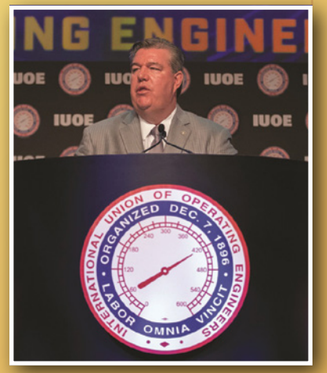
HISTORY OF THE INTERNATIONAL UNION OF OPERATING ENGINEERS

I.U.O.E. Local No. 825, New Jersey, member Brother Richard Kaminski replaces the torch on the Statue of Liberty on Liberty Island with an exact replica of the original torch in 1985 during the statue's restoration project, which took place from 1982 to 1986. *(Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, photograph by Bernard Gotfryd. Reproduction number e.g., LC-USZ62-123456.)*

LABOR OMNIA VINCIT • • WORK CONQUERS ALL

Together, I.U.O.E. Will Remain Strong for Another 125 Years



Dear Brothers & Sisters:

It is with great pride that the officers and General Executive Board of the International Union of Operating Engineers congratulate our membership on achieving 125 years of solidarity and growth throughout every state and province in North America. As general president of the I.U.O.E., it is truly an honor and privilege to serve the membership and celebrate this milestone with all of you.

I am very proud of our rich heritage, which for many of us includes multiple generations of I.U.O.E. members. I would like to thank our forefathers, including my own grandfather, for helping to build the foundations on which this great organization stands today. Without the pride and determination passed down from our founders and previous generations, we would not have the opportunities that we have today and which we will pass along to the next generation of operating engineers.

Reaching our 125-year anniversary was no small feat. Many unions have come and gone over that time, and we have faced our share of challenges since our humble beginnings in Chicago in 1896. But from the very start, strong leaders, committed staff and proud members have persevered and helped our union succeed and grow, no matter the difficulties.

Our current membership continues to build upon the success of our past. Each and every one of us is called to represent the future of this union – at the training site, on the job and in the union hall. The I.U.O.E. will continue to prosper for another 125 years only if we move forward with the same strength and common purpose.

Every day across the United States and Canada, we can see evidence of our labor. We build and maintain some of the most iconic structures in the world. We work hard to build and maintain positive relationships with our contractor and owner partners. Many charitable causes have benefited from the generosity of our membership. Along the way, co-workers have become family, union brothers and sisters who will forever be part of each of our lives.

As we celebrate this momentous occasion, let us honor those who came before us and those who work beside us by recommitting ourselves to leave our union even stronger for future generations. That is our greatest tradition.

I want to thank everyone who has helped make this anniversary year a success. Thank you for your hard work, your pride and your fellowship.

In solidarity,

James T. Callahan, General President
International Union of Operating Engineers

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Primary outside sources cited:

(1) The Operating Engineers: The Economic History of a Trade Union, Garth L. Magnum, Harvard University Press, 1964

(2) Union Resilience in Troubled Times: The Story of the Operating Engineers, AFL-CIO, 1960-1993, Garth L. Magnum, M.E. Sharpe, 1994

Head Historian: Calvin Jefferson
Research Assistant & Proofreader: Ann Wilkins Jefferson
Art Direction: Andy Taucher
Layout & Design: Steven Demanett

Changes to its official name provide a timeline of sorts for the early history of the **International Union of Operating Engineers**, which was born as the **National Union of Steam Engineers** in 1896, became the **International Union of Steam Engineers** in 1897 and then the **International Union of Steam and Operating Engineers** in 1912, before finally taking on its current title on July 1, 1928.

(Abridged from The Operating Engineers: The Economic History of a Trade Union.)

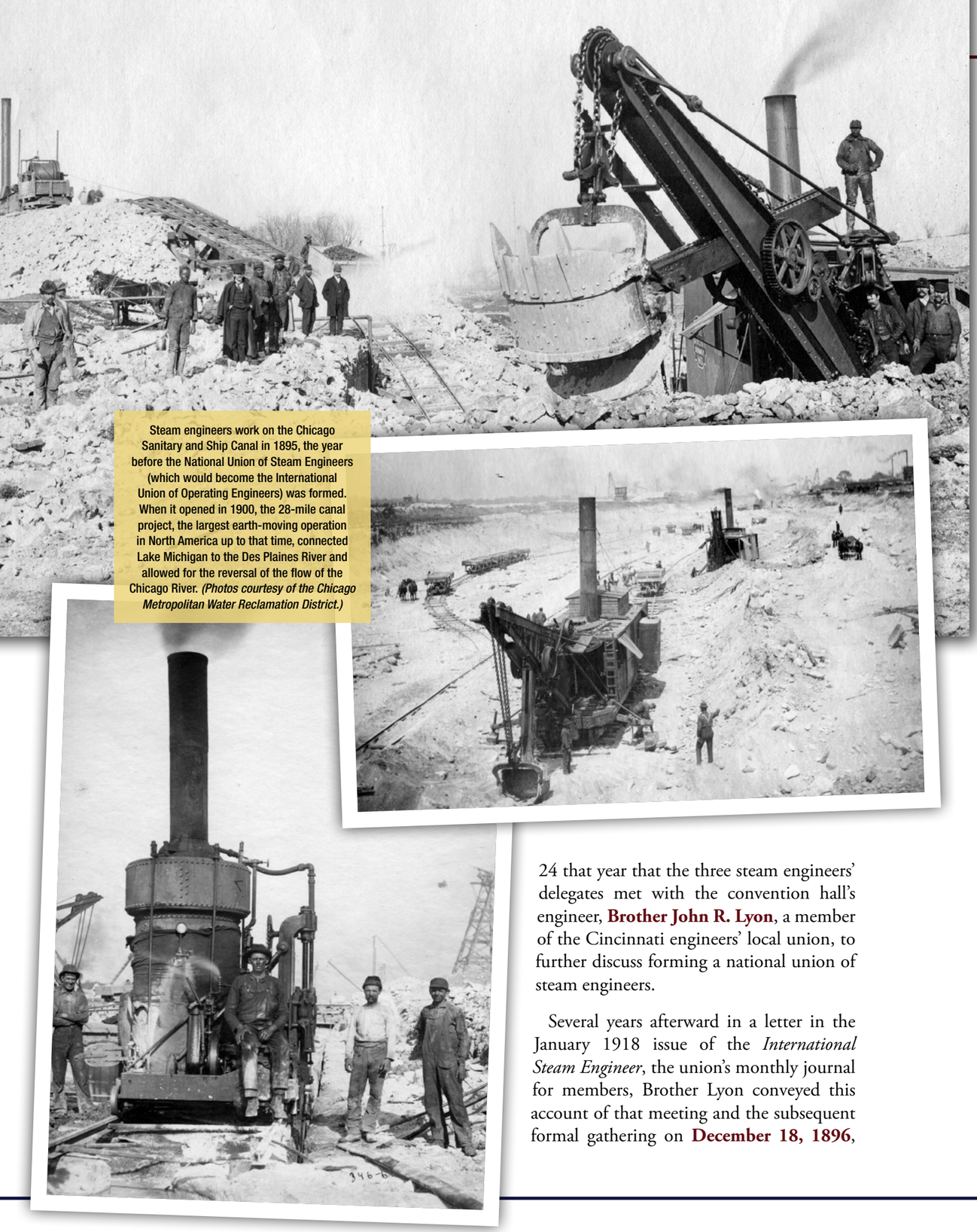
International Union of Operating Engineers

125 YEARS STRONG

The 11 men who set in motion the formation of what would become the International Union of Operating Engineers (I.U.O.E.) when they first assembled in Chicago on **December 7, 1896**, did so with every intention of changing the dreadful conditions plaguing their steam-engineering industry. Those 10 stationary and single portable engineers, who hailed from different local unions that had been chartered directly by the American Federation of Labor (A.F.L.) in eight states around the United States, gathered to organize all of the nation's steam engineers into a single, nationwide union. To lobby for and advance its mission, that very first national assembly of unionized engineers selected three delegates from those in attendance, **Brother John M. Smales** of Denver, **Brother L. P. Tomsen** of St. Louis and **Brother Charles J. DeLong** of Chicago, to attend the A.F.L. convention the following week in Cincinnati.

The ensuing events from which the **National Union of Steam Engineers** (N.U.S.E.), the initial predecessor of the I.U.O.E., was spawned were later documented by one of their participants – the engineer in charge of the Odd Fellows Temple in Cincinnati in late 1896. It was there during one of the early days of the A.F.L. convention held from December 14 to

These men constituted the first convention of the National Union of Steam Engineers held in August 1897 (however, their identities were not recorded for the photograph).



Steam engineers work on the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal in 1895, the year before the National Union of Steam Engineers (which would become the International Union of Operating Engineers) was formed. When it opened in 1900, the 28-mile canal project, the largest earth-moving operation in North America up to that time, connected Lake Michigan to the Des Plaines River and allowed for the reversal of the flow of the Chicago River. *(Photos courtesy of the Chicago Metropolitan Water Reclamation District.)*

24 that year that the three steam engineers' delegates met with the convention hall's engineer, **Brother John R. Lyon**, a member of the Cincinnati engineers' local union, to further discuss forming a national union of steam engineers.

Several years afterward in a letter in the January 1918 issue of the *International Steam Engineer*, the union's monthly journal for members, Brother Lyon conveyed this account of that meeting and the subsequent formal gathering on **December 18, 1896**, that resulted in the "temporary organization" of the N.U.S.E. (which had become the International Union of Steam and Operating Engineers by the time he wrote the letter):

"Upon the second or third day of the convention, we received in the engine room a visit from the three above named delegates, who stated that they had called incidentally to visit as one engineer would upon another socially but, more prominently, for the purpose of inquiring if we could inform them if there was such a thing as a union of engineers in Cincinnati. We had to admit there were none such, but we stated to them that there was a body of engineers who held regular meetings, but whose particular object was that of promoting and protecting the city laws governing the licensing of engineers. They then stated that in their opinion it was about time for the engineers of the United States to get busy and form a national organization. We then invited them to visit our organization on Thursday night, which they accepted. At that meeting, the three delegates stated their views, and after some discussion, the writer was appointed a committee of one to further confer with them with power to act.

"The next evening, the four of us met at the boarding place of the delegates on Shillito Street near Elm and drew up an informal set of rules, claims and constitution and closed the meeting by electing the following temporary officers with instructions to obtain the necessary number of signatures to obtain a national charter: Brother DeLong of Chicago, president; Brother Smales of Denver, secretary; Brother Tomsen of St. Louis, first vice president; Brother Lyon of Cincinnati, second vice president."

(Brother Lyon's initial tenure with the N.U.S.E. was short-lived, as his local in Cincinnati, which had been chartered by the A.F.L. on June 13, 1888, as Local No. 18, "at that time was not educated in the principles of unionism," as he explained, and therefore did not initially join the national organization. However, the local eventually entered the union on June 13, 1898, and continued as Local No. 18 until it was amalgamated with Local No. 906 on July 1, 1930, to become Local No. 20, with which Brother Lyon remained active until his death on March 24, 1942, at age 92.)

N.U.S.E./I.U.O.E. INITIAL LEADERSHIP

After the National Union of Steam Engineers (N.U.S.E., which would evolve into the I.U.O.E.) first organized on December 7, 1896, in Chicago, its first officers selected during a meeting on December 18, 1896, in Cincinnati were (listed with respective hometown):

Charles J. DeLong (Chicago), President
L. P. Tomsen (St. Louis), Vice President
John. R. Lyon (Cincinnati), Treasurer
John M. Smales (Denver), Secretary

The following year during the first-ever N.U.S.E. convention on August 9, 10 and 11, 1897, at Delabar's Saloon in St. Louis, the union's first officers elected by delegates of its locals were:

Frank Bowker (Boston), President
Frank Pfohl (Syracuse), First Vice-President
Samuel L. Bennett (Kansas City), Second Vice-President
C. J. Frealig (Detroit), Secretary
John M. Smales (Denver), Treasurer
J. M. Davis (Peoria), Trustee
M. J. Moran (Toledo), Trustee
Samuel Yetting (Kansas City), Trustee

Essential Craft for The Nation

"The history of our organization thus far is a history of unending struggle. The beginnings of the craft were bad; and the spirit in which the calling was regarded, especially by employers, and to some extent by the men pursuing it, were even worse."

– *The International Steam Engineer,* September 1912

Prior to December 7, 1896, when those 11 founding fathers took the first steps toward forming the I.U.O.E., the steam-engineering trade's overall condition and financial prospects

were dismal, at best, as even their employers – except in a few cases – considered engineers to be on the same levels of skill and responsibility as common laborers. What's more, engineers in the United States and Canada were wholly unorganized in any movement to secure better conditions for themselves, except in a few cities in which societies of steam engineers existed, although all were without collective goals or mutual affiliations.[1] "There was no strong bond of attachment arising from the common interests of their members and of those outside of them who practiced the calling," an article in the September 1912 *International Steam Engineer* recollected, "and no organization existed capable of materially helping them to better pay, shorter hours."

The abysmal working environments and meager wages that plagued construction and stationary engineers into the late 1800s were, in large part, tied to the evolution of the engineering trade itself. It was those difficult conditions that the original organizers and members of the I.U.O.E., each of whom were skilled at operating the dangerous steam boilers or maintaining the engines and engine power assemblies of the time, were determined to improve through the creation of a single, national union.

With the invention of the original steam engine by Thomas Savery in 1698 and its modern successor by James Watt in 1775, the electric generator by Michael Faraday in 1831 and the gasoline motor by Jean J. Lenoir by 1859, the development of electric, steam, internal combustion and pressure engines advanced rapidly, as well. In turn, the profession of operating and maintaining engines and power assemblies was likewise created and advanced and, long before 1896 in the United States, became an established occupation separate from all other labor crafts.

Early on, nearly all power equipment was custom-made for the particular job on which it was to be used, requiring the steam engineer to be able to operate, repair, assemble, dismantle, maintain and transport his equipment. What's more, as the use of steam engines and their technology significantly increased as the 19th Century progressed, so too did the need for skilled operators.[1]

Portable engineers – distinct from stationary engineers operating and maintaining static power and mechanical plants – came about after William T. Otis received a patent for the steam shovel in 1839, the first of which were "partial-swing" machines, as the boom could not rotate through 360 degrees, and were built on a railway chassis on which the boiler and engines were also mounted. In addition to an engineer operating the hoisting and swinging action, a fireman feeding the boiler and a crewman or "boomcat operator" controlling the separate crowd engine in the boom were needed to operate a shovel.

Next, the invention of the first practical hoisting engine in 1875 introduced the new hoisting-engineer trade to the construction industry. With the steam hoist, it became possible to construct taller buildings, ultimately ushering in the era of the skyscraper.

It was those stationary, portable and hoisting engineers who would eventually organize and establish the N.U.S.E. But in the decades before they finally came together in 1896, the

DENVER WAS ISSUED FIRST CHARTER

After the National Union of Steam Engineers (N.U.S.E., forerunner of the I.U.O.E.) was organized in December 1896 and then chartered by the American Federation of Labor on May 7, 1897, the union granted its first charter to the engineers of Denver, Colorado, as Local No. 1 on June 23, 1897. The steam engineers of Denver had been organized before associating with the N.U.S.E.; that local, as with many of the national union's earliest locals, was an independent affiliate of the American Federation of Labor, with which it was registered as Engineers Protective Union No. 5703.

The oldest written record of Local 5703 is a one-page financial statement for the first quarter of 1890, and the oldest membership list of the local is in a financial ledger from 1892 that contains the names of 62 individuals. Brother John H. Barlow, president of Local 5703 in 1896, recalled in a letter in the March 1918 issue of *The International Steam Engineer* how his local was officially chartered: "In 1892, a few of us engineers got together to talk over the best way in which to form a union. … We determined to obtain a charter from the Secretary of State, which, as it was for non-commercial purposes, cost us but $5. But before the expiration of the term for which the charter was issued, we obtained a charter from the (American Federation of Labor) direct."

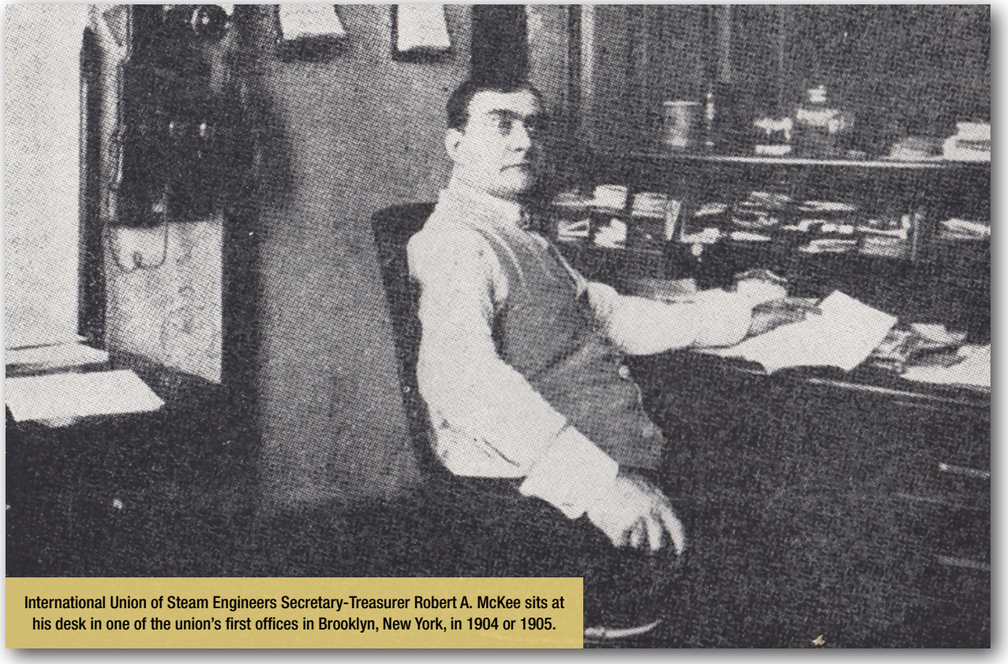
Local No. 1 charter member Brother John M. Smales, who is listed in the Local 5703 ledger from 1892, served as an N.U.S.E. delegate to the American Federation of Labor and represented Local 1 at the national union's first convention in December 1897. He served as the N.U.S.E.'s first secretary and its first elected treasurer.

LOGO CONTINUALLY FEATURES GAUGE, LATIN

During the first convention of the National Union of Steam Engineers in 1897, officers and members of the new organization chose the steam gauge as the union's official emblem and included it within the union's first logo. The gauge – as was the inclusion of "Steam" in the union's name – was chosen because steam was essentially the only source of power at that time, and it symbolized all types of engineers.

When first adopted, the needle on the gauge in the logo pointed to 80 pounds per square inch (psi). For unknown reasons, sometime during the late 1920s or early 1930s the union's General Executive Board changed the gauge reading to 420 psi in a new design of the logo.

As on the current logo, the original emblem contained the phrase "LABOR OMNIA VINCIT," which is Latin for **"WORK CONQUERS ALL."**



International Union of Steam Engineers Secretary-Treasurer Robert A. McKee sits at his desk in one of the union's first offices in Brooklyn, New York, in 1904 or 1905.

I.U.O.E. GENERAL PRESIDENTS

These men, listed with the locals in which they were/are members, have led the I.U.O.E. and its predecessors since the National Union of Steam Engineers was formed in December 1896.

Charles J. DeLong
(Local 3, Chicago, IL)
December 18, 1896 – August 1897

Frank Bowker
(Local 4, Boston, MA)
August 1897 – January 1898
Died while in office.

Frank Pfohl
(Local 11, Syracuse, NY)
January 1898 – September 1898

Samuel L. Bennett
(Local 6, Kansas City, MO)
September 1898 – September 1899

Philip A. Peregrine
(Local 1, Denver, CO)
September 1899 – September 1900

Frank B. Monaghan
(Local 4, Boston, MA)
September 1900 – September 1901

George V. Lighthall
(Local 3, Chicago, IL)
September 1901 – September 1903

Patrick McMahon
(Local 20, New York, NY)
September 1903 – June 1904
Died while in office.

John E. Bruner
(Local 18, Cincinnati, OH)
July 1904 – September 1905

Matthew Comerford
(Local 36, St. Paul, MN)
September 1905 – September 1916

Milton Snellings
(Local 99, Washington, D.C.)
September 1916 – June 1921
Died while in office.

Arthur M. Huddell
(Local 4, Boston, MA)
June 1921 – June 1931
Died while in office.

John Possehl
(Local 474, Savannah, GA)
June 1931 – September 1940
Died while in office.

William E. Maloney
(Local 150, Chicago, IL)
September 1940 – February 1958

Joseph J. Delaney
(Local 15, New York, NY)
February 1958 – September 1962
Died while in office.

Hunter P. Wharton
(Local 68, Pittsburgh, PA)
September 1962 – January 1976

J. C. Turner
(Local 77, Washington, D.C.)
January 1976 – June 1985

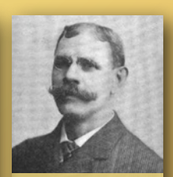
Larry J. Dugan Jr.
(Local 428, Phoenix, AZ)
June 1985 – February 1990

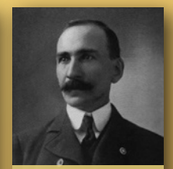
Frank Hanley
(Local 15, New York, NY)
February 1990 – March 2005

Vincent J. Giblin
(Local 68, West Caldwell, NJ)
March 2005 – December 2011

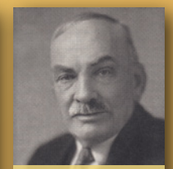
James T. Callahan
(Local 15, New York, NY)
December 2011 – present


Patrick McMahon


John E. Bruner

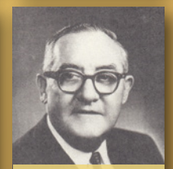

Matthew Comerford

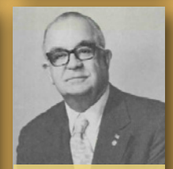

Milton Snellings


Arthur M. Huddell


John Possehl


William E. Maloney


Joseph J. Delaney


Hunter P. Wharton


J. C. Turner


Larry J. Dugan Jr.


Frank Hanley


Vincent J. Giblin


James T. Callahan

many local unions of engineers that existed worked without any singular direction and, consequently, their condition as a whole continued to deteriorate, with engineers at that time typically working 12 hours or more each day, seven days a week, for a mere $7 to $10 per week. What's more, the heavy equipment with which portable and hoisting engineers worked was more often than not extremely basic, heavy and dangerous, while stationary engineers usually worked in dark, damp and poorly ventilated spaces.

The steam engineers who were initially organized into unions when they were first formed in the United States worked in packing plants, breweries, distilleries, laundries and factories and tended to join unions formed by all the employees of the plant. Portable and hoisting engineers usually were allied with unions of longshoremen or other workers in the building trades. But as the minority in these groups, the engineers discovered their particular needs and issues were given little attention by their unions, since they did not concern the majority of the membership.

However, the engineers became increasingly more aware of the importance of their craft in the development of industry and the nation as a whole. Indeed, their skills were needed to build railroads, factories and fast-growing cities; dig canals; and erect large projects such dams, waterworks and essential sewage-disposal plants.

Meanwhile, the engineers watched the growing power and influence of other building trades that had formed unions and, as a result, were gaining reduced work hours and increased wages, and the engineers realized they, too, must organize. As an essay half a century later in the I.U.O.E. 50th Anniversary edition of *The International Engineer* declared, "It was inevitable that free men in a prosperous, growing country should rebel against these intolerable conditions."

Forming a Strong Foundation

Also recognizing the absolute necessity for the engineers to organize, the A.F.L. during both its 1895 and 1896 conventions adopted resolutions "to form a national body of engineers as soon as expedient."[1] Likewise, those initial December 1896 gatherings by engineers to form their union were well-planned and long-considered, as **Brother John H. Barlow**, who in 1896 was president of Denver Local No. 5703 (which would become N.U.S.E. Local No. 1), described in a letter in the March 1918 *International Steam Engineer*:

"Looking over the report of the A.F.L., I discovered that there were seven or eight local unions scattered over the country, affiliated directly with the A.F.L. I brought the subject up in the union and suggested that we form a national union. The members were taken with the idea, and the first step was to communicate with the other directly affiliated locals. This was done and we received favorable replies approving the project. John Smales was secretary at the time and was chosen to represent the Denver local at Cincinnati, and that is how the union was formed."

As an aside, Brother Barlow also explained the earlier formation of his Local 5703:

"A short time previous to this, a number of engineers had formed what was known as the Brotherhood of Stationary Engineers. As we did not wish to see too many organizations in the town, we invited them to join us, which after a good deal of preliminary work pro and con, they did, and I as president initiated some 70 in one meeting after the agreement was made."

The new union would spell out its goals and purposes in no uncertain terms during its first official convention in August 1897, during which delegates prepared a constitution in detail. The union also composed and announced its primary objective:

"Namely, to rescue our craft from the low level to which it has fallen, and by mutual effort to endeavor to place ourselves on a foundation sufficiently strong to resist further encroachment."

More-precise motives behind the establishment of the union are further provided in *The Operating Engineers: The Economic History of a Trade Union* written in 1964 by Professor Garth L. Mangum. "The International Union of Steam Engineers was formed by the confluence of three groups of steam engineers," he wrote. "Those who became disillusioned with the policies of the National Association of Stationary Engineers and organized independent local trade unions; brewery engineers who withdrew from the brewery workers union because they found their problems and interests distinctive from those of the other brewery employees; and the hoisting engineers who found organization of independent local unions necessary to fit into the well-organized structure of the building trades."

To those ends, the 11 engineers from eight locals in Massachusetts, New York, Ohio, Illinois, Kansas, Missouri, Michigan and Colorado who first met on December 7, 1896, dispatched their three delegates to the A.F.L. convention in Cincinnati the following week to petition for a charter. Representing nearly 400 engineers, brothers DeLong, Smales and Tomsen, joined by Brother Lyon, prepared the application during their meeting on December 18 and submitted it to the A.F.L., which would grant a charter to the N.U.S.E. on **May 7, 1897**.

