

UNITED STEELWORKERS



THE STRETCH

VOLUME 36, ISSUE NO. 5

Local 746L
TYLER, TEXAS

MAY 2006

UNITY AND STRENGTH FOR WORKERS

From The President's Desk

by Jim Wansley

I want to thank everyone who took the time to come by the union hall and vote in our election. We had a good turnout this time. Some seventy-six percent of those members eligible voted in the first round. The turnout for the run-offs was also good.

At the membership meeting on May 4th we will swear in our newly elected. We also be presented the election results, as reported to the Local Union by the Teller Committee, to the membership at that meeting.

I want to thank the Teller Committee for all the time spent manning the polls and for all the hard work and long hours spent preparing for the voting and then tabulating the vote. Unless you've done it, you can't appreciate how much is involved. I also want to thank Vice-president Harold Sweat, who worked with the Teller Committee to educate the new members and to get them the support they needed for a successful election.

After the May 4th swearing in of new officers, the Division Chairs will hold steward elections. Prior to that we will post for local union committees. Those interested in serving on one of the standing local union committees can call Helen Young or come by the hall to sign up, once the posting has begun.

We will also put out contract proposal forms for our members to provide the USW Master Contract Bargaining Committee

with proposal ideas for the Master Contract, as well as the Local Union Bargaining Committee with ideas for the local contract. The Local Contract will be negotiated once the Master has been settled. The same proposal form can be used for both.

According to information received this week, the Master Contract Policy Committee will sit down in Cincinnati, Ohio with the Company around May 30th to start negotiations. The current Master Contract expires July 22nd at midnight.

Again, I want to thank everyone who voted. One of the hardest things about this job is knowing how the membership as a whole feels. The vocal members tend to make you believe they speak for the silent majority, when often they don't. The majority of our membership, as shown in this election, supports what we've done the last six years to keep the plant open and understands how good we have it, compared to any other manufacturing sector hourly employees.

We will be in a tough contract negotiation this time. I believe we will again come away with the best labor agreement in manufacturing. To do it we must be prepared to go all out, if need be. No one wants a fight, but the surest way to get one is for the other guy to think you won't fight, or that you will put up a poor fight. In 2003 we took it right to the edge to get job security, prevent wage cuts and protect our retirees. It won't be any easier this time around.

Elected Candidates for 2006 Office

President:	Jim Wansley
Vice-President:	Harold Sweat
Recording Secretary:	Ken Alexander
Financial Secretary:	Charles Anderson
Treasurer:	Sherrell Brown
Trustees:	Red Blake, Chris Antal, Sandra Harden
Guards:	Jim Clark, Randy Boswell
Guide:	Billy Johnson
Policy Committee:	Sherrell Brown
Division I Chairman:	Jason Vickers
Division II Chairman:	James Honeycutt
Division III Chairman:	Red Roden
Division IV Chairman:	Edward Moore

Note: Sherrell Brown resigned as Treasurer and Bud Allred was chosen by the E-Board as his replacement.

USW Local 746L 2006 Election Committee

Bobby Gilbert (Chair), Steve Dowell, Pam Dagley, Ronnie Odom, Terri Johnson, Gary Reedy

2006 USW Local 746L Union Officials



Seated left to right: Sandra Harden-Trustee, Kency Alexander-Recording Secretary, Jim Wansley-President and Jim Clark-Guard.

Standing left to right: Randy Boswell-Guard, Red Blake-Trustee, James Honeycutt-Division II Chairman, Ed Moore-Division IV Chairman and Harold Sweat-Vice President.

These officials were present and sworn in at the morning monthly meeting on May 4th

Pension and Insurance Notes

by Sherrell Brown

QUALIFYING EVENTS

Qualifying events are to be reported to HR within 30 days of an event. Examples of Qualifying Events are: Marriage, Birth, Divorce, Spouse gains benefit coverage with her employment, Spouse loses benefit coverage with her employment, Child becomes Full Time Student, Child ceases to be a Full Time Student.

