Daniel Silva (left) and President Andy Saenz are pictured with Mayor Azar.

The officers of the New England Conference Board presented a COPE contribution to Executive Vice President La Sala at their 1982 meeting.

educate and involve ATU members throughout the U.S. in political and legislative campaigns, expanded in unprecedented proportions.

The election of political opponents to office in the 1980s necessitated the election of "friends." The ATU began a campaign to involve more local unions in the voluntary COPE program.

Membership interest was enhanced by the development and distribution of an ATU produced film, "Winning with ATU-COPE." The ATU distributed special legislative and political brochures and instituted an awards program that recognized members and individual local unions for their contributions to the program.

At its 1984 meeting in Ottawa, Executive Vice President La Sala addressed the NCRC. Next to La Sala are Local 1374 President (now International Vice President) Robert Saarinen in Winnepeg, Manitoba, and Gunther Bruckner, president of Local 583 in Calgary, Alberta.

COPE funds were utilized not only to support political victories on the national, state and local levels, to fund legislative victories in transit funding and to fight Administration privatization efforts, but also to advance ATU members' rights in several other areas. These included the enactment of the legislation and standards involving the commercial drivers' license, striker replacement prohibitions, worker safety, polygraph protection, minimum wage, family and medical leave and child care.

At the start of the 1980s, ATU members were contributing less than $15,000 per year to the COPE program. By 1991, that figure had increased over 2,000 percent to $337,500.

A Great Union Has No Borders

"The International Spirit of our Canadian membership is well manifested in their splendid loyalty to the Amalgamated. Nowhere throughout the Dominion of Canada have the dual, disrupting unions been able to get their toehold on our occupation, which indeed speaks well for the fraternal fellowship and brotherly good will of our Canadian members toward the workers and people in general of our great sister country to the south. Again as a matter of business, our Canadian membership realizes that the old established axiom, 'there is strength in great numbers,' still stands."

These words, written by General Executive Board Member Magnus Sinclair more than 50 years ago, still hold true today.

During the last 10 years, thousands of Canadians have reaffirmed their view that the ATU is the best organization to represent them. The conviction of these members was tested in repeated raids by the Independent Canadian Transit Union (ICTU).

ICTU is not affiliated with the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) and grows by scavenging upon the already organized.

During its 100-year history, the ATU has never raided an organized group of workers. It is the view of the ATU, and indeed the affiliated labour movement, that raiding is a cancer of organized labor. It may have the ability to siphon off workers, but a successful raid can never replace the organization, benefits and strength those workers previously enjoyed. Both the CLC and the AFL-CIO have adopted policies and sanctions against one affiliate raiding the organized workers of another.

In 1981, rather than working from within the ATU, some discontented members in Local 101-134, formed a dissident group, named the Independent Canadian Transit Union. They raided the workers of the Metropolitan Transit Operating Company represented by Local Unions 101-134 and 109 in Vancouver and Victoria, British Columbia. These members were jointly represented in a single bargaining unit of approximately 2,300 employees in Vancouver and 320 in Victoria. ICTU engaged in offensive tactics which caught the ATU off guard. ICTU wrapped itself in the Canadian flag and waged a campaign which attacked the per capita tax paid by Canadian members to the International Union.

In a representation vote conducted in January 1982, the ATU lost these bargaining units by only 16 votes, with 600 employees not voting. After their slim victory, ICTU not only refused to refund to these

Local 279 members along with International Vice President Arthur Burke and International Representative Angus MacFarlane celebrated their victory in repelling the 1983 ICTU raid.

stolen members an amount equal to the per capita tax, but, in fact, raised their dues.

The ATU vowed it would be prepared when ICTU again tried its underhanded tactics. The wait was not long. In 1982, ICTU transferred its efforts to Eastern Canada and attempted to raid Local 279 in Ottawa. Once again, ICTU wrapped itself in the Canadian flag, but the officers and members of Local 279, assisted by International Vice President Arthur Burke, International Vice President Angus MacFarlane, and the CLC, scored a narrow but important victory in Ottawa.

The victory demonstrated the strength of solid union representation rather than empty nationalism. As Burke stated after the 1983 victory:

> "I take a back seat to no one when it comes to respecting and honoring my country and its flag, but collective bargaining is not done with the flag and when it comes to sitting down at that bargaining table I want the best damn organization representing our members—and that is the ATU, because ICTU can't even begin to fill the bill as a trade union."

By 1985, the wounds of division in Local 279 were beginning to heal. When ICTU attempted another raid on the employees of OC Transpo, they could not even gather enough support to hold an election.

The union had learned to listen and respond to the rank and file. Under new leadership, Local 279 had grown and strengthened its ties to the membership. As President La Sala stated in a 1988 column in *In Transit*, "Today...Local 279 is a changed organization. The wounds of divisiveness have healed. The scars of prior individualism have almost disappeared. The Local Union has emerged from its difficulties stronger than before."

When ICTU tried yet one more time to raid Local 279 in 1990, the local union, with the assistance of all the Canadian international officers and the Canadian Council, fought back with such force that ICTU

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Canadians Unite to Create Major Political Victories

ATU local unions in Canada joined together as a potent political force in the 1980s. At the 1981 convention in Miami, Florida, the delegates approved the establishment of a National Canadian Regional Conference (NCRC). The NCRC was set up to "be the highest authority and voice in Canada for the ATU on all issues of special Canadian interest...."

At the first meeting of the NCRC, held in Toronto in 1982, the delegates adopted bylaws and elected International Vice President Art Burke as president. In an address to the delegates, International President John Rowland urged the Canadian ATU members to become actively involved in the political process and "start exerting some of the power and force which flows from the strength of your numbers." At its next meeting, the NCRC amended its bylaws so that only local union officers could serve as NCRC officers and elected Local 1374 President Robert Saarinen (now an international vice president) as NCRC president.

In 1983, the NCRC, at its meeting in Halifax, Nova Scotia, appointed Ken Foster from Local 1505 in Winnipeg as the full time executive secretary of the group.

In 1984, Local 113 in Toronto sponsored a political action seminar.

In 1961, the Canadian labour movement had joined together to create the New Democratic Party (NDP) to lead the fight for workers' rights. A major goal was to elect more NDP members in the provincial legislatures and federal Parliament.

In 1984, Local 583 in Calgary, Alberta, formed a political action committee with the goal of convincing the local membership of the importance of becoming involved in the political process. After the NCRC's 1984 meeting in Vancouver, British Columbia, Local 1505 in Winnipeg, Manitoba, formed a similar group.

Later that year, Local 113 in Toronto, the ATU's largest Canadian local, established a political action committee and held a seminar for 75 participants. A guest speaker was Bob Rae, leader of the NDP in Ontario. In November 1990, Rae and the NDP would be swept into office

in the Province of Ontario with the help of the ATU.

As the Canadians geared up to fight the Free Trade Agreement between the United States and Canada, the name of the ATU group was changed in 1986 to the Canadian Council and Bert King, president of Local 1462 in St. John's, Newfoundland, was elected as its president.

The labor movements in both the U.S. and Canada opposed the Free Trade Agreement. ATU members in Canada, along with their sister unions, viewed the agreement as taking away Canadian jobs and Canadian sovereignty. ATU locals joined forces with other local unions throughout Canada to persuade Canadian leaders not to approve the Agreement.

Despite these efforts, the Agreement was approved in both countries. In a March 1990 column in *In Transit,* it was reported that within a year the Agreement had already claimed 57,000 Canadian jobs. Canadian Council Executive Secretary Foster wrote:

> "ATU members across Canada have to think seriously about just what is going on in this country. Mass transit provides a public service which is valuable only if people have jobs to which to travel. If Canada's unemployment roles continue to grow at the rate of 60,000 per year, how long will our own jobs be there?"

In 1991, the ATU helped to elect the NDP in British Columbia. Michael Harcourt, the newly elected NDP Premier flashes a victory smile.

In 1991, these concerns would again be addressed in the United States and Canada concerning proposed Free Trade Agreements with Mexico.

By 1990, the Canadian Council was fighting a losing battle against the Mulroney government's proposed 7-percent goods and services tax, a surcharge on goods and services rather than income. In opposing the GST, the Canadian Council called for a strong and fair tax system rather than the regressive Mulroney tax.

In 1991, the political involvement of the Canadian Council and Canadian local unions paid off. Following the 1990 NDP sweep in Ontario, massive NDP victories

A Great Union, continued

was again unable to gather enough support for an election.

ICTU did not limit its efforts to Local 279. In 1989, it began a vicious raid on the 1,400 members of Local 1374 employed by Greyhound Lines of Canada. The ATU sprang into action. In a campaign led by the officers of Local 1374 and assisted by International Vice Presidents Jim Daley and Robert Saarinen, Canadian Council Executive Secretary Ken Foster and Local 279 President Randy Graham, the services and benefits of the ATU were stressed.

ICTU ran a campaign with a disregard for reality. It committed unabashed attacks on the ATU Constitution and its officers. As International Executive Vice President Ellis Franklin stated in an October/November 1989 *In Transit* column:

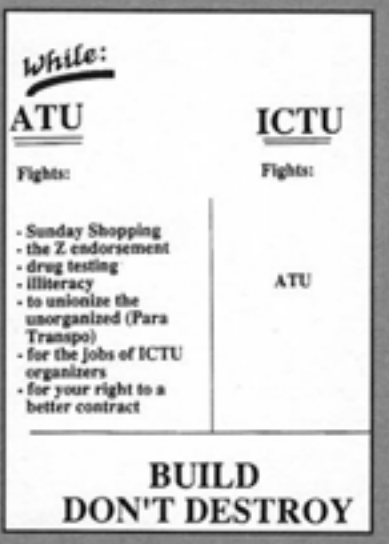
> "ICTU is conducting a campaign of exaggeration, fabrication, and outright lies. ICTU has no track record in the transit industry. We, the members of the ATU, should proudly defend our track record because it compares favorably with any union on this continent. We are the best union in the transit industry."

The members heard the message. In an election conducted on April 9, 1990, the members voted to retain the ATU.

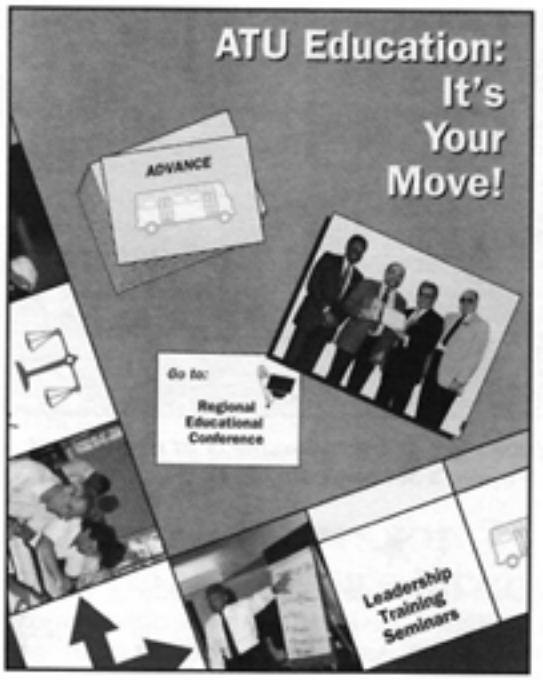
Canadian members demonstrated their strength through unity during this period.

A 1989 letter written to President La Sala by a former member of Local 101 in Vancouver (now a unit represented by ICTU) eloquently expressed how the ATU would always remain his union:

"I will be an ATU supporter to my dying day because the ATU alone in the public transportation industry stands for the moderate, pragmatic, feet on the ground, nuts and bolts approach to public transportation problems without which our industry and our jobs are doomed.



Literature such as this was part of Local 279's successful campaign against ICTU in 1990.



were achieved in British Columbia and Saskatchewan, ushering in an era of "looking after the needs of ordinary people" in those provinces. Members of Local 615 in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, had worked tirelessly for the NDP candidates there.

These NDP victories provided access for the ATU, the Canadian Council and the local unions to work closely with these provincial governments on transit policy and worker rights.

Canadians scored another big victory when they persuaded the Canadian federal government to drop a proposal for random drug testing of urban transportation workers in November 1990.

Education Takes Center Stage

Almost as quickly as President Reagan axed the government-funded education programs in the early 1980s, newly elected International President John Rowland filled the vacuum with a series of seminars funded, developed and presented solely by the International Union.

The new program covered grievance handling, political action and contract costing, and included a second round of seminars conducted in 1985. These first in-house programs provided the beginnings for what would soon become one of the best training programs in the AFL-CIO and the CLC.

The Canadian Council moved to supplement the International's program by sponsoring training seminars on grievance handling and safety and health issues. In cooperation with the Canadian Labour Congress and with funding of the Ontario government, the Canadian Council developed classes and teaching materials and trained instructors to conduct these seminars.

