

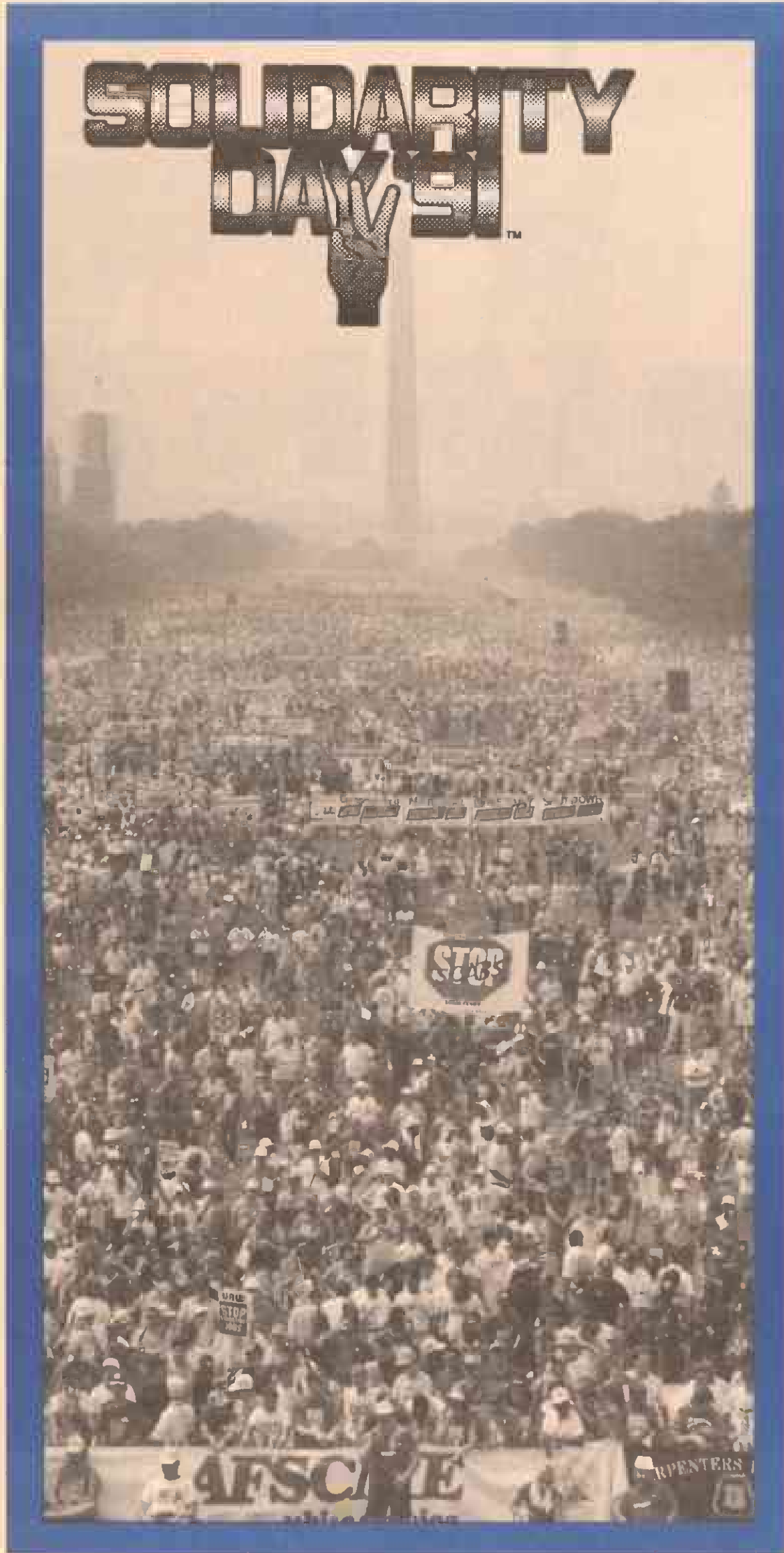


# WHITE COLLAR

Office and Professional Employees International Union, AFL-CIO and CLC

No. 441

Fall 1991



*Locals like 38 from Oklahoma City, Oklahoma traveled long distances to be heard—page 2.*



