

Let me say this about that

—By Gene Klare



Labor abbreviations

THE LABOR MOVEMENT and labor publications are replete with abbreviations and acronyms for the names of labor organizations. This column will spell out names behind shorthand versions which sometimes appear in the Northwest Labor Press and elsewhere. Here starts the list:

AFL-CIO is perhaps the most often-used abbreviation. It stands for American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations. The AFL-CIO is not a labor union; it is a federation of labor unions, a union of unions. It is sometimes called an umbrella organization. The AFL evolved from an organization started in 1881 with the name of Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions. In 1886 the name was changed to American Federation of Labor. Its first president was Samuel Gompers, who had been president of the predecessor organization. He was president and editor of the Cigar Makers International Union. The CIO was formed in 1935 by breakaway unions that wanted to organize workers in all occupations, particularly in mass-production industries. John L. Lewis, president of the United Mine Workers (UMW), was



SAM GOMPERS

the CIO's first president. The AFL and CIO merged nationally in 1955. Its affiliates include:

- AFGE — American Federation of Government Employees.
- AFM — American Federation of Musicians.
- AFSCME — American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees.
- AFT — American Federation of Teachers. Affiliates include the Oregon Federation of Nurses and Health Professionals Local 5017; the Portland Federation of Teachers and Classified Employees (PFTCE); and the Portland Community College Faculty Federation (PCCFF) and the Portland Community College Federation of Classified Employees (PCCFCE).
- AFTRA — American Federation of Television and Radio Artists.
- ALPA — Air Line Pilots Association.
- APWU — American Postal Workers Union.
- ATU — Amalgamated Transit Union.
- BAC — International Union of Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers.
- BCTGM — Bakery, Confectionery & Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union.
- CPBCTC — Columbia-Pacific Building and Construction Trades Council, based in Portland.
- CWA — Communications Workers of America; unions merged within it include the International Typographical Union (ITU), The Newspaper Guild (TNG), the International Union of Electronic, Electrical, Salaried, Machine and Furniture Workers, and the Association of Flight Attendants (AFA).
- GMP — International Union of Glass, Molders, Pottery, Plastics and Allied Workers.
- IAFF — International Association of Fire Fighters.
- IAM — International Association of Machinists, sometimes called International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW). A division within it is the former International Woodworkers of America (IWA), which has its headquarters in Gladstone. Another is the Transportation Communications International Union (TCU).

(Turn to Page 11)

Labor sues OSHA to force action on employer-provided safety equipment

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Eight years of delay by the U.S. Department of Labor on issuing a standard requiring employers to pay for job-related personal protective equipment (PPE) — a standard that, by the government's own estimates, would have prevented 50 deaths and 400,000 injuries on the job had it been released on time — has prompted the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) and the national AFL-CIO to sue to force the release of the standard. UFCW is an affiliate of the

Change to Win labor federation. The Labor Department's foot-dragging on this rule has exposed 20 million working people in some of America's most dangerous industries, including meatpacking, poultry and construction, to a terrible choice: Pay for the protective equipment out of their own wages, or accept increased risk of injury on the job due to a lack of protective equipment, union officials



said.

This Occupational Safety and Health Administration rule would require employers to pay the costs of protective clothing, lifelines, face shields, gloves and other equipment used by workers to protect them from job hazards.

The Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) estimates that 400,000 workers have been injured and 50 have died because of this shortfall in protection on the job.

OSHA's longstanding policy has been to require employers to pay for safety equipment. In 1997, the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission found that OSHA's existing standard did not meet this policy requirement; therefore, a new rule was required. OSHA promised in 1999 to issue this new rule in July 2000, but it missed that deadline and every self-imposed deadline since. The agency has failed to act in response to a 2003 petition by UFCW and the AFL-CIO and numerous requests by the Hispanic Congressional Caucus.

The lawsuit, filed Jan. 3, asserts that OSHA's failure to act is putting workers in danger, and seeks to end the eight-year delay.

"Nothing is standing in the way of OSHA issuing a final PPE rule to protect worker safety and health except the will to do so," said Joseph Hansen, UFCW International President. "It is long overdue that the agency take action on protective equipment. Now, we are asking the courts to force OSHA to act."

The lawsuit, filed in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, asks the court to order the secretary of labor to complete the rule within 60 days of the court's order.



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