From literally the first day of his presidency, James La Sala made education the centerpiece of his administration. As La Sala pledged at the 48th Convention in Toronto:

> "[I]t is my firm resolve to continue and expand [the educational] program to the end that every officer of this union, at the international and the local level, will have an opportunity to develop and enhance his or her skills in every aspect of what it takes to do the job for which we have been elected, from the keeping of the union's books and records, to the negotiation of a complicated contract or pension plan, to the techniques by which we can mobilize our political power."

The pilot program was a grievance handling seminar designed to train local union executive board members and shop stewards, as well as the top officers of the locals. Developed in conjunction with the George Meany Center for Labor Studies and the AFL-CIO's Department of Education, the first seminar took place in November 1985. Following the success of the initial seminar, the

1990 grievance/arbitration seminar in Calgary, Alberta.

At the first ATU legislative seminar in 1987, the attendees met with congressional representatives from Capitol Hill. Pictured here are Representative Al Wheat (D-Mo.) with International Vice President Oliver Green, now international secretary-treasurer, (left) and Local 788 President Robert Bartlett (right).

Amalgamated hired instructors all across the U.S. and Canada to present weekend grievance handling seminars.

The focus of the education program over the ensuing seven years included an extensive list of subjects. While the International Union continued the grievance and arbitration classes, it added training programs in public speaking, leadership skills, labor law, pension benefits, collective bargaining preparation, and legislative and political action.

A training seminar was developed and presented each year for newly elected financial secretaries, and in 1991, the Amalgamated set up a class designed specifically for ATU women members to help and encourage them to become active in local union affairs.

In 1987, the Union added an annual legislative seminar to bring together representatives from each of the state legislative conference boards, as well as leaders from the more politically active locals in the U.S. and Canada. They gather to study and discuss current political issues and to develop lobbying and other legislative strategies to use in achieving their goals. In addition, the participants have had an opportunity to meet with their congressional representatives.

In response to a series of U.S. Supreme Court decisions and state public employee bargaining laws, the International Union developed a training program on the procedures necessary to set up fee objector programs in the local unions. As more local unions confronted the problem of represented employees opting to be fee objectors rather than members, the International trained international vice presidents to assist local union officers in complying with the legal requirements.

Between May 1985 and September 1992, the International

Participants get down to business at the Second Annual Women's Seminar in 1992.

An Interview With The Current President

How did you first get involved with the ATU

I was a member of Local 824 in New Brunswick, New Jersey, but not very involved with the union. I was a good bowler and was in a league with other local union members. I went to a union meeting in 1957 and some of the officers I bowled with asked me to run for shop steward. I ran unopposed. Of course, I had no idea how to do the job. A couple of months later, I had to represent a 24-year member who had been discharged for misappropriation of funds. When I went in to meet management on the grievance, they knew I was "green." I failed to get the guy reinstated. Fortunately, the local president was more astute and successfully convinced the company that the member had made an honest error, and he was rehired.

I then realized that being in office is more than just a title. You have to know how to do the job. I began attending labor education classes at the local university. I was subsequently elected vice president, financial secretary and then, in 1962, president/business agent of Local 824.

President La Sala testified on transit legislation before a congressional committee in 1985.

How did you come onto the International staff?

In 1968, "Chick" Cicchino, an international vice president from New Jersey announced his retirement. The delegates to the New Jersey State Council thought I should be Cicchino's replacement. After they made this suggestion to President Elliott, he called me into Washington. He told me that he would give me a chance, but "there was no free lunch."

So while I was still president of my local, I worked as a special organizer and negotiated some contracts in other local unions.

I was first elected as eighth international vice president in 1969, and was elected executive vice president

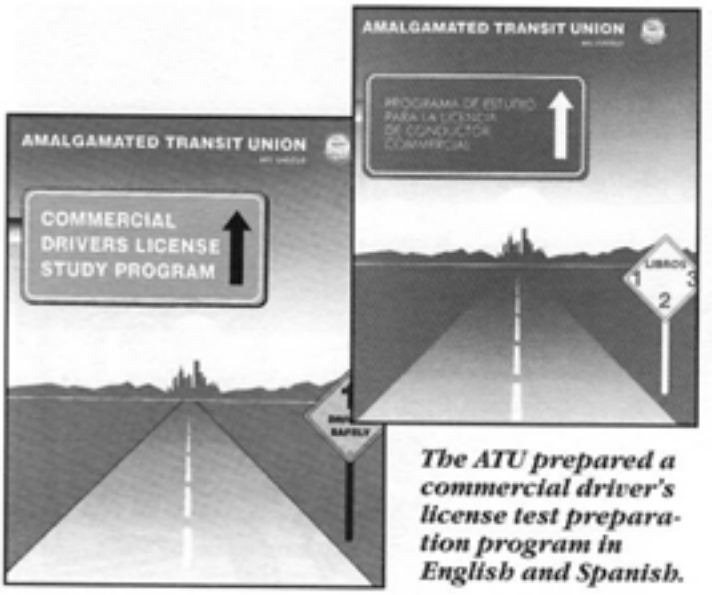
Union developed and presented nearly 190 seminars throughout Canada and the United States, with total attendance of more than 7,000 local leaders. During this time, the International Union's expenditures for education underwent a drastic increase, approaching $1 million annually at the peak.

Locals taking advantage of these opportunities were soon handling their own grievances and, in many cases, their own arbitrations, saving thousands of dollars in legal fees for their local union treasuries.

With their new-found communications and political skills, local union leaders were increasingly winning legislative battles at the municipal level and steadily gaining influence in the state legislatures and provincial parliaments.

Preparing Members for Commercial Driver's License Exams

As part of its concentrated focus on transportation safety, the U.S. Congress passed a Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Act in 1986. The Act, which was opposed by the ATU, required most of the Union's represented employees in the U.S. to obtain a commercial driver's license by passing a battery of written and road test requirements.



The ATU prepared a commercial driver's license test preparation program in English and Spanish.

Recognizing the tremendous harm the tests could cause, the ATU assigned officers and staff to work with state legislative conference boards and local officials on

at the Miami convention in 1981. When John Rowland retired in 1985, he recommended to the General Executive Board that I assume the presidency and they agreed with that recommendation. I was first elected to the position at the Toronto convention in 1986 and reelected at the Anaheim convention in 1989.

Why did you decide to do a history of the ATU?

We know that our 100th anniversary is a major event. I think its important for all ATU members to realize that the wages and benefits they enjoy today were not a gift from their employers. They only came about through the struggles and sacrifices of ATU leaders and members who came before them. As we began to research this history, it became apparent this was a worthy project that would benefit the Union, its members and the labor movement.

An important part of ATU recent history took place in the 1950s when transit companies were transferred from private to public ownership—how does this relate to what's happening today?

In the 1950s the private companies began increasing fares and decreasing service until they were no longer financially able to continue in business. As these private companies abandoned transit, the ATU was there to lobby for the necessity of public transit supported by federal dollars. If it had not been for the foresight of my predecessors, there never would have been a Federal Transit Act. Now the public bodies are increasing fares and decreasing service. They are contracting portions of transit systems to private companies—these are our jobs and our livelihood. But more importantly, it is a short-sighted approach. Transit is an essential government service. Giving it back to private companies with low paid workers who are not committed to make the transit system work will only return us to the problems we had in the 1950s.

What can the Union do about these policy changes?

Since the very beginning of the ATU, the officers and members have been politically involved. So much of what affects us happens in the legislative halls in Washington, Ottawa and every state and provincial legislature. In the last several years we have fought for transit funding, against attacks on Section 13(c), against mandatory drug testing, for family leave and child care, and many other pieces of legislation that affect our members.

But it is up to our members to ensure that men and women elected to Congress and Parliament and to state, local and provincial offices are people concerned with the welfare of working people.

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state legislation and state testing requirements. The ATU applied for and received two grants from UMTA to develop a "Commercial Motor Vehicle Driver's License Test Preparation Program." The educational package developed by the Union consisted of audio and video tapes and workbook materials. The materials were used by thousands of ATU members to prepare for the various state licensing examinations.

As the first century of the ATU drew to a close, President La Sala's commitment to education had proved itself in the quality of men and women in the leadership of the Amalgamated's 270 local unions. ATU leaders were more confident at the bargaining table, more articulate in front of the city councils, and more skillful in settling grievances before they resulted in arbitration.

Canada Leads Safety Fight

A clearing house for safety and health studies, articles and other related materials was set up at the Amalgamated in 1985 to seek out and evaluate the existing information and to make it available to local unions. At the 49th Convention in Anaheim, the first standing committee on research, education, safety and health was created to review the International's work in these areas

La Sala Interview, continued

This is also why it is so important that we redouble our efforts to support the ATU COPE. These voluntary contributions from members permit the ATU to work with local officers, state legislative conference boards and members and develop strategies and programs to advance our cause. It provides political support for ATU-endorsed candidates. Ultimately, COPE and individual involvement are the sources of political support to ensure that those elected to office will stand up for our interests.

Our history teaches us about the struggles of the past. What do you see as our struggles today?

I think in Canada and the United States, we are confronted with governments that have taken an adversarial attitude towards labor unions. For example, if a U.S. member exercises the right to strike, he or she can be replaced with a permanent employee. When President Reagan fired the air traffic controllers in 1981, he sent a message to government officials, to the courts and to managements that getting rid of the union is fair game.

The United States Supreme Court has imposed cumbersome record keeping procedures and legal requirements so some employees whom we negotiate for and defend in grievances and arbitrations only have to pay their "fair share" and not the full dues. At the same time, the courts have made it easier for the people we represent to sue unions, often in frivolous lawsuits.

President La Sala at Solidarity Day in Washington, D.C., in August 1991.

What about "privatization?"

Another Republican brain child. Whether you call it privatization or competitive bidding, it is a ruse to circumvent our labor contracts. If management can't get what it wants at the bargaining table, then they just contract out the work to companies with a lower paid work force. It pits working people against each other and union members against non-union members.

What do you think has been one of our greatest achievements in the last decade?

Without a doubt, the payoffs from our expanded education program. Our members have a right to expect that we are fully equipped to do our job.

Union officers and union stewards are dealing now with managements that are far more sophisticated.

and to provide direction and input from the delegates.

While transit workers themselves have always known their profession was demanding and dangerous in terms of health and safety, it was not until the 1970s that medical researchers turned their attention to the bus drivers' problems.

Early studies quickly uncovered an array of health concerns linked to urban bus driving. Researchers discovered higher than expected rates of heart disease and high blood pressure, back pain and back injuries, sick leave usage and mortality.

A major study was commissioned by the Canadian Council in 1985 and conducted by the Ontario Workers Health Centre. The study called for field testing of bus drivers' seats to find one that "better absorbs the various forms of vibration." Recommendations were also offered for stress reduction.

Canadian Council Executive Secretary Ken Foster was invited to share the research results at various management forums and was soon sought out by the transit industry's employer group, the Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA), to join their industry committee on bus design. As a result of these efforts, most transit systems in Canada and many in the U.S. have now implemented seat replacement programs that are reducing back injuries and lowering worker compensation costs.

In 1979, the ATU BLack Caucus met in New Orleans, Louisiana. From left to right, Charles Hall, Local 241 financial-secretary, Oliver Green, international vice president, James Thomas, Local 26 president and Bruce Foster, international vice president.

Stress-related problems, including heart and blood diseases, also received considerable attention in research circles, including a major U.S. government-funded study of hypertension that documented increased levels of blood pressure and isolated many of the causes of this stress.

Years ago, both the local union president and the management person across the table were former bus drivers. Now we sit across from attorneys, accountants and "management consultants." These people go to seminars sponsored by APTA and other groups and are taught how to emasculate our labor agreements. We have to be up to the task. So we train our officers to be better leaders, to understand finances, to cost out contracts, to be knowledgeable about pensions and many other subjects.

There has been an emphasis on organizing during your presidency. Can you comment on the importance of this for the ATU?

This is not an original quote but it certainly is true that "organizing is the life blood of the labor movement." I pledged at the 1986 convention that we would expand our organizing efforts. Since then, and for the first time in ATU history, we have appointed three full-time organizers under the direction of International Executive Vice President Franklin. It has been tremendously successful. We have done more organizing in the last six years than in the last twenty.

What do you view as the important characteristics of a union leader?

During my presidency, I have made it a point to travel widely and meet with our members throughout the United States and Canada. I have been present at ATU educational conferences, legislative conference boards, Canadian Council meetings, caucuses, local union and joint council meetings. I have preached to every gathering the importance of participation and involvement.

We are a democratic union. Our local unions operate virtually on their own. The members elect officers from within their own ranks to represent them.

Just as democracy in our national governments puts a responsibility on us as citizens to participate and vote, union democracy also brings responsibilities for our officers and our members.