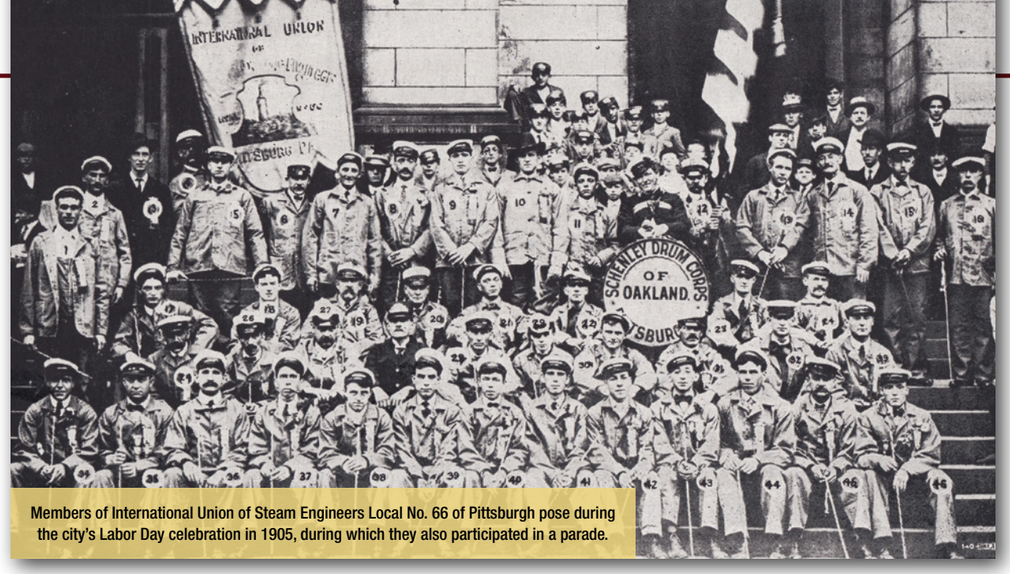
Although the differences between the three trades constituting the new engineers' union were often greater than their similarities, the common denominator amongst them was the steam engine. Hence, the name "National Union of Steam Engineers" was chosen simply because steam was practically the only source of power at that time and was utilized almost exclusively by all of the union's membership.

Having officially established the first representative body of practical steam engineers in the country, the N.U.S.E. began granting charters to its local unions. The charter for **Local No. 1** was issued to the Brotherhood of Steam Engineers of Denver on June 23, 1897, after which the group from St. Louis was designated **Local No. 2**; Chicago was designated **Local No. 3** and was the largest with 40 charter members; Boston was designated **Local No. 4** and was the only hoisting and portable organization; Detroit was designated **Local No. 5**; and Kansas City, Missouri, was designated **Local No. 6**.

The N.U.S.E. then held that first convention under the A.F.L. charter on August 9, 10 and 11, 1897, in **A. Delabar's Saloon and Hall** at 504 Market Street in St. Louis. During the proceedings, the union chose its first elected officers: **Brother Frank Bowker** of Boston, president; **Brother Frank Pfohl** of Syracuse, first vice president; **Brother Samuel L. Bennett** of Kansas City, second vice president; **Brother C. J. Frealig** of Detroit, secretary; and Brother Smales of Denver, treasurer.

The convention also adopted a **Declaration of Principles**, through which delegates declared that a reduction of hours for a day's work "increases the intelligence and happiness of the laborer" and vowed to secure a higher standard of wages for its members. With the proclamation, among other decrees the delegates also recognized that the "interests of all classes of labor are identical;" objected to prison contract labor; urged adoption of a national, uniform license law for engineers; pledged to support the A.F.L.; endorsed the union label; and urged "intelligent voting."

Before the end of 1897, the first Canadian locals joined the union, expanding its jurisdiction across the northern border and prompting the union to change its name to the International Union of Steam Engineers of America. Shortly after, however, its General Executive Board shortened that to the **International Union of Steam Engineers** (I.U.S.E.), and on December 17, 1897, at the A.F.L. convention, the union received permission to officially revise its name.



Members of International Union of Steam Engineers Local No. 66 of Pittsburgh pose during the city's Labor Day celebration in 1905, during which they also participated in a parade.

Initial Trials, Organizing Effort

While the fledgling I.U.S.E. was firmly established on paper, throughout its first decade of existence, the union was little more than a loose association of a few strong and many weak self-governing local unions. What's more, as *The Economic History of a Trade Union* points out, from the time of its founding until 1940, the dual nature of the organization's membership, brought together almost solely by their common utilization of steam, made it "essentially two unions in one – an organization of stationary engineers and a building trades union of operating engineers. In both branches, it was strictly a craft organization."

Early on, the union was dominated by its stationary engineers, who operated immobile steam engines that produced heat, electric power and refrigeration in large commercial buildings, factories and breweries.[1] It also included a much smaller portable membership of factory employees, marine engineers, operators at mines and workers in the building trades – although *The Economic History of a Trade Union* notes, "The building and construction industry eventually became its mainstay, though the stationary engineers remain an important segment of the union's membership."

After President Bowker passed away while in office on January 1, 1898, and First Vice-President Pfohl assumed the presidency, the union began to rapidly grow in membership and, to some degree, prominence. As of that date, the I.U.S.E. had a total of 788 members, with Local 1 thought to be its largest local with 200 members, the July 1902 *International Steam Engineer* reported. Less than five years later, by October 1902 the union consisted of 166 local unions from coast to coast totaling more than 19,000 members in good standing (that is, any person who has fulfilled the requirements for membership in the organization, including payment of required union dues and fees).

However, the membership growth during the union's first half decade was primarily the result of independent local unions coming into the international.[1]

The I.U.S.E. made its first earnest attempts to organize new members and bring existing

local unions into its fold beginning in 1902 and 1903 under **General President Patrick McMahon**. Through his leadership, the union then put its largest amount of resources toward organizing to date in 1904, during which it had five organizers in the field and made targeted efforts to organize in Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Missouri and Kentucky. As a result, the union's membership doubled between its conventions that year and in 1905.

But the union's international organizers were often diverted from their primary duties in order to settle issues its locals were having with other locals, their employers or other unions. Ultimately, despite the heavy expenditures of time and money, the results of the union's organizing campaigns were disappointing, as **General President John E. Bruner**, who took over leadership of the union following Brother McMahon's death on June 23, 1904, reported to the delegates of the I.U.S.E.'s Eighth Annual Convention in Omaha, Nebraska, on September 12, 1904:

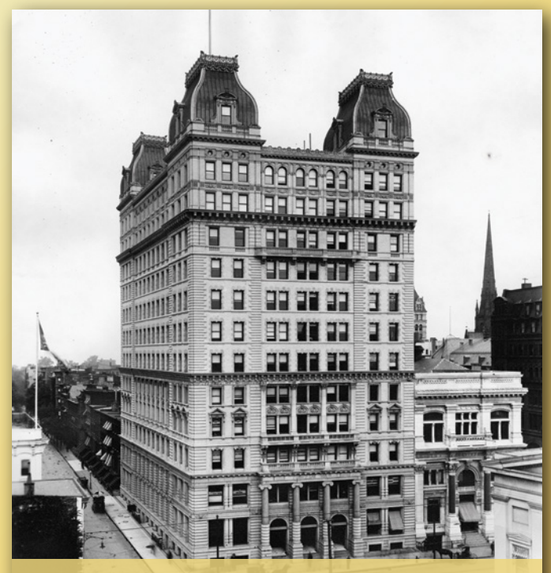
"While the growth of our Organization has not been as great in the year 1904 as it was in 1903, still our progress has been of a healthy nature; many of the locals secured in the year of 1903 needed careful attention and assistance to maintain their standing. The work of our organizers has not borne the results anticipated, not because of lack of energy injected into the movement, but antagonism from many manufacturers' associations, Parryites and other Engineers' associations organized as a mutual admiration society. The organizers were also called upon to do a large amount of work, on calls for general officers, to assist locals in settling disputes with employers and otherwise."

Perhaps restricting organizing efforts even more was the international union's weak financial status, propagated by many locals' determination to retain a measure of independence by limiting funding to the international office, which impeded the union's

I.U.O.E. HEADQUARTERS LOCATIONS

For the first nearly 18 years after being established in December 1896, the National Union of Steam Engineers and its re-named successors, the International Union of Steam Engineers (I.U.S.E.) and the International Union of Steam and Operating Engineers (I.U.S.O.E.) – each a predecessor to the I.U.O.E. – did not have a central, established office location. Instead, the union's headquarters were considered to be wherever its general president or general secretary-treasurer were located; for instance, in 1900, the I.U.S.E. was headquartered in Kansas City, Kansas, as General Secretary Samuel L. Bennett lived there (while General President Philip A. Peregrine lived and worked in Denver).

During his administration beginning in September 1905, I.U.S.E./I.U.S.O.E. General President Matthew Comerford first had his headquarters in St. Paul, Minnesota, which was his hometown and the location of his home local, No. 36. In early 1907, Brother Comerford relocated his office and, therefore, those of the international union to New York City, occupying various locations around Brooklyn before setting up offices in mid-1909 in the borough's Temple Bar Building (into which publishing of the union's journal, *The International Steam Engineer*, was also moved at that time), which would serve as headquarters for the next five years.



The Temple Bar Building at 44 Court Street in Brooklyn, New York, in which the I.U.O.E. headquartered its offices from 1909 into 1913. ***(Photography ©New York Historical Society, George P. Hall & Son Photograph Collection, PR 024, nyhs_PR024_b-19_f-173_008-01.)***

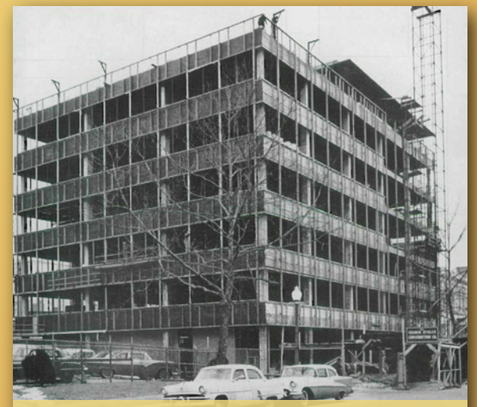
The former residence at 6334 Yale Avenue in Chicago, shown in 1914, that served as I.U.O.E. headquarters from 1913 into 1929.

While dealing with the confusion, delays and unnecessary correspondence caused by the lack of a permanent headquarters, the general officers regularly requested the union establish a central location for its offices. Ultimately, during the I.U.S.O.E. 1912 convention in St. Paul, delegates granted the General Executive Board the authority to select a city in which to establish a general headquarters and to spend the necessary funds to purchase it. The board considered New York, Washington and St. Paul before finally selecting Chicago and soon after purchasing a former residence there at 6334 Yale Avenue. On May 1, 1913, the union took possession of the building, about which the April 1913 issue of the union's *International Steam Engineer* journal reported, "The house is in excellent repair and will be ample for headquarters for the International Union of Steam and Operating Engineers for 25 years to come."

After just 16 years, the growing I.U.O.E. needed a larger office that was closer to the legislative epicenter of the country. It subsequently moved its international headquarters in 1929 into the Carpenters Union Building at 1003 K Street in Washington, D.C., where it would remain for the next 27 years.

By that time, the I.U.O.E. had begun construction on April 8, 1955, on a new headquarters building of its own on a site at 1125 17th Street, N.W., in downtown Washington, which it had purchased in the summer of 1954. In late 1956, the union moved its expanding offices into the modern, six-story facility constructed of structural steel and reinforced concrete that it built at a cost of $2,135,900.

Three decades later, the I.U.O.E. completely renovated its headquarters building over a two-year period before rededicating it in July 1998 with a ceremony attended by more than 200 international and local union officials, guests and staff. The refurbishment project completely made over the exterior and interior of the facility with new sidewalks and decks; a modern façade; reconfigured and modernized offices; a new high-tech, modern boardroom; and the most-technologically advanced and efficient systems that control heating, cooling and wiring.



The current I.U.O.E. headquarters building at 1125 17th Street, N.W., in Washington, D.C., under construction in 1956.

I.U.O.E. H.Q. & OFFICES

Various Locations across U.S.
1896 – 1909

Temple Bar Building
44 Court Street, Brooklyn, N.Y.
1909 – 1913

I.U.S.O.E./I.U.O.E. Building
6334 Yale Avenue, Chicago
1913 – 1929

Carpenters Union Building
1003 K Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.
1929 – 1956

I.U.O.E. Building
1125 17th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.
1956 – present

ability to keep an adequate organizing staff in the field.[1] "None of the efforts of the local unions to fence in the power of the international officers by constitutional restrictions was as effective as their tight grasp on the purse strings," Professor Mangum even declares in *The Economic History of a Trade Union*.

In effect, locals fiscally strapping the international officers would generally continue until after 1940. "Each convention brought numerous resolutions calling upon the international to assign organizers to certain regions, and calls for aid continued between conventions," as *The Economic History of a Trade Union* describes. "Yet the membership shared the universal preference for receiving services without paying the necessary costs."

New Success in a New Century

Meanwhile, the I.U.S.E. was also greatly hindered by the anti-union open-shop movement that persisted in the United States. In particular, the actions of the National Association of Stationary Engineers (which would change its name in 1928 to the National Association of Power Engineers) stifled the union as the association openly allied with the anti-union efforts of some I.U.S.E. signatory employers.

The union was also involved in the fight for a standardized eight-hour workday, having already during its 1899 convention in Boston set May 1, 1900, as "the time for the inauguration of the eight-hour system." While that objective did not come to fruition, in 1902 the union accelerated demands for the eight-hour day, even carrying the fight to the U.S. Congress. (The engineers and all of labor would continue that fight until Congress passed the Fair Labor Standards Act, which limited the workweek to 44 hours before overtime wages would be paid, on June 25, 1938, and amended the law to limit the workweek to 40 hours on June 26, 1940.)

Members of International Union of Steam Engineers Local No. 4 of Boston work on construction of the Cape Cod Canal in Massachusetts, which was built from June 1909 into July 1914 to connect Cape Cod Bay in the north to Buzzards Bay in the south.

During that time, the engineers' union was also fending off jurisdictional challenges from the unions of brewery workers, stationary firemen and coal miners. At the I.U.S.E. Sixth Annual Convention held September 2, 1902, in Pittsburgh, **General President George V. Lighthall**, while reporting advances made by the union, also discussed the jurisdictional disputes between engineers and those unions.

While the A.F.L. had recently ruled that the International Union of Brewery Workers could not claim jurisdiction over steam engineers employed in breweries - a decision that convention delegates praised - difficulties with the brewery workers continued. I.U.S.E. Canadian locals were also having similar troubles with the brewery workers, compelling the A.F.L. to issue a new directive in the spring of 1903 that declared, "We are convinced beyond question that the United Brewery Workers' International Union seriously errs and stands in the way of its own success, provoking antagonism from sources which could and should be fraternal, helpful and cooperative, if it voluntarily and broadmindedly gave its full adhesion to the recommendations and decisions of the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor."

Despite the jurisdictional disturbances, the I.U.S.E. enjoyed steady growth and relative success in both the United States and Canada. In fact, steam-engineer delegates to the Canadian Labour Congress in 1903 succeeded in changing the congress' by-laws to require all local unions, irrespective of previous affiliations, to belong to a national or international organization chartered by the A.F.L. in order to hold seats in the Canadian Congress. According to the I.U.O.E. 50th anniversary essay in the December 1946 *International Engineer* journal, the amendment marked the first time in the history of the congress that Canadian engineers "claimed recognition as factors in the labor movement."

During 1903, the I.U.S.E. also approved 95 applications for new charters and 50 new contract agreements for locals. Before the year was out, the union further added roughly 10,000 new engineers to its international membership.

With its increasing strength, during the union's international convention held at Wheeling, West Virginia, from September 12 to 20, 1903, delegates unanimously passed a resolution through which the union would wield its new-found power to entice manufacturers to place advertisements in the union's monthly magazine. The degree declared, "Resolved, that we demonstrate to the world our belief in the great principles of unionism of assisting those who are willing to assist us, by every member hereafter, confining his purchases and recommendations (where prices, efficiency and deliveries are equal) exclusively to those whose friendship for the organization is shown by having their names appear monthly in the official 'Of Whom to Buy' Index published in the *International Steam Engineer*, our official journal."

Subsequently, the union sent communications from General President Bruner to businesses suggesting they consider advertising in journals while also explaining, in so many words, that the union was in a strong position to advocate on their behalf to potential buyers of their products. In addition to the resolution being transcribed in the letter, it further read, in part, "… today, our members control the purchase of more machinery and supplies than any body of men in the known world … We note on going over the above-mentioned Index that the name of your company does not appear

therein, and thinking it a matter which may interest you, we shall be glad to furnish you with any information you may desire on the subject on receipt of the enclosed."

The following year, minutes of the union's Eighth Annual Convention on September 12, 1904, recorded ongoing growth, continuing disputes with brewery workers and the I.U.S.E.'s rejection of separate charter demands made by the United German Engineers of New York.

What's more, beginning that year, the first of thousands of operating engineers began work on digging and construction of the **Panama Canal** after the United States in 1904 assumed oversight of its construction from France. The 50-mile, man-made waterway connecting the Atlantic and Pacific oceans through the Isthmus of Panama in South America, one of mankind's most significant engineering accomplishments, would be completed in 1914 after the excavation of more than 170 million cubic yards of material.

As the union continued to make overall strides, attendance at its 1905 convention in Toronto was one third greater than any previous convention. Newly elected **General President Matthew Comerford**, who would serve in that position for the next 11 years, reported he had traveled some 21,000 miles on organizing business as the union's first vice president during the previous year.

Scores of I.U.S.E. operating engineers streamed into San Francisco to help rebuild the city after it was leveled by the catastrophic earthquake of April 18, 1906, one of the most significant earthquakes of all time. While locals throughout North America also responded with contributions that aided the city and its engineers, members from throughout the union played a prominent role in clearing the wreckage from the natural disaster and erecting a new city.

The 98 delegates from locals attending the union's 10th Annual Convention in Milwaukee on September 10, 1906, jointly declared their support for increased participation in politics in order to gain improved conditions for labor through legislation. It was the first definite action taken by the engineers toward using the ballot to improve their members' hours, wages and working conditions.(1)

By the end of its maiden decade, the I.U.S.E. was firmly established and had grown to more than 20,000 members. After 10 years, the union could look back on its steady gains, generally improved conditions for its membership and expansion of its objectives and ambitions.

Finances, Politics to Forefront

The I.U.S.E. continued on a path of progress into and throughout its second decade, while also keeping up its aggressive political action, its attacks on monopolies, its vigorous fight against "government by injunction" and its continued crusade against the brewery workers' incursions. However, the union also remained on precarious financial footing during that time as locals continued to deny adequate funding on the international level, which slowed the union's development.

"The most important factor in perpetuating the original independence of the local unions was the continual poverty of the international treasury," *The Economic History of a Trade Union* explains. "Even after the general president and general secretary-treasurer had become salaried officers (in 1905), this same insufficiency of income prevented the creation of a staff of field representatives through which the general president might have been able to influence the formulation of local policies and gain adherence to those of the international union."

The I.U.S.E. was essentially rescued from potential economic failure during the last day of its Milwaukee convention in 1906, when less

Members of International Union of Steam Engineers Local No. 4 of Boston excavate the site for construction of the Mystic Generating Station in Everett, Massachusetts, during the early 1900s.

than one-fourth of the delegates in attendance passed a levy on members for an additional 50 cents above the current dues and fees. But although the assessment was desperately needed, disgruntled members within the I.U.S.E. used the issue as a rallying point, bemoaning that the vote on the assessment had been taken on the afternoon of the next to last day of the convention and only 46 of a possible 153 authorized votes were cast.(1)

During that period and into the early 1910s, the I.U.S.E. maintained a measure of control over locals through its power to revoke the charters from any insubordinate, wayward or mismanaged locals. (As *The Economic History of a Trade Union* points out in 1964, however, in later periods, "the power of the general president to depose local officers and place local unions under the supervision of international appointees was found to be much more effective" than the power to revoke charters.)

The union also attempted to halt the increasing mobility of members within its hoisting and portable industries, who were more-regularly "traveling" from one local's jurisdiction to another for work, through the implementation of a **permit fee**. As problems were arising from engineers moving freely among locals, which could adversely affect conditions and stability of host locals simply through an overwhelming influx of transient workers, requiring permit fees to work in jurisdictions outside that of their home locals was seen as a means to control traveling members.(1)

Meanwhile, ongoing bickering with the brewery workers, who refused to abide by A.F.L. decisions that gave complete jurisdiction of engineers to the I.U.S.E., resulted in the national federation revoking the brewery workers' charter on June 1, 1907.

In a dramatically more-significant judgement later that year, the A.F.L. convention held November 11 to 23, 1907, in Norfolk, Virginia, adopted **Resolution No. 124**, which had been submitted by the I.U.S.E., awarding jurisdiction over the operation of all machinery used on building work to the union's hoisting and portable branch. The verdict gave the I.U.S.E complete jurisdiction over the motive power of all derricks, cement mixers, hod hoists, pumps and other machines used on construction jobs.

The Reception Committee for the 1912 International Union of Steam Engineers Convention held in St. Paul, Minnesota, in September of that year.

The implementation of the resolution was a monumental decision for the union, about which *The Economic History of a Trade Union* even declared:

> ***"The greatest heritage from the I.U.S.E. and the most important single event in the union's history was the A.F.L. decision of November 1907. … Had the jurisdiction of the I.U.S.E. remained limited to steam engine operation, the organization would have withered and died."***

The union during its own convention that year also increased the per-capita tax on its locals to 20 cents per member, 3 cents of which was assigned to a defense fund – although while that represented a doubling of the tax, the receipts from locals to the international office did not immediately increase by more than 25 percent. However, from 1908 to 1912, the union was able to keep up to four organizers in the field throughout North America.[1]

The engineers' union also began to actively participate in politics during that time to further its own objectives and those of organized labor overall. In the fall of 1908, the union endorsed and vigorously campaigned for the Democratic ticket and William Jennings Bryan for U.S. president (although Republican William Howard Taft won the election).

In April 1910, troubles arose between the I.U.S.E. and miners in Montana, a source of friction that lasted several years. In the end, the miners' union forced the dismissal of some 400 steam engineers by claiming that the miners' agreement with the Amalgamated Copper Company covered steam engineers as well as other mine employees.

In addition to the union's dispute with the Western Federation of Miners, delegates to the 12th Annual I.U.S.E. Convention held in Denver beginning September 12, 1910, discussed jurisdictional quarrels it was having with unions of electricians, longshoremen, steam railway engineers, ironworkers and

UNION'S JOURNAL INFORMING SINCE 1902

The International Union of Steam Engineers published the very first issue of *The International Steam Engineer*, the union's official journal, in 1902 with the debut of the July magazine that year. Initially a monthly publication, the journal was circulated "with the purpose of enabling members to win success in their chosen calling."

The earliest magazines continually aimed to inform readers of the latest developments in the engineering field and offered complete and detailed courses in mechanical drawing and mathematics. The very first issue of *The International Steam Engineer* gave a detailed account of work being performed by steam engineers who were excavating New York's first subway and helping to build ships in Newport News, Virginia.

Like the union it serves, the magazine evolved greatly over the years. Its name was changed in the late 1920s to simply *The International Engineer* to reflect the changing industry (as did the union's name to the International Union of Operating Engineers in 1927), and it was changed again with the May 1956 issue – the "25th Convention Issue" – to *The International Operating Engineer*, its title (sans "The") as the union celebrates its 125th anniversary in 2021.

The February-March 1998 issue of the *International Operating Engineer* introduced a new, quasi-tabloid-style newspaper format to readers that expanded news, information and features for and about the union's members as workers, consumers and citizens. Then the Winter 2006 issue again unveiled a new-look magazine, this time a more-visually appealing oversized-magazine format, with full color throughout, that would be published four times each year: winter, spring, summer and fall.

SYSTEM OF BRANCH LOCALS FORMED OUT OF NECESSITY

The I.U.O.E. charters "branches" of its locals as a vital means by which the union provides representation to apprentices and workers who are not operating engineers. Instead, these branch locals can represent other heavy-equipment operators and mechanics, as well as operations maintenance and other workers in building and industrial complexes and industry services throughout the United States and Canada – although with somewhat restricted membership privileges.

For instance, in December 1933 Local No. 701 of Portland, Oregon, created branch Local No. 701-A for its apprentices, with jurisdiction over all boiler-firing and machine-oiling jobs, and branch Local No. 701-B for new journeyman members, who were able to transfer into the parent Local 701 by making a written request and paying the difference in the union's initiation fee. Likewise, Local No. 132 of Charleston, West Virginia, chartered branch Local No. 132-C on November 1, 1960, to provide much-needed union representation to an increasing number of workers in several rapidly expanding equipment-service, industrial-service and aggregate-and-sand companies within the local's jurisdiction. In a current example, as of 2020 Local No. 3 of California, Hawaii, Nevada and Utah is the parent local to locals 3A (representing assistant engineers), 3B (miscellaneous journeymen), 3C (dredgemen), 3D (shop members and non-construction public employees), 3E (tech engineers and soil-testers), 3G (California Department of Transportation Unit 12 workers), 3M (healthcare workers) and 3R (registered apprentices).

As early as 1906, some locals of the International Union of Steam Engineers (I.U.S.E.), which would become the International Union of Steam and Operating Engineers (I.U.S.O.E) in 1912 and then the I.U.O.E. in 1927, were already utilizing "subordinate" branch locals to organize firemen – or apprentices – who fired and maintained the engines of the machines being operated by journeyman engineers. Soon after, locals also formed branches for engineers performing lower-paying "street- and general-construction work."

Those parent locals primarily organized branches early on in order to control the entry of potentially competitive workers into the union and, as a result, the wage scales of journeyman engineers. As Professor Garth L. Mangum further explains in *The Economic History of a Trade Union*, "The branch locals were a compromise between the local unions' reluctance to admit potential competitors and the international's realization of the necessity for inclusion and control of all qualified and potential engineers."

However, the American Federation of Labor (A.F.L.), citing its commitment to protecting the jurisdiction of the International Brotherhood of Stationary Firemen, objected to the I.U.S.O.E.'s practice of branch locals. Subsequently, during its 34th annual convention in November 1914, the A.F.L. passed a resolution warning the stationary engineers, "That the installation of branch locals, as now practiced by organizers of the International Union of Steam and Operating Engineers, shall be considered as a direct disregard of decisions of the American Federation of Labor and its executive council, which, if continued, shall be deemed sufficient cause for such discipline as future conventions may decide."

In response, the engineers' union during its fifth biennial convention in September 1916 in Newark, New Jersey, adopted a report to recommend to the A.F.L. that it support an amalgamation of the firemen's union into the I.U.S.O.E. The merger, however, was never accomplished. *(The International Brotherhood of Stationary Firemen, originally formed to represent workers engaged in the operation of steam boilers, became the International Brotherhood of Firemen and Oilers in 1956 before it was merged into the Service Employees International Union {S.E.I.U.} as a multi-state affiliate known as S.E.I.U. Local 32BJ in 2008.)*

Ultimately, the I.U.S.O.E. made its practice of utilizing branch locals official when it integrated measures for the system into its constitution during the early 1920s, by which time the branch-local system was essentially serving as a de-facto apprenticeship program. As such, the branch locals were afforded representation and many of the same rights and privileges of any local, albeit the branches were supervised by their respective parent locals.