Note: It takes several weeks to get a birth certificate for a new baby, therefore it is essential that you bring hospital release papers to HR as soon as the baby is born. Goodyear ACS will enroll the baby once the hospital papers are received, however they will set a flag to be watching for the Birth Certificate. With that, you must follow-up with the Birth Certificate as soon as it becomes available.

REMINDER---OTHER INSURANCE PRIMARY

Effective 10-2003, Contract Agreement was reached stating if Spouses or Full-Time Students work 32 hours or more (Full-time capacity) and have insurance offered thru their employer, then they must take it as their Primary insurance (Medical & Prescription Drug Employee Only Category). The Goodyear employee can elect to cover them with secondary coverage under Goodyear. Goodyear will reimburse a portion of Their Medical premium (Employee Only Coverage Category) to the Goodyear employee on a Quarterly Basis. However if the policy price is over \$200.00 per month Goodyear will make a determination as to whether the dependent has to apply for the coverage or not.

If there is any change in their status (loss of coverage, gains coverage, premium change, etc), then it is the employee's responsibility to complete a new COB form. Forms are available in the HR Benefits Office. A letter from their employer addressing the gain or loss of coverage will be required from Goodyear ACS to accompany the COB form. As an additional note, you must fill out a new COB Form each year during Annual Benefit Enrollment to continue receiving Quarterly COB reimbursement.

HEALTH PLAN OF TEXAS-ADMINISTRATED BY JISPECIALITY IN AUSTIN

Reminder - - - This is a Copay only Plan. There are no deductible or out-of-pocket costs to meet. However, you must follow the rules with this Plan. You and your dependents must have selected a primary care physician (PCP) in the **H.O.T.** The PCP becomes the gatekeeper of your treatments. If dissatisfied with your PCP, you and/or your dependents can change up to four times in a year. You must contact Terry Murtha-Zea in HR to change your PCP or call the Customer Service number listed on the back of your **H.O.T** card. This plan DOES require referrals by your PCP to go to a specialist. The in-network provider for this Plan is Mother Frances Hospitals, Mother Frances Urgent Care, and exclusive Mother Frances physicians. If needed, a provider list for **H.O.T** can be obtained from the foyer between the Dispensary and the HR/Benefits Office. If a medical situation arises when you are out of the area (traveling, vacation, etc), you must go to the Emergency Room (ER) and notify **H.O.T** on the back of your card. This plan is not available for retirees on Medicare.

ANTHEMBLUE CROSS/BLUE SHIELD

Reminder - - - No referrals needed with this Plan. This plan requires that you pay \$15 for physician office visits (\$5 at the Goodyear Medctr). Once you go beyond an office visit (surgery, hospital, diagnostic testing), then you will be required to satisfy your deductible and percents out-of-pocket. With this plan, you can go in-network, or out-of-network. However, you will be out less expenses if you choose an in-network provider (someone that has a contract with BC/BS). Provider books are available for your review in the HR/Benefits office. Mother Frances Hospital is the in-network hospital for this Plan.

Please note: Regardless of what Plan you are on, you should always ask the Provider if they still have a current contract with **H.O.T** or BC/BS to ensure the in-network fees are applied.

MED CENTER NO SHOWS

Once again the Med Center is having problems with no shows. Remember when we do not cancel our appointments, this delays our co-works and retirees in getting their appointments. When someone is sick and needs to see the Dr. they want to get in as soon as possible. If you are unable to keep your appointment please cancel as soon as you know, this just may help someone who needs to see the Dr. as soon as possible. Below is the definition of a no show.