*Members, like Maymawatie Jamnapersuad from New York, speak out about why they came to Solidarity Day II—pages 6 & 7.*



*Labor leaders OPEIU President John Kelly and AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland explain the importance of Solidarity Day—page 8.*



# Members and local unions well-represented

The more than 2,000 OPEIU members traveled across the United States from as far as California and Washington State. They came by car, train, bus and airplane, representing nearly 50 local unions. Just a few of them are pictured here, but they all deserve credit for standing up for the rights of working people and families in America.

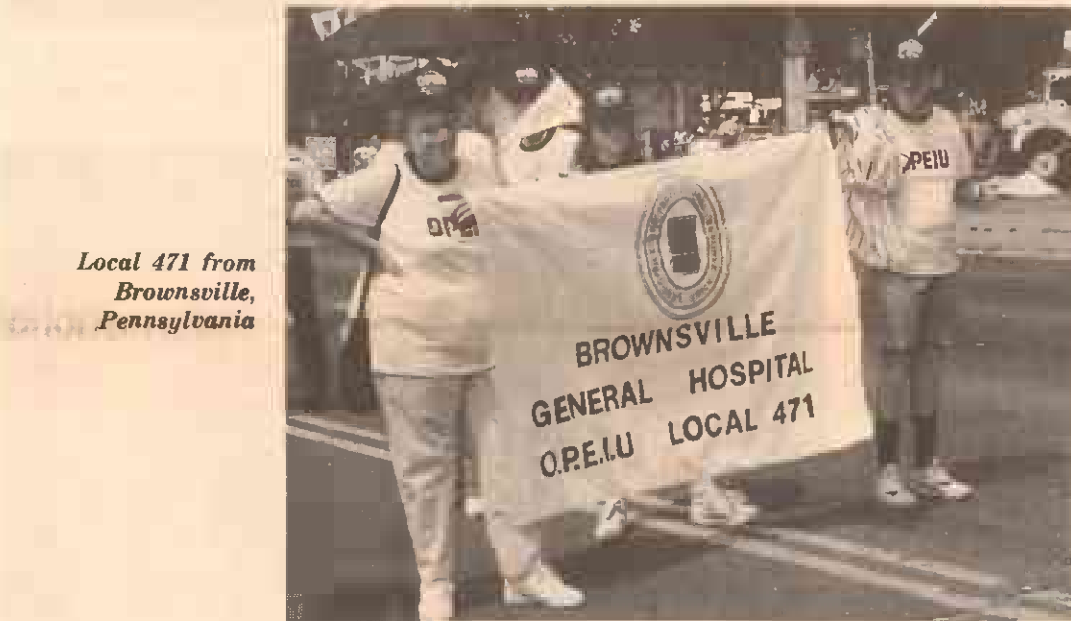


Local 2 from Washington, D.C.