We have to get involved and stay involved in our local unions. We all have to live by five basic principles—accountability, loyalty, teamwork, compassion and credibility. Otherwise, we will be complete failures. This holds true for both officers and members.

La Sala with Canadian Labour Congress President Shirley Carr at the 1989 ATU convention in Anaheim, California.

In 1987, the first ATU Women's Conference was sponsored by Local 998 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Caucuses

In a 1988 column in *In Transit,* President La Sala stated, "The Amalgamated is a finely woven tapestry of sorts, composed of many fine, unique people—of differing backgrounds, creeds and colors—living and working in various regions of North America, and dealing with different local and even federal governments."

The ATU Black Caucus, which originated during the 1960s, was an established group within the Union. It holds annual meetings at which presentations from the international executive officers, legislative reports and information are shared by the delegates from various local unions.

As more women became active in local union affairs and successfully pursued candidacies for local union office, women from ATU local unions began attending Women's Conferences. The first such conference was sponsored in 1987 by the Women's Committee of Local 998 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. During two days of speeches and workshops, the issue of women becoming more active and involved in union affairs was stressed. At the fourth such conference, held in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1990, the attendees voted to form and adopted bylaws for a permanent organization, the ATU Women's Caucus.

In January 1990, the ATU Latino Caucus conducted its charter meeting in Austin, Texas. In remarks to this opening meeting, International President La Sala voiced support for the new caucus and noted that although its first years had been difficult, the Black Caucus had subsequently matured and made invaluable contributions to the ATU. Albert Chapa, financial secretary of Local 1091 in Austin, was elected caucus president. He noted, "It is a tribute to the foresight of our International leadership and a product of the democratic nature of the ATU that the input of groups such as ours is not only welcomed but encouraged."

Brewster Strike

While no strike during this period would be as bitter as those on Greyhound in the U.S., ATU members would not soon forget the battle of over 100 members employed by Brewster Transport. This strike by the members of Local 1374 (Winnipeg, Manitoba) lasted over a year.

Brewster Transport was a wholly owned subsidiary of Greyhound Lines of Canada. When the parties entered into bargaining that year, it became increasingly clear that the company had no intention of reaching an agreement with the local union. The company demanded major concessions in wages and benefits and sought to remove the ticket agents from the contract's coverage.

The strike began on June 1, 1985, when the company turned down the members' offer to accept a 20-percent pay cut. By July, the company had hired replacement workers and instituted new bargaining demands. It illegally attempted to bargain directly with the strikers.

Throughout the protracted strike, with picket lines set up in Edmonton, Calgary, and in Jasper and Banff, Alberta, the strikers received outstanding support from ATU members throughout Canada and the U.S.

The union filed charges with the Canada Labour Relations Board. After a year long battle, the Labour Board ruled that the company had engaged in numerous unfair labor practices and ordered the company to bring the employees back to work, recognize their seniority, and pay lost wages back to July 4, 1985.

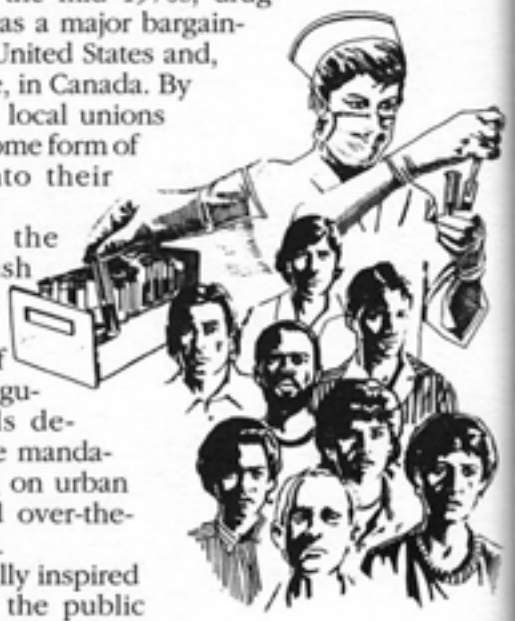
The company vowed to appeal the ruling and the local union re-entered into negotiations with the employer. This resulted in a labor contract and the members returned to work on June 18, 1986.

Drug Testing

Beginning in the mid 1970s, drug testing emerged as a major bargaining issue in the United States and, to a lesser degree, in Canada. By the 1980s, many local unions had negotiated some form of drug testing into their labor contracts.

In the U.S., the Reagan and Bush Administrations pushed for the introduction of legislative and regulatory proposals designed to impose mandatory drug testing on urban mass transit and over-the-road bus carriers.

These politically inspired efforts to show the public that the President was fighting the "drug war" in the U.S. were set in motion despite convincing studies of an outstanding safety record in the bus



The ATU immediately challenged the UMTA and FHWA drug testing regulations.

transportation industry.

Between 1986 and 1991, the ATU and other transit unions successfully foiled legislative drug testing proposals. But once again, what the Administration failed to gain on Capitol Hill, it sought to do through regulation. In 1988, the Department of Transportation issued far-reaching drug testing regulations affecting both the urban mass transit and over-the-road industries. The regulations required random, pre-employment, post accident and reasonable suspicion testing for all operators and maintenance employees.

International President La Sala immediately declared the new rules "unfair, unreasonable and unworkable." "It is another attempt by this Administration," he stated, "to discredit American workers and clear the conscience of corporations who go overseas for cheap 'drug-free' labor."

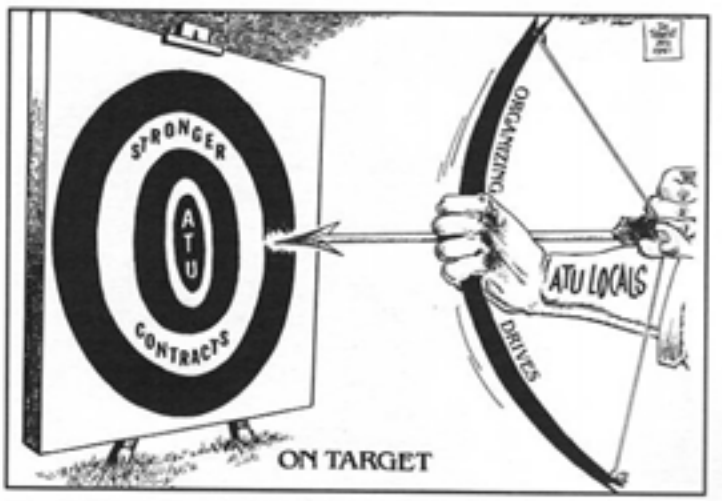
The ATU vigorously fought the regulations. The over-the-road regulations were challenged as violation of the U.S. Constitution. The Urban Mass Transit regulations were challenged as unconstitutional and not within UMTA's statutory authority. On January 11, 1989, a federal district court in San Francisco ruled that the random and post accident testing portions of the over-the-road rules were unconstitutional and called for an immediate halt to their enforcement. The government took this case to a federal appeals court, which unfortunately ruled that the testing was constitutional. As a result, the testing requirements in the over-the-road industry went into effect in November 1991.

On January 19, 1990, the ATU scored a major victory when the U.S. Court of Appeals vacated the UMTA drug testing regulations and agreed with the Union that the agency did not have the authority to issue such regulations.

Several local unions also filed lawsuits challenging the regulations. In Seattle, in a case brought by Local 587, the court found that the implementation of random testing by Seattle Metro violated the Washington state constitution. In California, Local 1277 (Los Angeles), Local 192 (Oakland), and Local 1574 (San Mateo) obtained court orders blocking random drug testing. Local 1564 in Detroit, Michigan, obtained an order enjoining the Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation from implementing its testing policy.

Despite the court victories, the implementation of drug testing was only a matter of time. Following an August 1991 train accident in New York in which five passengers were killed and over 150 others injured, the U.S. Congress enacted legislation giving UMTA the authority to issue drug testing regulations.

Although the Union successfully delayed the testing for several years, by the end of the period the focus had changed to negotiating provisions providing for employee assistance programs and rehabilitation.



The ATU made a commitment to organizing during this period.

Organizing

At the 1986 convention in Toronto, International President La Sala made a commitment to organizing, and the fulfillment of this goal became a major priority of his presidency.

Not long after the convention concluded, La Sala appointed Local 1307 President Karen Moore (St. Louis, MO), and Local 1575 President Charles Cook (San Francisco, CA), as international representatives. In addition, Gary Maurer, a member of Local 1600, was used as a special organizer and later appointed as an international representative.

Under the direction of International Executive Vice President Ellis Franklin, Moore, Cook and Maurer, along with local union officers and international vice-presidents, began an unprecedented number of organizing drives for the ATU.

In 1987, an important victory took place in Dallas, Texas, where 360 employees providing transit services under contract to the Dallas Area Rapid Transit voted for representation by Local 1338. The election came only after protracted litigation before the National Labor Relations Board.

Local 1612 was established in 1988 after 300 school

President La Sala appointed Karen Moore (Local 1307, St. Louis, Missouri), Charles Cook (Local 1575, San Francisco, California) and Gary Maurer (Local 1600, Atlanta, Georgia) as international representatives to conduct ATU organizing campaigns.

bus operators of Laidlaw in Riverside, California, voted for the ATU after a year-long campaign. The Union successfully organized other Laidlaw employees in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (Locals 85 and 1493), Portland, Oregon (Local 757), and Antioch, California (Local 1617).

In Ottawa, Local 279, with the assistance of International Vice President Angus MacFarlane, began organizing the employees of Para Transpo in 1986. The local union claimed the employer was a joint employer with the public transit authority, OC Transpo. During a legal battle that lasted over a year, they lost the argument that OC Transpo was a joint employer but built solid support for the ATU, and the unit was easily certified by the Canada Labour Relations Board in 1987. When the group of paratransit operators was first organized, the highest hourly rate was $8.40. Under their current labor contract, these same drivers will be earning $16.17 an hour by December 1993.

Hard Times, Good Contracts

The 1980s were marked by union-bashing and wage concessions, rising health care costs, cuts in worker safety enforcement, weakened labor laws, and increased government interference in the collective bargaining process (e.g., drug testing, privatization and fair share).

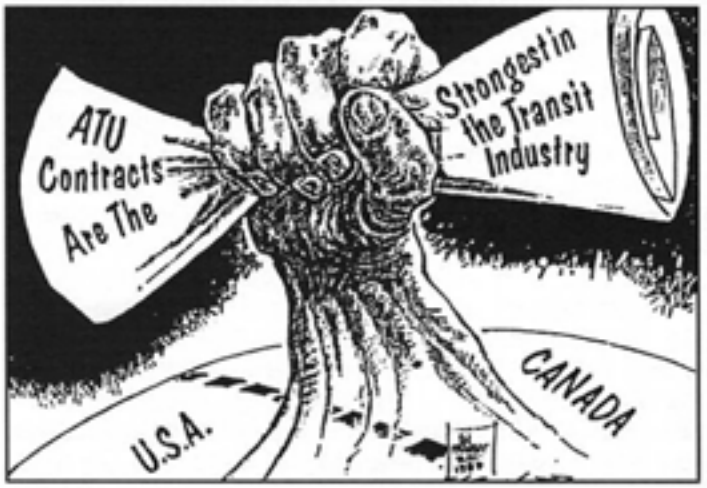
Despite these attacks from the conservative governments of both countries, the Amalgamated held its own through this period (with the exception of the U.S. intercity bus business which was destroyed by deregulation) and continued to do what it does best—negotiate contracts.

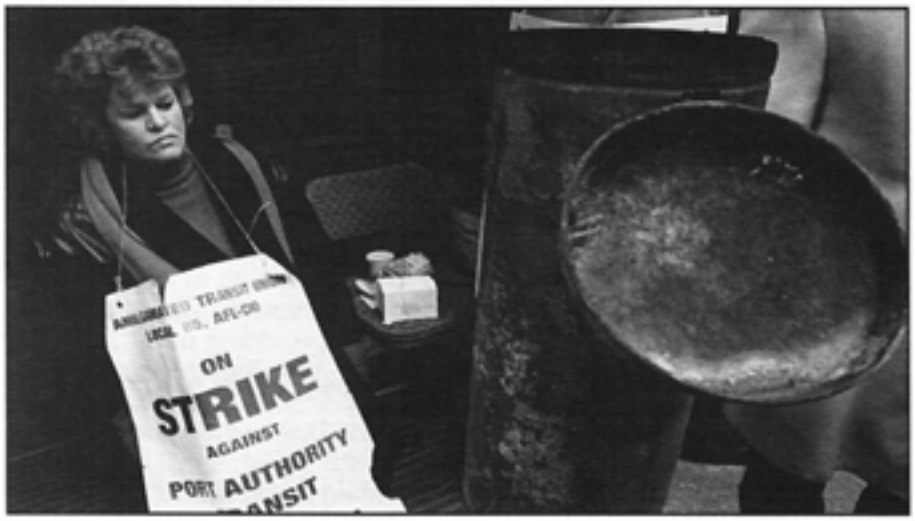
In 1989, Local 113 in Toronto effectively foiled a proposal of the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) to hire 450 part-time drivers. When an impasse was reached, rather than strike, the union instituted a job action to keep transit service running in order to avoid "back to work" legislation and to buy time for the union to educate government officials and the public.

