

If one worker each day stood up to fight injustice, it would take 123,288 years for bosses to fire the 45 million who today would join a union if they could. But if they and their union supporters all stood up together, it would be impossible.

That's the point of "A Troublemaker's Handbook 2," packed with tactics, strategies and examples of how unions are built and how they remain strong. Seventy-two author/activists from across the labor movement contributed to the book, including more than a dozen from CWA. The names of even more CWA leaders leap out in stories from the public and private sectors, in telecommunications, manufacturing, education and more.

With an anti-union administration in power, employers determined to operate union-free and politicians willing to do their bidding, it's probably more difficult today to organize and to bargain contracts than at any time since the 1930s, the last period of great labor upheaval that spawned most of today's larger unions, including CWA.

It took courage then, and it still does. But unions are built by just a few workers who start meeting one-on-one, adopt an agenda for the good of all and over weeks, months, sometimes years recruit enough people to make a stand. There are failures along the way, and there are inspiring successes.

Featuring union leaders' success stories, "Troublemaker's" 25 chapters cover practical topics such as finding power on the job, building unity, mobilization for organizing and contract campaigns, running a local union, building community and international solidarity and more.

EXAMPLES FROM CWA

A chapter on shop floor tactics discusses confrontational mobilization tactics such as those used by CWA 1037 to protect seniority at the Department of Personnel. More than 6,000 members wrote letters and stewards posted pictures on union bulletin boards depicting the commissioner's head made into a garbage can. They further ridiculed management by using the department's implied acronym, DOPE. An arbitrator upheld their tactics—and they got back their seniority.

Countless local unions get large numbers of members involved in meetings and rallies by introducing games to make it fun. For example, CWA Local 1180 in New York City came up with a skit called "Prime Time Lies" that made use of a "Lie-o-meter" to evaluate the bosses' latest pronouncements.

A business agent from CWA Local 1298 lays out an elaborate campaign and explains how his local got large numbers of members involved in a strike to eliminate a two-tier wage system at Southern New England Telephone Co., by systematically spreading the word about the company's two-tier wage system. To build upon the unity they had created, they printed a 24-page memorabilia booklet so that all would remember, "We Won It Together."

Steve Early, administrative assistant to District 1 Vice President Larry Mancino, discusses how to write a bargaining report and use websites and e-mail to keep members

involved. For example, during 2003 joint bargaining CWA and the IBEW strengthened grassroots mobilization by e-mailing their "Unity@Verizon" newsletter to more than 30,000 members. The large e-mail network was key to increasing power at the bargaining table and to coordinating workplace activity at hundreds of worksites, he said.

In a chapter on strikes, IUE-CWA Local 81201 President Jeff Crosby talks about the success of the nationwide, two-day health care strike against General Electric, which took place ahead of 2003 bargaining to signal management that the union wouldn't accept draconian cost-shifting. Crosby's local in Lynn, Mass., with 2,400 members, was one of the largest involved. Members picketed around the clock in the dead of winter, bringing national media attention.

On the other hand, in 2003 Verizon bargaining, both management and workers expected a strike. As the deadline approached, management rounded up 30,000 managers and scabs to take over the work. Then, the union chose to use an inside strategy. Just hours before the deadline it announced workers would stay on the job—forcing Verizon to spend millions to support its unused scab force. In this case just the threat was effective in winning a fair contract.

The book devotes an entire chapter to Jobs with Justice and how the CWA-inspired coalition of labor, community, student, religious and environmental groups has mobilized behind organizing campaigns, first contract battles, living wage ordinances and more, and how JwJ's Workers' Rights Boards have drawn public attention to numerous first contract battles.

Another chapter focuses on how card check recognition is more fair to workers than the current NLRB election process with its inherent delays that give companies a big advantage. It details the CWA District 6 campaign for card check and neutrality at SBC and its subsidiaries that led to organizing thousands of workers at Cingular Wireless, SBC Yellow Pages and elsewhere. Seth Rosen, administrative assistant to CWA Vice President Jeff Rechenbach, tells how, through card check, District 4 won area-wide bargaining units for Cingular workers in Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin.

AFA-CWA describes its CHAOS—Create Havoc Around Our System—program that has pressured management through informational picketing telling customers some planes might not fly. Flight attendants' absences because of illness might cause any particular flight to be cancelled.

"Troublemaker's" editor, Jane Slaughter, with Dan La Botz, who wrote the first edition in 1991, sum up the message they hope workers will take away from their reading: "You are part of something bigger than yourself. Be proud to be part of the scrappy side of the labor movement. Be proud to be a troublemaker."

A Troublemaker's Handbook 2, \$24 plus shipping (\$4 for first copy, \$1.50 each additional) can be ordered by credit card from Labor Notes at (313) 842-6262 or www.labornotes.org, or send a check to Labor Notes, 7435 Michigan Ave., Detroit, MI 48210. Bulk discounts are available.