Local 339 from Akron, Ohio

Local 12 from Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota



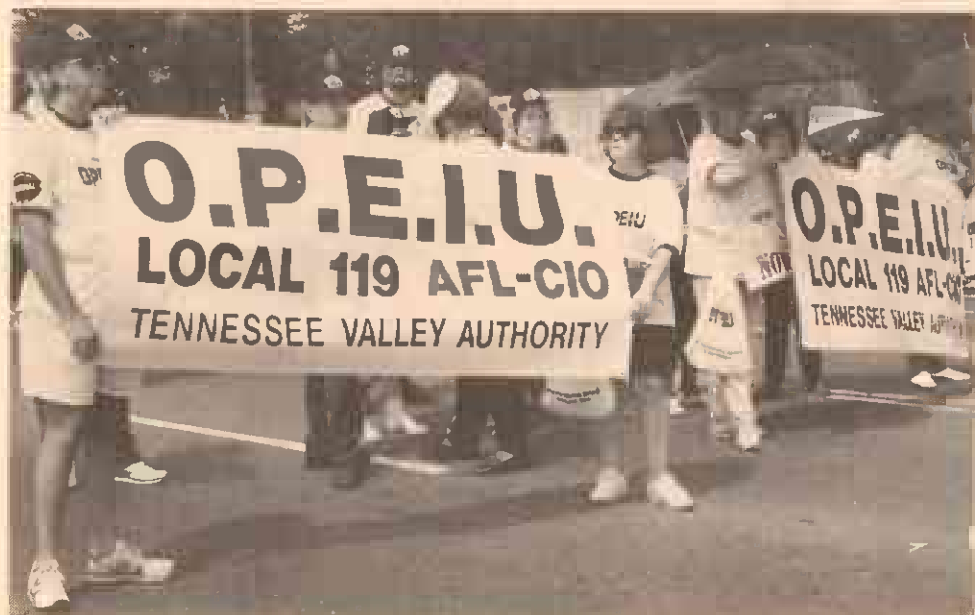
Local 471 from Brownsville, Pennsylvania



Local 32 from Newark, New Jersey



Local 106 from Groton, Connecticut



Local 119 from Tennessee Knoxville,

Local 502 from Oberlin, Ohio





# Solid and strong— United for justice



**T**here are many images that stand out in our minds from Solidarity Day 1991:

- A multi-colored ocean of union t-shirts filling and overflowing the boulevard from the Mall to Capitol Hill.
- A father carrying his young daughter atop his shoulders, while his son of 10 proudly carried the union sign demanding health care reform.
- A black trade unionist and her white union sister hugging and smiling for the cameras.
- A vast chorus of voices rising to sing the National Anthem with actress Jean Stapleton, and swelling again to sing "Solidarity Forever" led by country-western singer Willie Nelson.
- Fire trucks bringing welcoming relief from the heat as they sprayed the eager marchers with fire hoses.

Everyone has their memories and images from Solidarity Day II when an estimated 325,000 trade unionists from across the United States marched in the nation's capitol. But a common thread in all is the feeling of solidarity and strength.

Nearly 100 labor unions, 184 affiliated organizations, and trade unionists from more than 30 countries joined together to protest the U.S. Government's unfeeling treatment of the na-