But the union had relatively few branch locals until the late 1930s, during which the I.U.O.E. began insisting that parent locals give higher priority to taking in members of their branches. Subsequently, after a General Executive Board resolution in 1938 further clarified the branch local system, the union rewrote its constitution that year to designate "A" branches, which would consist of firemen, oilers and operators of "minor" equipment, as apprentice and junior engineers' subdivisions; while "B" branches, whose members would be known as "branch engineers," were to be used for organizing and controlling unorganized workers.

Two decades later, the Labor Management Reporting and Disclosure Act of 1959 (also known as the Landrum-Griffin Act), a federal law passed to regulate labor unions' internal affairs, forced the union to significantly revise rules governing the rights of members of its branch locals – along with the multiple changes it required in the union's constitution. Among the revisions, the act required the union to allow its branch members to nominate and vote for candidates for offices in parent locals, as well as run for those positions.

non-affiliated stationary engineers. Most all of the spats were the product of former engineers of those different crafts transferring into the I.U.S.E.

Conversely, convention attendees were also informed that the union had granted 77 new charters since its previous convention two years earlier, during which time 8,096 new members were admitted into the union. Additionally, delegates were told of a general increase in employment and further gains in the demand for an 8-hour day in Canada.

Wielding Its Newfound Power

Into 1911, the I.U.S.E. was constantly increasing in size and importance. Backed by the strong organization, its leaders were able to speak out and criticize the laws and lawmakers of such industrially controlled states as Massachusetts, as well as condemn trusts and monopolies that were denouncing organized labor.

While engineers were defending the general labor movement, they also were seeking to advance their own interests by having uniform regulations and effective licensing for engineers established in states and municipalities, insisting that public officials protect against individuals who were in charge of steam plants by virtue of ill-gotten or undeserved licenses. In New York City in January of 1912, for example, the entire operating force of boiler inspection and engineers licensing under the Police Department was put out of it jobs after it was discovered that they were giving licenses to unqualified applicants who "put up the price," instead of applicants who had shown the required knowledge for the work.

The International Union of Steam and Operating Engineers Executive Board of 1916, elected during the union's Fifth Biennial Convention held in Newark, New Jersey, consisted of (left to right, front row) Third Vice-President Joseph Muntefering of Brooklyn; General Secretary-Treasurer James G. Hannahan of Chicago; General President Milton Snellings of Chicago; First Vice-President Arthur M. Huddell of Chelsea, Massachusetts; and Second Vice-President William MacKenzie of Portland; and (standing) Trustees Chairman Charles Gralfs of Chicago; Trustee James A. Cooley of Philadelphia; Trustee F. A. Fitzgerald of New Haven, Connecticut; Fifth Vice-President George M. Jenkins of East St. Louis; and Fourth Vice-President Dave Evans of Cincinnati.

Members of Ladies' Auxiliary No. 6, which was affiliated with International Union of Steam and Operating Engineers Local No. 68 of Newark, New Jersey, pose during their Christmas party on December 27, 1917. Ladies' auxiliaries were often operated by the wives and girlfriends of I.U.O.E. members to support the social, charitable and community functions of their respective locals into the early 1970s.

President Comerford substantiated – and conveyed through correspondence and official reports – any positive outlook of the I.U.S.E in July 1912 when he conducted a cross-country journey and visited with multiple locals. In particular, the president noted that in Portland and Spokane, Washington, he found "a band of brave fellows in our organization there, and with the new young blood which has been imparted to the life of the locals, the future looks safe." He also eagerly announced that union engineers working on a five-story building under construction in Seattle were being paid $5 per day while non-union engineers in the vicinity were receiving only $4.

Then during the union's annual convention beginning September 9, 1912, in St. Paul, Minnesota, after the general membership had earlier voted by referendum in favor of instituting a long-discussed **Death Benefit Fund**, a committee submitted a list of insurance plans through which the fund could be established. In September the following year, the union's General Executive Board presented four options to the membership, from which, as a whole, it would select a provider for the new benefit.

Delegates to the convention also adopted amendments to the constitution that would allow the union to better sanction the admission of apprentice engineers into its membership, thereby overhauling, as an essay in the January 1913 *International Steam Engineer* described it, "the most haphazard way in the past that our general body has been able to bestow any consideration at all on the channels through which men have been admitted into the practice of the engineers' calling." With the new statutes, the union would be able to exercise more control over applicants for membership in regard to their training and experience, about which the article proclaimed, "This is one of the foremost requirements to protecting our organization and promoting its usefulness to its membership as well as to the craft."

Reflecting on all of the actions and accomplishments of the 1912 convention, the essay lauded the entirety of the engineers' union organization for making those vital strides possible:

> ***"They are not the result of last year's work or the work of any given year. They are the necessary fruits of the work which has been done all throughout the years of the existence of the I.U.S.E., and every member in good standing of the organization has borne his part in producing them just as surely, if not just as effectively, as has the highest officer or the most influential member of our body."***

The steam-engineering industry itself was also progressing, with internal-combustion engines powered by gasoline and diesel fuel already beginning to dominate the trades. Steam shovels, for instance, evolved in 1911 into full-swing power shovels that were lighter and more versatile and more mobile, and the gas-powered shovel was becoming the mainstay for heavy-equipment operators.

On his cross-country trip in the summer of 1912, President Comerford noticed a large number of portable steam-powered hoisting engines in a scrap heap in San Francisco, having been replaced by electric motors and gasoline engines. He duly noted, "Their days of usefulness had passed; their places had been taken by more modern-appliances. … This is something we cannot afford to pass by thoughtlessly."

With the marked increase in the use of the internal-combustion engines and electric motors, hydraulic machinery and refrigerating systems, as well as steam boilers and engines, the types of work performed by the union's growing membership were changing as members' roles became more diverse and more construction workers came into the organization. Accordingly, during its 1912 convention, the union amended its name to the **International Union of Steam and Operating Engineers** (I.U.S.O.E.) – the "operating" added to the title as a catchall for operators of non-steam-powered machinery.

According to *The Economic History of a Trade Union*, the union also championed an immediate name change after an expelled former member of a New Jersey local organized and incorporated a group that he called the "International Union of Steam Engineers." As the union had never registered its previous title of the same name, the book points out, "it took immediate steps to protect the new one."

Transformed by Technology

The conversion of the I.U.S.O.E. from a steam engineers' union to an organization of operators of gasoline-, diesel- and electrically powered machines would continue into the late 1920s. Along with that, great strides were being made on the local level in obtaining better conditions for members; for example, in 1913, Boston's **Local No. 16** secured a contract with breweries that was described as a "model" agreement that provided $35 weekly pay for chief engineers and $28 for others, the eight-hour workday and arbitration of grievances between the employers and employees.

Correspondingly, in the latter part of 1913, engineers around the nation were beginning to learn about the emerging technology of **mechanical refrigeration**, as thousands of butcher shops, creameries, ice-cream factories and other manufacturers had already installed refrigerating machineries and abandoned the use of ice for refrigeration. What's more, small refrigerating machines for household use were coming of age, as was the cooling of residences, office buildings and theaters, making it incumbent upon engineers to learn the mechanics of the new development.

I.U.S.O.E. members then gained their first-ever international insurance plan at the beginning of 1914 when, as a result of the referendum in 1912, the union established a Death Benefit Fund. The group insurance was arranged with the Metropolitan Life Insurance

Brother William M. Finlay (left), former International Union of Steam and Operating Engineers fifth vice president and editor of the union's *International Steam Engineer* journal, and Brother James Limbaugh, both members of Local No. 293 of Cleveland, served in the U.S. Navy during World War I. Upon his return from the war, Brother Finlay was elected business manager of the local.

Company and provided each member's beneficiary with $1,000 of insurance upon his death, with premiums based on the ages of individual policy-holders.

Prior to that year, the union also never had a central headquarters, the offices of its general president and general secretary-treasurer up to that point being wherever they happened to live. But the 1912 convention had granted the union's officers the authority to seek a central location for official general offices, and delegates at the 1913 convention voted to purchase the former residence of "a prominent Chicago businessman" at **6334 Yale Avenue** in Chicago to serve as headquarters, into which the union moved its international offices in early 1914.

But almost immediately after the move, Chicago-based **Local No. 69** and the international office were at odds over a number of conflicting policies. Perhaps most notably, a new business agent of the local began forcing the members of stationary **Local No. 401** off jobs on uncompleted buildings and declined to place them on new jobs while retaining the temporary jobs for his own members. He also refused to follow the practice of allowing members of stationary locals to work, by permit, on building jobs when hoisting and portable locals could not supply the needed workers.[1]

When Local No. 69 subsequently rebuffed the I.U.S.O.E.'s protests over those actions and others, the international revoked the local's charter by unanimous vote of the General Executive Board on April 29, 1914. However, that evening, General President Comerford was attacked while walking a few blocks from his home, severely beaten and hospitalized with a broken collar bone – although the attackers were never identified.

The Chicago Federation of Labor supported the expelled local and refused to recognize the newly chartered replacement, **Local No. 569**, despite A.F.L. intervention on behalf of the I.U.S.O.E.

Brother Comerford had been a popular president in the early part of his administration, according to *The Economic History of a Trade Union*, but his penchant for revoking the charters of locals that departed too drastically from international policies and chartering new locals in their place turned many local officers and members against him. Charter revocation had been used twice as a disciplinary measure by previous I.U.S.O.E. administrations, but President Comerford revoked at least 10 charters between 1909 and 1916.[1]

He was able to attend the union's now-biennial convention that opened on September 14, 1914, in Peoria, Illinois, during which delegates passed directives decreeing that no member of the I.U.S.O.E. could have membership in any other trade union and recommending that an organizer be dispatched to establish locals along the Panama Canal construction project. Among its other business, by the end of the conference, the union also re-elected all of its sitting officers for additional terms.

A 'Brighter than Ever' Future

Out in the field, many of the union's engineers remained busy that year and into 1915 on construction of the **Arrowrock Dam** on the Boise River near its namesake town in Idaho, which had started in early 1912. When the concrete arch dam, on which equipment utilized by operators included a refurbished 70-ton Atlantic steam shovel and two 18-ton "dinkey" excavators, was completed and dedicated on October 4, 1915, it was the tallest dam in the world and would remain so for nine years.

Construction of the Panama Canal had also been concluded for its opening on August 15, 1914, and the I.U.S.O.E. took a particular interest in the great **Panama Pacific International Exposition** in San Francisco, held in celebration of the canal's completion. Not only had members of the union worked on construction of the canal, but they had taken a prominent part in the erection of the exposition, which was the first ever built entirely with union labor. In recognition of the engineers' contributions, November 6, 1915, was set aside as "Union Engineers' Day," for which special ceremonies were held at the exposition's Palace of Machinery.

A record 172 delegates in attendance at the union's Fifth Biennial Convention held in Newark, New Jersey, in September 1916 elected **Brother Milton Snellings**, the union's first vice president, over Brother Comerford to succeed the general president in his position. During the convention, delegates also adopted resolutions that included one condemning the ongoing continental war in Europe (which would grow into World War I with the United States' entry in April 1917), and another strongly opposing proposed federal laws prohibiting the manufacture and sale of alcohol (which would not go into effect until January 1920 when passage of the 18th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution created prohibition – which lasted until December 1933).

The convention representatives also decided that I.U.S.O.E. locals should initiate steam-shovel operators for membership in the union. Shortly after the conference adjourned, the union successfully organized steam-shovel men in Chicago into a branch local assigned as

Members of Local No. 232 in Niagara Falls, Ontario, operate the largest shovel ever built at the time, a Bucyrus-type machine weighing 400 tons and with booms up to 110-feet long, while working on the Queenston-Chippawa Hydroelectric Plant on the Niagara River just north of the Niagara Falls in 1921.

Local No. 569, Branch A, and the formation of other similar branch locals around the country soon followed.

By the end of the second decade of its existence, in late 1916 the I.U.S.O.E. had reached new heights and its membership had secured widespread recognition and increasing influence within the construction trades for their collective skill and knowledge. Encapsulating the culmination of the union's first 20 years, the I.U.O.E. 50th Anniversary edition of *The International Engineer* exclaimed, "The era closed at a time when the future of the operating engineer was brighter than ever."

World War & Homefront Battles

Expectations of continued prosperity for the I.U.S.O.E. and the entire labor movement were tempered with the United States' official entry on April 6, 1917, into World War I on the side of the English-led Allies, which had been fighting the German-led Central Forces since July 28, 1914. Just prior on March 12, 1917, representatives of the engineers' union attended a special meeting of the National and International Trade Unions of America in Washington, D.C., to consider labor's position in the war and, afterwards, issued a statement that read, in part:

"Whether we approve of it or not, we must recognize that war is a situation with which we must reckon. … But, despite all our endeavors and hopes, should our country be drawn into the European conflict, we, with these ideals of liberty and justice herein declared, as the indispensable basis for national policies, offer our services to our country in every field of activity to defend, safeguard and preserve the Republic of the United States of America against its enemies, whomsoever they may be, and we call upon our fellow workers and fellow citizens in the holy name of Labor, Justice, Freedom, and Humanity to devotedly and patriotically give like service."

At the onset of the war, union engineers were confronted with contractors who were using unfair methods in the construction of military camps and other government work. As a result, the U.S. Secretary of War and the A.F.L. signed an agreement that provided that union wage scales and hours as of June 1917 were to be the basic standard.

Members of International Union of Steam and Operating Engineers Local No. 793 in Ontario, Canada, employed by King Paving work on a road in Burlington, Ontario, using a horse-drawn road-grader in 1922.

The I.U.S.O.E. would keep up its efforts to support its membership on the homefront throughout the war. As a means of creating multiple employment positions for union members, for instance, in June 1917 the union took a firm stand prohibiting members from working in breweries where the chief engineer was not a union member.

The following January, President Snellings reported that union members were making progress in government work and particularly in the U.S. Navy shipyards, where the Navy Department had long regarded engineers simply as tenders for engines, cranes and locomotives, with little regard for their skills and knowledge. But in the first conference ever held between the union and the Navy Department, the I.U.S.O.E. president succeeded in changing the Navy's policies for engineers and gained substantial pay raises for members working on naval projects.

Union steam and operating engineers also shared in the patriotism and loyalty of American labor, including participating in April 1918 in the largest mass parade of workers ever held in Chicago – for which the **Chicago Hoisting Engineers**, who were affiliated with the I.U.S.O.E., won first prize for their float depicting the German Kaiser dangling in full uniform from a mammoth crane. In October 1918, President Snellings would receive a letter from A.F.L. Secretary Frank Morrison commending the union "for having kept its pledge to serve the country in every field of activity."

By its Sixth Biennial Convention, held in Cleveland beginning September 9, 1918, the I.U.S.O.E. had been very successful in amalgamating the steam-shovel men in various large cities into its union, and it was also at harmony with the stationary firemen's union. However, the increased use of electric motors instead of steam as motive power for machinery had led to various disputes with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, which claimed jurisdiction over operators of electric-powered apparatus.

Among their duties, delegates of the convention approved a resolution for the A.F.L. to advance amalgamation efforts between the I.U.S.O.E. and the International Brotherhood of Steam Shovel Operators and Dredgemen in order to end misunderstandings between two trades that were closely allied. Drawn up by a committee created to press the issue, the resolution read, "The (A.F.L.) Executive Council is hereby instructed to use its best efforts in the direction of bringing about an amalgamation of the two organizations. It is the opinion of the committee that the work of the members of these two organizations is so closely identified that an amalgamation seems to be the only logical solution."

Sometime during the war years, the I.U.S.O.E. entered into its first-ever **International Agreement**, which govern the hiring of union workers by companies operating on a national basis, when it signed with the **Fred T. Ley Contracting Company** of Springfield, Massachusetts. (The union would eventually increase its use of international agreements, especially during the 1940s and 1950s, as they proved to be valuable in areas where there was little or no union organization, creating work for union members on projects that otherwise could have been subjected to non-union conditions.)

After the war ended on November 11, 1918, the union's growing importance was recognized in the summer of 1919 when its president, Brother Snellings, was elected to the Executive Council of the A.F.L. Building Trades Department at its convention in Atlantic City. The council at the same session ruled that the operation of electrically driven machinery in electrical generating stations and

substations, as well as the operation of electric cranes, properly belonged to and came under the charter of the I.U.S.O.E.

The union also kept up its ongoing crusade to improve the wages of all its members, and in one particular effort demanded in early 1919 that engineers employed by the country's railroads – most of which had been nationalized under the U.S. Railroad Administration in December 1917 – should receive 90 cents per hour, at which the administration balked. At the same time, engineers in the Pacific Coast shipyards obtained an agreement calling for better wages, overtime pay on holidays and eight-hour workdays.

Toward the end of 1919, the engineers' union again joined with all of labor to combat brutal attacks by anti-union forces, especially the antistrike provisions of a national railroad bill before the U.S. Congress. Ultimately, organized labor's united front blocked passage of the legislation.

Rise of Central Plants, Strikes

The number of hoisting and portable engineers within the I.U.S.O.E. rose steadily throughout the 1920s as construction work increasingly employed more steam shovels, internal combustion engines, electric motors and hydraulic machinery. Regardless, stationary engineers remained the majority within the union into the latter half of the decade.

But the role of the stationary engineer as someone who had sole responsibility for interior power of a building was diminishing. During the decade, isolated power plants in single facilities were all but completely replaced by central power plants, where the skills of engineers became more specialized.

Not all changes were so dramatic, however, and at the 1920 I.U.S.O.E. convention, delegates again discussed disagreements with the Steam Shovel and Dredgemen, who had submitted to the A.F.L. a plan of amalgamation, which the engineers union had already rejected. Ultimately, the proposal resulted in the suspension of the Steam Shovel and Dredgemen's charter with the national federation.

Away from those administrative disruptions, union engineers beginning in 1920 were put to work on several landmark federal construction projects. Among those were the **Wilson Dam** on the Tennessee River at Florence, Alabama, which was the first of nine Tennessee Valley Authority dams built on the river when it was completed in 1924; and the new, 27-mile **Welland Ship Canal** connecting Lake Ontario and Lake Erie in Ontario, Canada, that would allow ships to sail around Niagara Falls when opened in August 1932.

I.U.S.O.E. members were also at work in the early 1920s expanding the one-time-revolutionary **Schoellkopf Power Plant**, whose first station was built in 1874, on the Niagara River in Niagara Falls, New York, near the famous American Falls. The project involved adding multiple new generators to the plant's third power station, which had originally been completed in 1914, and building a new hydraulic tunnel to supply it with water from the upper river. At the same time just to the north on the Canadian banks of the river, fellow members were constructing the new **Queenston-Chippawa Hydroelectric Plant** (now the Sir Adam Beck Generating Station I), for which operating engineers of **Local No. 232** in Niagara Falls, Ontario, operated the largest shovel ever constructed at the time, weighing 400 tons with booms up to 110-feet long, before the facility first produced power in 1922.

In late 1920, the I.U.S.O.E. won a milestone victory over the Associated General Contractors of America in a jurisdictional dispute involving operation of temporary elevators to be used for conveying building materials on construction sites. The contractors association's attempt to take over operation of the elevators was duly rejected in a decision rendered by the National Board for Jurisdictional Awards.

A member of I.U.O.E. Local No. 4 in Boston displays the local's banner he carried in a parade during the late 1920s.

But growing employer opposition to organized labor struck the engineers hard the following two years, and coupled with effects of The Depression of 1920-1921, membership in the I.U.S.O.E. declined by one-fourth across that period. What's more, in 1921 and 1922, more members were on strike or locked out of jobs than at any one time in the union's history, while the international office paid out $30,911 in strike benefits for 62 strikes between its 1920 and 1922 conventions, leaving its Defense Fund depleted.

The union suffered another blow during that time with the sudden death of General President Snellings on June 9, 1921, while he was serving as a delegate to the A.F.L. convention in Denver. Brother Snellings, who was 52 years old, was succeeded by the union's first vice president, **Brother Arthur M. Huddell**.

The new general president was able to announce in September 1921 that a decade-long controversy with the United Brick and Clay Workers of America was settled with the signing of an agreement that provided an amicable jurisdictional set-up in the Chicago area. Over the next two months, President Huddell also reached similar agreements with the United Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees and Railway Shop Laborers, whose members were responsible for the physical condition of operational railway rights of way, and the International Union of Quarry Workers, which agreed to relinquish jurisdiction of engineers to the I.U.S.O.E.

While in the summer of 1922 the I.U.S.O.E. won another national victory in obtaining jurisdiction over the operation of electrically driven machinery, conditions for the country's organized labor had reached a low point as legislative attacks from an unfriendly national administration persisted. As such, The *International Steam Engineer* in its June 1922 issue ran a letter from the A.F.L. Executive Council that declared, "All hope of remedial legislation by the present Congress was lost months ago."

By the time the union's Eighth Biennial Convention commenced in September 1922, not only were a record number of its hoisting and portable locals striking, but other industries in which stationary engineers were employed were also affected. For instance, an International Paper Company strike involved the entire membership of local unions in Glens Falls and Fort Edward, New York, and the granite industry strike in the eastern portion

of the country affected I.U.S.O.E. members in places including Rockport, Massachusetts, and Graniteville, Vermont.

Addressing the convention on the ominous state of affairs, President Huddell professed:

"When the situation is presented to this office, there is no escape from granting men strike permission who are willing to go out and fight for conditions for the engineers, and in every such case strike permission has been granted by me, and the men have gone out and fought in a manner that is a credit to our international union. Our membership has shown, in both the stationary and the hoisting branch of our organization, that they are willing to fight for conditions, and have gone out and demonstrated, as they never did before, their fighting qualities. To every man who has been involved in these controversies, I want to say that he deserves the highest praise for the manner in which he has conducted himself, and the results that have been accomplished will reflect to the credit of these men and future Engineers."

Additional Gains & High Spirits

By mid-1923, the I.U.S.O.E. was emerging from the effects of the depression and a measure of prosperity was returning to its ranks and, subsequently, the international office. Importantly, the union had again held together through another extended test of its collective will and brotherhood, giving rise to an essay in the July 1923 issue of the union's journal to announce:

> ***"Attempts of employers' associations to disrupt the ranks of labor found the International Union of Steam and Operating Engineers invulnerable in practically every quarter. Members were less affected by the insidious schemes to break down morale of the membership than any other unit of the American Federation of Labor."***

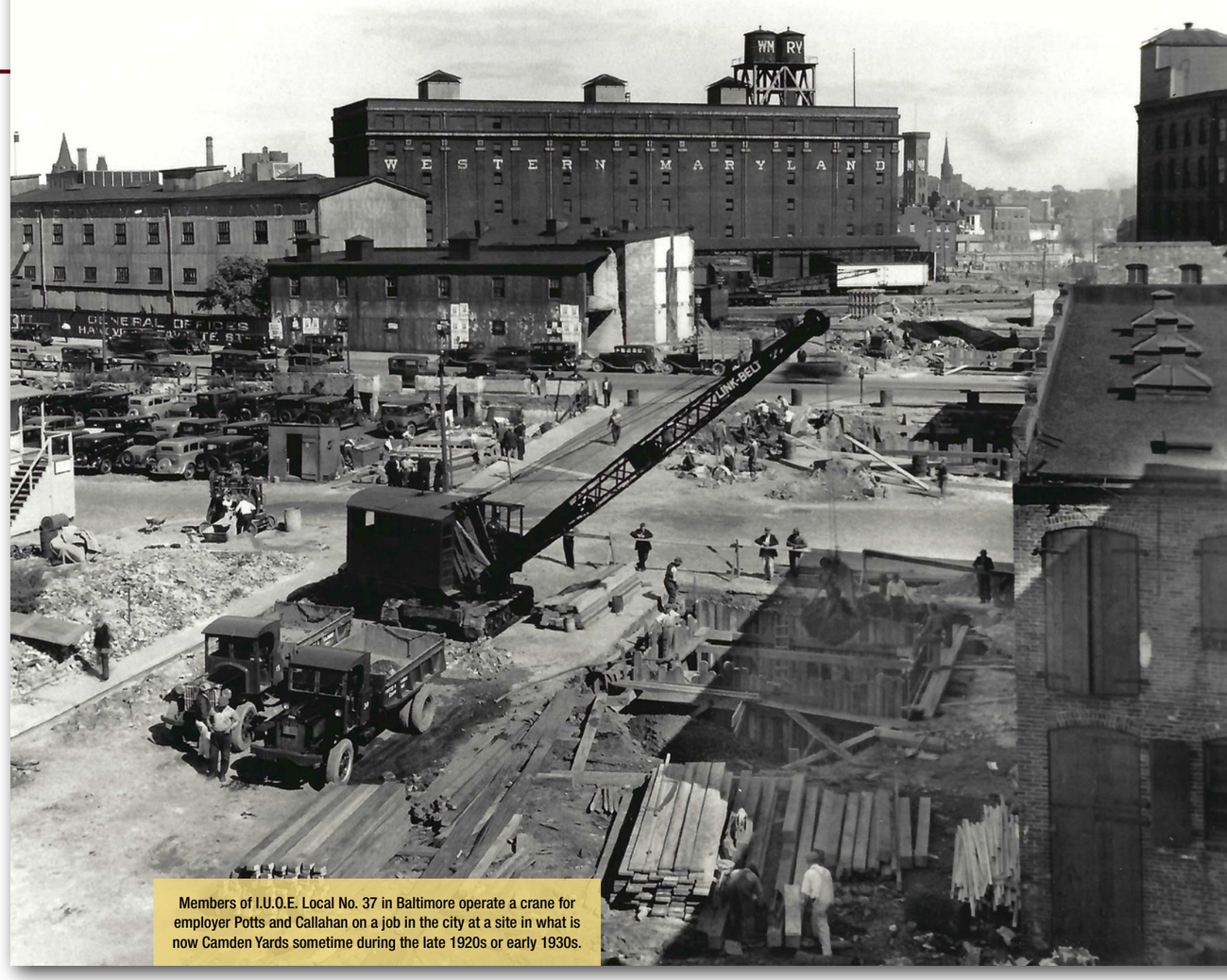
Moreover, advancing technology into and during the mid-1920s helped usher in a period of relatively strong prosperity for construction workers, including engineers. Gains made by the I.U.S.O.E., in particular, resulted in increased membership in 1923, during which the union reinstated 1,512 former members, admitted 5,521 new members and granted 25 charters for new locals.

Two international collective-bargaining practices initiated during that time – which later became important elements in the union's bargaining strength, as *The Economic History of a Trade Union* points out – also helped sustain the union's improving condition. The first was an international agreement signed directly between the heads of firms doing interstate business and General President Huddell, who in his report to the I.U.S.O.E. Ninth Biennial Convention in Detroit in September 1924 strongly advocated for such agreements, which called for the hiring of only union labor, adherence to area wage scales and work rules, and settling labor disputes peacefully. The second was the procedure of using the union's bargaining power to persuade interstate contractors to hire union engineers in areas where locals were too weak to organize the firms.