The union's strategy proved effective in convincing city and provincial politicians of Local 113's position that the part-time operators were unnecessary.

After the Minister of Labour intervened, the parties returned to the bargaining table, and an agreement was reached which contained no part-time employees and a 14-percent wage increase, making Local 113 operators the highest paid in North America.

Wage increases in Canadian contracts averaged 4.9 percent a year during the 10 years ending in 1992, while U.S. contracts averaged 3.4 percent. Local 113 drivers in Toronto saw their wages rise from $10.97 to $19.25 per hour over the 10-year period, the highest driver rate in Canada. In the U.S., Local 265 of San Jose topped the list at $18.33 per hour, up from $12.01 ten years ago.





On March 16, 1992, the 2700 employees of Port Authority Transit (PAT) in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, represented by Local 85 went out on strike after PAT refused to abide by a fact-finder's recommendations for a new contract. The members returned to work on April 12 when a state court judge enjoined the strike as a clear and present danger to the public. As this book went to press, members of Local 85 were still working without a new contract. (Courtesy of Pittsburgh Post Gazette.)

"We are here, as we have been for a century, fighting for the right of honest working men and women to make a decent living at an honorable profession. The company is trying to turn the clock back to the days when we had to fight simply to get to the bargaining table...."

James La Sala, In Transit, May/June 1990

CHAPTER NINE *1981-1992*

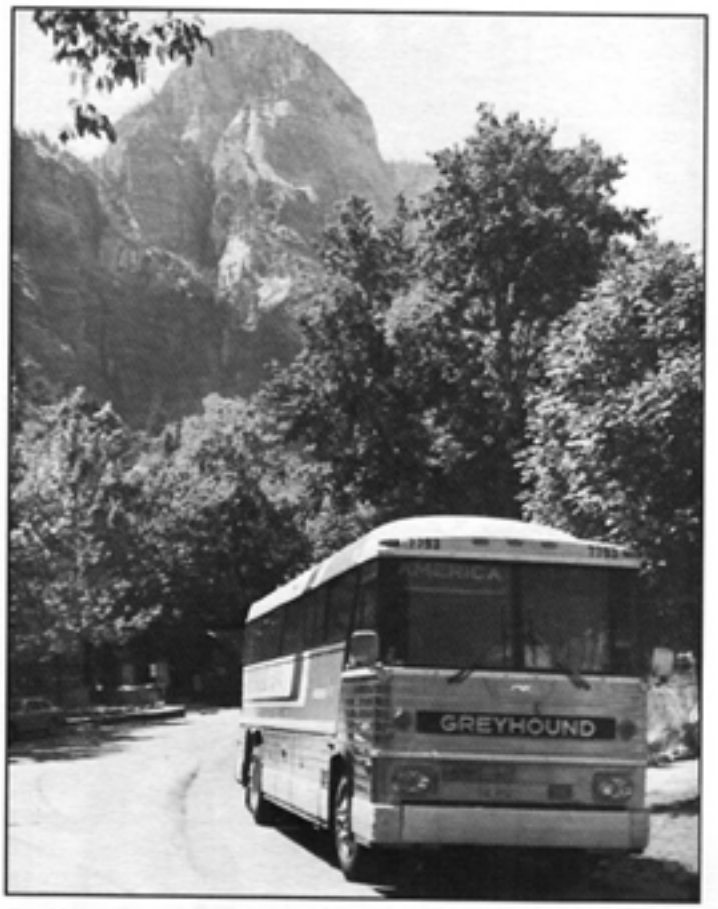
Greyhound: An Unfinished Story

For ATU members on Greyhound and Trailways, this has been a decade of economic hardship and labor strife. Once the top-paid ATU members in the United States, the very survival of the ATU Greyhound bargaining unit hangs by a legal thread after a strike against the company on March 2, 1990.

In 1981, the ATU represented close to 25,000 intercity bus industry members in the United States and Canada. More than 16,000 members were in a single national Greyhound bargaining unit represented by 31 local unions.

A national Trailways bargaining unit covered some 4,000 employees represented by five different locals comprising the Trailways Joint Council. The Greyhound and Trailways systems made up 91 percent of the entire over-the-road industry.

In its 1980 negotiations, the Greyhound Council succeeded in achieving a 41½-cent mileage rate. A new agreement executed by the Trailways Joint Council at the end of 1981 brought 11 separate contracts into a single nationwide bargaining unit. But the industry's economic difficulties were far more serious than was then generally recognized.



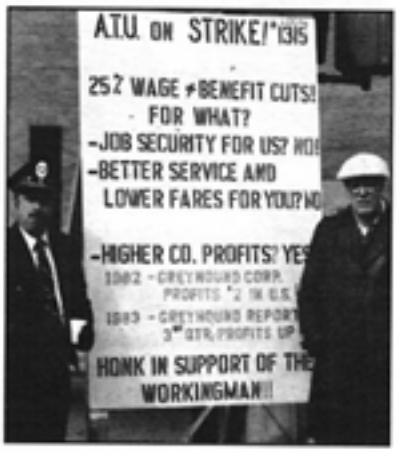
In 1981, Greyhound was the leading U.S. intercity bus company.

Deregulation and Downsizing

The deregulation of the intercity bus industry in 1982, combined with airline deregulation in 1978 and railroad and trucking deregulation in 1980, created fierce competition for passengers.

Competition from the discount airline fares of several low-cost carriers led to immediate decreases in bus ridership and revenues. Bus package express revenues were also hard hit by trucking deregulation and competition from United Parcel Service.

Greyhound and Trailways responded to these competitive challenges by discontinuing unprofitable services and downsizing their operations. They sold off company terminals and other assets. The result was the loss of hundreds of jobs and even further reductions in bus ridership and revenues.



Striking ATU members in 1983 display sign outlining their position.

The 1983 Strike

The chairman of the Greyhound Corporation went into the 1983 round of bargaining demanding "parity" with Trailways and other bus companies paying lower wages and benefits. He insisted that Greyhound Lines, Inc. (the Corporation's transportation division), could not successfully compete without extraordinary concessions.

When Greyhound refused to back down from this bargaining position, the Amalgamated Council of Greyhound Local Unions called a national strike of its 12,700 members at midnight on November 3, 1983.

The 47-day strike had the full backing of the ATU, the AFL-CIO and the entire labor movement. In city after city, fellow unionists picketed to prevent the company from operating with scabs and strikebreakers.

By November 17, Greyhound began limited service using 1,300 new hires. On December 21, 1983, one day before the company planned to expand service with another 3,500 strikebreakers, a settlement was reached with the Greyhound Council.

The new 3-year contract, ratified by 74 percent of the membership, imposed a 15-percent reduction in wages and benefits for current employees and put new hires at second-tier rates without coverage under the trusteed pension plan.

On December 5, 1983, Brother Raymond Phillips, a striking member of Local 1043, Cleveland, Ohio, was struck and killed by a Greyhound bus driven by a replacement driver. One year later, at a memorial service, Charles Flanagan, now president of Local 1043, placed a wreath at Phillips' grave site.

Then International President John Rowland would later recall:

> "They were hiring scabs and headed for breaking our strike. I was informed...that $60 million had been set aside...to get rid of us....[E]ventually management put an offer on the table that...I think they expected us to reject....The vote on the offer was...overwhelmingly approved but left a tremendous bitter taste in...our members....They never thought that their employer would do the things that were done to them."

While the 1983 Greyhound strike was fought to a loss, there was no knockout. The union preserved seniority rights and the "permanent" strikebreakers lost their jobs when the strikers went back to work.

Further Deterioration of the Industry

Between 1983 and 1986, economic conditions in the intercity bus industry continued to deteriorate. Eighteen of 38 settlements reported at the 1986 convention contained wage cuts or wage freezes in the first year of the contract.

Trailways, Inc., under Chief Executive Officer James Kerrigan, suffered from the high interest burden of its leveraged debt structure. Kerrigan desperately sought labor cost concessions from the Trailways Council midterm in the first national agreement. When the Council denied these concessions, Kerrigan explored a possible employee buyout (ESOP) to avoid bankruptcy. The company had furloughed 800 ATU Trailways members and contemplated the discontinuation of an additional 1,100 jobs when the company's ESOP proposals were rejected.

Meanwhile, Greyhound continued efforts to achieve its profitability goals. In August 1984, the company laid off 1,500 of its 11,000 employees, including 400 supervisors and sought to negotiate additional labor cost concessions in the existing agreement.

By the fall of 1985, Greyhound members were voting on a proposed contract extension, submitted without recommendation, that would have frozen pay until October 31, 1989, and eliminated 2,500 bus terminal jobs. In return, the company offered job guarantees for drivers and maintenance workers with 10 years of service, limitations upon removal of work from the bargaining unit, and monetary incentives for voluntary

ATU members on Trailways, Inc., overwhelmingly rejected a 1983 contract offer. The ballots were prepared by (from left to right) Frank DeWolfe, president, Trailways Council; Tommy Mullins, international representative (now international vice president); Ed Erkel, Council board member and president of Local 1133. Assisting was Assistant General Counsel Alexander "Buddy" Cohn (standing).

separation and early retirement.

Although the members rejected Greyhound's contract offer, the company proceeded to transform its terminals into "commissioned agencies," selling off over 120 terminals and terminating over 2,000 employees. It also began a franchise program which shifted some routes to lower-cost carriers. The result of the disinvestment program was an additional 22 percent decline in ridership in a one-year period.

The Sale of Greyhound

In 1986, the Greyhound contract renewal negotiations quickly broke down. Rather than suffer another strike, Greyhound announced on December 23, 1986, that the assets of Greyhound Lines, Inc., had been sold to a group of investors led by Fred Currey of Dallas, Texas. The sale was consummated on March 18, 1987.

Currey claimed his company, GLI Holding Company, had no legal obligation to the union. He told the ATU that he would recognize the union and offer employment to ATU members if a "proper" agreement could be reached.

In order to preserve the bargaining unit, a contract settlement was reached on GLI-dictated terms. The new 3-year agreement, for the now-reduced bargaining unit of 6,500 drivers, mechanics and clerical workers, cut mileage rates from 37.44 cents per mile to 30 cents for current employees and instituted a 10-year progression for new drivers starting at 24 cents per mile. There was a 2-cent premium on the mileage rate in eight "high cost" cities and an incentive plan which provided an additional 1-cent per mile for each increase of one in the average passenger load.

The contract was approved by 70 percent of the Greyhound members.

AGREEMENT

In 1987, the Greyhound Council reached a contract settlement with GLI preserving the bargaining unit.

The Demise of Trailways

On June 19, 1987, the second stage of the industry's transformation occurred. Fred Currey announced plans to acquire the assets of GLI's primary competitor, the failing Trailways system, which was on the verge of financial collapse. GLI's acquisition of Trailways added $80 million of new debt to a company that already had close to $300 million in long-term debt.

GLI offered employment under the Greyhound contract to approximately 1,400 active Trailways bus drivers and brought them into the Greyhound bargaining unit.

When the company and the union were unable to reach agreement on a dovetailed seniority system, a bitter seniority dispute between the former Trailways and Greyhound drivers spawned a series of court cases. This ultimately resulted in a Special Master's decision granting 400 former Trailways drivers seniority recognition capped at 25 years of service to bid on 200 regular run and 200 extra board assignments allocated by regions.

In November 1987, the Trailways Corporation was forced to liquidate in bankruptcy. In order to protect claims involving unresolved grievances and arbitrations, and the health and welfare fund, the attorney for the Trailways Council, Isadore Gromfine, represented the Council in the bankruptcy proceeding. When the liquidation plan was approved in 1988, a $9 million fund was established to pay off the union's claims.

Stalled Negotiations

In 1989, GLI and the union entered negotiations for a new collective bargaining agreement with very different views of their future needs. The company's biggest problem was its gigantic debt burden and accompanying interest expense. Although the company was inherently profitable from an operating standpoint, it was laboring under the debt burden from its inflated acquisition cost financed with junk bonds at up to 13 percent interest.

The union, which had suffered wage and benefit losses in both its 1983 and 1987 contracts, was seeking wage and benefit improvements based on the company's increased ridership and operating revenues.

GLI's proposal included no guaranteed wage increases for drivers and demanded rights to subcontract mainline service and maintenance work. The company's bargaining posture seemed calculated to bring on and break a strike rather than achieve a contract.

