

THE GLOO FACTORY PRESENTS:

WHY UNION?





Craftsmen's guilds were the precursors of "modern" unions. For example, the Declaration of Independence was signed in the Philadelphia Guild of Carpenters' hall. Unions as we know them

emerged in the mid-1800's to fight the excesses of the industrial revolution: 12-14 hour shifts, tiny pay, nonexistent safety and rampant child labor.

It was a hard fight: Strikers were shot, often by soldiers. Only a united front could prevail against such thuggery. It took many bloody battles - check out the 1914 Ludlow massacre, just as one example.



Unions finally forced worker's rights and reforms such as the weekend, an end to child labor, and widespread employer-based health coverage. Unions also spearheaded the Family and Medical Leave Act.



These Union-forced reforms created the middle class. And not incidentally, made the United States of America the most prosperous nation in history.





....AND **THEN** WHAT HAPPENED?

The 1% set in motion a decades-long campaign to weaken labor rights and destroy unions. Compounding this problem, the progress of technology, deregulation and international trade agreements allowed them to "outsource".

The threat of a strike means little if the owners can just pack up the factory and ship it out to a slave labor camp in China. Manufacturing jobs were the first hit, but are now joined by the loss of millions of office and professional jobs.



If one manufacturer "cheats" like this, they may gain a small advantage. But if everyone cheats, the game collapses.

Fired American workers can't afford to buy these products.



Hard-fought union-negotiated living wages and health and retirement benefits are being eroded by this race to the bottom. As the rich get richer and the poor get poorer, unions are needed more than ever. Despite the freedom to organize being under serious legislative attack, union members remain steadfast.



HOW DO UNIONS PROTECT WORKERS?

The Contract is the keystone:

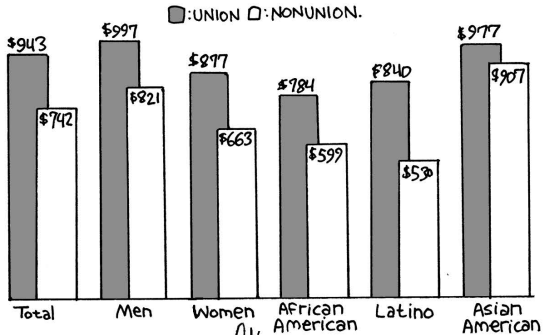
The contract is the negotiated agreement between workers and management - the cornerstone of good employee relations. For the worker, it guarantees a voice on the job, better wages and benefits, and worker safety. Workers also gain clear policies to ensure fairness and dignity on the job.



For the employer, it guarantees: A more stable and productive workforce that will create better products and services. A contract also improves workplace standards and builds safer work environments.

The Union difference is real:

MEDIAN WEEKLY EARNINGS OF FULLTIME WAGE AND SALARY WORKERS, 2012



Despite the fact that Union memberships are at historical lows, millions upon millions of Union members are helping to lead a movement for social and economic justice, not just in America, but around the world. Workers need unions to be guaranteed a share in future prosperity.

You might think that with social media, Union organizing would be easier than ever.

You would be wrong. The billionaires who own big companies like Starbucks and Amazon seem so afraid of sharing the profits with their workers, that they will push the limits of the law to prevent their workers from Unionizing.

And when the law is still an obstacle, lawmakers are cheap to buy when you're a billionaire.



Nevertheless, the plebeians perservere in the face of persecution. For a recent example, the Starbucks coffee shop corporation has fought the unionization of their baristas tooth and nail.

Despite this, over a hundred Starbucks locations in 19 states have managed to unionize. But this has not been an easy task.





FIRE ALL THE UNION ORGANIZERS!

THAT'S ILLEGAL, SIR.

SO? BILLIONAIRES DON'T GO TO JAIL!

January 2022 in Memphis, Tennessee, Starbucks fired seven employees, five of whom were union organizers.

Reportedly, one of them was fired for

signing a union card while in view of Starbucks' security

cameras. If so, a downright Orwellian instance!

Starbucks management denies everything, of course, claiming the baristas were fired for breaking rules that were never enforced before.

They also have the advantage of a nationwide corporate front, while the unions are regional. Still, unionized stores are increasing.

Frequent union stores, so your coffee or tea doesn't leave a bitter taste!



UNION MADE COFFEE TASTES BETTER!

Amazon, the giant online shopping corporation, fought even harder against unionization of their warehouse workers than Starbucks fought their barista unions.

Amazon management did not believe that their business strategy of "exploit the workers to the brink of death" would survive workers empowered to negotiate for better working conditions. We can only hope that they are right.

