

move and he was more right than the majority. His name was E. R. White, one of the most knowledgeable and articulate officers this union has ever had. He saw the picture more clearly than the majority because what we are reaping now are the fruits of the corporate state and the class struggle that it generates. What is happening to us is class warfare in its finest hour. I wish those words were back in our preamble. That's our mission: to engage in the class struggle and lift our membership out of it.

What about income distribution as distinct from assets and wealth. The top 20% of income receivers get 40¢ out of every dollar of personal income. That means that the 80% of us that are left have to scrap over the other 60¢. The bottom 20% gets one nickle of every dollar of income. Those in the middle 60% share the remaining 55¢. Great Britain, Holland, West Germany and Japan, all have more equal systems on income distribution than we have in the United States today. Some may argue that we have a higher standard of living, and even that is becoming very debatable. Other countries have inched past us in the standard of living. Even if we do, our standard is laced to credit. If you cash in your chips, you have little if anything left. Who is it that gets your interest on the payments on your credit? The richest 4%, that's who. We owe it to our members to somehow close up that income differential gap, to get off our fannies and organize, and to start fixing the blame for our economic ailments on those at the top of wealth and income—at the top of that pyramid.

Let's get our members and the American people in general a little bit worked up—a little bit angry—at that richest 4 or 5%. We've been stuck for a long time now, where we are taught in school by the instruments of the corporate state, that we should save all of the contempt that we can muster in our bellies to heap on those who are beneath us on the economic totem pole. And, that is exactly what happens. When in reality we ought to save up a full measure of that same contempt for that richest 4 or 5% up at the top that makes it all happen and creates welfare clients and those less fortunate than we.

Let's start laying the blame for inflation at the doorsteps of that rich 4 or 5% rather than let them lump it on us everyday when they print the daily newspapers. We don't have to apologize for our salaries. But we do have an obligation to bring our members and the rest of the working people up to our standards. The immediate way that we can do that is to start pouncing on that issue of income, wealth and inequality. If we ignore that issue, and continue to remain silent on it, we are the silent bed partners of the right-wing corporate America and you can bet that they will murder us in that bed if they get us in it. So put income and wealth inequality near the top of your issues list.

### Tax injustices

What about taxes? The tax system is supposed to be the leveler of the pyramid, the engine by which we redistribute wealth. It's supposed to be done by taking an ability to pay approach, which extracts the most from those at the top and spreads it around and down the pyramid toward the bottom. Well, federal taxes have become more regressive since World War II than they were before the war. Corporate taxes have gone down from 27¢ of every federal tax revenue dollar in 1950, to 16¢ in 1970. Today the effective corporate tax rate is only about 26% and not the 48% that the statutes says it should be and not the 48% they like to testify about before the Congress and not the 48% they advertise and talk about as free enterprise everyday in the newspaper. They are paying 26% and not a penny more.

It seems to be an economic axiom in the United States that the more money an individual makes, once he gets above the \$50,000 level, the more tax breaks he gets and the lower effective tax rates become. That's the antithesis of any civilized humane tax program. Another reason for this increasingly regressive tax system can be found throughout the states and the local levels where you see a lot of manifestations of dismay today. State and local taxes which rely on the inherently regressive property tax and the sales tax have grown in proportion to federal taxes. They've grown from 42¢ of every federal tax dollar collected in 1950 to 58¢ for every dollar collected in 1970.

Those who think that a Proposition 13