During bargaining, the company began its strike preparations. A GLI spokesperson explained that if the employees went on strike, the company would operate with permanent replacements and crossovers. GLI announced a $50 million account to resist any strike. The company advertised in major newspapers offering permanent employment to strikebreakers.

Amalgamated Council of Greyhound Local Unions

As the contract termination deadline neared, the Greyhound Council urged the Company to engage in real bargaining.

Even before the contract expiration on March 1, GLI began training strikebreakers. It posted bulletins for employees informing them that strikers would not be allowed to use their seniority to bump back onto the job. The almost 1,000 drivers hired since 1987 were told that if they kept working or crossed a picket line, they could bypass the 10-year progression rates and move to the top rate, never to be displaced by a returning striker. Former Trailways drivers were promised their full Trailways seniority as an incentive not to strike.

The negotiations for about 6,300 drivers and 3,000 mechanics and clerical workers stalled when the company's "first and final" offer of January 10, 1992, was rejected by 91.9 percent of the union members.

Greyhound strikers picketed from coast to coast.

The Strike

A strike was authorized, if necessary, to require the company to deliver on its past promises of wage and benefit improvements. The company responded with an ultimatum that its contract offer would be imposed on March 2, 1990. When further negotiations between the company and the union failed, the company refused any extension of the existing contract.

On March 2, 1990, over 9,000 ATU Greyhound union members went on strike. Virtually all of the union drivers honored the picket lines and refused to work.

The day after the strike began, a picketing member, Robert Waterhouse, was struck and killed by a Greyhound bus driven by a replacement driver in Redding, California.

Rather than accepting responsibility for its "unprofessional" strikebreaker, the company suddenly proposed to grant replacement drivers experience-based seniority credits for their years with any other bus or trucking company. The company implemented this proposal

On March 3, 1990, ATU member Robert Waterhouse was struck and killed by a Greyhound bus driven by a replacement driver in Redding, California.

over the union's emphatic objections and successfully recruited approximately 4,000 new drivers as permanent replacements to continue the company's service.

The strike was bitter. ATU members felt betrayed by the company they had spent years to build. When violent incidents broke out in various U.S. locations, union members claimed the incidents were company inspired. The company immediately blamed the strikers and their union.

The ATU maintained the position that it was prepared to return to the bargaining table to negotiate a fair contract with Greyhound. At the urging of Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service Director Bernard DeLury, the company finally agreed to sit down with the union on March 17 and 18. Although the union put out new proposals, the company rejected the proposals and refused to offer any new proposal of its own. On March

(By permission of Mike Luckovich and Creators Syndicate.)

Greyhound Council President Edward M. Strait called upon the company to stop using unsafe replacement drivers.

18, the company abruptly broke off negotiations, citing "union-sponsored" violence as the reason for refusing to bargain.

It quickly became apparent through an increasing number of accidents and near misses that the strikebreakers were not well trained to do the work. On March 22, Greyhound Council President Edward M. Strait called upon the company to stop using unsafe and ill-trained replacement drivers. The Council issued a report documenting more than 55 union members who had been struck by buses and security vehicles on picket lines.

U.S. Senator James Exon sent a letter to the Secretaries of Transportation and Labor expressing concern for the safety of the traveling public and urging them to intervene in the Greyhound dispute and fully enforce the federal transportation safety requirements.

After agreeing on March 29, 1990, to return to the bargaining table, the company reversed its decision the very next day, citing union violence as the reason. ATU President La Sala issued a statement to the national news media condemning the violence. He noted the fallacy of the company's excuse: "Any crackpot can stop negotiations from resuming by calling a phone threat or taking a pot shot at a bus."

The Legal Battles

A few months after the strike started, the battle shifted from the bargaining table and the streets to the legal and political arenas. At the beginning of the strike, the union had filed multiple charges with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) protesting the company's unfair bargaining which it claimed made the strike an unfair labor practice strike. The General Counsel of the NLRB agreed and issued an unfair labor practice complaint against Greyhound in May 1990. On May 22, 1990, the union sent a letter to the company making an unconditional offer to return to work. The offer was promptly rejected by the company.

On March 25, 1990, the Greyhound Council met at ATU headquarters in Washington, D.C., to discuss the strike. AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue conveyed the organization's full support and backing to the strike.

As if to reconfirm its resolve to operate as a "union-free" company, Greyhound filed a lawsuit in federal district court in Jacksonville, Florida, against the ATU, the Greyhound Council, two ATU local unions, and 20 union officers and members under the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO). The lawsuit, which sought $30 million in damages and appointment of a receiver for two ATU local unions, claimed that the union engaged in a coordinated campaign of violence to financially cripple Greyhound Lines. Within months, Greyhound began gathering evidence in its lawsuit including the deposition of every ATU international officer and all of the Greyhound local union officers, and requesting thousands of documents from the various levels of the union.

As the strike continued, resolutions were introduced in the United States House of Representatives and the Senate calling upon the parties to return to the bargaining table and negotiate a settlement to the labor dispute. By August, the United States Senate had unanimously approved the resolution.

The ATU waged a postcard campaign urging members to write to their congressional representatives to support the resolution calling upon the parties to return to the bargaining table.

On June 4, 1990, citing strike related expenditures, Greyhound filed for bankruptcy reorganization under Chapter 11 of the Bankruptcy Code in Brownsville, Texas. This caused the union to have to fight for the rights of its members in a forum that was, at best, uninformed and, at worst, hostile to the nation's labor laws.

The Greyhound Council and the NLRB joined forces in the bankruptcy court. The NLRB filed multiple proofs of claims for unfair labor practice damages to strikers, initially totaling $85.7 million but increasing each day. Of that amount, the NLRB asserted that $79.3 million was an administrative expense which must be paid in full before the company could reorganize. The company sought to avoid this liability by filing a complaint to put the strikers' back pay claims behind those of all other

creditors, a motion to classify these claims as unsecured rather than as claims payable in cash for the wages owed to the strikers, and a motion to estimate and cap the unsecured claim at $40 million.

In a blow to the union, the bankruptcy judge sustained the company's position that the back pay claims should be classified as unsecured. In other bankruptcy cases, wages accruing during the bankruptcy had a priority status and were paid in full. The judge's decision put the Greyhound strikers on the same footing with other unsecured creditors, effectively reducing the amount that could be collected on their claims. The NLRB immediately determined to appeal the court's decision.

The bankruptcy court went on to hold an evidentiary hearing to estimate the amount of the unsecured claim. The judge agreed with the expert testimony presented by the NLRB and union that the potential liability might reach $125 million. But when bankruptcy Judge Schmidt ruled, he reduced the amount to $31.25 million, 25 percent of the estimate, to fit it within the company's reorganization plan.

The ruling was another blow to the Greyhound strikers and totally unfair. The union and the NLRB joined to appeal this ruling.

Then, in the face of strong ATU objection, the bankruptcy judge permitted Greyhound management's proposed reorganization plan to be voted on and approved by its creditors. The plan had a proposed "settlement" of the labor dispute that would have left virtually all strikers without jobs or back pay. The terms reduced Greyhound's liabilities to strikers to 4 percent of the actual back pay owed them. The ATU immediately opposed the plan.

The ATU and the NLRB asked the bankruptcy judge to delay implementation of the reorganization plan until it could be appealed. This move was also rejected.

As part of the company's reorganization, GLI's C.E.O., Fred Currey, had been paid $1.9 million and forced to resign by the creditors. Upon Currey's departure, President La Sala commented:

> "Mr. Currey's departure was small consolation for all of the agony that has been visited upon our Greyhound members.
>
> * * *
>
> "We cannot rejoice as long as the ragged shadow of the picket line still darkens the path our members walk on the way to justice and dignity. Mr. Currey bailed out of this disaster of his own making with his 'golden parachute' intact."

While the company was reorganizing in bankruptcy, the unfair labor practice case was moving forward. On November 6, 1990, the general counsel of the NLRB amended the unfair labor practice complaint to include the company's continuing refusal to reinstate striking employees, further unlawful alterations of employment conditions without bargaining, unlawful termination of strikers for protected activities, company threats to striking employees, company security guards' physical assaults on striking employees, and the company's refusal to provide information needed for bargaining.

In what promised to be a protracted proceeding, the NLRB hearing began in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, on January 15, 1991. A month later, by order of the administrative law judge, the complaint against the company was again amended to include charges that the company's "experience based" seniority proposal, unilaterally instituted on March 8, 1990, was inherently discriminatory and motivated against the strikers because it awarded preferential seniority to striker replacements.

By October 18, 1991, there had been some 25 days of hearing before the administrative law judge on the "national case," consisting essentially of the bargaining and seniority issues and the causation of the strike.

On September 10, 1991, the company filed a motion to sever the national issues from the local allegations of company threats and statements against striking employees and discriminatory discharges of strikers.

In his decision granting this motion on December 30, 1991, the administrative law judge estimated that the local case alone would consume about 375 trial days over about 4 years. He cited the need for a quick resolution of national issues and the public interest in having it resolved quickly.

Local 998 (Milwaukee, Wisconsin) President Bruce Colburn addressed a rally for striking Greyhound workers as the unfair labor practice hearing convened on January 15, 1991.

By the summer of 1992, the hearing on the national unfair labor practice issues was almost completed at the first level of NLRB proceedings before the administrative law judge. While the union expected a favorable decision, it knew the company would pursue its appeals.

Striking Greyhound members were supported at a rally in Louisville, Kentucky, by (from left to right) AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland, Federation Vice Presidents William Bywater and Richard Trumka, Kentucky AFL-CIO President Robert Curtis and Secretary-Treasurer Ronald Cyrus.

Other Options

The union also explored other options to end the strike. The Amalgamated Council retained a financial advisor to explore possible reorganization of the bankrupt company upon terms that would include a labor settlement. In 1990, an investment group met with the Greyhound Council to confirm its interest in a buyout of the company under terms that would include new management, adequate financing and equipment, a long-term labor contract, an employee stock ownership plan and full settlement of the labor dispute and related litigation. Unfortunately, the proposal never worked out.

As Greyhound was finalizing its reorganization plan, the ATU requested that the bankruptcy judge allow consideration of a competing reorganization plan that included a purchase offer by Richmont Corporation of Dallas and the former chairman of Greyhound, James Kerrigan. The group had reached agreement with the union to rehire all striking ATU members if it took over Greyhound. The judge refused to grant any delay. Richmont, unable to get its foot in the door, also faded from the horizon.

Support and Solidarity

While events were taking place on the litigation and other fronts, the ATU and other AFL-CIO unions supported the strikers in numerous rallies. On June 19, 1990, the Reverend Jesse Jackson and civil rights leader Rosa Parks led hundreds of striking ATU Greyhound members and others in a "Boycott Greyhound: Walk for Dignity" rally in Washington, D.C.

On August 24, 1990, the Greyhound Council and the AFL-CIO sponsored national support rallies for striking Greyhound workers urging a continued boycott of Greyhound Lines, which took place in Atlanta, Georgia; Boston, Massachusetts; Cleveland, Ohio; Dallas, Texas; Detroit, Michigan; Los Angeles, California; New York, New York; Portland, Oregon; Washington, D.C., and various other cities throughout the country. On November 16, 1990, similar rallies were conducted in five target cities to discourage Greyhound ridership during the Thanksgiving holiday.

The financial strain of the litigation, the legal defense, the bankruptcy and the buyout efforts, along with the six months of payments of strike benefits to the Greyhound members severely depleted the ATU Defense Fund and other assets. After a vote of the General Executive Board, strike benefit payments were suspended after September 13, 1990, for any ATU members on strike.

In an August 27, 1990, letter to the officers and members of the Greyhound Council, President La Sala pledged to conserve the monies remaining in the Defense Fund for use in the ongoing legal and buyout efforts. He also vowed that picketing and boycotting activities would continue until a fair settlement with Greyhound was reached.

On March 2, 1991, a year after the Greyhound strike began, the AFL-CIO donated $25,000 to start a strike relief fund for the strikers. The date was marked by strong solidarity rallies in many cities across the country.

The Reverend Jesse Jackson and civil rights leader Rosa Parks, along with International President La Sala led the "Walk for Dignity" on June 19, 1990, in Washington, D.C.

A Story Without a Conclusion

As this book went to press, the strikers had maintained solidarity throughout their 2½-year struggle. Only 700 of the company's pre-strike driver work force crossed the picket line in response to the company's warnings to the strikers. The Greyhound Council voted

Michael Rucker, president of Local 1001 (Denver, Colorado) picketed with strikers in that city.

to allow a partial return by individual drivers beginning Easter weekend of April 1992.

The International Union had expended more than $10 million on the strike and related litigation efforts and the litigation was continuing.

