

people, adjusted for inflation and taxes, dropped by 3%. Disposable pay went down by 3%. We're falling behind systematically.

In food, with beef production, cows have to get pregnant and so on to complete the cycle. The farmers dry up that process on the ranches and get the productive cycle slowed down in order to raise the prices. They've succeeded because they've driven food prices up nearly 21% during that time span. We're also reaping the harvest of some worldwide droughts and bad crop conditions that are holding food prices up. And there certainly aren't any paychecks in the middle of the process that contribute to it.

You go to housing costs. The Federal Reserve Board's monetary policy, these high interest rates have driven mortgage interest rates up to 11% and even higher in some areas. The onsite construction labor cost of a home today versus ten years ago is down by 17%. Technology in the home building industry has wiped out significant numbers of construction workers. In some areas it's as high as 33%. Everyone says paychecks are causing this runaway in the price of housing. Baloney! What's causing the runaway is 11 and 12% interest rates on construction mortgages and unfettered land speculation. I don't know any IAM members that are out buying up land to keep five years and sell at profits of ten and twelve thousand percent. That's what is going on. Stop taking the blame for it whether we're in construction or not. That 4% up at the top is causing it.

Rigged pricing in the energy industry has pushed costs up 12% in that same period of time. You all know what happens there. A refinery today is one of the most capital intensive enterprises there is. There are almost no jobs left. Everything is push button. Refinery workers are dissipated by the modern refineries. You can't blame any paychecks for gasoline and oil prices and energy prices that are all BTU-related to oil. Blame a cartelized situation. Blame the American oil industry as the architects of it, not paychecks.

Lastly, health care costs. They are tied primarily to the private health insurance premiums and this very costly fee-for-service system among our doctors and specialists. We have to come down just

as hard as we can in every utterance you make in your communities on these four basic necessities. We've got to turn this inflation argument away from labor, away from paychecks and pin it on those who are really responsible for it. That's that top 4% again. We make a doctor an automatic millionaire when we walk him through the graduation door of the institution, college or medical school. And we have a President who has just betrayed us on a solution to that problem. He points to a voluntary cost containment program by the hospitals. That's more hog wash!

Solutions proposed

That's the whole range of the problems. These are the most aggravating and the most immediate ones. What do we do about them? What are the solutions?

The quickest way would be just push the button and self destruct. But I don't think we can, in good conscience, subscribe to that theory. Besides, non-violent anarchy, which is about what we have now, is getting us nowhere. I don't think violent anarchy will be any better.

So, first we have to determine to work with whatever there is that is available. That means reaching out externally and building coalitions with all like-minded groups. There are a lot of other people who understand these facts of life. All you have to do is go find them. I find them by droves. I find them at the national, state, and local levels all across the country. They can be on single issues or many issues. We're doing it with the energy coalition. We're doing it with the defense dependency and conversion issue. In the very near future, I expect to be doing it with the Presidential nomination issue too, and also on the Congressional nominations and elections as well.

If we can put these coalitions together at the national level, and I know we can, all will come to naught unless we effect and implement them down at the local level. So, reach out on any issue you face at home, back where you work. Reach out to churches, students, the ADA, DSOC, progressives, farmers, other unions, anybody that can agree with you and help you. Get them in tune, make friends, keep them tuned in, and don't be afraid to ask for help. We can't beat the right wing