A patient is considered to be a No Show when they fail to show up for their appointment or cancel their appointment so close to the appointment time that the clinic is unable to fill their time slot. Almost all of the medical centers No Shows are patients who do not cancel or keep their appointments. Since January 1, there have been 159 No Shows. They represent more than 50 hours of the physicians time that could have been spent helping other Goodyear employees, retirees or dependents. By count, there were

10-minute appointments not kept = 27
20-minute appointments not kept = 122
30-minute appointments not kept = 10

This represents a serious increase in the number of No shows that are occurring.

Goodyear And Local 746L Annual Blood Drive

Coordinated By The Maintenance Area Steering Committee

Canvass for the blood drive to be done on Wednesday May 10th and Thursday May 11th, 2006. The blood drive is to be held in the main conference room on Wednesday June 7th and Thursday June 8th, 2006.

Also Stewart Regional Blood Center will be at the John Nash Activity Building adjacent to the union hall on Tuesday June 6th, so that family members and friends can participate in the blood drive. Actual times will be determined once the canvass has taken place.

Thanks for your support
Dick Shawver

A LETTER TO THE MEMBERSHIP

by Sherrell Brown

First let me begin by giving you a little history and job descriptions so you will better understand my rationale in making the decision I am about to inform you of. The full time position I have is as the Pension and Insurance Representative for the Union. This is guaranteed through the master contract. This position requires that I represent all retirees and membership, with issues concerning pension and insurance. My other positions are worker's comp representative, accident and sickness representative (personal sick leave) and policy committee member and of course treasurer.

Pension and Benefit rep., worker's comp, accident and sickness and policy committee person are all related and intertwine with one another. If one of my positions is an odd man out that would be the treasurer's position. I was appointed P&I Rep. when Danny Parker retired, at that time we had 233 retirees we now have 772. We also only had one insurance co. to deal with, which was Goodyear. Now we have Health Plan of Texas, Blue Cross Blue Shield and Anthem Blue Cross. This is after we changed from United Health Care and One Nation. When I first took this position we had only one drug co-pay now we have three which complicates the issue even more because the drugs can go from one co-pay to the next depending on how they are classified each year.

Having said all that, I decided I would accept the appointments and nominations for at least one more term. I felt as though I could still handle the work load unless something unforeseen happened. Now we are starting to get our instructions for the up coming negotiations. The Policy Committee will now be smaller because of layoffs at some of the master plants. It will be even smaller if engineered products are sold before negotiations. We will also have new Policy Members who have not negotiated before. The Policy Committee has several sub committees that remain active for the duration of the contract. I have been successful at dodging placement on the committees because of my work load here at the local. However with fewer members on the Policy Committee, I am going to have to step up and help out. I feel that I should remain on the Policy Committee for several reasons. I will be negotiating the contract on the P&I committee, there I will understand the language and how it is to be applied. Also making all the contacts and knowing who to call because of these negotiations gives me an edge in solving a lot of the issues the members and retirees have, once I return home.

Therefore it is with great regret, but I have decided to resign the position of treasurer in order to serve the membership and retirees better in the other positions. The Executive Board has appointed Bud Allred to fill my position as Treasurer. Bud will do an outstanding job for the membership. I have enjoyed serving the membership in the position of treasurer, but because of these recent developments the work load is too great. It is for that reason I am stepping down as Treasurer, but have agreed to remain as back-up for Bud who will assume those duties.

Letter to The Editor

Would you please publish the following "Thank You" in the editorial, The Stretch.

To Sherrell Brown,

For all that you did in resolving the issues concerning the hospital balance, the insurance situation, and negotiating the settlement, we want to express our heartfelt thanks. We could not have accomplished that task without your knowledge and help.

So, Sherrell, a great big "Thank You" from us.

Always,

Lonnie and Carol Fletcher



Retirees' Corner

by Tennie Hulsey and Carol Swanson

May 8th will be the retirees monthly meeting to be held at the John Nash Activity Center, 6:00 PM. Members attending are to bring finger food. Plans are being made for future trips. Information will be in The Stretch or contact, Linda Bateman at 903-561-6527.