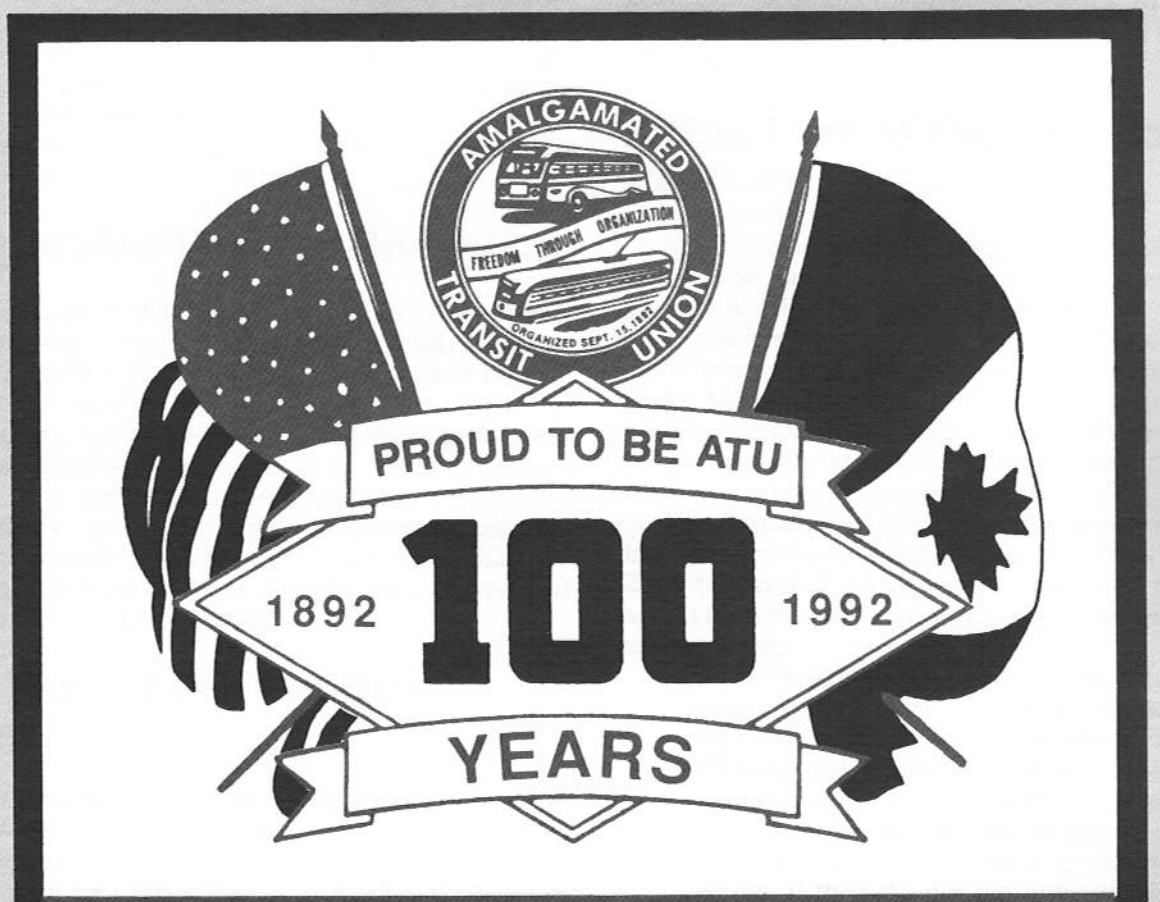
The Greyhound story is unfinished. Justice has not been served and will be a long time coming. The Greyhound strike, perhaps more than any other, demonstrated the need to pass a law in the United States which would ban permanent replacement scabs. President Ronald Reagan created open season on unions by firing the air traffic controllers. Greyhound, as well as a multitude of U.S. employers, followed in his footsteps by daring its workers to strike and then permanently replacing those who exercised this right.

The struggle goes on. Perhaps, someday a chapter in labor history will be written describing the valiant stand one union took against the threat of permanent replacements.

More than two years after the strike began, the fight continues.

'We start our second century as we did our first. Working to disenthral' ourselves from economic 'slavery' and 'improving our condition,' so that we might 'participate' in some of the progress and advantages of modern life."

James La Sala, quoting portions of Samuel Gompers' first convention call, In Transit, March/April 1992



A Century of Progress...

A Vision for the Future!

EPILOGUE *1992 and Beyond*

A Vision for the Future

In the last century, the ATU has, through good times and bad, achieved far more than the late great Bill Mahon ever thought possible. While each ATU leader built upon the solid foundations of the Union, the challenges facing the ATU in 1992 are equally or more formidable than those that faced the Union in 1892.

The Union today, mirroring the labor movements in the United States and Canada, can no longer feel secure about its future. Both countries are enduring economic recessions. Both countries have declining labor union memberships. Both countries are suffering from cutbacks in mass transportation funding and layoffs of our members in the mass transit industry.

With these realities as a backdrop, the ATU must map out its vision and fight for its future.

An Expanded View of Unionism

Unionism is more than just membership in an organization. It is being a member of a larger society. The respect ATU members have for each other should be carried into our work lives and home lives.

As our societies change, so must our Union. In the next century, we could and should have a future without regard to the race, sex or ethnic origin of our co-members and co-workers. The words "sexual harassment" and "discrimination" should be stricken from our vocabularies.

These laudable goals must be achieved to give real meaning to the word "solidarity."

Being Part of the Political Process

The past decade has well demonstrated to ATU members the effects of anti-union attitudes of politicians and judges. Workers in the United States have watched their wages fall, and their labor laws and worker protections have been gutted. We have watched the gradual dismantling of our mass transportation systems.

The election of the New Democratic Party (NDP) governments in Ontario, British Columbia and Saskatchewan has proven to Canadian members the difference a working partnership with government can make.

It is time for ATU officers and members to galvanize behind those candidates for legislative office who share our goals. At its spring 1992 board meeting, the ATU General Executive Board took an important action. It unanimously adopted a recommendation by President La Sala that the Union will only support those candidates for congressional office who sign on as sponsors to the pending legislation which would outlaw the practice of hiring "permanent replacements" during an economic strike. In one simple but effective vote, the General Executive Board told politicians in the United States that it will not tolerate any more Greyhounds.

Even more important than monetary contributions is communication with our members. Through *In Transit* and communication between the International and local unions, we must keep the membership involved and informed. A membership which is educated and in tune with the goals and aspirations of the ATU is a true asset to the Union.

Aside from expanding the COPE Program, it is necessary for local unions to keep their members politically involved. It is not just a matter of the membership voting for candidates who support reforms sought by the labor movement. It is also a matter of members working to elect candidates who share these goals. We must keep our members involved in politics, in our provincial, state, and local central bodies, and in the CLC and AFL-CIO.

Being Part of the Legislative Process

ATU members need to take a leading role in restructuring labor laws, labor policies, transportation policies and pro-worker laws and policies.

The terms "privatization" and "competitive bidding" have become common expressions in state legislatures in the U.S. and now these terms are beginning to sow seeds in Canada. The ATU needs an effective legislative program at the federal, state and provincial levels to counteract these measures.

The Canadian Council issued a paper on "Contracting Out: The Major Challenge of the 1990s" on January 20, 1992. In that paper, it was concluded that political action is an integral part of the contracting out fight. The author wrote:

> "Without exception every single transit authority is answerable to a political body be it quasi municipal, provincial or federal. Political lobbying and political action is critical to the success of any future contracting out campaign. Politicians, contrary to public opinion are susceptible to political pressure. Conversely, if they do not get any sense of concern either from the union or the public at large, they will do as they see fit."

Just as the Union fought for transit labor protections in the Federal Transit Act which took our members from private to public employment, we must fight to see these rights are preserved and protected both in private and public employment.

The ATU needs to fight for effective public employee legislation in the United States. During the past two decades, our rights to arbitrate the terms and conditions in new or renewed collective bargaining agreements have been severely watered down. The only way to protect these rights is through public employee legislation. Our ability to be effective at the bargaining table parallels our ability to be effective in the state and local

legislative bodies.

We need to see that our national, state, provincial and municipal leaders plan and implement expanded and coordinated transit systems. While transportation is not a panacea, it is our answer to the ever increasing urban pollution and urban crime.

We must encourage our leaders to view transportation as an essential public service—like police and fire protection, and highway and street building and repair —a necessity for urban dwellers.

We need a working partnership with transportation policy makers, environmentalists, law enforcement and urban planners to increase the ridership on and the accessibility of our transit systems.

More than involvement in issues that directly affect ATU members as transportation employees, we must address the larger issues affecting working men and women. It is our duty as union members to work on those national issues which have become overriding public concerns.

A Growing Union

To survive, the ATU must organize those employees it represents who do not belong to the Union.

More importantly, the ATU must organize the thousands and thousands of employees who are still unrepresented. This cannot be a goal solely of the leadership, but a commitment made by every local union and every local union member. We will seek out and represent not only those unorganized in the transportation industry but expand our Union into new areas of representation.

A New Union Order

The bottom line is and always has been that a union is a service organization and ultimately it is only as good as the service it provides for its members.

When the ATU was formed in 1892, its goals were apparent. It needed to organize and strike for recognition if necessary. It needed to sit down at the bargaining table and negotiate agreements for the members. This was true not only of the ATU but of every union within the labor movements of the U.S. and Canada.

As we near the year 2000, we face different priorities. While we need to retain our concept of dedication to each other, in the future our methods of communication and involvement must change.

Union meetings cannot be the only vehicle for informing the members. There must be hot lines, video connections, social and sports activities, to promote unity, involvement, and a sense of belonging.

ATU members must know that they belong to an organization that has a rich history and a dedication to succeed over the next century.

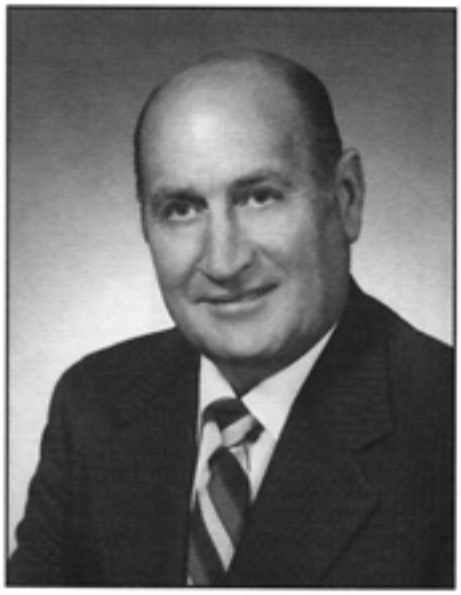
We have had a long history of adapting to change and moving forward. The history of recent years reaffirms this tradition.

In the past decade, this great Union has made a vigorous renewal of its commitment to the pursuit of political goals in the U.S. and Canada. We have embarked on a massive educational program that has upgraded the grievance handling, arbitration and collective bargaining skills of our local leaders. We have increased the size of our legal department and spent millions of dollars on outside legal fees to protect the rights of our members. We have expanded the scope of our research programs to include health and safety issues as well as the traditional collective bargaining research.

It is our investment in the future that will lead the ATU into its second hundred years. It is our commitment of resources that will bear fruit well into the 21st century. It is our commitment to leadership that will uphold the great traditions of the Amalgamated Transit Union so one hundred years from now this Union will still be here, strong as ever.

ATU OFFICERS
EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

James La Sala
International President
Local 824
New Brunswick, New Jersey

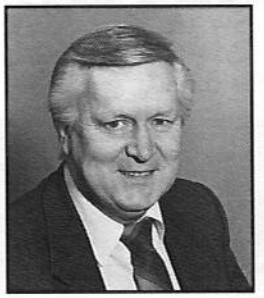


Ellis B. Franklin
International Executive
Vice President
Local 1493
Charleston, West Virginia

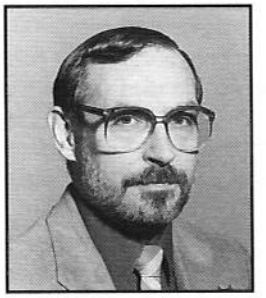
Oliver W. Green
International Secretary-
Treasurer
Local 1300
Baltimore, Maryland

ATU OFFICERS
INTERNATIONAL VICE PRESIDENTS/GENERAL EXECUTIVE BOARD

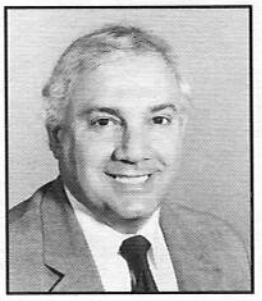
Melvin W. Schoppert
Local 757
Portland, Oregon



Warren S. George
Local 85
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania



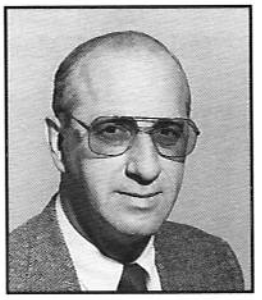
James H. Daley
Local 101-134
Vancouver, British Columbia



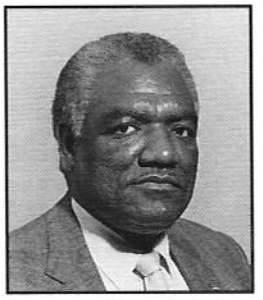
Michael J. Siano
Local 821
Jersey City, New Jersey

Angus Leo MacFarlane
Local 113
Toronto, Ontario

Tommy Mullins
Local 1544
Washington, D.C.