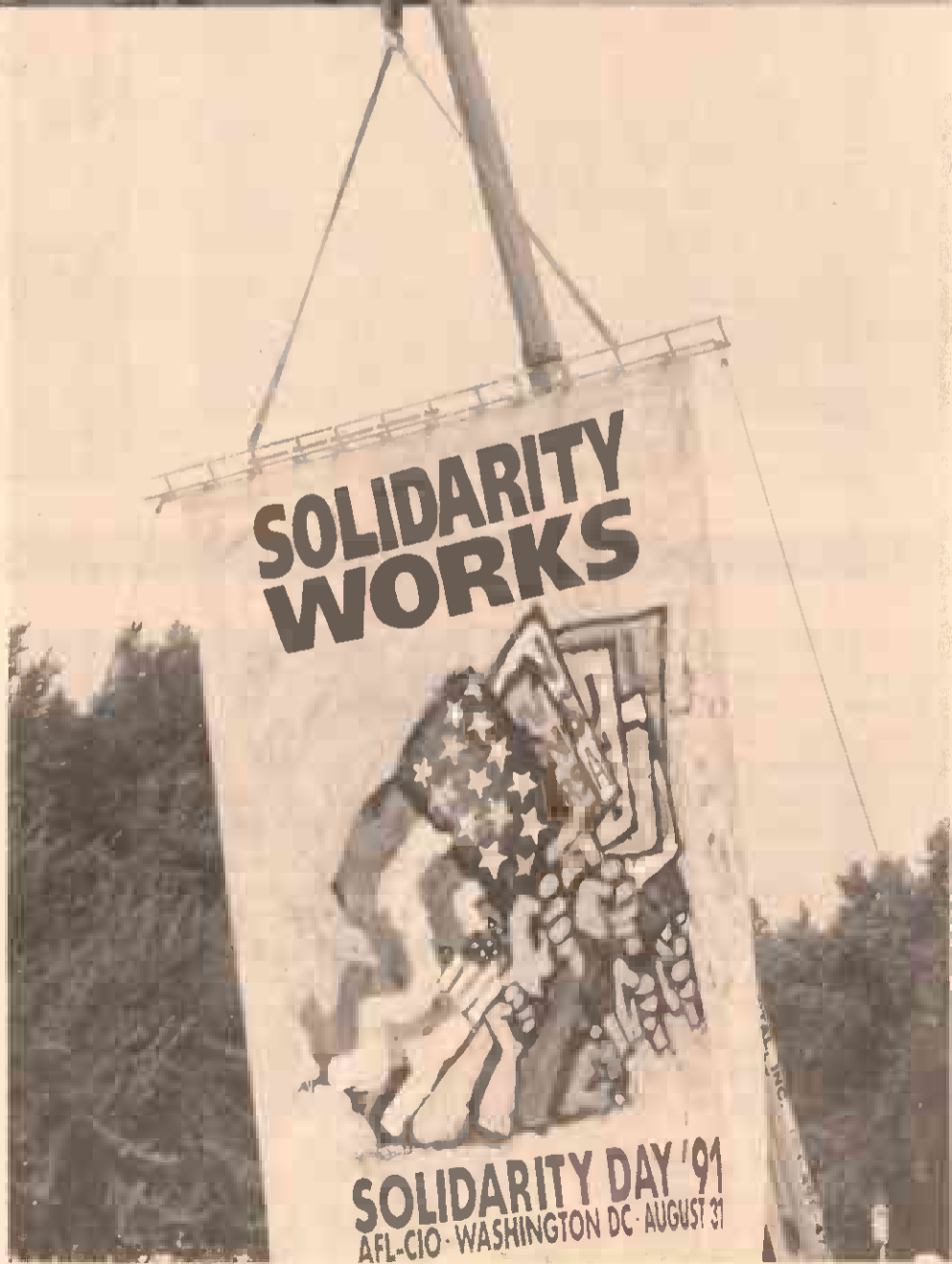
tion's workers, families and the down-and-out and to celebrate the unity of the American labor movement.

The hordes called upon Congress and the President (both absent during a Congressional recess) to enact legislation providing for national health care for all, legislation prohibiting the permanent replacement of strikers, improved education programs, extended unemployment benefits, a civil rights bill, housing for the homeless, jobs for the unemployed.

### OPEIU marchers

More than 2,000 OPEIU members from nearly 50 local unions spread across the U.S. traveled to Washington by bus, car, plane and train to join the celebration. From infants to 80-year old retirees, we were fully represented as families, workers, pensioners, trade unionists and voters.

OPEIU marchers were from every race and national origin—a microcosm of society at-large. There were men and women, old and young, handicapped, active and retired workers, workers from the public and the private sectors. They came from every state and work in insurance companies, shipping, banks and financial institutions, colleges and universities, hospitals and nursing homes, state and city governments, manufacturing, public utilities, transportation, every







The District of Columbia Fire Department provided welcome relief from the sweltering heat.



Singers like Pete Seeger entertained the marchers with songs of protest and solidarity.

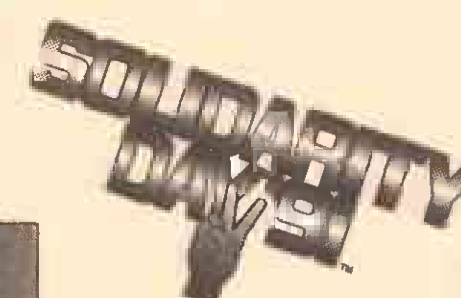


Locals from across the U.S., like Local 153 from New York City, proudly displayed their signs and banners as they marched to Capitol Hill.