My family and I want to thank every one for your prayers, cards, visits, and food during the illness and death of William Eugene (Gene) Hulsey. Your kindness and concern for us was appreciated.

Tennie Hulsey and family

NOTICE

SIGN UP FOR COMMITTEES

Anyone interested in signing up for any of the Committees must come by or call the Union Hall to sign up for the Committees you would like to serve on. The deadline for signing up is Friday, May 12, 2006. They are as follows:

- Safety Committee
- Publicity & Education
- Employee Assistance Program
- Legislative & C.O.P.E.
- Employee Involvement Coord. & Back up
- Entertainment Committee
- Budget & Finance Committee
- Skilled Trades Committee
- Employee Strike Assistance & Benefits
- Sub-Contracting Out Committee
- Time Study Committee
- By-Laws Committee
- Henderson County CLC
- Fair Practice Committee
- Worker Compensation Rep.
- Buy American Committee
- Organizing Committee
- Thompson Accord Committee
- Smith County CLC
- Women of Steel

Riding for the Son

Cross Spoke Riders - that's the name of the new Christian Motorcyclist Association chapter in Tyler. Dale Harrelson (430), Bob Voit (410) and Mike Newland (431) along with their wives are members of this new chapter. We are meeting at the Golden Corral Restaurant on Loop 323 in Tyler at 7:00 P.M. on the second Tuesday of the month starting on May 9th.

We are missionaries in a since that we use our motorcycles as a tool to witness, to go to rallies and into prisons to tell the lost about Jesus Christ. It's an unorthodox approach, but it works.

CMA is a ministry of Christian motorcyclists that reaches around the world. There are over 116,000 members in 850 U.S. chapters as well as chapters in 15 other countries. CMA through a yearly fundraiser called "Run for the Son" has joined Campus Crusade for Christ to bring the film "Jesus" to billions of people in a language they can understand. The film has been translated into more than 877 languages and shown in more than 228 countries. Through a ministry called Open Doors we have been able to bring 1,167,480 bibles into countries where other ministries do not go. Missionary Ventures International is an organization that supplies motorcycles and bikes to native pastors in over 40 different countries. CMA has placed over 2300 motorcycles, 3200 bicycles, 2 boats, and 2 horses with pastors in over 80 countries.

Come join us if you are interested in a Christian ministry with a vision of "Changing the world, one heart at a time".



Dale Harrelson (430), Bob Voit (410) and Mike Newland (431)

The Dancing Mahlers



Pat Mahler (center) shows off some of his "smooth moves" with his daughter Brittany (right).

Pat Mahler is an R1/R2/H3 tirebuilder in Dept. 705. Pat has many talents other than building tires. One recently discovered was his ability to dance. Pat, along with many other fathers, brothers or significant others (some didn't have fathers) of the Lindale High School Drill Team, had the opportunity to dance at the annual Spring Show.

Brittany Mahler is a junior and will be the social officer for the drill team this coming year for her senior year. The music was to Lady in Red and Men in Black. This will be an annual event and maybe some at a football game in the fall. The crowd went wild!!!



Go to <http://www.lindaleeagles.org> pick Lindale High (Gr 9-12) in the gray to the left. The Spring Show is on the left on the next page. The next time you see Pat, ask him to dance a few steps for you.

Place an Ad in The Stretch

Send ads by e-mail to:

joewyatt@cox-internet.com

or by regular mail to:

The Stretch C/O Local 746L Union Hall
13642 St. Hwy 31 W.
Tyler, TX 75709

The ads from members and retirees of Local 746L are free for 3 lines and \$5 a line after that. The ads must be for legal items, be in good taste and have a name and phone number where the information can be verified. The editor and E-Board have final approval on all ads and retain the right to refuse any ad. Ads that run for longer than one month will have to be resubmitted each month.



"Great. Her arm came off and she can't afford health insurance."

