

State of the Union . . .

. . . the economy,

our society

It is time for some internal reflection on where we are and where we think we have to go to defend ourselves, indeed not only to survive but to survive on a plane higher than any on which we have previously lived. I think this much is clear. We can't sit around and wait for the rest of the labor movement. It seems content to act much like a sleeping dog, sooner lie around and snooze, than to act like a sheep dog, wake us up and hurl us into the future, or away from disaster's brink.

I can tell you from first hand experience, that while the AFL-CIO leadership sits down there and fiddles and deals with these Congressmen and Senators, we alienate a hundred of them at a time who are willing and came to Washington ready to do something in our behalf. And we alienate them because we support the wrong programs and the leadership is out of touch with what's going on, not only among our membership but all across the country. The right wing, while we lose our friends, coalesces among themselves, with the Republicans, with corporate America and small business. Then they proceed all together to put the arm on the wavering moderate, liberals, and anyone else they can ensnare. You saw what the right wing and corporate America did to the national health insurance proposal.

Too much isolationism

Our whole movement, top to bottom, has become more and more isolated from our natural allies and, indeed, some of us have developed too much contempt and distaste for some of those who ought to be our allies, and would be if we would let them. The roster would run something like the minority groups, the youth, the students, progressive churches, liberal and progressive academies, and academics, even the radicals and the social activists can be our allies, and last but not least,



This is the text of an address by IAM President William W. Winpinger to the international staff of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers.

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