More than 2,000 OPEIU members battled heat and fatigue—and 97 degree temperatures to demand action on domestic needs.



The OPEIU tent and staff welcomed marchers to the capitol staging area—providing lunch and cold soft drinks throughout the day.



sector of the workforce. And, there were home health care workers, engineers, secretaries, electricians, nurses, computer programmers, food service workers, lawyers, lab technicians, janitors, supervisors.

Although the temperatures soared to 97 degrees with high humidity, OPEIU marchers were welcomed to the Mall by Washington and New York staff at the OPEIU hospitality tent. There they found needed respite from the heat in the form of ice, cold soft drinks and fried-chicken lunches. They also received information on the line of march, souvenirs, t-shirts, and more.

From the tent and OPEIU staging area members could readily hear the opening musical entertainment for Solidarity Day. They could sing along

with Willie Nelson to "Solidarity Forever", with Jean Stapleton to the "National Anthem," and to songs of protest in both English and Spanish with Pete Seeger and his grandson Tau Rodriguez-Seeger, among others.

They could lounge in the shade of the nearby trees, sipping their soft drinks and swapping travel stories.

But, finally they were called up to march, joining wave upon wave of colorfully clad trade unionists—brothers and sisters in the labor movement—who all sought the same goals: justice and a decent standard of living for all Americans.

On route to Capitol Hill they sang labor songs and chanted labor chants. Other union members cheered in support from the sides of the boulevard.

Fire trucks lines the route to spray

the sweat-drenched marchers with their water hoses.

**At Capitol Hill**

Speakers from labor organizations and their allies reminded the marchers of the original Solidarity Day in 1981. That first rally and march drew hundreds of thousands of union members who protested the attacks by the Reagan Administration on the nation's social programs, on labor unions and their members, on the middle class, on civil rights.

Not much has changed in the following decade. Americans today are still suffering from the legislation enacted in those years. States and cities are suffering drastic federal cutbacks which have resulted in service cuts, the demise of social programs, increased

unemployment and homelessness. Families and working people are reeling from the callousness of that and this Administration whose only concern clearly is the wealthy, corporations and the military.

With the strike of the air traffic controllers in those days, it became fashionable to hire permanent replacement workers and not to rehire strikers when the contract was settled. This new development in labor relations greatly tipped the balance of power in favor of management and made it increasingly difficult for workers to negotiate fair and equitable labor agreements. Without the threat of a strike, employers were no longer pressured to settle contracts.

This phenomenon still exists today. But, the labor movement has worked

ceaselessly to enact legislation to prohibit the permanent replacement of striking workers. According to the bills—S. 55 and H.R. 5—employers could only hire temporary workers until the contract is settled.

The House has passed H.R. 5. It must yet pass the Senate. However, the President has vowed to veto the legislation; and it is unclear if we will have enough votes to override.

So, we went to Washington to show President Bush the extent of the support for this measure, as well as for a better health care delivery system.

Today the cost of health care has soared out-of-sight. Millions of Americans have no coverage at all; millions more have inadequate health care coverage. Because of costs employers are attempting to cutback

benefits or shift the cost burden onto the employees, many of whom have traded wages for such benefits over the years.

All employers should be forced to provide coverage for their employees. No one should have to forgo decent medical care for themselves or their children.

So we came to give the President and Congress this message: the American labor movement is alive and well. We are solid and strong, and growing stronger each day. We will continue to wage the fight for workers' and families' rights and for social justice. And, we won't take "no" for an answer.