Soon afterward, President Huddell's 1926 New Year message to the membership struck a positive tone as he highlighted the recent gains made by the I.U.S.O.E. as it approached the completion of its third decade:

"There are more members now enrolled in the International Union, and the organization's treasury is in a more prosperous condition than ever before. Also, there has never been a time when harmony and mutuality among all the elements of the organization was as evident as now. Not only have we enjoyed a most gratifying increase in number, but there has likewise been a substantial improvement in wages and working conditions for our membership – an improvement hitherto unequalled in any one year of the organization's history."

The union strengthened the position of its general president through constitutional



Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 37 in Baltimore operate a crane for employer Potts and Callahan on a job in the city at a site in what is now Camden Yards sometime during the late 1920s or early 1930s.

amendments made during its 1926 convention that enhanced the general president's supervisory control by giving him "power to suspend either individual members or officers for incompetency, negligence or failure in successfully carrying out their duties." The president was further provided the authority to select the person who would replace any suspended officer or member.

In addition, another constitutional revision made during that convention lengthened the period between which conventions would be held from two years to four years – thereby lengthening the time between which general officers were to be elected and re-elected, as well.

As the union's new-found progress continued, by the close of its 30th year it had gained more members in 1926 than in any other year, and its membership stood at more than 40,000 while its assets in property and money in all funds totaled over $200,000. With those substantial developments, the I.U.S.O.E. was able to obtain better conditions for members, and that year, locals entered into more agreements with employers than ever before for increased wages, shorter hours, better working conditions and even paid vacation time – while only one local had to go out on strike to secure an increase.

Several jurisdictional disputes were also settled satisfactorily during the year, including

disagreements with the Building Service Employees International and the Machinists International Union.

The following year, at long last, the I.U.S.O.E. absorbed the Brotherhood of Steam Shovel Operators and Dredgemen in 1927, ending decades of antagonism between the two organizations that had persisted from the time they were both founded in 1896. With the amalgamation, roughly 7,000 operators of excavating and dredging machinery in various parts of the United States and Canada transferred into the I.U.S.O.E.

Building Icons as The I.U.O.E.

As advancements had altered most all of its industry and members were working almost exclusively with internal combustion engines, electric motors, hydraulic machinery and refrigerating systems, on **July 1, 1928**, the union dropped "steam" from its name and it became the **International Union of Operating Engineers**. What's more, as the organization progressed, it had attracted workers from the public sector, making it a truly diverse trade union. While announcing the change to the press, General President Huddell explained:

> *"Our general executive board is of the opinion that this is a forward step for our international union, as the evolution in industry is rapidly changing from steam to other power, and the word 'steam' in our title overshadowed every other development in industry and in some places was a hindrance to the progress or our organization This does not in any way change the jurisdiction of our international union."*

I.U.O.E. and other building-trades members working on the Rockefeller Center project in New York City line up to receive their pay on Christmas Eve 1931 beside a Christmas Tree they erected, which was reportedly the very first Rockefeller Center Christmas Tree. (New York-based Local No. 14 member Brother Horace Gibbs is indicated by the arrow.)

Favorable conditions continued for the union through that year, and many of its members were working on massive public-works projects throughout the country. Those jobs included the $48-million **Holland Tunnel**, described as the world's largest and longest vehicular tunnel when it was completed in February of that year, linking New Jersey and New York City under the Hudson River. Members also continued to build the Welland Ship Canal, which was 20 percent complete in May 1928 when that month's issue of the union's recently renamed *The International Engineer* journal described the project as "a prodigious undertaking calling for prodigious use of power-driven excavating and construction machinery."

President Huddell was re-nominated by ovation of delegates and, therefore, without a ballot during the I.U.O.E.'s First Quadrennial Convention in Buffalo, New York, in September 1928 – after which conventions would be held every four years. Although the preceding years had been comparatively prosperous for the union, reports made during the conference recounted that its locals conducted 33 strikes during the previous two years, with the international expending $15,146 in strike benefits.[1]

The following year – and seven years after the General Executive Board in 1922 approved a proposal to move the union's international headquarters from Chicago to Washington, D.C., to be close to the legislative center of the United States – the I.U.O.E. moved its general offices to the nation's capital in 1929. The union's administrative center was set up in the **Carpenters' Building** at **1003 K Street, Northwest**, where it would remain for the next 27 years.

The union's engineers continued employment on many large projects during the final years of the decade, as well. Many were kept busy on construction of the replacement **Cascade Tunnel**, an eight-mile railway passage burrowed through the Cascade Range of Washington state that was one of the biggest digging jobs ever undertaken in the Western Hemisphere, until its completion in 1929.

But the Great Depression, the economic and societal catastrophe that officially began with the Wall Street stock-market collapse of October 29, 1929 (history's "Black Tuesday") and lingered into the late 1930s, hit operating engineers particularly hard. As a result, membership in the I.U.O.E. between July 1930 and July 1933 fell from 33,705 to 21,502, with membership of its hoisting and portable locals dropping 54 percent and its stationary locals declining 23 percent.

Throughout the depression years, the operating engineers, like many other unions during that period, held no conventions.

But one noteworthy construction project on which members worked during that time was the **Empire State Building** in New York City's midtown Manhattan borough beginning in 1930. When completed in 1931, the 102-story skyscraper was the tallest building in the world.

Passage of the Davis-Bacon Act in 1931, which guaranteed construction workers' wage rates on federally funded projects, helped alleviate some of the union's stifling unemployment as federal construction provided many of the jobs on which operating engineers were employed during the next three years. Those projects in 1931 included the massive hydroelectric dams across the Skagit River in the State of Washington and the 16-mile-long replacement **Beauharnois Canal** as part of the St. Lawrence Seaway.

Numerous operating engineers were also put to work at that time on construction of the **Hoover Dam** (known then as the Boulder Dam) in the Black Canyon of the Colorado River on the Arizona-Nevada state line. The 726-foot-tall concrete structure was built at a cost of $48.8 million – until then the largest contract awarded by the federal government

– using I.U.O.E. skilled labor beginning in 1931 until its completion in 1936, at which time it was the world's tallest dam until 1968 and its power plant was the world's largest hydroelectric station until 1949.

Surviving Catastrophic Events

The union's focus on enduring the turbulent times was violently interrupted on May 20, 1931, when a gunman opened fire on General President Huddell, **General Secretary-Treasurer John Possehl** and **Brother Frank Langdon**, editor of *The International Engineer*, as they lunched at the Robin Hood Coffee Shop directly across from the union's headquarters in Washington, D.C. While Brother Possehl escaped injury and Brother Huddell was saved when a bullet aimed at his heart was stopped by a notebook in his pocket, Brother Langdon lost an eye in the attack, during which the shooter emptied two guns at the union leaders.

President Huddell attributed the shooting to his attempts "to eliminate racketeering in our union." Police said they believed the shooting was the "outgrowth of a labor feud," the Associated Press reported the following day.

Prior to the attack, President Huddell and Secretary-Treasurer Possehl were investigating former General Secretary-Treasurer Dave Evans for alleged embezzlement of $36,000 from the union's Death Benefit Fund between September 1929 and March 1931. The week following the shooting, a grand jury began an investigation into the allegations against Evans, who President Huddell had replaced as the union's secretary-treasurer with Brother Possehl on March 19, 1931. Evans was convicted of embezzlement in June the following year and served one third of a five-year sentence.

Two weeks after the attack, President Huddell passed away on June 1, 1931, while he was in a hospital being treated for a cerebral hemorrhage. No one was ever convicted of shooting him and Brother Langdon.

Brother Possehl was subsequently named by the union's General Executive Board to replace Brother Huddell as I.U.O.E. general president. After having served as its general secretary-treasurer for less than three months, Brother Possehl took over the union's top position on June 5, 1931.

As the depression lingered, I.U.O.E. progress was greatly aided when the 1933 A.F.L. convention voted in favor of the engineers' union in its long-running battle with the United Brewery Workers to represent engineers working in breweries.

That year, the start of construction on the **Golden Gate Bridge** in San Francisco provided a source of manhours for many engineers until it was completed in 1937. The longest and tallest suspension bridge in the world when it opened that year, the Golden Gate would be declared one of the "Wonders of the Modern World" by the American Society of Civil Engineers.

But it was President Franklin D. Roosevelt's "New Deal" program, officially known as the National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933, that created most of the much-needed work for the operating engineers, in addition to jobs for millions of people in the United States. After President Roosevelt signed the bill into law on June 16, 1933, its new federal agencies and state and local governments spent over $19 billion on work-relief projects, most of which was for construction, to combat the unemployment caused by the Great Depression.

A side effect of the New Deal was the I.U.O.E.'s increased determination to establish branch locals, as existing members "saw the influx of would-be engineers working those federally funded jobs as a threat to their authority within their respective locals," according to *The Economic History of a Trade Union*. (Branch locals had become official within the international in 1920 as a means for apprentices to come into the union.) Just prior to enactment of the New Deal, the I.U.O.E. had already started working on an extensive campaign for organizing engineers of all unorganized industries, which included chartering "B" branch locals for new members who were not operating engineers and, therefore, would not have the same power as existing members of parent locals.[1]

The I.U.O.E. Constitution Revision Committee that re-drafted the union's Constitution and General Laws with major revisions during a conference in Atlantic City in 1938 to strengthen the democratic procedures of the union.

Organizing stationary engineers as part of its activities during the early 1930s also brought the I.U.O.E. into the oil-refining industry. After employees of the **Shell Oil Refinery** in Wood River, Illinois, were organized by the union in 1933, the international assigned a full-time representative to the refining industry in 1936 and the A.F.L. would award the union jurisdiction over oil-refinery production workers in 1938.[1] (While the immediate contribution to membership was insignificant, organizing the industry would eventually bring in a total of 15,000 new members in the field by 1960.)

The end of prohibition with repeal of the 18th Amendment by passage of the 21st Amendment on December 5, 1933, made the manufacture and sale of liquor legal again in the United States and revived the brewing industry, which created more work for the union's hoisting, portable and stationary engineers. However, the resumption of brewing reignited the jurisdictional dispute between the I.U.O.E. and the United Brewery Workers, which renewed attempts to force engineers in breweries to join their union, that dated back to 1897. But the A.F.L. convention in October 1933 reiterated the verdicts of previous conventions that had established jurisdiction of the I.U.O.E. over engineers in breweries, and convention delegates voted by an overwhelming majority in favor of the engineers' union, ending 35 years of jurisdictional controversy.

As great strides were also made in air conditioning during that period, operating engineers became more aware of the importance of acquiring a complete understanding of the technology if they were to retain positions in buildings equipped with air-conditioning systems. Thorough knowledge of electric refrigeration would prove to be a tremendous advantage to engineers who were required to supervise refrigeration plants along with power and heating plants, and accordingly, the union promoted study of the emerging technology.

Fending Off Added Assaults

At 40 years old, the I.U.O.E by 1937 was firmly established and widely recognized as a leading craft union of skilled tradesmen. As such, it was well-positioned to meet any attack against itself and its sovereignty – two of which came in 1937.

First, in an apparent attempt to deny to practical operating engineers the right to be promoted to positions of supervisor or chief engineer, the National Society of Professional Engineers launched legislative campaigns in various states to prevent the use of the word "engineer" by anyone other than a degreed engineer, including members of the I.U.O.E. The union responded in kind, forming legislative committees and successfully fighting the measures in every state capitol where they were introduced, including New York, Ohio, Florida, Michigan, Texas, Nebraska, California and Washington, D.C.

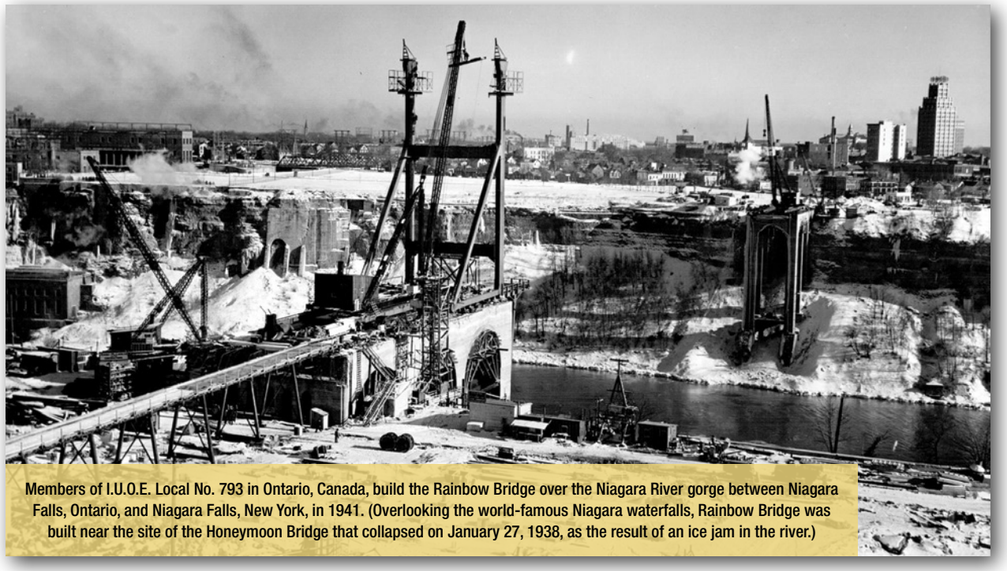
In order to further protect the union, **General Secretary-Treasurer Frank A. Fitzgerald** registered the I.U.O.E. trademark in the U.S. Patent Office, ensuring no infringement on the organization's right to its title and insignia.

Later in the year, the I.U.O.E. won another important decision when the A.F.L. convention in Denver upheld its Executive Council's ruling for the engineers in a jurisdictional dispute with the Quarry Workers' International Union. The Executive Council had decided that the quarry workers' jurisdiction did not extend to any piles, pits or distribution yards where sand, stone, gravel, slag or trap and crushed rock was excavated and loaded, dredged, blasted, crushed, screened, sized, stored and distributed for building and construction work.

The latter part of the 1930s also saw heavy employment for operating engineers on massive public-works programs. Large undertakings employing thousands of I.U.O.E. members included the great dams of the Tennessee Valley Authority; the **Grand Coulee Dam** on the Columbia River in Washington state, which after completion in 1942 would be the largest hydropower producer in the United States; and the **Bartlett Dam** in the Arizona desert, the highest multiple-arch dam in the world when completed in 1939. (The public took such a strong interest in watching operating engineers working on those and other historic projects with their impressive machinery that the government erected grandstands, installed loudspeakers and telescopes, and built parking lots for the multitudes of spectators.)

Into 1938, the growing use of diesel engines in the construction industry had required

Delegates and their guests attend the I.U.O.E. 21st Convention banquet at the Raleigh Hotel in Washington, D.C., on April 17, 1940.



Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 793 in Ontario, Canada, build the Rainbow Bridge over the Niagara River gorge between Niagara Falls, Ontario, and Niagara Falls, New York, in 1941. (Overlooking the world-famous Niagara waterfalls, Rainbow Bridge was built near the site of the Honeymoon Bridge that collapsed on January 27, 1938, as the result of an ice jam in the river.)

operating engineers to become proficient in operating diesel-powered machinery. In a letter to the membership, General President Possehl advised that members who operate diesel engines were "engineers in the fullest sense of the word" and were to "be accepted into local unions as full-fledged engineers on the same terms as those engineers who operated any other kind of equipment."

Members then voted overwhelmingly that year through a referendum ballot for major revisions in the union's constitution and general laws that would ensure the union would always be governed democratically by the membership. To honor that edict, a Constitution Revision Committee convened at Atlantic City, New Jersey, on August 11 recommended major alterations that included changing all active charters by inserting the territorial jurisdiction granted to each local union; modifying the vested authority of the international union; allowing locals to elect officers for periods of one to four years and adding provisions for the recall of local officers; adding provisions to protect the interests of locals and their memberships during strikes and lockouts; and adding provisions for setting convention dates and holding conventions every four years. (Under the 1928 constitution, the only provision for holding a convention was through a referendum vote; under the new constitution, conventions would have to be held unless the membership voted to postpone them.) The revised constitution was decisively adopted by a referendum vote of members on December 31, 1938.

Yet another jurisdictional controversy arose in 1939 when the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Chauffeurs, Stablemen and Helpers of America claimed it should represent anyone who operated power-driven equipment on buildings and construction work. Following lengthy hearings, a special committee named by the Executive Council of the Building and Construction Trades Department of the A.F.L. ruled that all power-driven equipment used on any type of construction work, including all power-driven equipment that was in dispute between the teamsters and the operating engineers, came under the jurisdiction of the I.U.O.E.

Maloney Ushers in Gilded Era

More than 300 delegates gathered for the 21st I.U.O.E. Convention beginning April 8, 1940, in Washington, D.C., the first held by the union since before the Great Depression. Among the business they conducted, the delegates adopted resolutions that placed them on record as favoring a national license law for operating engineers and continuation of the Public Works Administration, the New Deal agency designed to reduce unemployment through the construction of highways and public buildings that had been disbanded the previous year – and would remain so despite I.U.O.E. appeals.

But with a legacy that included reviving stationary-field organizing and implementing the formation of state- and market-wide hoisting and portable locals, General President Possehl died on September 14, 1940. The 56-year-old had been serving on the General Executive Board while it was in session in Washington, D.C., when he became ill with a heart ailment the day before he passed away.

The board on September 19 unanimously elected **Brother William E. Maloney**, the union's fifth vice president, as its next general president. A native of Chicago and a member of the I.U.O.E. for 30 years, his ascendency to the position marked the start of a period of "spectacular growth" for the union over much of the ensuing two decades, which coincided with his presidency, as *The Economic History of a Trade Union* asserts:

> ***"By any measure, the years 1940-1958 must be counted as the most illustrious period of the union's history to that time."***

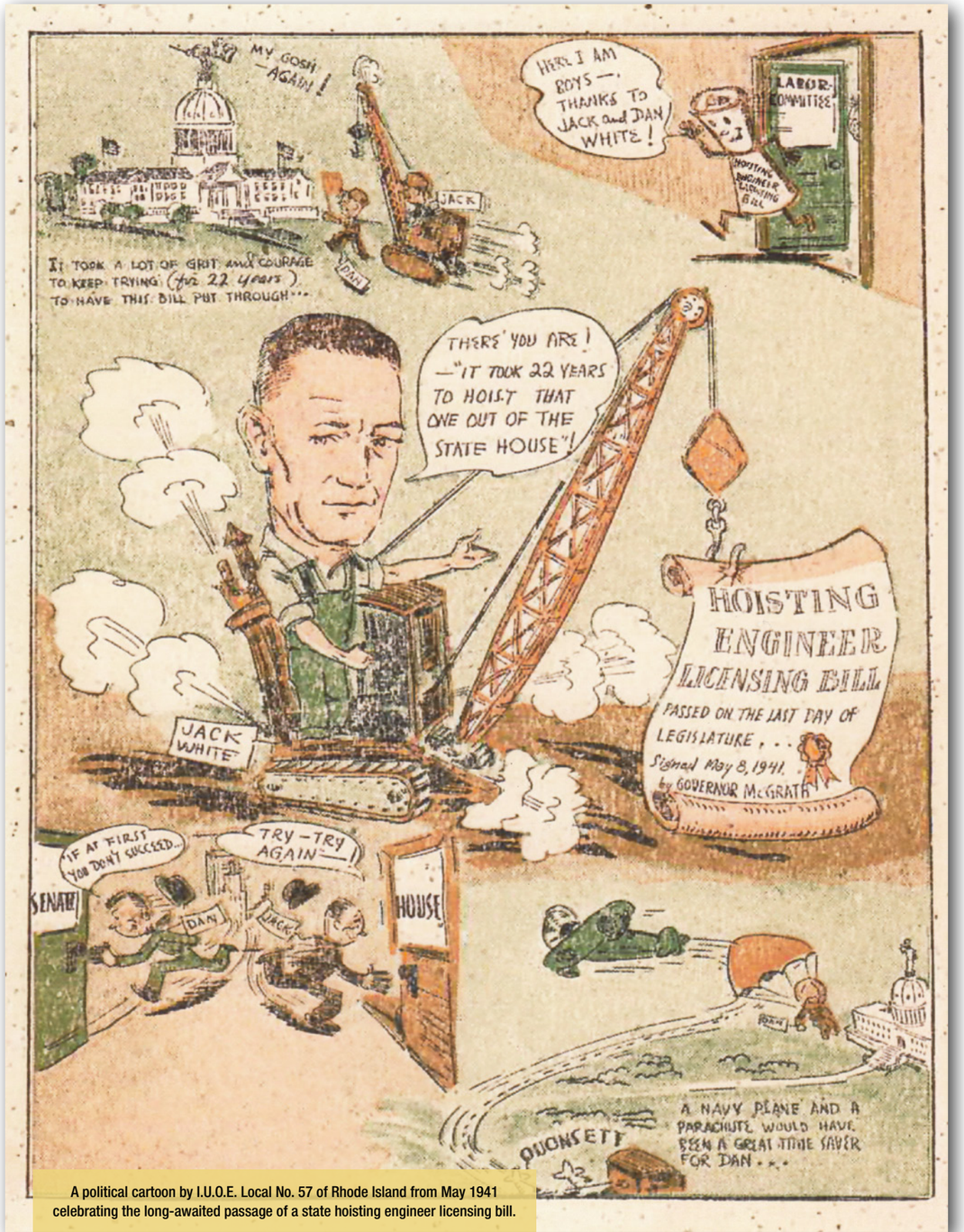
Up until 1940 and, essentially, the beginning of General President Maloney's term, the engineers' union since 1896 was basically two organizations in one, consisting of a branch of stationary engineers and a building trades branch of operating engineers, *The Economic History of a Trade Union* attests. Beginning in 1940, a "small but significant trend towards organization" of semi-skilled operators and employees in numerous other industries added a third group to the union's membership, starting a trend in the union's organizing campaigns that reached well beyond its traditional doctrine and corresponding efforts. In particular, starting in the early 1940s, the union placed a new focus on organizing the dredging jurisdiction on the east coast, which had essentially been neglected since the 1927 amalgamation with the steam-shovel workers' and dredgemen's union.[1]

"In the organizing campaigns of the 1940s and 1950s, the union departed from its one-time craft purity," the book summarizes. As a result, when the delegates of the union's 21st Convention met in Washington, D.C., in April 1940, its membership stood at 58,240 – and by 1960, union affiliation by members employed outside the construction industry would be four times what it was in 1939.

But late that year, another world war that would have unimagined consequences was ignited in Europe and Asia. Canada entered the conflict on September 10, 1939, alongside the Allied countries led by England and France, just nine days after the military forces of Nazi Germany invaded Poland, setting off the hostilities in which the I.U.O.E. would play a prominent role.

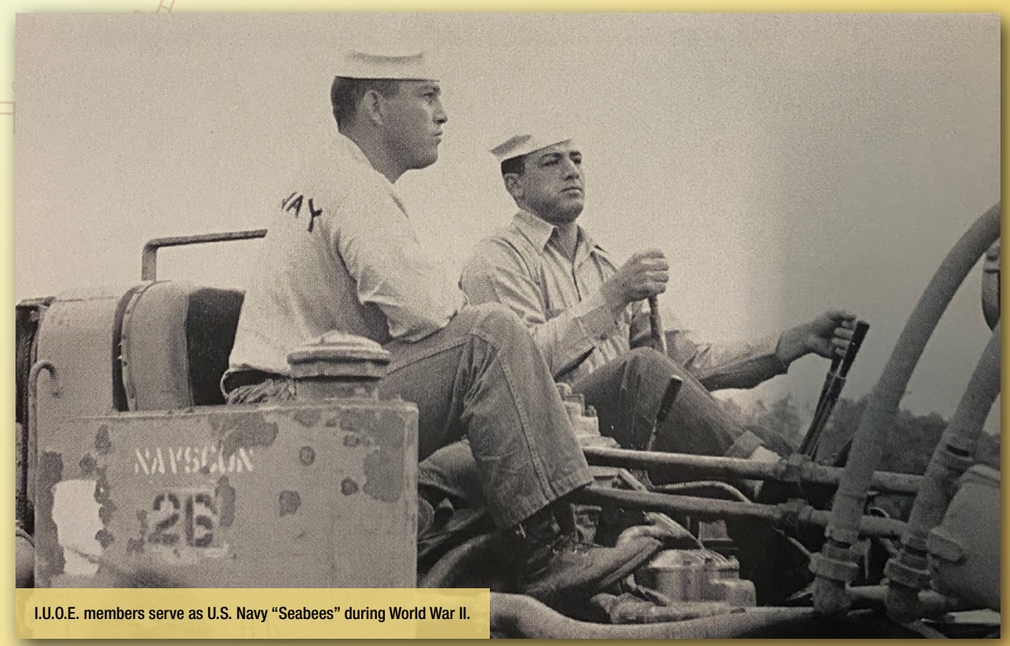
Winning a Second Global War

With World War II raging across much of the globe into 1940, in July of that year the United States inaugurated its National Defense Program. The resulting construction needs for the nation's military buildup would require the manpower of scores of I.U.O.E. members. Within nine months after the Selective Service Act became law on September 14, 1940, operating



A political cartoon by I.U.O.E. Local No. 57 of Rhode Island from May 1941 celebrating the long-awaited passage of a state hoisting engineer licensing bill.

SECOND WORLD WAR BORE HEROES, 273 GOLD STARS



I.U.O.E. members serve as U.S. Navy "Seabees" during World War II.

Members of the I.U.O.E. have consistently and heroically served the nation in times of war as members of the U.S. Armed Forces and as civilian contributors. During World War II, 17,891 members saw service in the military, 273 of whom paid the ultimate sacrifice with their lives (symbolized by the military with a gold star) while fighting in the global conflict.