James A. Hayes
Local 1126
Omaha, Nebraska

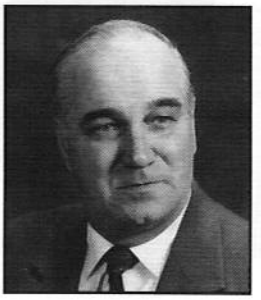


Jackie B. Breckenridge
Local 241
Chicago, Illinois

Oscar Owens
Local 192
Oakland, California

ATU OFFICERS
INTERNATIONAL VICE PRESIDENTS

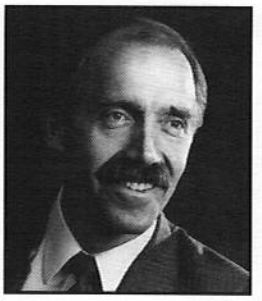
Richard C. Branson
Local 589
Boston, Massachusetts



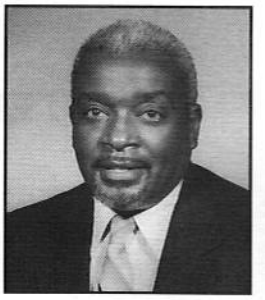
Joseph Welch
Local 580
Syracuse, New York

Wilford Spears
Local 308
Chicago, Illinois

Dana McGee
Local 1600
Atlanta, Georgia

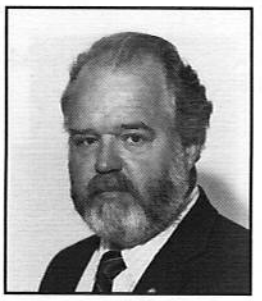


Robert Saarinen
Local 1374
Edmonton, Alberta

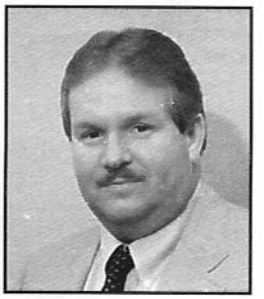


Rodney Richmond
Local 689
Washington, D.C.

Luther E. Hall
Local 713
Memphis, Tennessee



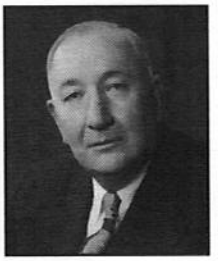
Donald T. Hansen
Local 758
Tacoma, Washington



Robert H. Baker
Local 627
Cincinnati, Ohio

FORMER INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENTS

William D. Mahon
1893-1946
Local 9
Columbus, Ohio



Abraham L. Spradling
1946-1959
Local 628
Cincinnati, Ohio

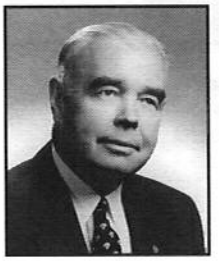
John M. Elliott
1959-1973
Local 1195
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Dan V. Maroney
1973-1981
Local 1493
Charleston, West Virginia

John Rowland
1981-1985
Local 788
St. Louis, Missouri

FORMER INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENTS*

Robert B. Armstrong
1947-1948
Local 788
St. Louis, Missouri



Sam Berrong
1948-1957
Local 900
Highwood (now
Waukegan), Illinois

John Elliott
1957-1959
Local 1195
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Henry Mann
1959-1965
Local 1277
Los Angeles, California

Edward Oliver
1965-1976
Local 1211
Indianapolis, Indiana

John Rowland
1976-1981
Local 788
St. Louis, Missouri

James La Sala
1981-1985
Local 824
New Brunswick, New Jersey

** Prior to 1989, the position was entitled executive vice president*

FORMER INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY-TREASURERS*

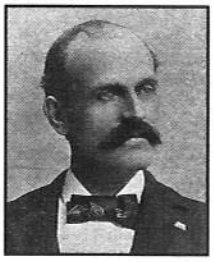
J. C. Manual
1892-1893
(No Local)
Detroit, Michigan

S. M. Massey
1893-1894
Local 27
Minneapolis-St.Paul, Minnesota

M. G. Moore
1894-1895
Local 26
Detroit, Michigan

NO PICTURE AVAILABLE

James G. Grant
1895-1895
Local 26
Detroit, Michigan



Rezin Orr
1895-1917
Local 14
Fort Wayne, Indiana

L. D. Bland
1917-1934
Local 241
Chicago, Illinois

William Taber
1934-1946
Local 241
Chicago, Illinois

Othmer ("Rip") J. Mischo
1946-1968
Local 998
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

James J. Hill
1968-1974
Local 308
Chicago, Illinois

John Rowland
1974-1976
Local 788
St. Louis, Missouri

Raymond C. Wallace
1976-1989
Local 713
Memphis, Tennessee

**From 1897 to 1946, the Secretary's duties were performed by the International President and the office was entitled International Treasurer.*

FORMER INTERNATIONAL VICE PRESIDENTS

Aber, Clarence L.
Armstrong, Robert B.
Bartlebaugh, C. E.
Behner, A. L.
Berrong, Sam B.
Bierwagen, Walter J.
Bland, L. D.
Bowbeer, Ben
Brown, E. Lee
Burgess, Roger E.
Burke, Arthur H.
Burt, A. H.
Carter, B. A.
Champagne, Henri
Cicchino, Charles
Clark, Charles H.
Colgan, Joseph C.
Collette, Ernest
Commons, Ben
Connally, J. W.
Cooper, William
Cornelius, Richard
Curtin, Donald J.
De Bate, Otto
Dean, George A.
Downing, W. C.
Dunn, T. H.
Durand, George
Elliott, John M.
Fahey, Joseph P.
Fay, Fred
Fitzgerald, Wm. B.
Fitzgerald, D. S.
Fitzgerald, Frederick
Foster, Bruce P.
Franklin, Ellis B.
Gagnon, Gerard
Ganley, Patrick
Garvey, Michael
Gerkin, Merlin
Gibbons, Joseph
Gormley, James J.
Green, Oliver W.
Grey, H. T. B.
Hanley, Patrick E.
Hare, Sidney W.
Healy, John F.
Hoover, Fred A.
Hunter, Charles W.
Hutchinson, Donald J.
Jacobs, William
Jennings, Wm. P.
Jones, Albert E.
Jones, Harry
Keeler, A. H.
Keenan, George
Kreisel, Floyd W.
Largay, James
La Sala, James
Lawson, J. B.
Leahy, Edward
Levander, Wilhelm F.
Link, George
Loughran, Charles
Mann, Henry B.
Maroney, Dan V.
McBrayer, Thomas L.
McCaffrey, Charles C.
McClenathan, W. S.
McGinnity, James
McGrath, P. J.
McGuire, Alex J.
McMorrow, Edward
McNamee, W. J.
Mischo, Othmer J.
Monks, C. L.
Morgan, John
Morrison, George M.
Murray, M. J.
Noel, Allen A.
O'Brien, John F.
O'Brien, Patrick J.
O'Connell, Laurence
O'Shea, Frank
Oliver, Edward W.
Parker, John M.
Penman, Charles
Powers, Fred C.
Pratt, C. O.
Reardon, John H.
Reeves, R. L.
Robertson, H. W.
Robinson, William L.
Rowan, O. A.
Rowland, John W.
Schmitz, A. E.
Shaw, C. M.
Shea, P. J.
Sheehan, P. F.
Shine, Thomas F.
Sinclair, Magnus
Smith, Harold A.
Smith, Ivey G.
Snowden, Stuart R.
Spradling, Abe L.
Stack, Robert
Stainback, W. T.
Steele, Arthur
Taber, Wm.
Taylor, C. U.
Thorpe, J. J.
Tipton, Guy E.
Trepanier, Raoul
Van Avery, C. W.
Wall, Walter P.
Wallace, R. C.
Welch, Wm. F.
Whitt, W. E.
Wiley, J. B.
Wright, William A.
Yelkey, Charles D.

CONVENTIONS

Convention Number	Year	City	Number of Delegates
1	1892	Indianapolis, IN	52
2	1893	Cleveland, OH	19
3	1894	Milwaukee, WI	12
4	1895	Detroit, MI	*
5	1897	Dayton, OH	19
6	1899	Louisville, KY	45
7	1901	Buffalo, NY	36
8	1903	Pittsburgh, PA	148
9	1905	Chicago, IL	134
10	1907	New Orleans, LA	132
11	1909	Toronto, Ont.	183
12	1911	St. Joseph, MO	197
13	1913	Salt Lake City, UT	245
14	1915	Rochester, NY	228
15	1917	Providence, RI	*
16	1919	Chicago, IL	327
17	1921	Atlanta, GA	300
18	1923	Oakland, CA	268
19	1925	Montreal, PQ	312
20	1927	Birmingham, AL	254
21	1929	Seattle, WA	245
22	1931	Boston, MA	225
23	1933	Toronto, Ont.	179
24	1935	Detroit, MI	*
25	1937	San Francisco, CA	228
26	1939	Cincinnati, OH	295
27	1941	Atlantic City, NJ	311
28	1946	Chicago, IL	501
29	1947	Los Angeles, CA	477
30	1949	Pittsburgh, PA	516
31	1951	San Antonio, TX	425
32	1953	Vancouver, B.C.	386
33	1955	Denver, CO	430
34	1957	Washington, D.C.	*
35	1959	Miami Beach, FL	396
36	1961	Toronto, Ont.	419
37	1963	Minneapolis, MN	433
38	1965	San Francisco, CA	404
39	1967	New Orleans, LA	414
40	1969	New York City, NY	418
41	1971	Las Vegas, NV	408
42	1973	Miami, FL	421
43	1975	Calgary, Alb.	480
44	1977	Washington, D.C.	487
45	1979	Los Angeles, CA	495
46	1981	Hollywood, FL	522
47	1983	Las Vegas, NV	534
48	1986	Toronto, Ont.	499
49	1989	Anaheim, CA	517
50	1992	Miami Beach, FL	

** Not Reported*

CHARTERS

LOCAL	CHARTER DATE	CHARTER CITY
19	January 20, 1893	Colorado Springs, Colorado
22	March 14, 1893	Worcester, Massachusetts
26	October 17, 1893	Detroit, Michigan
85	May 21, 1897	Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
89	October 9, 1897	New Castle, Pennsylvania
103	January 5, 1899	Wheeling, West Virginia
107	April 5, 1899	Hamilton, Ontario
113	June 21, 1899	Toronto, Ontario
128	November 16, 1899	Asheville, North Carolina
134	January 19, 1900	New Westminster, BC, now Vancouver, BC
164	November 20, 1900	Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania
168	December 3, 1900	Scranton, Pennsylvania
174	December 31, 1900	Fall River, Massachusetts
192	June 1, 1901	Oakland, California
212	August 20, 1901	Burlington, Iowa
215	August 30, 1901	Aurora, Illinois
241	April 1, 1902	Chicago, Illinois
256	May 20, 1902	Sacramento, California
265	June 12, 1902	San Jose, California
268	June 14, 1902	Cleveland, Ohio
272	June 25, 1902	Youngstown, Ohio
276	July 14, 1902	Stockton, California
279	July 24, 1902	Ottawa, Ontario
281	August 2, 1902	New Haven, Connecticut
282	August 5, 1902	Rochester, New York
285	August 12, 1902	Steubenville, Ohio
308	December 1, 1902	Chicago, Illinois
312	December 15, 1902	Davenport, Iowa
313	December 20, 1902	Rock Island, Illinois
329	February 28, 1903	Dubuque, Iowa
381	April 1, 1904	Butte, Montana
382	April 19, 1904	Salt Lake City, Utah
398	December 10, 1904	Boise, Idaho
416	November 24, 1905	Peoria, Illinois
425	May 19, 1906	Hartford, Connecticut
441	September 30, 1906	Des Moines, Iowa
443	October 23, 1906	Stamford, Connecticut
448	January 10, 1907	Springfield, Massachusetts
508	July 21, 1908	Halifax, Nova Scotia
517	February 4, 1909	Gary, Indiana
519	May 1, 1909	La Crosse, Wisconsin
540	March 1, 1910	Trenton, New Jersey
558	March 28, 1911	Shreveport, Louisiana
568	August 8, 1911	Erie, Pennsylvania
569	August 8, 1911	Edmonton, Alberta
580	January 10, 1912	Syracuse, New York
582	January 29, 1912	Utica, New York, now Rome, New York
583	February 26, 1912	Calgary, Alberta
587	April 8, 1912	Seattle, Washington
588	April 25, 1912	Regina, Saskatchewan
589	May 22, 1912	Boston, Massachusetts
591	May 25, 1912	Hull, Quebec
610	October 28, 1912	Charleston, South Carolina
615	February 3, 1913	Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
616	March 3, 1913	Windsor, Ontario
618	March 20, 1913	Providence, Rhode Island