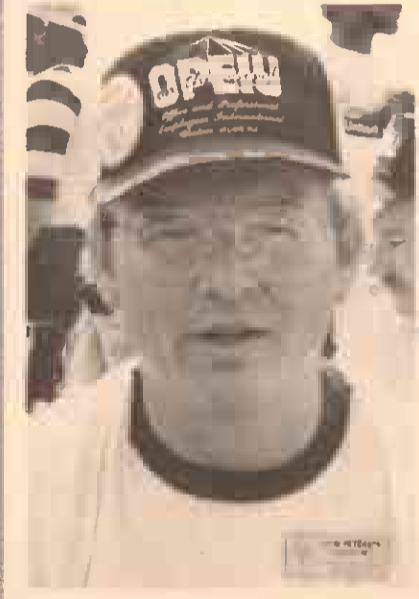
(See messages from OPEIU President John Kelly and AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland on page 8).







# Solid and strong—



*I'm here because I believe in Solidarity. All unions need to work together, and I'm so happy to see it. We have the same, powerful enemy. And, we need to organize.*

**John Peterson  
Local 39, Madison, WI**

*It's important to protect people's right to withhold their labor and not lose their jobs. And, most strikes today are over health benefits, which is another reason we're here today—to obtain a decent health delivery system for all.*

**Vivian Grubbs  
Local 1794, Cleveland, OH**



*I'm here because I believe in workers' and labor's rights, which they're trying to take away. We have to stand up and be counted.*

**Brenda Bremer  
Local 277, Ft. Worth, TX**

*We need to join in solidarity with all the working people of America to protect our rights and those of our families.*

**Debra Graumann  
Local 381, Oklahoma City, OK**



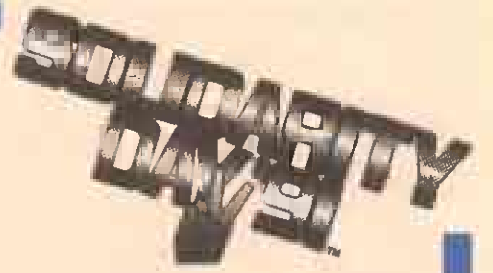
*Striker replacement legislation that prevents the permanent hiring of strikerbreakers and a decent health care system for all are the key issues needing to be passed by Congress.*

**Rick Klein  
Local 2, Washington, DC**

*This is important because unions are the basic foundation of this country. Without unions many of us would not be as far as we are up the economic ladder.*

**Leroy Aplin  
Local 153, New York, NY**





# marching for justice



**We get no help from Washington, DC. It's time to unite to give them our message: we need health care reform and worker protections.**

**Elizabeth Alonzo  
Local 29, Oakland, CA**

**I traveled 23½ hours to get here and be a part of all this because we have to show our legislators and the country that we trade unionists stand together on these important issues.**

**Jody Monahan  
Local 53, Omaha, NE**



**I came to help make our point: we want health care reform, stronger union protections, a civil rights act, and we want them now.**

**Ann Jackson  
Local 268, Knoxville, TN**

**We're marching for the health of America and to obtain for all of America's workers the right to strike without fear of permanent replacement.**

**Julie Weir  
Local 502, Oberlin, OH**



**I'm here because I love OPEIU and the labor movement which have done so much for me. I support them because they've always supported me.**

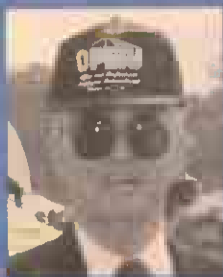
**Valerie Manlove  
Local 1, Indianapolis, IN**

**We need to show the world one united front of all unions working together. It's wonderful to see everyone here.**

**Adele White Eutsey  
Local 32, Newark, NJ**







# Protect the right to strike

by John Kelly, International President

I was never more proud of our OPEIU members than I was on August 31, 1991—Solidarity Day II. I looked out at the sea of faces and couldn't help but feel the sense of solidarity and strength and to be proud of our union and the labor movement—both of whom have worked throughout the years to unite working people, to raise the standard of living for them and their families, and to stand up for the helpless and hopeless that no one else will support.