But Amazon's desperate union-busting came to naught: Amazon warehouse workers in the huge Staten Island, NY facility have voted to unionize, and also workers in Bessemer, Alabama.

WE GIVE THEM FREE
BOTTLES TO PEE IN.
WHAT MORE COULD
THEY WANT?



A sensible union contract (presumably guaranteeing bathroom breaks!) will do both Amazon and it's workers good in the long run. What's a workplace without workers?

Unions make life better for everyone involved.



SO YOU WANT TO START A UNION?

1) **COMMUNICATION.** Talk to your co-workers about wages, benefits & work conditions. Do they want improvements?

If so, 2) **CONSULT A PRO:** Consult a union organizer. Unions have centuries of hard-won experience they're happy to share with you. They'll help you 3) **KNOW YOUR RIGHTS:** Federal labor law protects your right to start a union. Don't be discouraged by anti-union bosses!

4) **THE BOARD:** Submit your coworkers' signed union support cards to the National Labor Relations Board and request a Union election. If you win it, your employer must recognize your union & bargain with you. Then 5) **NEGOTIATE** a good deal. Older unions in your line of work will provide model contracts and help negotiate with employers.

For grocery and retail workers: UFCW.org
United Electrical & Machine workers: UEunion.org
AFL-CIO is the "union of unions": aflcio.org
And the publishers of this pamphlet are proud members of the Communication Workers of America: cwa-union.org

Sweatshops benefit nobody but a tiny cadre of stockholders. Take a sweatshop-made shirt for example:

DOLLAR COST:

A TYPICAL SWEATSHOP
SHIRT SELLS WHOLE-
SALE FOR \$2 TO \$3
ON AVERAGE.

"CHEAP" HAS
A HIGH PRICE!



REAL COST:

ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION.

...AND TOXINS RESPECT NO
BORDERS, ESPECIALLY THE
AIRBORNE ONES.



HUMAN LIVES.

THE 1000+ PEOPLE SLAIN IN THE
BANGLADESHI FACTORY COLLAPSE
ARE DWARFED BY THE DEATH TOLL
OF FACTORY FIRES. THE
TOTAL TOLL IS IN THE
TENS OF THOUSANDS.



AMERICAN JOBS.

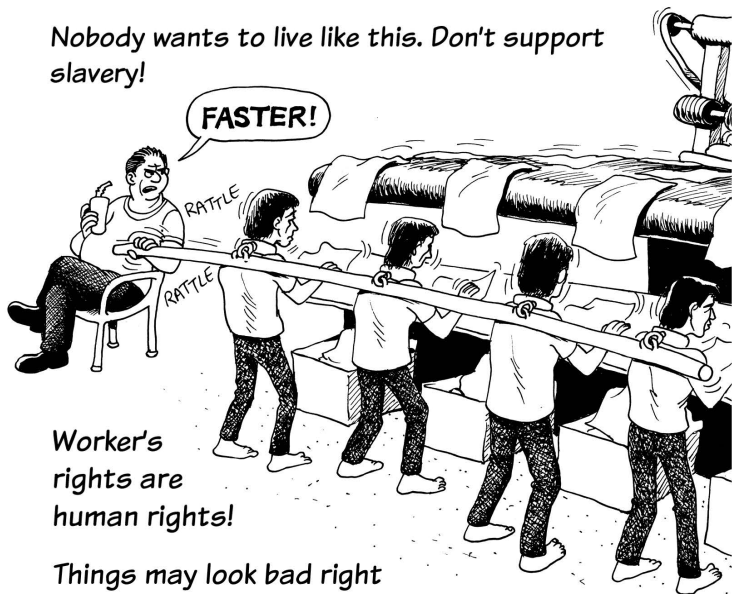
BUYING UNION-MADE GOODS
KEEPS GOOD JOBS HERE.
NOT TO MENTION THAT US-MADE
SHIRTS HAVE NEITHER A DEATH
TOLL, NOR A SLAVE LABOR
COMPONENT.



WORTH THE
EXTRA DOLLAR,
YEAH?

Buying/shopping Union makes a real difference!

Nobody wants to live like this. Don't support slavery!



Worker's
rights are
human rights!

Things may look bad right now, but don't despair! The 1% has lost battles before. They desperately need to be challenged before they crash the whole system. Strong, democratic unions are the only force with a hope of doing that. You can do your part by supporting union workers and buying union made products.

LOOK FOR THE UNION BUG!



Do you want to support worker's rights (and their families)? Be sure to always look for the union bug! Find out how to join or start a union at: www.aflcio.org
Labor heritage foundation at www.laborheritage.org
Art by Kjartan Arnorsson - Produced by the Gloo Factory.