CHARTERS

LOCAL	CHARTER DATE	CHARTER CITY
627	April 25, 1913	Cincinnati, Ohio
628	May 19, 1913	Covington, Kentucky
638	July 5, 1913	Cedar Rapids, Iowa
639	July 10, 1913	Lexington, Kentucky
662	April 21, 1914	Pueblo, Colorado
682	August 27, 1915	Fort Wayne, Indiana
685	November 18, 1915	Brantford, Ontario
689	January 19, 1916	Washington, D.C.
690	January 20, 1916	Fitchburg, Massachusetts
691	January 27, 1916	Springfield, Missouri
694	February 28, 1916	San Antonio, Texas
697	March 14, 1916	Toledo, Ohio
704	May 20, 1916	Little Rock, Arkansas
713	July 10, 1916	Memphis, Tennessee
714	July 13, 1916	Portland, Maine
717	July 31, 1916	Manchester, New Hampshire
725	August 10, 1916	Birmingham, Alabama
726	August 11, 1916	Staten Island, New York
732	September 23, 1916	Atlanta, Georgia
738	January 22, 1917	Hamilton, Ohio
741	February 22, 1917	London, Ontario
752	May 18, 1917	Bloomington, Illinois
757	June 28, 1917	Portland, Oregon
758	July 12, 1917	Tacoma, Washington
765	August 13, 1917	Montgomery, Alabama
770	August 22, 1917	Mobile, Alabama
779	October 20, 1917	Sioux City, Iowa
784	November 30, 1917	Meridian, Mississippi
788	January 31, 1918	St. Louis, Missouri
801	April 10, 1918	Altoona, Pennsylvania
812	May 27, 1918	Clarksburg, West Virginia
819	June 25, 1918	Newark, New Jersey
820	June 25, 1918	W. Hoboken, New Jersey, now Union City, New Jersey
821	June 25, 1918	Jersey City, New Jersey
822	June 25, 1918	Paterson, New Jersey
823	June 25, 1918	Elizabeth, New Jersey
824	June 25, 1918	New Brunswick, New Jersey
825	June 25, 1918	Edgewater, New Jersey, now Oradell, New Jersey
836	August 6, 1918	Grand Rapids, Michigan
842	August 19, 1918	Wilmington, Delaware
843	August 20, 1918	Bellingham, Washington
846	August 27, 1918	St. Catharines, Ontario
847	August 28, 1918	St. Joseph, Missouri
857	October 8, 1918	Green Bay, Wisconsin
859	October 14, 1918	Decatur, Illinois
878	April 30, 1919	Evansville, Indiana
880	May 8, 1919	Camden, New Jersey
883	May 21, 1919	Everett, Washington
892	June 19, 1919	Sapulpa, Oklahoma, now Tulsa, Oklahoma
898	June 25, 1919	Macon, Georgia
900	July 12, 1919	Highwood, Illinois, now Waukegan, Illinois
923	August 25, 1919	Amsterdam, New York
946	December 3, 1919	Cornwall, Ontario
956	July 12, 1920	Allentown, Pennsylvania
966	March 2, 1922	Port Arthur/Ft. William, Ontario, now Thunder Bay, Ontario

CHARTERS

LOCAL	CHARTER DATE	CHARTER CITY
981	February 14, 1927	Alexandria, Louisiana
987	March 11, 1929	Lethbridge, Alberta
993	July 26, 1933	Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
996	August 18, 1933	South Bend, Indiana
998	August 30, 1933	Milwaukee, Wisconsin
1001	September 1, 1933	Denver, Colorado
1005	September 21, 1933	Minneapolis, Minnesota, now Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota
1015	November 7, 1933	Spokane, Washington
1027	March 19, 1934	Fresno, California
1028	March 22, 1934	Chicago, Illinois, now Des Plaines, Illinois
1031	March 27, 1934	Beaumont, Texas
1037	May 7, 1934	New Bedford, Texas
1039	June 26, 1934	Lansing, Michigan
1043	July 11, 1934	Youngstown, Ohio, now Cleveland, Ohio
1054	October 29, 1934	Jamestown, New York
1056	January 23, 1935	Flushing/Long Island, New York, now Flushing, New York
1064	July 12, 1935	Terre Haute, Indiana
1070	December 9, 1935	Indianapolis, Indiana
1091	September 21, 1936	Austin, Texas
1093	September 28, 1936	Kalamazoo, Michigan
1095	October 7, 1936	Jackson, Michigan
1108	January 25, 1937	Quincy, Illinois
1116	April 5, 1937	Providence, Rhode Island
1119	April 13, 1937	Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania
1126	May 5, 1937	Omaha, Nebraska
1145	June 30, 1937	Binghamton, New York
1146	July 1, 1937	Saugus, Massachusetts
1150	September 15, 1937	Minneapolis, Minnesota
1160	September 18, 1937	Monroe, Louisiana
1164	October 7, 1937	Knoxville, Tennessee
1168	October 22, 1937	Wausau, Wisconsin
1177	January 4, 1939	Norfolk, Virginia
1179	January 17, 1938	New York, New York
1181	January 31, 1938	New York, New York
1182	February 3, 1938	Saint John, New Brunswick
1189	May 4, 1938	Guelph, Ontario
1192	June 6, 1938	Waterloo, Iowa
1195	August 25, 1938	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
1197	September 26, 1938	Jacksonville, Florida
1202	November 4, 1938	New York, New York
1205	November 14, 1938	Boston, Massachusetts
1208	November 9, 1938	Jackson, Mississippi
1209	December 19, 1938	New London, Connecticut
1210	January 6, 1939	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
1212	February 27, 1939	Chattanooga, Tennessee
1220	June 26, 1939	Richmond, Virginia
1222	August 15, 1939	Los Angeles, California
1225	September 25, 1939	San Francisco, California
1229	November 24, 1939	Saint John, New Brunswick
1235	February 5, 1940	Nashville, Tennessee
1241	May 13, 1940	Lancaster, Pennsylvania
1244	July 29, 1940	Lafayette, Indiana
1248	September 23, 1940	Jersey City, New Jersey
1249	September 30, 1940	Springfield, Illinois
1251	October 28, 1940	Battle Creek, Michigan

CHARTERS

LOCAL	CHARTER DATE	CHARTER CITY
1256	December 9, 1940	El Paso, Texas
1267	March 3, 1941	Miami, Florida, now Ft. Lauderdale, Florida
1277	July 2, 1941	Los Angeles, California
1279	July 14, 1941	Johnstown, Pennsylvania
1285	August 25, 1941	Jackson, Tennessee
1287	September 16, 1941	Kansas City, Missouri
1290	October 13, 1941	Moncton, New Brunswick
1293	October 27, 1941	Lincoln, Nebraska
1300	February 4, 1942	Baltimore, Maryland
1303	March 4, 1942	Detroit, Michigan
1309	May 6, 1942	San Diego, California
1310	June 4, 1942	Eau Claire, Wisconsin
1312	June 19, 1942	Greensboro, North Carolina
1313	June 22, 1942	Kansas City, Missouri
1317	September 17, 1942	Livingston, New Jersey, now Clifton, New Jersey
1320	September 24, 1942	Peterborough, Ontario
1321	September 29, 1942	Albany & Troy, New York
1324	November 23, 1942	Savannah, Georgia
1328	January 18, 1943	Raleigh, North Carolina
1333	March 10, 1943	Rockford, Illinois
1336	April 12, 1943	Bridgeport, Connecticut
1337	April 19, 1943	Columbia, South Carolina
1338	May 3, 1943	Dallas, Texas
1342	July 2, 1943	Buffalo, New York
1345	September 2, 1943	Reading, Pennsylvania
1348	November 15, 1943	Mystic, Connecticut
1356	March 13, 1944	Sioux Falls, South Dakota
1357	March 21, 1944	Irwin, Pennsylvania
1360	May 8, 1944	Topeka, Kansas
1363	July 12, 1944	Newport, Rhode Island, now Providence, Rhode Island
1374	December 18, 1944	Winnipeg, Manitoba, now Calgary, Alberta
1382	April 26, 1945	Springfield, Massachusetts
1384	May 11, 1945	Portland, Oregon
1385	May 14, 1945	Dayton, Ohio
1395	September 25, 1945	Pensacola, Florida
1400	December 13, 1945	New Orleans, Louisiana
1415	November 27, 1946	Windsor, Ontario, now Toronto, Ontario
1433	October 20, 1948	Phoenix, Arizona
1436	January 14, 1949	Harrisburg, Pennsylvania
1437	February 8, 1949	Raleigh, North Carolina
1447	January 18, 1950	Louisville, Kentucky
1462	February 5, 1951	St. John's, Newfoundland
1464	February 26, 1951	Tampa, Florida
1474	August 16, 1951	Richmond, Indiana
1493	October 15, 1954	Charleston, West Virginia
1494	November 1, 1954	Marion, Indiana
1496	May 10, 1955	Williamsport, Pennsylvania
1498	December 5, 1955	Joplin, Missouri
1499	November 1, 1955	Muncie, Indiana
1500	July 30, 1956	Memphis, Tennessee
1505	March 28, 1957	Winnipeg, Manitoba
1512	February 24, 1959	Springfield, Massachusetts
1517	April 10, 1961	Idaho Falls, Idaho
1535	November 14, 1966	Harahan, Louisiana
1539	June 7, 1968	Charleston, West Virginia
1541	December 3, 1968	Bayonne, New Jersey

CHARTERS

LOCAL	CHARTER DATE	CHARTER CITY
1546	June 17, 1971	Baton Rouge, Louisiana
1547	March 24, 1971	Brockton, Massachusetts
1548	February 29, 1972	Plymouth, Massachusetts
1549	February 23, 1972	Austin, Texas
1552	April 20, 1973	Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
1555	June 29, 1973	Oakland, California
1557	March 1, 1974	Hull, Quebec
1560	October 7, 1974	New Orleans, Louisiana
1561	October 18, 1974	Oak Lawn, Illinois
1563	November 25, 1974	Aurora, Colorado, now Denver, Colorado
1564	March 6, 1975	Detroit, Michigan
1565	January 15, 1975	Chapel Hill, North Carolina
1572	March 1, 1976	Mississauga, Ontario
1573	July 25, 1976	Brampton, Ontario
1574	September 1, 1976	San Mateo, California
1575	October 1, 1976	San Francisco, California
1576	March 1, 1977	Lynnwood, Washington
1577	August 1, 1977	West Palm Beach, Florida
1578	March 1, 1977	Lowell, Massachusetts
1579	September 1, 1977	Gainesville, Florida
1582	September 1, 1977	Niagara Falls, Ontario
1585	April 10, 1978	Hamilton, Ontario
1587	September 1, 1979	Toronto, Ontario
1588	November 1, 1979	South Windsor, Connecticut
1589	August 1, 1980	Long Beach, California
1591	June 1, 1981	Fort Lauderdale, Florida, now Broward County, Florida
1592	April 1, 1982	Binghamton, New York
1593	May 1, 1982	Tampa, Florida
1594	September 1, 1982	Salem, Oregon
1595	January 1, 1983	Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
1596	May 1, 1983	Orlando, Florida
1598	September 1, 1983	Spokane, Washington
1599	June 1, 1984	Pasco, Washington, now Tri-Cities, Washington
1600	July 1, 1985	Atlanta, Georgia
1602	November 1, 1984	St. Catharines, Ontario
1603	January 1, 1985	Bethlehem, Pennsylvania
1605	January 1, 1986	Concord, California
1607	January 1, 1986	Derby, Connecticut
1608	January 1, 1987	Cambridge, Ontario
1610	July 1, 1987	Washington, D.C.
1611	February 1, 1988	New Orleans, Louisiana
1612	June 1, 1988	Riverside, California
1614	November 1, 1988	Dover, New Jersey
1617	January 1, 1990	Antioch, California
1618	July 1, 1989	Aurora, Colorado
1622	August 6, 1990	Danbury, Connecticut
1623	May 1, 1991	Waterloo, Iowa
1624	April 22, 1990	Peterborough, Ontario
1625	August 1, 1990	Buffalo, New York
1626	July 1, 1990	Edison, New Jersey
1630	October 16, 1991	Toronto, Ontario
1633	February 18, 1992	Welland, Ontario

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