USW Condemns Continental's Unilateral Imposition of Lower Wages as Illegal and Vow to Make the Tire Maker Reverse its Position

Pittsburgh - The United Steelworkers denounced Continental Tire North America's (CTNA) decision to declare an impasse in contract talks at its plant in Charlotte, N.C., and condemned the company's unilateral imposition of lower wages.

"We consider this action unlawful and will take every step to see that the company's action is reversed," USW Executive Vice President Ron Hoover said in announcing that the union will file unfair labor practice charges against the company with the National Labor Relations Board, on top of earlier charges filed over the company's layoffs.

The plant's USW-represented workers reported to work this morning despite the contract expiration and the company's decision to reduce wages of existing workers by 15 percent, slash health benefits and eliminate pensions.

Union leaders have been authorized by the membership to call a strike if necessary, but there are no immediate plans to do so.

"We are far from an impasse," said Mark Cieslikowski, president of USW Local 850 at the plant. "Our plan is go through every avenue we can to try to resolve this."

Continental declared the impasse during negotiations with the union over a contract to replace one that expired at midnight even though progress was being made.

"We were at the table bargaining and were working toward an agreement when the company informed us they felt we were at an impasse," Hoover said. "We were far from an impasse and still have a number of ideas to bridge our differences."

Continental, the U.S. unit of German automotive giant Continental AG, has demanded \$32 million in yearly concessions from the Charlotte plant's workers and has threatened to halt production if it does not get steep cuts in pay and benefits. The union offered annual concessions of \$16,000 per employee and was awaiting a counter offer when the company called off talks.

So far, Continental has rejected cost-cutting measures offered by the union, including proposals made Sunday. The union believes Continental has a pre-determined plan to abandon the North American market and move production to lower-cost countries.

Hoover said CTNA is incapable of devising business and marketing strategies to help them compete in the United States. Instead of updating its products and making needed investments in its plants, he said the company is looking to take money out of the pockets of its workers.

The USW represents 850,000 hourly workers in the United States and Canada. Some 70,000 are employed in the tire, rubber and plastics industry.

A Letter from USW Executive Vice President, Ron Hoover

April 10, 2006

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

As you've probably heard, I've requested that every Local in R/PIC send representatives to Charlotte, North Carolina, for an April 29 rally to demonstrate support for our Brothers and Sisters at Local 850. President Gerard is tentatively planning on attending this rally. Let me explain why.

Our Brothers and Sisters there have been under attack for more than six months. The company's all-out assault extends far beyond our Local 850 members and retirees. If Continental Tire succeeds in imposing its "slash and burn" policy in Charlotte, it would undercut the living standards we've all worked to establish in every R/PIC contract.

Conti has long pursued an unfair competitive advantage in labor costs in the U.S. Now its failed business strategies are forcing it to flee the North American market. It's bad enough that Conti is seeking drastic cuts in wages and benefits to replace our production by financing its plan to expand non-union facilities and build new plants offshore. It's even worse that Conti is looking to run away from its pension and health care obligations to its retirees.

Flat-out, we can't and won't let this happen-not to our retirees and not to our active members employed in our industry. We need to stand strong together and demonstrate our Solidarity to Conti.

I strongly encourage you to bring as many people as possible to the April 29 Charlotte rally. It's a fight that none of us can afford to lose.

In solidarity,
Ron Hoover



As requested in the above letter, Local 746L sent 7 members to the Charlotte Rally. They were (left to right) Joe Wyatt, Turk Gorkmen, Ed Moore, (that's our own Chuck Rocha standing behind Ed) USW International President Leo W. Gerard, Freddie Wehrmann, Jim Clark and retirees Dino Robinson and Freddie Young.

Thanks For the Votes

I would like to take this opportunity to say "thank you" for re-electing me to Division IV Chairman.

Ed Moore

Although I didn't win the office of Recording Secretary, I made a very good showing. Thank you to all who voted for me.