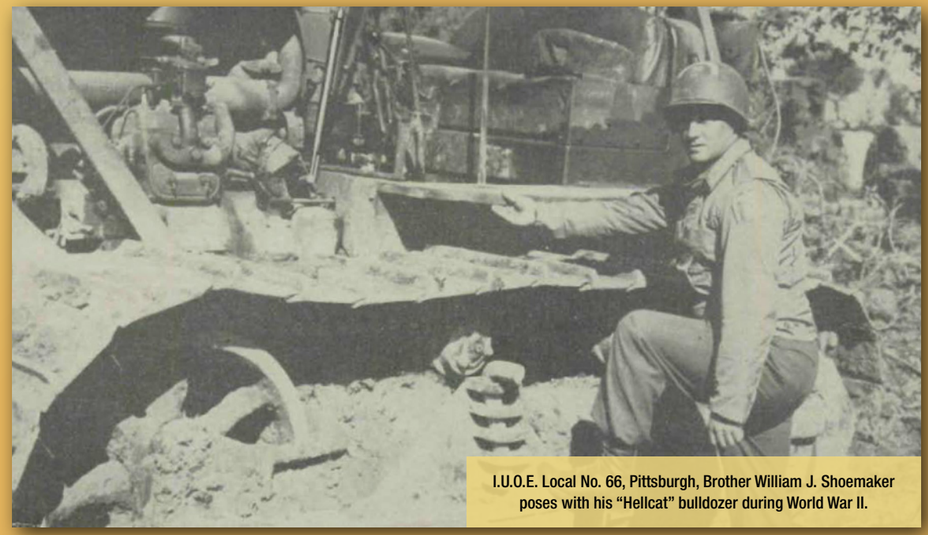
A large proportion of the I.U.O.E. members who served did so in the famed U.S. Navy Construction Battalion – "Seabees" – and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Those members helped construct much of the vital wartime infrastructure needed to attain victory, including the 1,600-mile Alaska Highway (or ALCAN highway) connecting Alaska with the continental United States through Canada in 1942 and 1943 that used 11,000 pieces of road-building equipment manned by operating engineers; 1,284 airports within the United States; and portions of the 1,475-mile "Big Inch" and "Little Inch" petroleum pipelines from 1942 through 1944 that extended from Texas to New Jersey. Countless operating engineers also worked on military-dedicated construction jobs in Europe and the Pacific Islands, as well as Newfoundland, Greenland, Labrador, Trinidad, British New Guinea, Arabia and Egypt.

In another symbol of the union's vital contributions to the war effort, the I.U.O.E. was honored for its part in winning an Army-Navy "E" award for the Consolidated Engineering Company of Baltimore for the construction of the Naval Air Station at Cedar Point, Maryland. (The "E" Award was an honor presented to companies during World War II whose production facilities achieved "Excellence in Production" of war equipment.) What's more, I.U.O.E. Local No. 235 of Wilmington, California, was commended on December 7, 1945, for enabling the Los Angeles Port of Embarkation to successfully fulfill its mission, as members of the local maintained and operated the land and floating cranes essential to expeditious handling of the heavy munitions of war during over two years of around-the-clock, highly accelerated operations.

Among those many individual I.U.O.E. members who served with distinction in the U.S. Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard during the war, Brother Carl A. Carlson Jr. of Local No. 399 in Chicago was bestowed with the Medal of Freedom, the highest honor given to civilians by the president of the United States, for "courageous and distinguished service" for his actions at the Pearl Harbor Naval Base on May 21, 1944. Brother Carlson, a locomotive engineer with the Seabees, was assembling seven freight cars loaded with black gunpowder that day when three nearby munitions ships exploded. "Undeterred by two major explosions which left the docks and immediate vicinity in a blazing inferno, hurled heavily laden burning missiles over a wide area and pierced the cab of his locomotive," according to the citation, he single-handedly finished coupling the cars and removed them from the danger zone.

I.U.O.E. Local No. 399, Chicago, Brother Carl A. Carlson Jr.

Pittsburgh Local No. 66 Brother William J. Shoemaker, a U.S. Army private and bulldozer operator with the Sixth Engineer Special Brigade in France, was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, the Army's second-highest decoration, for extraordinary gallantry on D-Day, the allied invasion of occupied France on June 6, 1944. Brother Shoemaker continued to work his bulldozer on the beaches of Normandy while it was a target of intense mortar and cannon fire from enemy Germans that day, dragging many capsized vehicles out of the surf and clearing obstructions from the beach. Demolishing road blocks and filling in anti-tank traps afterwards, according to the citation, "His courageous action permitted vehicles and armor to move out in support of the infantry troops."



I.U.O.E. Local No. 66, Pittsburgh, Brother William J. Shoemaker poses with his "Hellcat" bulldozer during World War II.

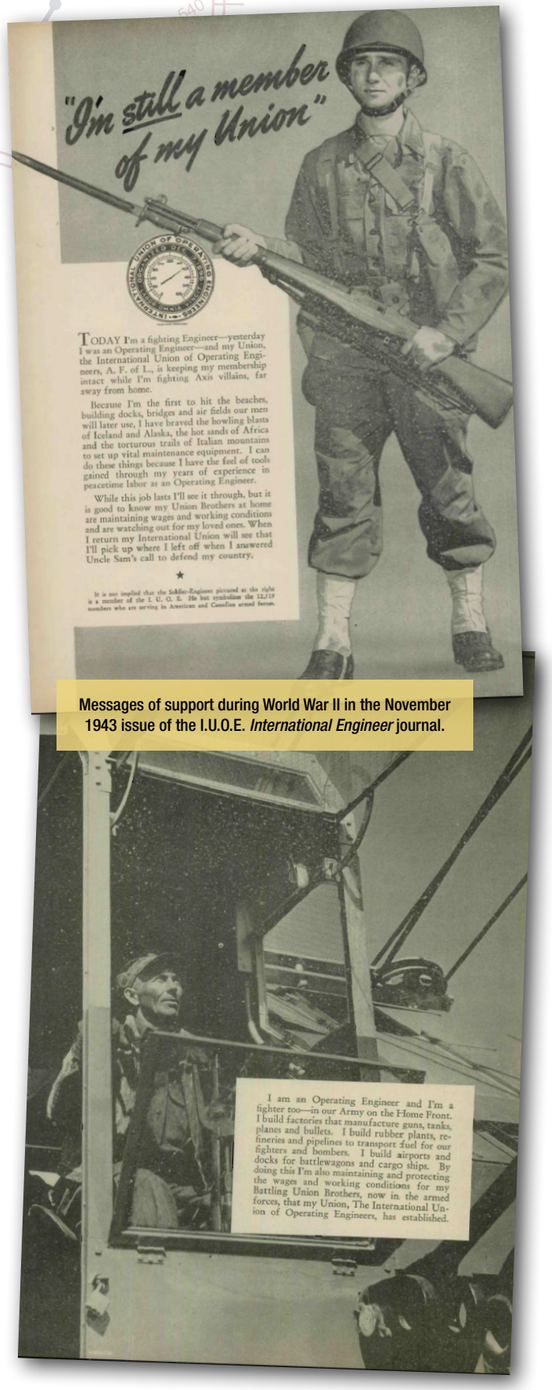
engineers helped build 50 large military camps, 30 troop-reception centers, 52 harbor-defense projects, 16 air-force projects and 148 other projects as part of the U.S. Army's emergency defense requirements.

In addition to construction work, I.U.O.E. members manned and maintained huge sewage-disposal plants, water pumps and immense cold-storage plants at the camps. "In fact, in almost every phase in speed production brought about by the necessity of housing, feeding and clothing an army in the shortest possible time, machinery played a big part," *The International Engineer* December 1946 issue recounted, "and wherever there was power generated, there was found an operating engineer."

The I.U.O.E. also participated in conferences between the A.F.L. Building and Construction Trades Department and various agencies of the government, from which the Memorandum of Agreements were developed on August 1, 1941. Provisions of the treaty called for no work stoppages and protection of wage standards on military construction projects.

Internally, the union on October 15, 1940, arranged for members who should volunteer or be drafted for military service in Canada or the United States to be provided with Service Withdrawal Cards, which provided exemption of dues and payment of Death Benefit Fund fees by the local unions. A few months later, the General Executive Board instructed the general president and general secretary-treasurer to purchase $5,000 in Victory Bonds using the union's Death Benefit funds on deposit in Canada.

The United States entered World War II following the Japanese attack on the U.S. Naval Station at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, on December 7, 1941. Immediately afterward, President Maloney addressed all I.U.O.E. locals on the importance of all members "to do their utmost within their power to help in bringing the war to a victorious conclusion." He further declared,



Messages of support during World War II in the November 1943 issue of the I.U.O.E. *International Engineer* journal.

"After this emergency is over, I want it said that the I.U.O.E. did their part in helping to defend the United States and its possessions."

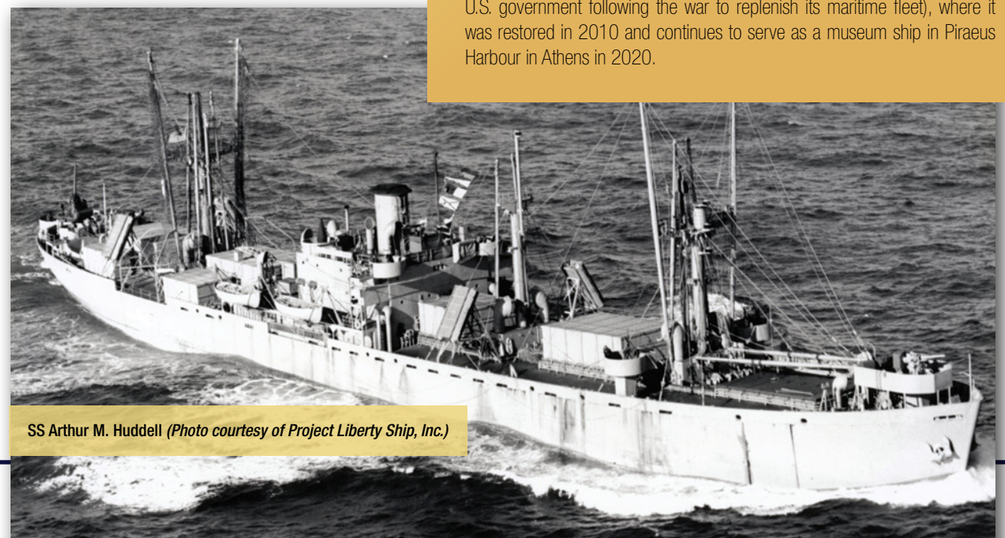
On the homefront and on battlefields, I.U.O.E. members distinguished themselves throughout the war. Many operating engineers fought courageously in battle, while many others constructed vital bases, airfields, roads and bridges in the war's European and Pacific theaters as members of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers or the U.S. Navy Construction Battalions, or "Seabees" as they became famously known. Stationary engineers were also engaged in processing mass amounts of food, clothing, munitions and war materiel in plants throughout North America.

When the United States joined the fight, about 12,000 A.F.L. members were employed on defense projects in the Philippines, Wake, Guam and Midway islands, about 400 of which were members of the I.U.O.E. Soon after, communication was lost with about 100 of those operating engineers, and there were no reports as to whether they were alive or held as prisoners of the Japanese. The I.U.O.E. Executive Board in January 1942 provided that all union members in good standing who were prisoners of war would remain members in good standing and be relieved from paying union dues.

Back home, among the key wartime projects on which operating engineers were engaged was construction of the **Alaska Highway**. The 1,671-mile road from Dawson Creek, Canada, to Big Delta, Alaska, constructed to connect the contiguous United States to Alaska across Canada, employed hundreds of operating engineers between March 9 and October 28, 1942.

That year, construction of the **"Big Inch"** and the parallel **"Little Big Inch"** pipelines for transporting heating oil and gasoline from Texas to the northeast states also began employing I.U.O.E. members. However, only two sections of the lines – New Jersey and the Mississippi River crossing – were let to union contractors, and in an attempt to organize workers on the remainder of the line, **Local No. 513** of St. Louis and union steamfitters, teamsters and laborers unsuccessfully went on strike against the crucial Mississippi River portion in the summer of 1943. The action turned violent at times and resulted in the deaths of two people and injuries to many others before the War Labor Board intervened and ended the strike.

The **Manhattan Project**, the government's research and development program that during World War II produced the first nuclear weapons ever used, also employed large numbers of I.U.O.E. members. Related projects on which operating engineers worked beginning in 1942 included construction of the **Hanford Site** in the State of Washington, home to the first full-scale plutonium production reactor in the world; **Los Alamos National Laboratory** in New Mexico, created for the design of nuclear weapons; and **Clinton Engineer Works** (soon



SS Arthur M. Huddell *(Photo courtesy of Project Liberty Ship, Inc.)*

SS Arthur M. Huddell

WARTIME SHIP SALUTED PRESIDENT

The United States government posthumously honored former I.U.O.E. General President Arthur M. Huddell, who led the union from June 1921 until his death in June 1931, for his efforts on behalf of labor by commissioning the liberty ship SS Arthur M. Huddell in December 1943 during World War II. Initially carrying explosives from the United States to Europe, during much of the war the ship transported materials for Operation PLUTO, the construction of a fuel pipeline under the English Channel to supply allied forces in Europe after the June 1944 D-Day landings in Normandy, France.

So-called "Liberty Ships" were EC2-type vessels built with a standardized design and prefabricated parts for emergency mass production by the U.S. Maritime Commission during World War II. The program produced 2,711 Liberty Ships, which were named after prominent deceased Americans, starting with Patrick Henry and the signers of the Declaration of Independence.

The St. Johns River Shipbuilding Company in Jacksonville, Florida, erected the S.S. Arthur M. Huddell beginning October 25, 1943, in just 43 days, with six operating engineers taking part in the construction. The 10,500-ton vessel was christened by Brother Huddell's widow and launched on December 7, after which it was outfitted for duty in just 10 days.

Brother Huddell was a founding member of the forerunner to I.U.O.E. Local No. 4 of Boston in the late 1800s and, subsequently, helped form the I.U.O.E. when it was first organized as the National Union of Steam Engineers on December 7, 1896. He served as his local's business manager, playing a significant role in the 1895 passage of legislation in Massachusetts that regulated steam engineering to make it safer, and he was president of the Boston Central Labor Union in addition to leading his international union.

For the remainder of the Second World War and immediately afterwards, the SS Arthur M. Huddell carried coal, general cargo and personnel between the United States and Europe. In 1956, AT&T used the ship to lay undersea communication cable, and during the Cold War, it laid cable for the Navy's Sound Surveillance System.

The ship was decommissioned in 1984 and by the end of the 20th century was one of only three Liberty Ships still afloat. In 2008, it was transferred to Greece (which had purchased a large number of Liberty Ships from the U.S. government following the war to replenish its maritime fleet), where it was restored in 2010 and continues to serve as a museum ship in Piraeus Harbour in Athens in 2020.

Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 37 in Baltimore and their guests attend the local's first-ever 30-Year Club banquet on May 3, 1945, at the city's Emerson Hotel. The Local 37 30-Year Club continues to operate in 2021.

after renamed Oak Ridge National Laboratory) in Tennessee, where the enriched uranium used in the first atomic bomb, dropped on Hiroshima, Japan, on August 6, 1945, was produced.

The I.U.O.E. was singled out on various occasions for its support of the war effort, including a special citation from the U.S. Treasury Department in October 1942 for distinguished services rendered to the National War Savings Program. Then in March 1943, U.S. Navy Rear Admiral Ben Moreell – who was best known as the "Father of the Navy's Seabees" – presented an Award of Merit to the union in acknowledgment of its efforts to enlist recruits for service in the Navy's Construction Battalions.

As the war dragged on, the I.U.O.E. held its convention in Chicago in April 1944, by which time the union's membership had reached a peak of about 130,000 before declining somewhat. The wartime convention was strictly business, with delegates endorsing the six-hour workday, disapproving government interference in employment and resolving to campaign for national voter registration so that the membership could vote in full strength. Following the conference, all general officers were re-elected by member referendum.

The union won an important jurisdictional decision that December in a dispute with the International Association of Machinists over repairs on machinery operated by engineers at worksites where they were being used. The A.F.L. Executive Council approved a special committee's recommendation that jurisdiction over all repairs necessary to keep machines that were operated by members of the I.U.O.E. on worksites belonged to the operating engineers.

After nearly six years of war, the I.U.O.E., all of labor and all of North America celebrated the end of hostilities in Europe on May 8, 1945. The war ended completely when Japan surrendered on August 14, 1945, bringing total victory for the United States, Canada and their allies.

Nearly 18,000 members of the I.U.O.E. had served in the armed forces during World War II, 273 of whom were killed.

At the close of the war, the contributions and sacrifices of the union's membership were recognized in a letter of appreciation and praise from Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal, who wrote:

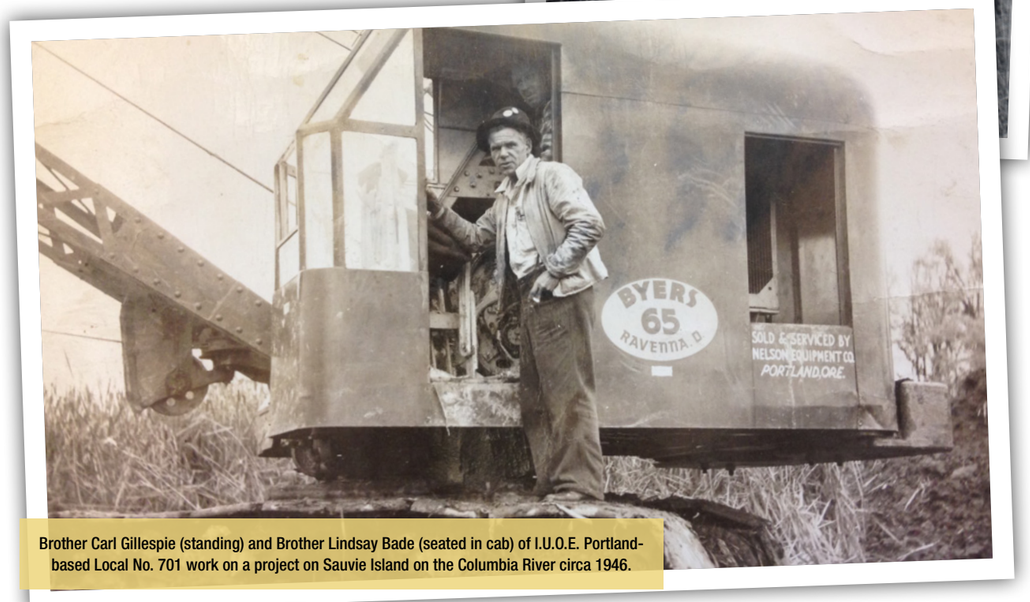
"I am addressing this letter of appreciation to the I.U.O.E. on the day of the surrender of the last of our enemies. Among the unions which have worked with the Navy to build our enormous chain of bases at home and abroad, your union has been outstanding. Your members deserve to carry with them into peace, therefore, a special sense of pride in a great national achievement. On this day of final victory, the Navy sends to all of you its sincere thanks."

Golden Benchmark Anniversary

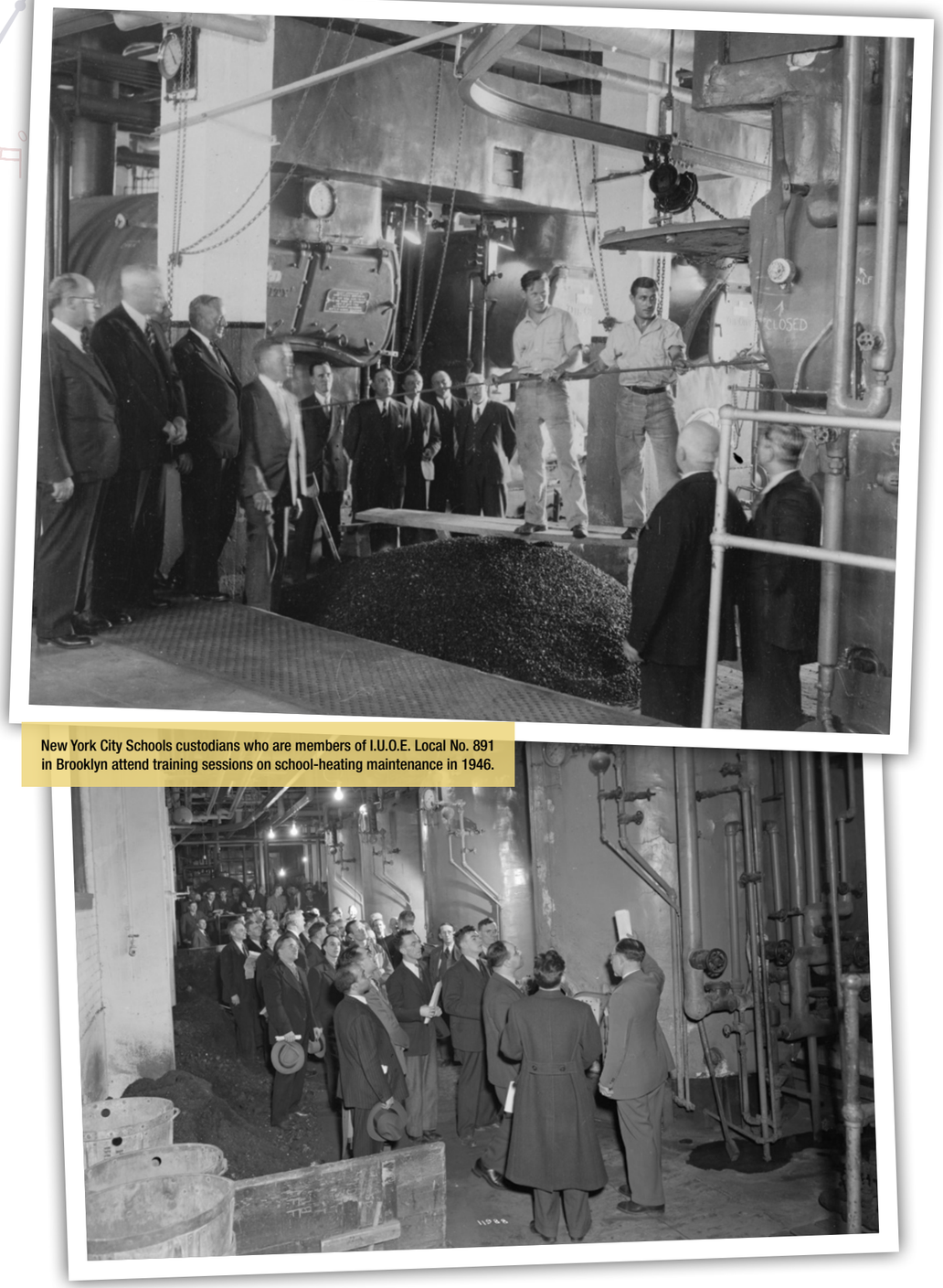
"The term 'Engineer' today means a great deal, for engineers are men above the average in intelligence and mechanical ability. Today, the engineer to be a success in his profession must be technical as well as practical; he must be a good mathematician, draftsman, understand steam, gas, diesel engines, electricity, hydraulics and also be an all-around mechanic. The improvement of engineers along these lines has long been fostered by the International Union."

– *The International Engineer*, December 1946
I.U.O.E. 50th Anniversary Issue

By the end of the Second World War and for some time afterward, heavy and highway work was the primary source of employment for the operating engineers, with construction of airports, dams, reservoirs, railroads, pipelines, subways, sewers, bridges, water treatment plants and highways furnishing from 70 to 90 percent of their jobs. Civilian infrastructure that had been put on hold during the war,



Brother Carl Gillespie (standing) and Brother Lindsay Bade (seated in cab) of I.U.O.E. Portland-based Local No. 701 work on a project on Sauvie Island on the Columbia River circa 1946.



New York City Schools custodians who are members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 891 in Brooklyn attend training sessions on school-heating maintenance in 1946.

including new housing, schools, hospitals, roads, industrial buildings and churches, also created a construction glut that helped keep operating engineers working. (1)

However, readjustment in some industries from wartime to peacetime production resulted in a lull in employment for some engineers around the United States. For instance, many members of **Local No. 564** in Texas were laid off after the war ended when the massive Dow Chemical Company plants in its jurisdiction stopped producing for war and were shut down until new uses or new markets developed. In July of 1946, the idled Dow plants reopened and the local's laid-off members were recalled.

The numerous post-war projects requiring the skilled services of I.U.O.E. members included tunnels through the Cascade Mountain range, the **Brooklyn-Battery Tunnel** under the East River in New York City, and flood-control and navigation projects in various sections of the nation. Construction of the $10-million **Columbia Basin Project** to pump irrigation water throughout east-central Washington state and the $200-million **New York International Airport** in New York City (later renamed John F. Kennedy International), which would be the world's largest airport when completed in 1948, were also underway and employing scores of union engineers. In Chicago, the world's largest water filtration works were placed in operation during that time after the city's mayor selected **Brother Matt J. McBride** of **Local No. 556** as chief engineer of the $24-million plant.

It was also during this time that, under General President Maloney's direction, the I.U.O.E. began to enter into vastly more **International Agreements** for its hoisting and portable trades with many of the large, national construction contractors operating all over the United States. Consequently, between January 1942 and May 1952, the union's number of international agreements with industrial construction firms, pipeline contractors and railway-track contractors would increase from 45 to a total of 238. The pacts proved to be of great assistance to the union in territories that were traditionally operated on a non-union, open-shop basis, and had a positive effect as an organizing tool in protecting the union's jurisdiction and in meeting its manpower responsibilities to the industry. (1)

Enjoying some of the most lucrative conditions in its existence, on December 7, 1946, the I.U.O.E. reached the **50th Anniversary** since it was formed by 11 operating engineers during a meeting in Chicago. To mark the milestone occasion, General President Maloney and General Secretary-Treasurer Fitzgerald saluted the union's first half century in their forward for the 50th Anniversary edition of *The International Engineer*:

Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 564 of Richwood, Texas, work at one of the Dow Chemical plants in its jurisdiction sometime during the late 1940s.

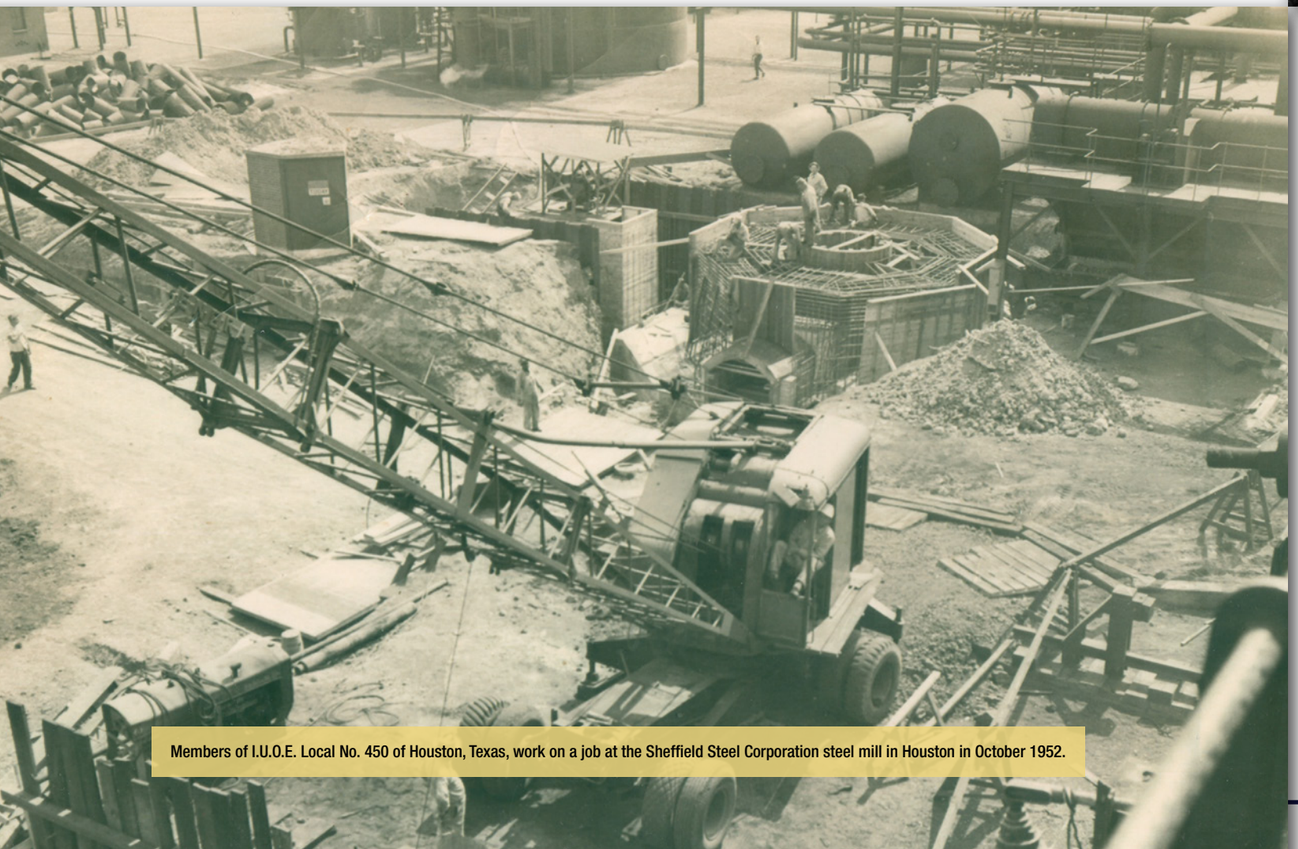
"The record shows, in the span of five decades, how the union built a solid foundation; how it expanded in establishing locals throughout the United States, the Dominion of Canada and the Panama Canal Zone; how it traveled a rough road through labor dissensions and political upheavals; how it weathered depressions, and how it participated – physically, politically and economically – in the building of America.