But that movement is in jeopardy. And, that's why we gathered in Washington for a day of celebration and protest.

It is essential that we seek passage of legislation to ban the permanent replacement of strikers, or we will see our bargaining power drastically eroded.

We have thus far been successful in the House of Representatives where we won passage of H.R. 5, the Workplace Fairness bill by a 65-vote edge.

The 247-182 vote provided a comfortable margin for passage of the legislation, which would ban the use of permanent replacement workers during a lawful economic strike. (You can contact our Research Department to see how your Representative voted.)

One of the major reasons for the overwhelming win in the House was the outpouring of vocal support for the legislation from trade unionists and their families in the Representatives' home districts. Between mailgrams, post cards and letter writing campaigns from unions, close to one million messages urging the passage of the legislation flooded Capitol Hill.

And, we are pleased that the majority of House members recognize that the loophole allowing

employers to "permanently replace" striking workers is contrary to the spirit and intent of the nation's labor laws. It is ironical that the law guarantees workers the right to strike but at the same time allows employers to permanently replace those workers the minute the strike begins. What sense does that make?

This is a bill about fairness in the workplace, and this is a fairness which the majority of American people assume is already in existence. . . Most Americans assume that workers already have the right to strike. Clearly reality is something else.

This bill, however, will correct that.

### The Senate fight

The road to Senate passage of S. 55—the companion bill to H.R. 5—will be much rougher than the House path to victory. It is expected that the bill's backers will need to round up 60 votes for the cloture vote to break a predicted filibuster.

We need another intensive effort to sway Senators as the vote nears. We marched on Solidarity Day II to give them that message. Now we need you to follow up with phone calls, mailgrams, post cards and letters urging your Senators to vote for passage of S. 55.

Act now. If you do not know your Senators and/or need their addresses or phone numbers call our office. Call us collect at (202) 675-3210.

Without the protected right to strike, we will have little strength at the bargaining table to improve the lives of our families, to represent our members, to obtain justice and dignity on the job.



### WHITE COLLAR

Official Organ of OFFICE AND PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION affiliated with the AFL-CIO, CLC

JOHN KELLY  
President

GILLES BEAUREGARD  
Secretary-Treasurer

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### Solidarity Day Remarks of AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland

Brothers and sisters—this gathering of labor and its allies forms the heart and conscience of America. We call this solidarity—and we know that solidarity works!

What brings us to this place?

We are here because we care about this country and the values for which it stands.

We're here to remind our elected representatives that they were put there to serve, not the faceless marketplace, but the aspirations of real people.

We're here to raise our voice, as one, against the power of special interests organized around the primacy of greed at the expense of the people who make this country work.

We're here to insist that democratic government—the White House, the Congress and the Courts—must assure fair play for all—not just for those with the most money, the most luck, or the strongest bootstraps.

We're here to demand action, now, on health care reform. If government cannot break the barriers to access to medical services for all—that most basic of human needs—then what good can it do?

We're here to demand action by the Senate of the United States on the striker replacement bill. If our government cannot be trusted to keep its promise to protect our fundamental right to strike in defense of our families—then how can it be trusted at all?

And if it cannot act firmly and boldly to advance that bedrock guarantee of human liberty, freedom of association at home and abroad, then for what good purpose does it exist?

Today we are joined by our brother and sister trade unionists from all over the world in celebration of the vital role that freedom of association must play in human life.

Everywhere you look—in Eastern and Central Europe, in Asia, in South Africa, and now even in the republics of the Soviet Union—working people like you are rising to their feet, taking to the streets and demanding their fundamental right to breathe free and to live in dignity. China next! Cuba next!

Workers everywhere have shown the world that justice and human liberty do not come from on high, but from the ground, where their roots must flourish and grow.

Their struggle enriches us all. And it tells us all that if we go from this place and work together and fight together to advance our common goals, today and tomorrow, we cannot fail.

We shall prevail.

Solidarity forever!