Joe Wyatt

Steelworkers will explore every available option to maintain Oklahoma City production

Flood of cheap imports threatens to close Bridgestone/Firestone plant as erosion of North American manufacturing continues

(Pittsburgh, PA) — The United Steelworkers (USW) acknowledged today receiving notice from Bridgestone Americas Holding, Inc. of the potential closing of the company's Oklahoma City plant. It plans to meet with the company as soon as possible to begin a dialogue that investigates what actions may be taken to continue operations beyond the projected closing date.

"We intend to explore every possible option," said USW executive vice president Ron Hoover. "We recognize that the long-term demand for the Oklahoma City product line is shrinking and that the competition of imports is vicious. With the company's plan to build a new aircraft tire facility in the U.S., I expect them to consider Oklahoma City as a location and to recognize that it has an experienced workforce at Local 998."

The current contract between members of USW Local 998 and Bridgestone/Firestone (BFS) prohibits plant closures. That contract expires in July. If the company proceeds with its stated plan, ramp down would begin no later than October 31, 2006 and closure would occur no earlier than December 31, 2006.

"This announcement amplifies the need of our elected officials to closely examine the trade policies that allow American industries to be destroyed by the flood of cheap imports," said Hoover. "Closures of this magnitude have a devastating impact on working American families and their communities."

The USW represents some 70,000 members employed in the North America tire, rubber and plastic industry, including more than 1,200 at the Oklahoma City plant. The BFS plant there produces low-cost tires for the replacement market.

HazMat Training Sessions Held at the Union Hall

A great deal of instruction took place the week of April 3rd at the union hall. The USW International Training Department has been conducting an in depth training course in the handling and response to Hazardous Materials cleanup and disposal. The instructors for the sessions were United Steel Worker's Johnny Alexander and Jim Novak. The week began with a refresher course for those that are already trained in the procedures. Tuesday through Thursday, those that are new to the program went through the full

course in Haz Mat. The classroom training (shown at bottom) was followed by exercises that included full dress out and the handling of mock spills and emergencies. Trainees (left) with full HazMat gear perform one of the various tasks that were part of the training.



According to Jeff Foxworthy, you're not a kid anymore WHEN...

You quit trying to hold in your stomach no matter who walks into the room.

You enjoy watching the News.

The phone rings and you hope its not for you.

The only reason you're still awake at 4 AM is indigestion.

People ask what color your hair USED to be.

You're proud of your lawnmower.

Your best friend is dating someone half their age AND isn't breaking any laws.

You start singing along with the elevator music.

You really do want a new washing machine for your birthday.

Your car has four doors.

You routinely check the oil in your car.

You've owned clothes so long that they've come back into style—TWICE.

You no longer think of speed limits as a challenge.

You consider coffee one of the most important things in life. 8 AM is your idea of "sleeping in".

You don't remember when you got that mole...or the one next to it.

You write Thank You notes without being told.

Neighbors borrow your tools.

You answer a question with "...Because I said so!"

Others ask for your recipes.

You start Christmas shopping in August.

You paint walls for a reason other than getting your deposit back.

You don't like to drive after dark.

You say the words "Turn that music down!"

You wear black socks with sandals.

You point out what buildings used to be where.

You know all the warning signs of a heart attack.

You rake the yard without being told to.

You can't remember the last time you laid on the floor to watch television.

The service station attendant lets you pump your gas before paying.

You can live without sex, but not without your glasses.

USW MEMBERSHIP CARDS

Greetings:

It has been our practice to issue new membership cards shortly after the newly elected International Officers and Directors are sworn into office. However, several factors have caused us to delay issuing new cards.

First, as you know, we have just finalized the new logo and colors of the USW. We are redesigning the new card to make sure that it reflects that fresh look. In addition, we are working to insure that we have an accurate membership list for all Local Unions and Units so that when we do issue new cards everyone eligible to receive a card will receive one.