"It is through this striving for improvement that our organization has advanced to its present standing. Our International Union now is in its best condition in history. A glance at the quarterly financial report shows we are financially secure. Such a healthy condition is ample protection in meeting any emergency."

With a membership of approximately 130,000 engineers and other professionals on its Golden Anniversary, the close-knit structure of the I.U.O.E. had allowed it to establish and maintain standards of wages, reasonable schedules of hours and improved circumstances of employment.

The union's general offices in Washington, D.C., were also modernized, as its various departments had been reorganized to conform to the latest administrative methods and practices. The I.U.O.E. had instituted a system that handled the business of the union with such a high degree of competence – highlighted by the installation of a modern accounting system featuring speed and efficiency – that other international unions recognized it as a model of proficiency.

But in 1947, the U.S. Congress passed the anti-union Taft-Hartley Act (officially known as the Labor-Management Relations Act of 1947) over the veto of President Harry Truman, unleashing a torrent of restrictions upon organized labor and constraining the powers and activities of labor unions for decades to come. "If it were rigidly administered and enforced, it could wreck the labor movement in the United States," President Maloney wrote in a report a year after the legislation was passed. "And even if it is administered with moderation, it constitutes a continued threat to the freedom of the labor movement."



Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 450 of Houston, Texas, work on a job at the Sheffield Steel Corporation steel mill in Houston in October 1952.

Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 793 in Ontario, Canada, help construct a subway station in Toronto in 1952.

Just a month after Taft-Hartley went into effect, however, the I.U.O.E. on August 1, 1947, put into effect a **Pension Plan** to provide a retirement pension for all employees of the general office and field divisions of the union. That year, the union's membership also approved by a referendum vote a proposal to increase death benefits for the many members serving in the Armed Forces.

The A.F.L. Building and Construction Trades Department and the Associated General Contractors of America then established the **National Joint Board for the Settlement of Jurisdictional Disputes** on March 11, 1948. The board gave construction unions such as the I.U.O.E. and their employers procedures and mechanisms for settling jurisdictional differences without government interference.

The decade closed out with another historic triumph when **Local No. 98** of Springfield, Massachusetts, in December 1949 became the first local in the I.U.O.E. to institute an employer-funded **Health and Welfare Insurance** program for its membership as part of its collective-bargaining agreement with contractors. With assistance from the international office, the local gained the groundbreaking new benefit, which would be financed through a 3-percent payroll contribution from its contractors, in a new contract it had won after a five-week-long strike.

Growth Warrants a New Home

A surge in construction of nuclear-energy plants and petroleum pipelines throughout North America fueled

extensive growth of the I.U.O.E. in the first half of the 1950s, during which organizing efforts among pipeline workers resulted in an initial influx of over 15,000 new members working under the union's **National Pipeline Agreement**.[1] As a result, by the end of 1955 the union's active membership stood at 241,391, an increase of nearly 50,000 members from just four years earlier.

A highly successful, carefully planned organizing campaign had turned the tables on the pipeline industry, in which prior to 1949 practically all pipelines in the country were being constructed by non-union contractors. In September 1949, the union signed an agreement with 13 large pipeline companies that had withdrawn from the Associated General Contractors because of various conflicts and formed the **Pipeline Contractors' Association** in 1948. The pact contained many concessions on conditions established for building construction and set wage rates for pipeline work at those prevailing on area highway construction.[1]

Just three years after signing the agreement, by 1952 the I.U.O.E. campaign had organized 92 percent of the pipeline industry, with 72 contractors having joined into the contract, and by 1956, the agreement involved 200 signatory contractors and 25,000 new pipeline members had been added to the union.

But the union was again impacted by war when the Korean Conflict between Soviet-backed North Korea and U.S.-backed South Korea broke out on June 25, 1950, and over the next three years, the union and its members played vital roles in the war. In addition to members distinguishing themselves in combat and at home on materiel production,

Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 3 in San Francisco stand with contractors and government officials in front of an HD 21 tractor during a project at Ponderay Lake (or Lake Pend Oreille) in Idaho in 1953.

Before construction began on the new (and current) I.U.O.E. headquarters building in Washington, D.C., on April 8, 1955, General Secretary-Treasurer Charles B. Gramling turns the first shovelful of dirt at the building site during a groundbreaking ceremony attended by many local and international officers of the union.

when the war broke out, stepped-up work on atomic energy installations also required the full skillsets of I.U.O.E. engineers. As such, General President Maloney issued an order to all locals that "full cooperation with the Department of Defense and with the Atomic Energy Commission was to be given and that work stoppages on vital government projects were to be kept to a minimum."

The early 1950s also saw the union push member participation in an improved program that had been instituted in July 1949 to inform and educate its engineers about accident prevention – an effort that has endured and been expanded over the decades since. The importance of accident prevention was accentuated during 1950 and 1951 when the union paid out more than $50,000 in death benefits for members killed as the result of on-the-job accidents.

Unprecedented prosperity in the United States and Canada during the mid-1950s, and the subsequent expansion of the industry sector and its increase in factory activity and the construction of new schools, institutions, hotels and office buildings, created even more work for the I.U.O.E. membership. Along with the boom in industrial construction, the government also continued to expand its atomic-energy program, keeping many operating engineers employed in that sector.

During that time, on November 1, 1954, the I.U.O.E. and the laborers, teamsters and carpenters unions formed the **National Joint Heavy and Highway Committee** to more-actively pursue the abundance of heavy and highway work taking place throughout their jurisdictions. The committee was tasked with expediting work in the field, preventing jurisdictional disputes and protecting the

Equipment used by members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 4 in Boston on construction of the city's Dewey Square Tunnel, which would route Interstate 93 under the city's financial district. *(Photo courtesy of the Boston Public Library, Leslie Jones Collection.)*

jurisdictions of the participating unions. To help achieve its mission, the committee established area committees and a National Education and Information Bureau to gather data and provide information to the unions.

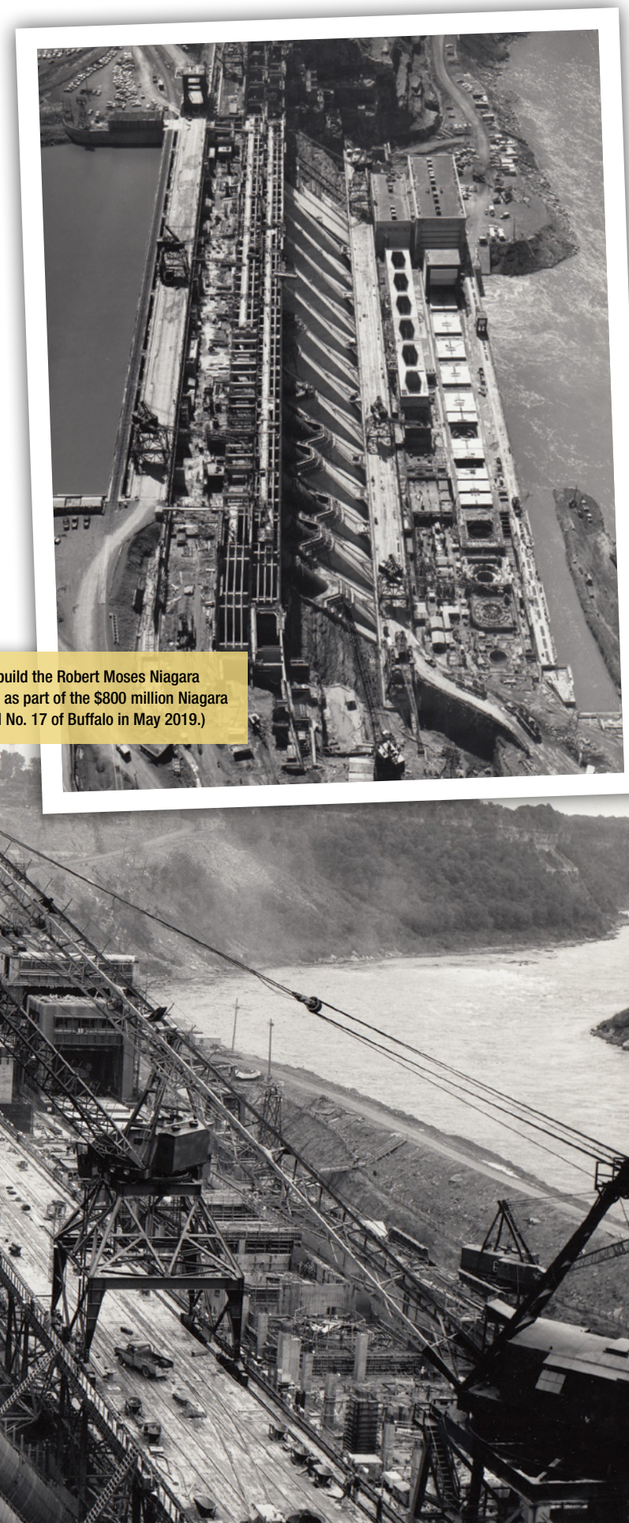
With a membership of more than 241,000 in 1955 and the union having greatly expanded its services to its increasing number of locals throughout the recent years, the I.U.O.E. international headquarters in the old Carpenters Building in Washington, D.C., was "bursting at the seams," as an essay in the June 1956 *International Operating Engineer* described it. To ease its growing pains, the I.U.O.E. decided to construct its own international office building in the heart of the nation's capital, and in April 1955, the union broke ground for the nearly $2.2-million facility at **1125 17th Street, Northwest**, which would be opened two years later.

Meanwhile, in 1956 the I.U.O.E. established its **General Pension Plan** for officers and staff of its locals, benefitting thousands of individuals immediately and over the union's ensuing decades.

That year, the federal government established the Highway Trust Fund to provide a more dependable source of funding for the construction of the U.S. Interstate Highway System. In financing the highway system and certain other roads, the fund helped create thousands of jobs for operating engineers well into the future.

Following the 1956 collapse of two-thirds of the outdated Schoellkopf Power Plant into the Niagara River, the loss of the generating station prompted the U.S. Congress the next year to pass the Niagara Redevelopment Act, which granted the New York Power Authority (N.Y.P.A.) a federal license to develop a hydroelectric-producing plant on the United States' share of the Niagara River. The next year, the N.Y.P.A. began building the nearly $800-million **Niagara Power Project**, on which I.U.O.E. operating engineers worked from the beginning until it was fully completed in 1963.

Niagara Falls, New York, **Local No. 463** supplied more than 400 members and hosted more than 1,000 additional operating engineers from locals across the country over the lifespan of the project to fulfill its large manpower needs, which included construction of the **Robert Moses Niagara Hydroelectric Power Station**, the Lewiston Pump Generating Plant and a man-made, 1,900-acre reservoir. The Niagara Power Project opened in 1961 as the largest hydropower facility in the Western world, with a combined 25 turbines spun by 748,000 gallons of water per second, according to the N.Y.P.A. (Decades later in 2021, Robert

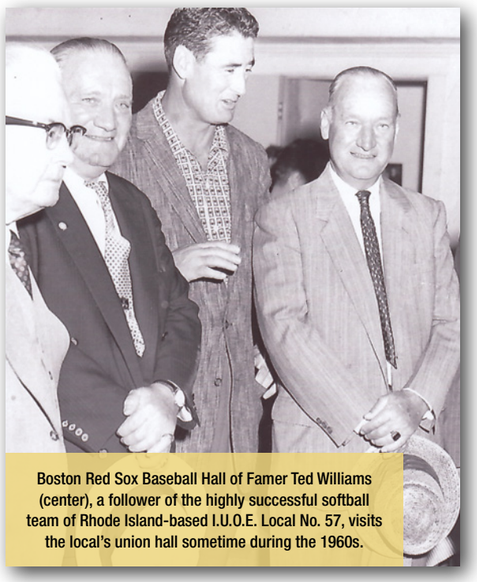


Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 463 in Niagara Falls, New York, help build the Robert Moses Niagara Hydroelectric Power Station on the Niagara River during 1960 and 1961 as part of the $800 million Niagara Power Project that began in 1957. (Local 463 was merged into Local No. 17 of Buffalo in May 2019.)

Moses is the biggest electricity producer in New York State, generating up to 2.6-million kilowatts of power.)

Among the other notable projects employing I.U.O.E. members at that time, more than 3,000 operating engineers were working on the joint **United States-Canadian Saint Lawrence Seaway** construction project, which took nearly four years of work when completed in 1959 and cost nearly $1 billion. Another massive project employing thousands of members was construction of the **Illinois State tollway**, a 187-mile "super highway" that cost $442 million to build before it first opened in 1958 in the Chicago area.

After 18 years serving as general president (still in 2021 the longest tenure for that office in the history of the I.U.O.E.), Brother Maloney retired from the position in 1958 because of health reasons. He passed on to his successor, **General Secretary-Treasurer Joseph J. Delaney**, an international organization that had grown from roughly 75,000 to nearly 300,000 members under his leadership and had a net worth of more than $18 million.



Boston Red Sox Baseball Hall of Famer Ted Williams (center), a follower of the highly successful softball team of Rhode Island-based I.U.O.E. Local No. 57, visits the local's union hall sometime during the 1960s.

'Organize, Organize, Organize'

Almost immediately after being selected by the General Executive Board on February 14, 1958, to lead the union, new General President Delaney initiated a dynamic program for progress. He made his intentions clear in a message splashed right on the front cover of the March 1958 *International Operating Engineer* journal:

> *"We are going to institute the most aggressive organizing campaign in our history. Our nation is on the threshold of a new era in power and production. Our craft can make great contributions to this new advance.*
>
> *"We are going to organize, organize, organize – both in the stationary and portable fields.*
>
> *"We are going to render improved service to our present membership and bring benefits of unionism to the new fields within our craft jurisdiction.*
>
> *"We will meet the challenges ahead with promptness, vigor and determination."*

As part of his "seven-point program," President Delaney appointed a Director of Organization to head up what he called "the most aggressive organizing campaign in the history of our union." He further declared that the union would accelerate its Apprentice Training Program "so that management will have at its call an available supply of trained operating engineers for all its varied and costly equipment."

To help implement his ambitious program and support its organizing efforts, President Delaney created the union's **Department of Research & Education** and on August 1, 1958, appointed **Brother Lane Kirkland** as its director. Brother Kirkland, who would later serve as president of the A.F.L.-C.I.O. (the A.F.L. and Congress of Industrial Organizations having merged in 1955) from 1979 to 1995, would be the driving force behind establishment of the union's **Central Pension Fund** in October 1960, a plan that would grow remarkably throughout the years.

Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 653 in Mobile, Alabama, work on construction of the foundation for a highrise building in the city during the 1960s.

The new administration established the I.U.O.E. Canadian Conference in 1959 to promote closer ties between its Canadian locals.

That year, the union also officially launched its **Nuclear Energy Training Program** in San Francisco on July 14, 1959, with the opening of a 10-day instructor-training course. Over the ensuing couple of years, the union added many elements to the program, including the use of radioactive material and appropriate detection and handling instruments – procured by the union after it obtained a license from the Atomic Energy Commission – to properly and effectively teach radiation-safety techniques.

However, passage of the Taft-Hartley Act in 1947 had over the ensuing years resulted in multiple states lobbying for and issuing so-called "right-to-work" statutes, by which employees of unionized workplaces were not legally obligated to pay union dues for the union representation they were receiving. Throughout that time and into the late 1950s, the I.U.O.E. had been and was still involved in campaigns fighting the implementation of the anti-union mandates in multiple states, and in 1958 alone the union and its organized-labor allies successfully fended off legislative efforts in California, Washington, Idaho, Colorado and Ohio, although Kansas did pass a "right-to-work" law that year.

Looking back on the union's efforts to combat those movements and others, General President Delaney in his report in the April 1960 *International Operating Engineer* would even declare, "No legislative problem at the state level posed so great a challenge in recent years as the concerted effort to enact so-called right-

UNION ADVANCED CIVIL RIGHTS IN ITS INDUSTRY

During the surge of the civil-rights movement in the 1960s, the I.U.O.E. and most of the construction trades were targeted by civil-rights advocates because of the low number of minorities in building-trades unions and their apprenticeship programs – although, as Professor Garth L. Mangum notes in *Union Resilience in Troubled Times* from 1993, racism was not the sole cause of the disparity. While discrimination did exist within unions, he explains that because building trades unions were "organized by men of the white working class … entrance into the unions often was determined by family ties and/or personal connections" … and, therefore, "few minorities (as well as white males without 'connections') entered the union because they were outside the traditional entry route."

For the most part, into the culturally charged Sixties, the I.U.O.E. left its locals to address issues of racism and racial disparity among their own respective ranks; but with the growth of its hoisting and portable branch (which primarily required entry through the union's selective training programs), overall minority membership in the union declined. Subsequently, even before the civil-rights movement gained momentum in the mid-1960s, in May 1961 the I.U.O.E. issued a Statement on Civil Rights:

> *Since it was chartered in 1896, the International Union of Operating Engineers has been dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Our history clearly demonstrates that color, religion or national origin has never been a bar to the full enjoyment of membership. At the present time we number among our ranks many representatives of minority racial and religious groups.*
>
> *While we take justifiable pride in the advances made to improve the wages, hours and working conditions of our membership, we have never lost sight of our consistent policy to aid and encourage all workers within our craft, without regard to race, creed, color, national origin, or ancestry, to share equally, in the full benefits of membership in this International Union. Deviation from this policy, no matter how slight, has always been opposed by this International Union.*
>
> *The International Union of Operating Engineers will affirmatively cooperate, within the limits of its local and contractual authority, in the implementation of the policy and provisions of the Executive Order establishing the President's Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity, issued by the President of the United States on March 6, 1961.*

The I.U.O.E. also supported campaigns that helped pass the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1966, the Manpower Development and Training Act of 1962, the Vocational Education Act of 1963 and the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. Regardless, the I.U.O.E., as did other construction-trades unions, still faced charges of discrimination, and in 1968, the Department of Labor's Office of Federal Contract Compliance began withholding funds from federally financed projects in several locations until minority quotas were met and its "Philadelphia Plan," a quota system for hiring minority workers in the trades, was imposed.

Conversely, the I.U.O.E. considered its training programs to be the solution for increasing minority representation, and in August 1968, General President Hunter P. Wharton appointed Brother James H. Gary to the International staff with the task of assisting the international union and its locals in resolving internal civil-rights issues. Soon after, the union initiated an Affirmative Action Plan for locals first in Pennsylvania and Ohio and then in Los Angeles; New York City; Indianapolis; Atlanta; the state of Michigan; Chicago; Birmingham; and Hamden, Connecticut.

While efforts to make the union more inclusive continued, on July 1, 1977, General President J. C. Turner created a Department of Civil Rights and appointed Brother Louis J. Brady of Local No. 3 in San Francisco as its director. General President Frank Hanley's administration later combined the Department of Civil Rights with the union's Office of Organization, thereby making the recruitment of minorities one of the priorities of its organizing endeavors.

By the early 1990s, the I.U.O.E. had "minimized" its civil-rights discrepancies, as *Union Resilience in Troubled Times* points out. In doing so, the union opened entry into its membership by actively recruiting minority and women apprentices, while an increase in I.U.O.E. workers in the public sector resulted in an increase in new minority and female members. "In other words," Professor Mangum declares, "the 'loop' that was previously closed to minorities and women has been substantially widened."

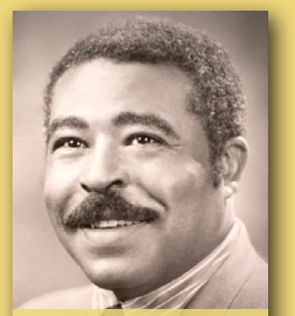
LOCALS AT FOREFRONT OF FOSTERING EQUALITY

With a creative organizing initiative executed in late 1973, the I.U.O.E. was able to use the civil-rights issue as an organizing tool against open-shop contractors in a predominantly non-union area. As part of the program, Local No. 312 of Alabama and Local No. 624 of Mississippi sponsored training programs to prepare minority residents in their historically non-union states with entry-level skills as heavy-equipment operators and mechanics for the $1-billion Tennessee-Tombigbee (Tenn-Tom) Waterway Project, a series of projects connecting the Tennessee River with the Gulf of Mexico through parts of the two states.

The locals also formed a coalition with community-action groups to protest the low, pre-determined wages for construction of the Tenn-Tom, after which the wage rates were dramatically increased. Because of the efforts of the I.U.O.E. locals, union contractors also were the successful bidders on three of the four major contracts awarded through 1975 after a non-union contractor was awarded the first contract on the project.

MEMBER BROKE RACIAL BARRIERS

I.U.O.E. Brother James E. Keyes Sr. was the first black business representative for any construction union in the United States when he assumed that position for I.U.O.E. Local No. 478 of Connecticut in the early 1970s. During his time with the union, Brother Keyes helped establish the international's Apprenticeship and Training Programs for minorities and women in every state in the country, and among many other activities he also worked closely with national civil rights groups, outreach agencies and the Job Corps to promote and assist with the referral and placement of minorities and women into construction unions.



I.U.O.E. Local No. 478 Brother James E. Keyes Sr.

For all of his efforts, the New Haven, Connecticut, Branch of the N.A.A.C.P. presented its 1983 Freedom Award to Brother Keyes. After 11 more years of service to the union and community, he passed away on September 25, 1994.

Fittingly, as a delegate to the I.U.O.E. 33rd Convention in 1988, Brother Keyes seconded the re-nomination of international trustee and close friend Brother Peter Babin of Local No. 406 in New Orleans with this tribute:

> ***"It's kind of strange for me and for maybe some of you people here assembled for a Yankee who is black from the North to stand at this microphone to second the nomination for a rebel who is white from the South. This could only happen in real, true spirit in the labor movement."***

to-work law." *(While throughout the coming decades through to its 125th anniversary in 2021, the union would spend an untold amount of its political resources fending off "right-to-work" attacks at state and national levels.)*

The 1960s were years of more growth for the I.U.O.E., and already in 1960, the operating engineers reaped the benefits of their union's ambitious organizing drive as the membership climbed to more than 302,000 that year.(2) The work situation in the construction industry was also favorable, highlighted by numerous pipeline fabrication jobs, and a substantial majority of it was being done with union labor.

But during the union's 26th General Convention, held in Florida in April 1960, delegates conceded constitutional amendments made necessary by harsh mandates of the recently passed, anti-union federal Landrum-Griffin Act (officially the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act) that put in place measures to regulate labor unions' internal affairs such as voting and reporting of certain activities. Regardless, after the conference was completed, President Delaney declared, "Our union has emerged from this convention strengthened, invigorated and unified in spirit and purpose."

One reason for that encouraging outlook was the convention's approval of a plan for developing a union-wide Central Pension Fund. While larger and stronger locals had begun in the 1950s to negotiate

health insurance and pension provisions, the new program was created because smaller locals that lacked the membership to sponsor a pension plan were being left without retirement benefits for members. Initially, **Local No. 501** of Los Angeles was used as a base for the Central Pension Fund into which other locals could join. (By 1992, the plan's assets totaled $3 billion, and it was paying close to $140 million in annual benefits to 35,000 beneficiaries.)[2]

Other developments during that time included the I.U.O.E. combining services in 1962 to form the **Department of Organization, Research and Education** for greater effectiveness in those areas. **Brother Reese Hammond**, former head of the Research and Education Department and a member of **Local No. 94** in New York City, was named to lead the new group.

Out in the field during the early 1960s, I.U.O.E. members were being kept busy on jobs that included constructing U.S. Air Force Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (I.C.B.M.) bases throughout the country. Also of note, members were operating one of the most completely automated electrical power complexes in the world, the **Meramec Power Generating Plant** in South St. Louis, after it went online in 1961.

Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 14 in Flushing, New York, construct the iconic Unisphere for the 1964 World's Fair.

Tragedy struck the union's general office once again when General President Delaney died suddenly on September 9, 1962, at age 65. The union's 12-member Executive Board unanimously elected **General Secretary-Treasurer Hunter P. Wharton** to take over the presidency.

Jobs, Goals Reach for the Sky

Into 1963 and under new leadership, a great number of I.U.O.E. engineers were at work in all parts of the country on pipeline construction, while others were still working in just about every part of the nation on the Interstate Highway System, which was about one-third complete at the beginning of the year. To supply the rapid growth of the use of electricity on its power grid, the Tennessee Valley Authority had $47-million worth of transmission facilities under construction with a major use of I.U.O.E. members, and union engineers were also performing a high volume of work to shore up the nation's military defense installations.

But that year, it was perhaps the February 12 start and subsequent construction of the 630-foot-high **Gateway Arch** in St. Louis, which operating engineers from Local No. 513 would play a key role in raising, that garnered the most attention. Manning special hoisting "creeper cranes" that crawled up the two opposing legs of the structure as each was erected before meeting at the top, the I.U.O.E. members and their special skills were key factors in the success of the job. Completed on October 28, 1965, the now-iconic monument at the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial overlooking the western banks of the Mississippi River is the world's tallest arch and the highest man-made monument in the Western Hemisphere.