We anticipate issuing these new "permanent" cards with the new logo by early next year. The existing membership cards previously issued by USW A or PACE shall remain valid until the new cards are issued.

In solidarity,
James D. English
International Secretary-Treasurer

Goodyear Moves Up on 'Fortune 500' Listing

Goodyear advanced in the upper echelon of American businesses in *Fortune* magazine's annual ranking of the largest companies in the United States, which was released April 3rd.

Goodyear is the 112th largest business in the country, up from 120th last year.

Exxon Mobil replaced Wal-Mart atop the "Fortune 500," posting sales of almost \$340 billion in 2005.

Following the oil company were Wal-Mart, General Motors, Chevron, Ford, ConocoPhillips, General Electric, Citigroup, American International Group and International Business Machines.

Cooper Tire & Rubber, which last year was ranked 470th, fell to 770 after selling its auto parts business.

The "Fortune 500" ranks publicly traded U.S. companies by sales.

Goodyear has Best Safety Week in April

Goodyear had its best global safety week to date, with 20 incidents recorded during the week of April 2-8. There were seven incidents recorded in North American Tire manufacturing, four in NAT Retail, four in Engineered Products, three in Wingfoot Commercial Systems and one each in Asia Pacific and the European Union.

Strategic business units in Latin America and EEMEA worked incident free, as did Goodyear's chemical operation. "Goodyear's 'No One Gets Hurt' safety initiative continues to grow, and more associates are working safely because of the focus we're putting on safety," said Mike Porter, director of global health and safety. "If we can reduce the number of incidents by almost 50 percent over a typical week, we can certainly do it every week," said Porter. "We ask that everyone keep their focus on safety all the time, while continuing to do their jobs."

OBITUARIES



Gene Hulsey past away on April 5th. Gene retired from the Tyler plant in 1996. Mr. Hulsey was a minister and was the President of the retirees club SOAR for the last nine years. He was 73 years old.



Tyler associate Ricky Cates passed away on April 8th after a battle with Pulmonary Fibrosis.

Ricky was employed at the plant for 36 years where he served as a Staff Technician.

Spotlight on China

China's President, Hu Jintao, is making a much-anticipated visit to the United States this week, first stopping in Seattle for a meeting with Bill Gates and then moving on to meet with President Bush. He comes at a time when the trade relationship between our countries is a disaster: a \$200-billion-plus U.S. trade deficit with China is soaring while the Chinese government continues to undervalue its currency and not play by fair trading rules. The result? U.S. jobs are hemorrhaging, and the bleeding is showing no signs of stopping.

In light of the visit and the overall situation, here are some facts on the world's most populous nation:

China Facts

- China increased its industrial production by nearly 28 percent in 2005 alone.
- "Outsourcing" companies promote that relocating to China's low-wage market with little if any worker or environmental protections can immediately save 30- 50% in costs.
- Five out of every six ships sent here from China loaded with products for our market return to China empty. The sixth ship likely has scrap metal or paper on board.
- Every year, 2.2 billion pairs of shoes are sent from China to the U.S. – seven pairs for every man, woman and child!
- Over four million Chinese are in forced labor camps producing auto parts and other products that are often exported.
- According to China's own central bank, U.S. workers earn 33 times as much as their Chinese counterparts.
- We have a \$37 billion deficit in advanced technology goods - \$36 billion of which is with China (so much for the claim that Americans who lose their manufacturing job can simply move on to a high tech job).
- Right now, the number of Chinese that speak English as a second language is more than the number of people in the United States that are native English speakers.
- Though China doesn't track rural unemployment, estimates show that overall unemployment is around twenty percent – that's over 250 million people, or just 50 million less than the entire U.S. population.

The Stretch staff or publisher does not assume responsibility for views expressed in signed articles published in this publication.

Joe Wyatt Editor

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UNITY AND STRENGTH FOR WORKERS



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