E.P.E.C. Formed in 1967

COMMITTEE HELPS WIELD UNION'S POLITICAL STRENGTH

The I.U.O.E. established its own political education organization, the Engineers Political Education Committee or E.P.E.C., in April 1967. Its initial officers were I.U.O.E. General President Hunter P. Wharton as chairman, General Secretary-Treasurer Newell J. Carman as secretary-treasurer and Executive Vice-President Richard H. Nolan as vice chairman.

The union's General Executive Board first acted on forming the committee during its September 23, 1966, meeting when Brother Carman made a motion to create the committee "to further, directly and indirectly, the joint interest of the members of the International Union in the betterment of general economic and social conditions in the world, by engaging in legislative, political, educational, civic, welfare and other appropriate activities." The motion was duly seconded, put to a vote and unanimously adopted by the board.

"In recent years, legislation which demands the attention of labor has resulted in more and more participation in politics by our people," General President Wharton explained shortly after the committee was created. "The formation of E.P.E.C. is one mechanism whereby our people can express in a tangible form their wish to support the friends and penalize the enemies of labor."

The E.P.E.C. took its first action in mid-April 1967 when Secretary-Treasurer Carman sent out receipt books to all locals of the I.U.O.E. to be used for voluntary contributions by individual members to the E.P.E.C. The goal of the organization was to receive at least $1 per member in voluntary contributions, while not pressuring any member to donate.

I.U.O.E. Executive Vice President Richard H. Nolan (left), General Secretary-Treasurer Newell J. Carman (center) and General President Hunter P. Wharton make the first voluntary contributions to the new I.U.O.E. Engineers Political Education Committee in 1967.

Since first organizing the E.P.E.C., the union has continued to operate the federal committee by raising money through voluntary contributions from its members and their families. The I.U.O.E. then uses those funds to back political candidates who support the interests of the union and organized labor in general, including critical issues such as infrastructure investments, prevailing-wage standards, healthcare, training and worker safety.

Union engineers also began work on the **Oroville Dam** on the Feather River east of Oroville, California, in 1961, which when completed in 1968 would be the tallest dam in the United States. The operators essentially moved mountains during the project, surpassing the record of ton-miles of materials moved on any other earth-transporting project in modern history by ten times.

The 1964 I.U.O.E. Convention in San Francisco was a high point of that year, with the union's great strides in organizing setting a pattern for conference activity. Afterwards in remarks in an article in the December 1964 *International Operating Engineer*, General President Wharton summed up 1964 as a "Year of Achievement," during which the union and its roughly 290,000-strong membership had relatively effective control of its construction jurisdiction.

With construction work during the mid-1960s at all-time record levels, the operating engineers continued to place an increased emphasis on job safety. Its efforts at both the international and local levels were consequently recognized several times, including General President Wharton receiving a plaque for distinguished service at the 1965 Labor Conference of the National Safety Council.

(Continued after following "Training & Education" section.)

I.U.O.E. Training & Education

PREPARING AN INDUSTRY-BEST WO RKFORCE OF SKILLED ENGINEERS

The I.U.O.E. International Training and Education Center (I.T.E.C.) near Houston, Texas.

"Engineers cannot be turned out in a day; they must be developed through precept and practice, by study as individuals and by the organization as a body, until they reach proficiency in their calling and afterwards."

***– The International Steam Engineer*, July 1902**
(First issue of the I.U.O.E. official journal)

The foundation on which the International Union of Operating Engineers stands has been rebuilt over time and now rests squarely upon unrivaled, superior training of its membership and individuals – apprentices – who seek to enter the industry and the union. As the union celebrates its 125th anniversary in 2021, it places an unprecedented emphasis on preparing apprentices and upgrading members' skills through a multitude of internal training and education programs made available to all local unions.

But the I.U.O.E. that initially organized in 1896 (as the National Union of Steam Engineers) was far from focused on training its membership or potential candidates for joining its ranks of skilled engineers. To the contrary, throughout the union's first several decades, it had no official stipulations or edicts for teaching individuals seeking to join the union and learn the trade; the union instead focused almost entirely on improving the collective condition of its experienced member craftsmen.

"The attempt to protect the wage of the fully qualified engineer raised the question of controlling the entry of potential engineers," Professor Garth L. Mangum explains in *The Economic History of a Trade Union* from 1964. He goes on to question the absence of provisions for apprenticeship in the union's early constitutions: "If none but 'competent engineers' were to be admitted to membership, how was competition of the almost qualified to be met, and what was to ensure union membership once competence was acquired?"

Compounding the union's early disregard of apprentices was the manner the so-called "helpers" were trained within the steam-dominated industry. As such, prospective engineers learned the craft while serving as firemen in engine rooms and oilers for equipment operated by journeymen and, therefore, only learned through observing those journeymen at work.

During the I.U.O.E. 1905 convention, delegates elected to accept into the union members with engineers' licenses who were temporarily working as firemen. Subsequently, just before the 1912 convention, Local No. 6 of Kansas City proposed an amendment to the union's constitution that would admit firemen and oilers, who "by their contact with machinery in the line of duty of the engineers are being educated and taught the science of steam engineering."

The proposal, however, was met with stiff resistance during the convention. "The opposition was in part craft pride," Professor Mangum concluded, "but it was more the fear that some of the engineer's work might be taken over by the lower-paid apprentice." Regardless, delegates adopted the apprenticeship amendment – but the union still did not advocate for a formal apprenticeship program of its own.

As learning the trade remained primarily the burden of individual potential engineers, it was not until the mid-1910s that the international union and, even more so, several of its locals began to address the specific needs and concerns of apprentices at the local level. In fact, beginning with the January 1915 issue of its *International Steam Engineer* journal, the then-International Union

PROGRAM FOCUSES ON PIPELINE WORKERS

Shortly after the Pipe Line Contractors Association (P.L.C.A.) was established in 1948, the I.U.O.E. and the association negotiated their first National Pipeline Agreement, with safety and productivity as its guiding principles. The Pipeline Contractors Association was founded as a means for various pipeline contractors to encourage safe and efficient practices in pipeline construction, to negotiate labor agreements and to resolve problems commonly encountered in the industry.

I.U.O.E. officials recognized and even addressed in mid-1973 that it was facing a shortage of qualified pipeline engineers and, in that regard, suggested that a pipeline training program should be initiated to the advantage of both the union and the contractors. However, it was not until 1992 that the union established its National Pipeline Training Program through negotiations with the P.L.C.A. on a new National Pipeline Agreement that set up the National Pipeline Training Fund, into which employers initially contributed 20 cents per each hour worked for them by an I.U.O.E. member.

The I.U.O.E subsequently developed the first training curricula for the operation of pipeline equipment, and the union's pilot training program took place beginning September 20, 1992, at the training site of Local No. 324 in Howell, Michigan. The initial program offered a three-week course on sideboom (or pipelayer) vehicle operations and 40-hour courses on operating angle dozers and excavators/backhoes.

As the I.U.O.E. celebrates its 125th anniversary in 2021, its National Pipeline Training Program is open to active members of the union from the United States and Canada and offers courses at two training facilities. The main training site is the International Training and Education Center near Houston, and the second site utilizes the training facilities of Local No. 181 in Boston, Kentucky.

of Steam and Operating Engineers (I.U.S.O.E., which would be renamed to I.U.O.E. in 1927) even began running articles that contained simple lessons in mathematics "to assist beginners particularly to secure licenses, and also help them in passing civil service examinations." The union chose to publish the articles, titled "Practical Arithmetic for Engineers and Apprentices," as requests from "localities where no license law exists and from apprentice engineers have become so numerous to this office, asking what course of study to pursue to fit themselves to pass an examination for an engineer's certificate."

That year, the I.U.S.O.E. was inundated with requests to establish apprentice locals, about which it announced in the November 1915 *International Steam Engineer*, "It is very gratifying to the General Officers of the I.U.S.O.E. to see the number of petitions reaching headquarters requesting the organizing of Local Unions of Apprentice Engineers in the various localities, which shows beyond all question of doubt the desire of the men of that calling to become affiliated with our international organization." Subsequently, the union issued an initial charter to Apprentice Local No. 1 of Detroit, an affiliate of that city's Local No. 5, on May 18, 1915.

I.U.O.E. instructors work with trainees at the I.T.E.C.

Advancing Apprenticeship to the Forefront

Into the late 1950s, the I.U.O.E. still had little need to administer standardized apprenticeship programs, especially given engineers did not require a great deal of math to perform their jobs. Consequently, the union's longstanding informal process of educating apprentices primarily through on-the-job training was still adequate for preparing those novice members.

But a 1959 ruling by the National Labor Relations Board (N.L.R.B.) that would affect the hoisting and portable branch of the I.U.O.E. essentially forced the union to formally engage in apprenticeship training. In the decision, the N.L.R.B. declared that the operation of construction machinery was a "service trade" instead of a "skilled craft" because no federal apprenticeship program for operating engineers existed at the time and, therefore, they essentially did not possess skills that required excessive training.

"While we believe that these rulings are wrong, they are nevertheless effective as an obstacle to our progress. They stand in the way of our ability to carve out our proper bargaining units from larger bodies of employees and severely hinder our organizational activities," General President Joseph J. Delaney declared to the I.U.O.E. 26th Convention on April 11, 1960. "The only way to overcome this problem is through the development and promotion of recognized apprenticeship training programs."

Local No. 428 of Arizona established the union's first negotiated joint-labor-management apprenticeship program for operating engineers in 1959 – which was the first to apply a set of recommended apprenticeship standards – when its new contract set up a joint apprenticeship fund financed by employer

A drilling class at Local 150 in Chicago.

contributions. The fund would develop and maintain a federally sanctioned apprenticeship program that included 6,000 hours of schooling through standardized classroom instruction and on-the-job training for grading- and paving-equipment operators; heavy-duty mechanics and repairmen; universal-equipment operator; and plant-equipment operators.

As the I.U.O.E. continued to develop its training efforts on an international level, in 1961 it assigned New York Local No. 15 Business Agent Reese Hammond as director of the union's Department of Research and Organization and charged him with formulating its education and training programs. The union then renegotiated its agreement with the National Constructors' Association (NCA) in 1962 to include a new article through which the two parties agreed to establish a National Joint Apprenticeship Committee composed of three association members and three union members "to consider and develop national standards for apprenticeship for the trade of operating engineer." After the Associated General Contractors joined the committee, the I.U.O.E. and its employers adopted national apprenticeship standards at a March 1963 meeting, which were subsequently approved by the Federal Committee on Apprenticeship.

As the I.U.O.E.'s education and training director, Brother Hammond also negotiated with higher-education institutions, including community colleges, to allow apprentices to receive academic credit for their union-sponsored instruction.

Between 1964 and 1968, the I.U.O.E. developed the concept of "continuous total training," including pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship and upgrade courses for journeyman-level members, and the union also began participating in Job Corps to help provide individuals in need with career skills. The international began assisting locals in earnest in 1966 with developing apprentice and training programs, as well as training standards and performance specifications.

As a result of those efforts, by 1968 the union's hoisting and portable locals were annually disbursing $5 million among the apprenticeship and training programs of 38 locals that were educating more than 2,000 total apprentices. What's more, between 1966 and 1982, the U.S. Department of Labor awarded over $16 million in government contracts to I.U.O.E. employment, training and research initiatives under the union's National Training Program.

The union had more than 7,300 registered apprentices in its hoisting training programs in 1980, although that number dramatically dropped to just over 4,000 in 1986 in the wake of a poor national economy and increased non-union competition. From that time into 1992, however, the figure slightly rose to more than 4,670 enrolled in programs operated by 75 locals.

The development of training programs for I.U.O.E. stationary locals was similar to that of the union's hoisting and portable locals, if not as rapid. The union's Committee on Stationary Engineers first worked to establish a National Stationary Apprenticeship Program with employing contractors beginning in early 1973, the result of which was adoption of new national standards for stationary-engineer apprenticeship training that September. But into the 1990s, formal training for stationary apprentices was not as widespread as it was for the union's hoisting and portable apprentices.

A paving class at Local 150.

A pipeline class at the I.T.E.C.

Making Training a Union-Wide Priority

Highlighting the I.U.O.E.'s accelerated emphasis on training during the administration of General President Frank Hanley from 1990 into 2005 was the opening of the I.U.O.E. Southern Apprenticeship and Training Center at Yellow Creek in northeast Mississippi in September 1996. The center would serve as a comprehensive training facility for I.U.O.E. apprentices and journey-level members of locals in the southern region of the United States, providing them with training to operate the latest construction equipment as well instruction in fields such as hazardous materials handling and asbestos abatement.

The union took another major stride in the presentation of its training and education initiatives in December 1997 when it converted several equipment-training programs to a CD-ROM format, thereby taking maximum advantage of new technology to make the teaching aspect of training more effective and on-target, and the learning aspect more stimulating and simple. The CD-ROM format allowed I.U.O.E. instructors more flexibility in steering the direction of the training, which resulted in trainees receiving the information they required more quickly.

A training simulator for machine operation at the I.T.E.C.

Then, in perhaps one of the more significant developments for the union's training during that time, in 2000 the I.U.O.E. and the Department of Labor's Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training developed revised guidelines for teaching heavy-equipment apprentices and revised apprentice-selection procedures to more accurately reflect changing trends in the industry, as well as the economic situations of the time. Among its provisions, the new Apprenticeship Guidelines for the Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee decreased on-the-job training hours from a minimum of 6,000 hours to a minimum of 4,000 hours; redefined the ratio of apprentices to journey workers as no more than one apprentice for every five journey-level workers; reduced the amount of classroom-based, related-studies hours to reflect the hours of field training; allowed credit for previous experience at the trade; and added three membership "direct entry" classifications: apprenticeable military, apprenticeable Job Corps and members signed on through organizing.

The Department of Labor's Office of Apprenticeship Training, Employer and Labor Services formally approved and certified the new guidelines during a ceremony at I.U.O.E. headquarters in Washington, D.C., on January 4, 2001. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission also ratified the new procedures.

Yet another key accomplishment took place in 2006 when the union established its National Training Fund to serve as an umbrella organization for all I.U.O.E. training programs, coordinating policies, strategies and activities with extensive support and input from its locals. Notably, the fund would provide a broad range of safety and health training for the union's membership and instructors, which would eventually include the union's National HAZMAT Program for the safe, proper handling of hazardous materials.

Additional developments included the early-2009 launch of the union's Blackboard Learning System, an online training clearinghouse and course-delivery platform.

Equipping the Union for Future Success

By 2017, the I.U.O.E. had in place for many years an extensive infrastructure of local training facilities, equipment and learning resources that continue to form the backbone of its craft instruction. But in July of that year, the union began construction on a definitive tool in its training arsenal: the I.U.O.E. International Training and Education Center near Houston.

Built on 265 acres mostly purchased by the union in 2014 in anticipation of a massive construction boom in the Gulf Coast region, and especially in the oil-and-gas sector, the facility serves the union's Hoisting & Portable, Stationary and Petrochemical branches and set the training standard in that region. "Our goal is to build a training center that takes the best attributes of all the outstanding programs developed throughout the international and amass them in a southern location in order to capture the upcoming development opportunities," I.U.O.E. General President James T. Callahan had announced in the Spring 2014 *International Operating Engineer* journal.

Designed with the help of a blue-ribbon panel of local I.U.O.E. training coordinators from across the United States and Canada, the state-of-the-art, world-class Training and Education Center opened in April 2018 as the largest and most comprehensive training facility for union operating and stationary engineers in North America. It was specifically developed to advance and improve the skills of the union's members, instructors and staff throughout the country to better meet the needs of the construction industry by augmenting and enhancing the training programs administered by the union's locals.

The center provides the means to host, support and develop the skills of a constantly expanding and varied group of construction and maintenance professionals. It includes an 8,120-square-foot conference space; 17 classrooms and labs; a 15-pad crane field; equipment simulator rooms; a heavy-equipment mechanics shop; welding bays; a central utility plant with training redundancies; a 227-room dormitory; a fitness center; and full dining facilities. Its ample outdoor space is used to conduct pipeline training, crane training and heavy-equipment operations.

"This state-of-the-art facility demonstrates our union's commitment to high-quality training to our signatory contractors, general contractors and owners," an article in the Winter 2017 *International Operating Engineer* declared.

As the I.U.O.E. moved into 2020 and towards its 125th year in 2021, the union was annually investing over $180 million in training, while its locals were sponsoring 100 apprenticeship and training programs at 127 training sites throughout North America. With 1,000 instructors and thousands of acres dedicated to training throughout North America, the union's members have access to training on virtually every topic heavy-equipment operators and stationary engineers require.

Over the years, the comprehensive training programs the I.U.O.E. has developed and maintained have become widely recognized as the best in a number of industries – and allow the union to fulfill its ongoing mission: To provide highly skilled, safe and productive heavy-equipment operators and facilities engineers to the construction, pipeline, stationary and environmental industries.

A wind turbine maintenance class at Local 150.

Stationary Training and Trust
GROWING A PETRO-CHEMICAL WORKFORCE

The new I.U.O.E. Stationary Engineer Apprentice Training and Trust (SEATT) graduated its first class of operators in early 2016 at Western Refining in El Paso, Texas, after six weeks of intensive training. SEATT was formed to work with participating employers to establish a highly skilled pool of future petro-chemical operators.

For that initial course, SEATT recruited experienced operators from the refinery to instruct the students in topics that petro-chemical operators needed to be safe, efficient and productive. Classes addressed subjects ranging from basic hand tools to valves, boilers, reactors, distillation, turbines, compressors, instrumentation, furnaces, cooling towers, heat exchangers, physics, chemistry, safe work permitting and hot work permitting, as well as various other topics.

Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 513 in St. Louis operate crawler cranes to erect the Gateway Arch in 1964 and 1965 as part of the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial on the west bank of the Mississippi River. *(Photos credit: Arteaga Photos LTD.)*

I.U.O.E. Local No. 513 members who worked on the Gateway Arch included (left to right) Jerry Cottrell, crane operator; James Purl, oiler; William Quigley and Luther Fritts, derrick operators; and Leo Covington, compressor operator. *(Photo credit: Arteaga Photos LTD.)*

In another presentation, the union's operating engineers were honored for their safety record in the construction of the **Barkley Dam** along the Cumberland River at Paducah, Kentucky, before its completion in 1966.

The increased construction pace that continued into that year was further bolstered by passage in 1965 of federal education legislation providing grants for a five-year, $7.8-billion program for construction of community educational centers. Much of the funding was channeled into immediate work throughout the country that would be performed by I.U.O.E. members.

However, the buildup of American involvement in the Vietnam War, a conflict ongoing since 1955 between U.S.-supported South Vietnam and communist Soviet Union-and China-supported North Vietnam, had escalated by 1965. Before the war would end with the fall of Saigon, South Vietnam, on April 30, 1975, many I.U.O.E. members would be involved while serving in the U.S. Armed Forces and especially the Navy's Seabees construction units.

In North America during the mid-1960s, remarkable construction was taking place under jurisdiction of the National Space and Aeronautics Administration (NASA), and no project was more spectacular than the **Vertical Assembly Building** at the **John F. Kennedy Space Center** on Merritt Island in Florida that was erected with the help of I.U.O.E. members from 1963 to 1966. The 52-story tall facility, in which the Saturn V rocket and Apollo 11 spacecraft that carried man's first voyage to the moon beginning July 16, 1969, were assembled, would contain some 98,600 tons of steel and was the largest building in the world when completed. *(The Vertical Assembly Building continues in 2021 to serve as the central hub of NASA's multi-user spaceport, having previously served for 30 years as the final assembly point for its space shuttles to external fuel tanks and solid-rocket boosters.)*

Meanwhile, Canada was experiencing a surge in dam building, which put many I.U.O.E. members to work. Those projects included construction of the dual-dam, multi-use, power-generating **South Saskatchewan River Development Project** that was completed in June 1967 with its Gardiner Dam as one of the largest earth-fill dams in the world; and the **Churchill Falls Generating Station** in Labrador, one of the largest dams and power stations on the North American continent – and in 2021 the second-largest in Canada – after it was built from 1967 until 1974.

Additionally, growing nuclear construction in the country was also performed by union operating engineers, some of whom manned the world's tallest tower-type cranes to construct

One of the gold dredgers, photographed in 1968 on the final day of its operation on a dredge pond in Yuba County, California, operated by members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 3 in San Francisco for the Wendell P. Hammon company. The operating engineers dredged over 1-billion cubic yards of material during the 68 years Hammon's company was in business, yielding more than $137 million in gold.

several atomic facilities. Other significant Canadian projects at the forefront during that time and throughout the balance of the 1960s included a spectacular, $240-million job to successfully and economically extract oil from petroleum-rich sands along the **Athabasca River** in northern Alberta province.

On the international political front, in May 1967 the I.U.O.E. formed its **Engineers Political Education Committee**. The international's own political arm, the committee was needed, as an article in that month's *International Operating Engineer* explained, to "carry out the wishes of the members for supporting friends of labor."

To that end, "Make 1968 a Four-Star Political Year" was the theme proclaimed on the front cover of the February 1968 *International Operating Engineer*. General President Wharton would go on in 1969 to voice a call for "bold action" in 10 vital legislative areas, including on-the-job safety, cost-of-living, consumer welfare, social security, education and other measures relating to working people.

The I.U.O.E. was making strong internal gains elsewhere, as well, and by its 28th Convention in Bal Harbour, Florida, in April 1968, its membership had reached nearly 370,000, up from about 320,000 members just four years earlier in 1964. Also in September 1968, the union held its first-ever **National Conference of Hoisting and Portable Engineers** and made plans for a similar conference of stationary engineers soon after in Washington, D.C.

As the decade was coming to a close, operating engineers were at work on almost all of the major construction projects underway in North America. Those included various new bridge projects undertaken in the wake of the December 15, 1967, collapse of the Silver Bridge over the Ohio River that resulted in the deaths of 46 people – and made the nation "bridge-safety conscious."

Arguably one of the most significant jobs on which I.U.O.E. members would ever work, construction of the **World Trade Center** in New York City and its 110-story "twin-tower" skyscrapers, had been underway since August 1966. Work on the seven-building complex in Lower Manhattan would continue to utilize the skills of union operating engineers with **Local No. 14** and **Local No. 15** of New York City and other locals until completion in April 1973.

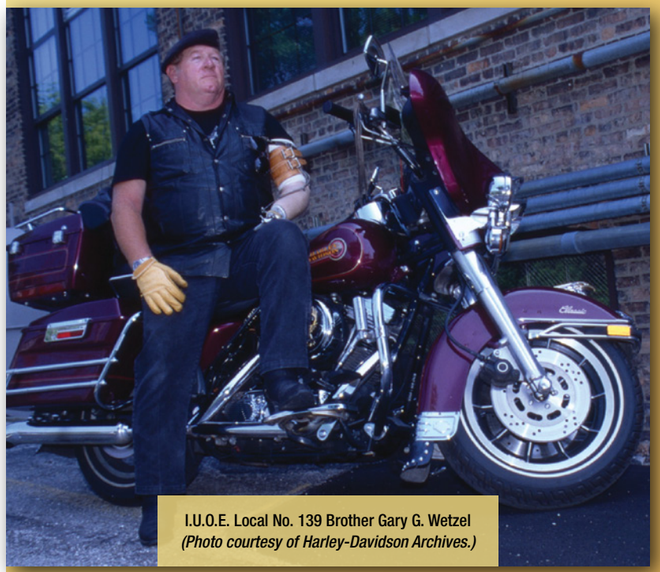
Brother Gary G. Wetzel

MEMBER, A VIETNAM VET, RECEIVED MEDAL OF HONOR

Even after enemy fire downed the helicopter in which he was riding and then tore off his left arm on January 8, 1968, near Ap Dong An in South Vietnam during the Vietnam War, future I.U.O.E. Local No. 139, Wisconsin, Brother Gary G. Wetzel continued to fight. Despite his catastrophic injuries, the then-21-year-old U.S. Army private returned to his gun nest in the chopper and eliminated an enemy automatic-weapons position that was firing on his fellow soldiers.

His act of courage and heroism earned Brother Wetzel, who was promoted to the rank of Specialist 4, the Congressional Medal of Honor, which U.S. President Lyndon B. Johnson presented to him the following fall. Brother Wetzel, who joined his Wisconsin-based local in 1972, is the sole I.U.O.E. member to have received the nation's highest military award.

Future I.U.O.E. member U.S. Army Specialist-4 Gary G. Wetzel (far left) waits to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor from U.S. President Lyndon B. Johnson during a ceremony at the White House on November 19, 1968. *(Executive Office of the President of the United States file photo.)*



I.U.O.E. Local No. 139 Brother Gary G. Wetzel *(Photo courtesy of Harley-Davidson Archives.)*

Following the war that also left him with a prosthetic left arm, he learned how to operate heavy equipment in the early 1970s through a program offered by Local 139, equipment manufacturer J.I. Case Company and the State of Wisconsin. He was one of only 15 men selected to participate in the course, which he completed as its second-most proficient operator.

As a member of the I.U.O.E., he operated backhoes, loaders, telehandlers and other equipment using his artificial arm before retiring in 2013. He also served as a steward or general foreman on various projects for the local.

Away from jobsites, Brother Wetzel annually rode his Harley-Davidson motorcycle in the Rolling Thunder parade on Memorial Day weekend in Washington, D.C., which calls for accountability of the nation's POW/MIA soldiers. He also authored a book, "Jake, The Forgotten Warrior," and writes poems, all of which are based on his experiences as a soldier.

On July 7, 2017, Brother Wetzel helped dedicate a "transition wall" that marks the main entrance to the Gary G. Wetzel Way nature trail built in 2016 at Camp American Legion in Lake Tomahawk, Wisconsin. The wall memorializes all veterans, and the paved trail, constructed mainly by Local 139 apprentices who served in the military, provides a therapeutic nature walk for disabled veterans.

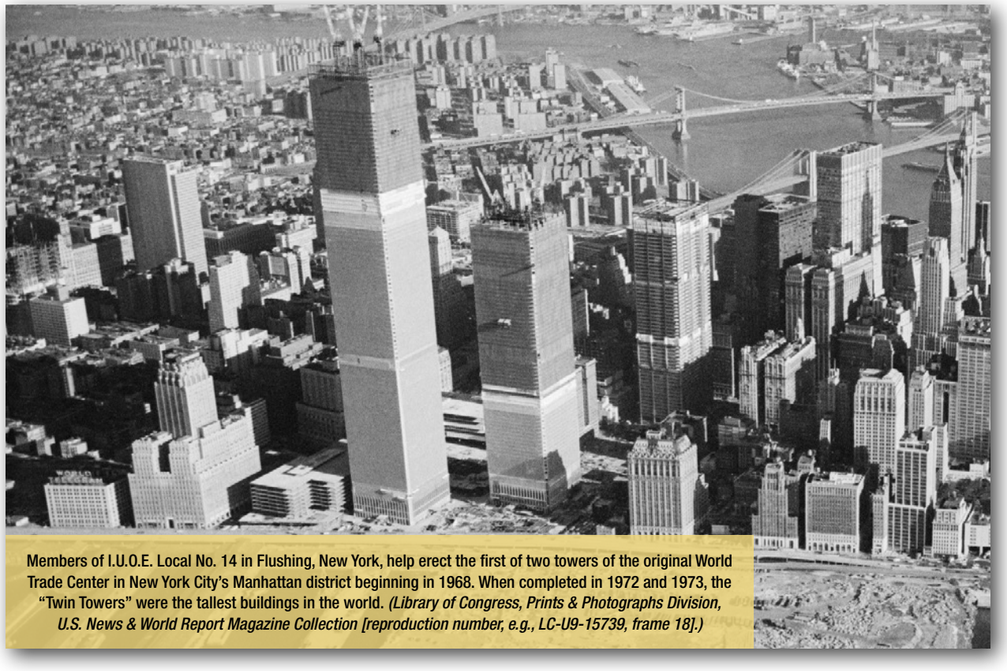
Educating Young People

PROUDLY PARTICIPATING IN JOB CORPS

The I.U.O.E. National Training Fund has partnered with Job Corps, a national career-training program for young people ages 16 through 24, since the early 1970s. As such, the union in 2021 has training agreements with the U.S. Departments of Labor and Agriculture to administer and operate pre-apprenticeship training programs at various Job Corps training centers throughout the United States.

Through Job Corps, the I.U.O.E. has trained thousands of young adults as pre-apprentices in the fields of heavy-equipment operation, heavy-equipment mechanics, stationary engineering and asphalt paving. As of 2020, the union had provided career technical training to more than 380 students annually at 10 I.U.O.E. Job Corps centers across the nation, each staffed with local union members.

Continuously improving and updating equipment, tools and curriculum in order to meet the training needs of the ever-changing construction and mechanic industries, in 2018 the I.U.O.E. Job Corps program expanded at the Turner Job Corps Center in Albany, Georgia, becoming home to three trade offerings and five Job Corps instructors. Along with the Anaconda Job Corps Center in Anaconda, Montana, the Turner site became the second location to house five programs, creating the largest presence that the I.U.O.E. National Training Fund had at the time at any Job Corps training facility.



Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 14 in Flushing, New York, help erect the first of two towers of the original World Trade Center in New York City's Manhattan district beginning in 1968. When completed in 1972 and 1973, the "Twin Towers" were the tallest buildings in the world. ***(Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, U.S. News & World Report Magazine Collection [reproduction number, e.g., LC-U9-15739, frame 18].)***

Construction of the 1,368-foot-tall "North Tower" (officially 1 World Trade Center) began in August 1968 and was topped-out with a final steel beam on December 23, 1970; and erection of the 1,362-foot-tall "South Tower" (2 World Trade Center) was under way by January 1969 and was topped-out on July 19, 1971. With I.U.O.E. engineers at the forefront of construction, the twin towers would set a new world record for building height, which for nearly 40 years had belonged to the Empire State Building, and signaled a new era in skyscraper construction.

Pulled Down from New Highs

Enormous expansion of work in the construction industry that had spurred I.U.O.E. growth during the 1960s continued to propel the union forward into the early 1970s. The high proportion of the nation's construction expenditures that were invested in highway, airport, reclamation, suburban housing, industrial park and earth-moving projects were particularly important to operating engineers' robust employment conditions in the new decade.[2]

With the Vietnam War persisting and many of its members still in southeast Asia in combat and construction roles, the international entered 1970 somewhat leery, however, as national unemployment was rising and would hit 5.5 percent before the year was out. But aside from several federal legislative setbacks in 1970 and 1971 instigated by the President Richard M. Nixon administration, the union construction industry did set up a three-party Construction Industry Stabilization Committee, with General President Wharton named as a labor member, that was empowered to review all construction-contract wage raises. Additionally, the federal Occupational Health and Safety Act of 1970 was signed into law at year's end, establishing and enforcing job safety and health standards going forward,

Sister Candace "Candy" Martin, shown here working as a surveying "instrument man" on construction of the John Hancock Tower in Boston in July 1971, was one of the first female I.U.O.E. members when she became the first female member of Local No. 4 of Boston during the late 1960s. *(Boston Globe photos courtesy of Northeastern Universities Libraries, Archives and Special Collections Department.)*

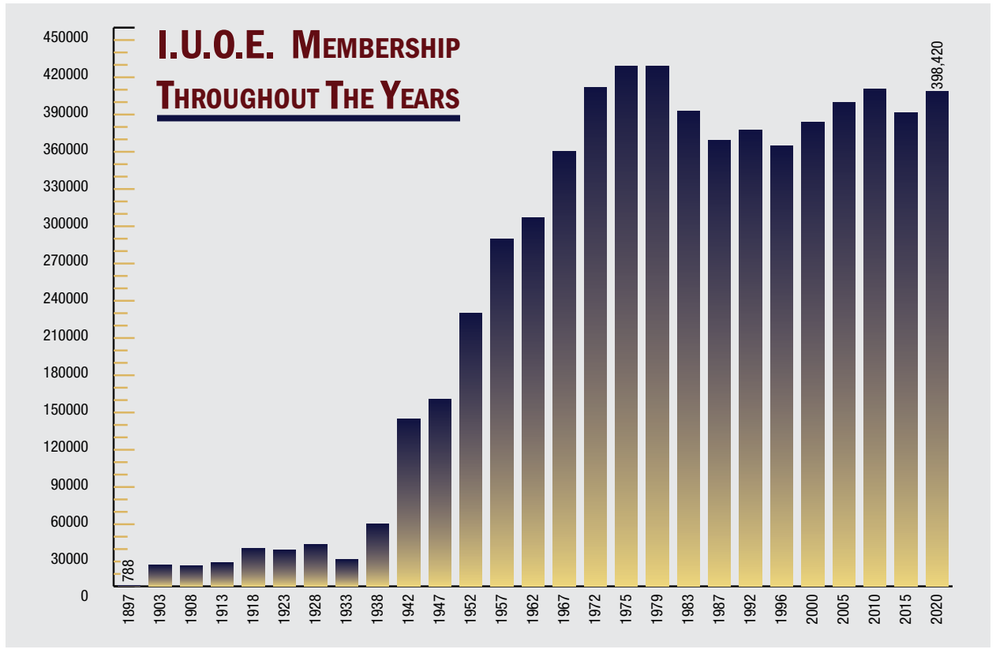
and I.U.O.E. **Safety Director Alan Burch** was named one of three commissioners to serve on the Review Commission of the new Occupational Safety and Health program.

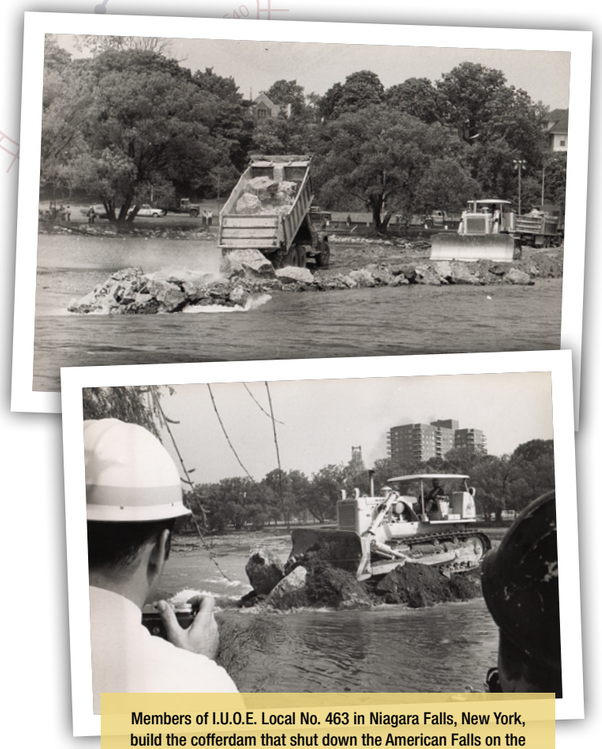
One of the highlights of the union's construction jobs that year was members' use of helicopters to help speed work on a new, parallel span to the original **Chesapeake Bay Bridge**, which connects Maryland's Eastern Shore region with its Western Shore. The 4.3-mile older span had opened in 1952 and was still the world's longest continuous, over-water steel structure when the new bridge was completed on June 28, 1973.

Sadly, however, seven I.U.O.E. members and 10 union laborers died on June 24, 1971, in a fire and explosion in a large water tunnel in which they were working near the Los Angeles suburb of Sylmar. The disaster occurred at 1:05 a.m. as the night-shift crew was drilling in a water tunnel for the Los Angeles supply system 250 feet below ground and a pocket of methane gas was ignited, after which the heat, gas and lack of oxygen "made rescue impossible," according to a report in the July 1971 *International Operating Engineer*.

The operating engineers lost that day were Los Angeles **Local No. 12** brothers **John Drobot**, **Jose R. Carrasco**, **Alvin H. Streen**, **William R. Snodgrass**, **Gary A. Nichols** and **Robert W. Warner**, and **Brother William I. Ashe** of **Local No. 3** in San Francisco.

The following year, during which the union's membership reached an increase of 100,000 more members than it had 10 years earlier, the I.U.O.E. initiated its first **National Maintenance Agreement**. A collective-bargaining blueprint, the agreement was developed to create, preserve, expand and improve work opportunities for operators in the maintenance industry; it would cover work defined as maintenance, repair, replacement, rehabilitation and renovation. Since 1972, the union's National Maintenance Agreements





Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 463 in Niagara Falls, New York, build the cofferdam that shut down the American Falls on the Niagara River in June 1969 for maintenance. *(Photos courtesy of Niagara Falls Thunder Alley/www.niagarafrontier.com.)*

have produced over 1.2 billion manhours of work, and overall, they have provided more work for building tradesmen than any other national agreements.

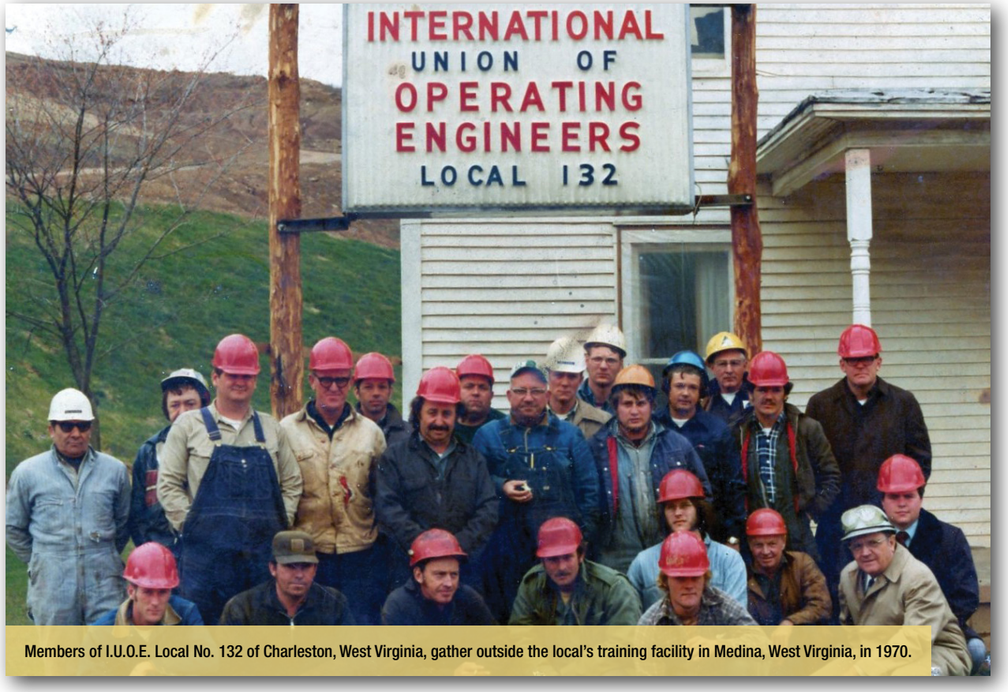
In 1974, I.U.O.E. **Fourth Vice-President Russell T. Conlon**, a member of Seattle's **Local No. 302**, represented the union in negotiations for the **Trans-Alaska Pipeline Agreement**, which among other things guaranteed that construction of the **Trans-Alaska Pipeline** (also known as the Alaskan Pipeline) would use an all-union workforce. Beginning the next year, thousands of I.U.O.E. members, working under the jurisdictions of Local No. 2 of St. Louis and Local No. 302, played major roles in bringing to fruition the demanding project, which in addition to the main line included building highways, pump stations and feeder lines through at-times challenging terrain and often in difficult weather conditions.

Once fully completed in 1977, the 800-mile Trans-Alaska Pipeline spanned the state from north to south to deliver oil from Prudhoe Bay to Valdez, Alaska. An article in the August 1977 *International Operating Engineer* subsequently announced:

> *"After a three-year battle against the obstacles of both nature and man, operating engineers have helped make the largest, privately funded construction project in history an awe-inspiring technological reality."*

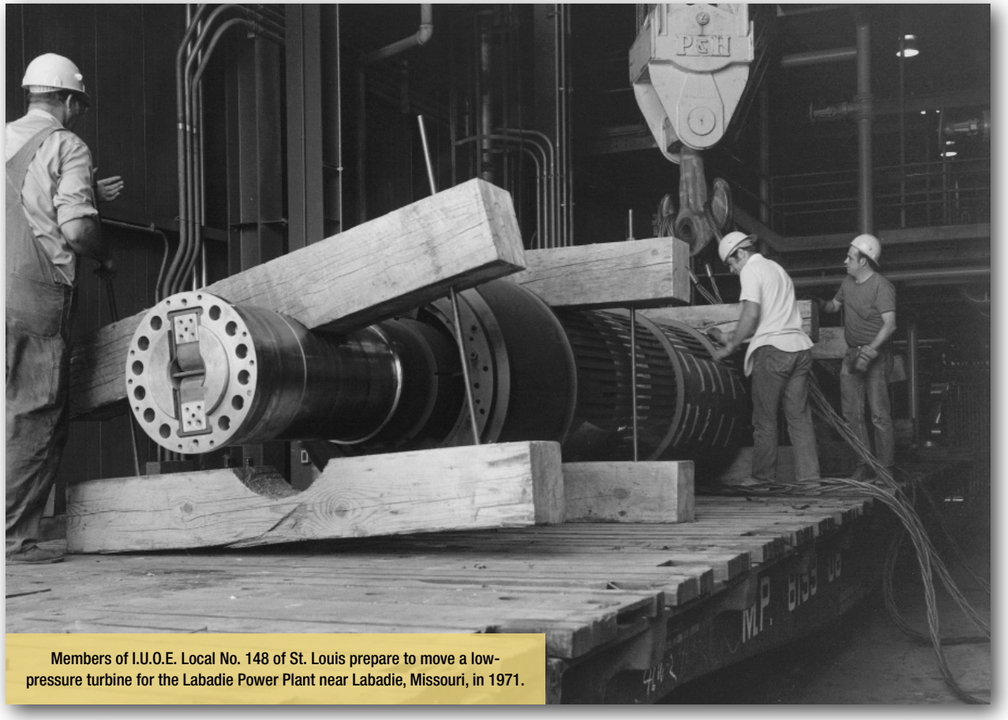
I.U.O.E. membership reached a record level of 420,000 members in the mid-1970s, but that plateau would not last long as a series of economic recessions caused by inflation and an energy shortage hit the United States and Canada, crippling construction and slowing down commercial expansion. The deteriorating conditions helped spur a corresponding rise of non-union, open-shop contractors.

In his book *Union Resilience in Troubled Times: The Story of the Operating Engineers, 1960-1993*, Professor Mangum points out that union policies and practices also contributed greatly to the "growth of the open-shop movement." He states that by the mid-1970s, union-won wage and fringe-benefit increases were far above the inflation rate; a bulk of construction activity had moved to the suburbs and beyond; locals were reluctant to make appropriate concessions; administration of labor laws had become conservative; open-shop contractors were being admitted into associations "that once operated solely union;" and there was a "switch" in contractor policies regarding "double-breasting" – all of which contributed to the growth of non-union competition.[2] As it grew, union contractors began double-breasting by creating non-union subsidiaries to compete in markets in which project owners refused to deal with union contractors or payment of union wages and benefits would prevent successful bidding. [2]



Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 132 of Charleston, West Virginia, gather outside the local's training facility in Medina, West Virginia, in 1970.

Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 18 in Cleveland break while on a jobsite in August 1971.



Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 148 of St. Louis prepare to move a low-pressure turbine for the Labadie Power Plant near Labadie, Missouri, in 1971.

"Rising unemployment rates in the 1970s forced union members to work non-union in some areas of the country," *Union Resilience in Troubled Times* explains, "and moribund union organizing programs resulted in the loss of union contracts, especially in highway and multiple-family residential construction. … So successful was that customer-led rebellion that the construction industry went from 42 percent to 22 percent union in just 20 years."

However, the I.U.O.E. did not experience as much loss to the non-union sector than the other building and construction trades because the operating engineers' primary source of employment was government-financed heavy and highway, rather than private industrial and building, construction.[2] Regardless, I.U.O.E. membership had started a regression that would decline from nearly 419,000 in 1975 to a low of around 359,000 in 1987.

But in 1975, the union held its first annual **I.U.O.E. National Hoisting and Portable Safety Conference** in Countryside, Illinois, which featured representatives of several health and safety organizations. The 18 conference delegates from various locals and the international headquarters passed a number of strong motions calling for increased safety standards. By 1979, the symposium would develop into the annual I.U.O.E. Safety, Accident-Prevention and Health Conference.

Countering the 'Union Busters'

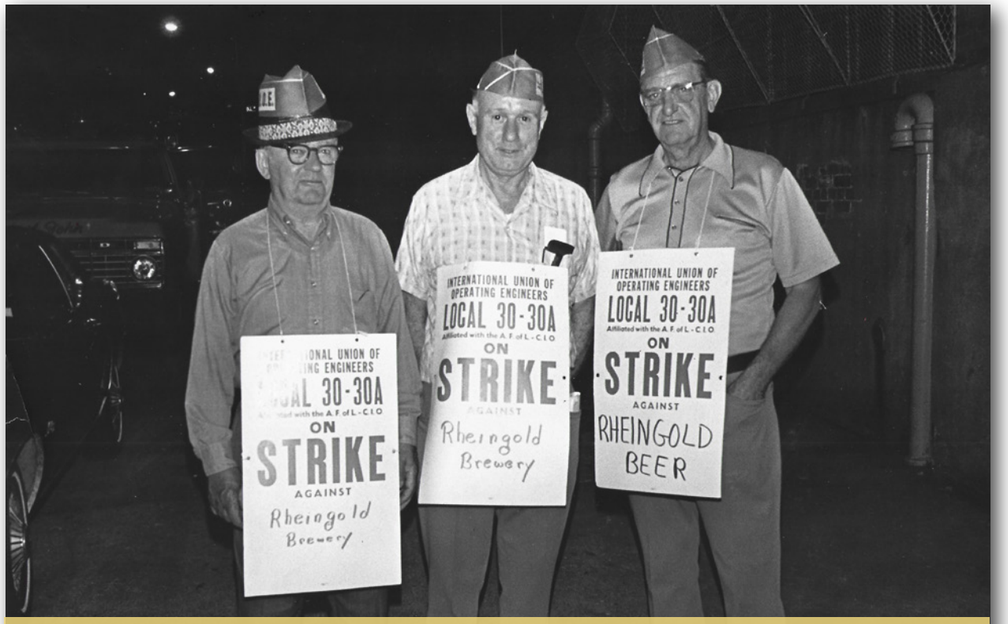
Anti-union attitudes and non-union competition were broadening in the United States when **General Secretary-Treasurer J. C. Turner** succeeded the retiring Brother Wharton as I.U.O.E. general president in January 1976 – but the union's newest leader was not discouraged. "The answer," General

President Turner stated in a letter to the membership in the January 1976 *International Operating Engineer*, "is a stepped-up emphasis on organization."

However, the economic consequences of the politics of U.S. President Gerald R. Ford's administration, which ended the promise of wage stabilization, were a major setback for the I.U.O.E., which opened the door for the non-union sector of the industry.[2] "Following Ford's veto of the Economic Rights of Labor legislation and John Dunlop's resignation as secretary of labor, construction labor costs rose until there were incentives and opportunities for a successful open-shop incursion into the organized sectors of the construction industry that caused substantial membership declines in the 1970s and 1980s," *Union Resilience in Troubled Times* explains. As a result, between 1975 and 1988, the union suffered a loss of 54,108 members, although during that same period, stationary membership increased by nearly 10,000 to almost 100,000.

The union had been increasing its use of maintenance agreements to secure that work for members over the first half of the 1970s, although by that time, unionized maintenance was often being performed in facilities in which the operating personnel were non-union.[2] By 1976, the international office had settled such agreements with 57 contractors and 117 projects, up from 41 contracts covering 103 locations in the United States and Canada in 1968. Similar agreements were settled with commercial and industrial maintenance contractors, onshore and offshore oil drillers, and railroad maintenance and construction (and later, nuclear power, bridge, and stack and chimney construction) contractors.[2]

Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 318 in Marion, Illinois, work on construction of the Smithland Locks and Dam, the first structure of its size built on the Ohio River, during the early 1970s.



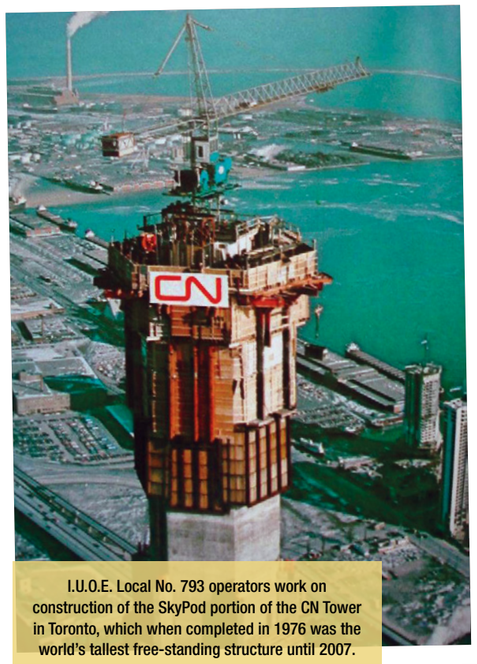
Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 30, which covers parts of New York and Connecticut, strike against the Rheingold Brewery in Brooklyn in June 1973.

The I.U.O.E. in 1976 was involved in "one of the most significant dual-shop decisions rendered by the National Labor Relations Board (N.L.R.B.)," according to *Union Resilience in Troubled Times*, when the U.S. Supreme Court upheld a decision by a lower court overruling the N.L.R.B. in a case concerning **Local No. 627** of Tulsa, Oklahoma. In reversing the board's decision, the courts defined the "single-employer" concept by establishing the criteria by which a subsidiary can be independent of the parent corporation, a necessity in determining the relationship between the employer and the employees in collective-bargaining agreements.

The case stemmed from a 1972 complaint filed with the N.L.R.B. by the local in which it alleged that the South Prairie Construction Company had violated the National Labor Relations Act by refusing to apply the collective-bargaining agreement the union had with Peter Kiewit Sons' Company (now Kiewit), which operated South Prairie, to its employees. Local No. 627 contended that because both companies had a common owner, they constituted a "single" employer under the act. Since the N.L.R.B. considered both subsidiaries separate entities, it erroneously ruled that the employees of South Prairie, a highway contractor, were not covered by the collective-bargaining agreement the union had with Kiewit, also a highway contractor.

"This happens all over the country," Local No. 627 **Business Manager Gerald Ellis** stated after the Supreme Court decision. "Companies set up one non-union subsidiary to compete with their union subsidiary. Now these non-union subsidiaries have to abide by the union agreement."

Two years later in 1978, the I.U.O.E. and seven other building trades unions signed the **National Industrial Construction Agreement** with the National Constructors' Association. The pact, which initially



I.U.O.E. Local No. 793 operators work on construction of the SkyPod portion of the CN Tower in Toronto, which when completed in 1976 was the world's tallest free-standing structure until 2007.

Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 793 in Ontario, Canada, excavate the site for construction of the CN Tower in Toronto circa 1973.

involved 50 industrial contractors, was implemented to shorten construction time requirements on heavy industrial projects, contain costs and provide greater stability in the industry.[2] Later addressing the agreement, General President Turner told attendees at the 1984 I.U.O.E. Convention, "The pact is openly and frankly a response by the unionized sector of the construction industry to recent open-shop advances in the area of industrial plant construction and preserving jobs for union members."

Into and through 1978, the union and much of the country were still feeling the lingering effects of the 1973-1975 recession and its so-called "stagflation," in which high unemployment and high inflation existed simultaneously. Despite improvements to the economy and construction

Graduating apprenticeship class of I.U.O.E. Local No. 99 of Washington, D.C., in 1973.

employment, union members all around North America were still concerned about jobs, manpower, and the costs of living. "We still face the overall inflation situation," President Turner wrote to the membership in the November 1978 *International Operating Engineer*, "and labor families are the first to face its devastating effects."

During the final years of the 1970s, among the major projects I.U.O.E. locals handled, **Local No. 400** was instrumental in the four-year construction of the largest air-cooled power plant in the world, the 330,000-kilowatt **Wyodak Power Plant** near Gillette, Wyoming, which was completed in 1978. The following year, operating engineers from **Local No. 370** in Spokane, Washington, became the first to make a lift with the world's largest, land-transportable mobile crane, the Neil F. Lampson company's Transi-Lift. The members used the mammoth crane, with a 340-foot boom, a 190-foot mast and a capacity of 2,000 tons, to lift a 1,100-ton nuclear reactor pressure vessel 280 feet to place it in a containment building at the under-construction **U.S. Hanford Nuclear Reservation** in southern Washington state's Benton County.

Then in 1979 during the 60th Convention of the A.F.L.-C.I.O. Building and Construction Trades Department in San Diego, the I.U.O.E. and other building-trades unions launched a massive offensive against the nation's "union busters," who for years had been working to put organized construction craftspeople out of work and reduce their collective standard of living. The I.U.O.E. delegates at the convention gave a strong, united voice to the campaign against, as the December 1979 *International Operating Engineer* described them, "union-busting contractors, their right-wing political puppets and the corporations that have been masterminding the conspiracy to turn the entire industry into a low-wage, open-shop empire."

Training to Make a Comeback

Throughout much of the first half of 1980s, the I.U.O.E. and most building-trades unions struggled in the throes of a severe economic depression that engulfed the country during the first nearly four years of the decade and a continuing anti-union environment. As a result, into the second half of the decade, membership growth

in the operating engineers' union gradually diminished and the open-shop movement gained new ground.

Among some of the key projects on which some operating engineers were able to work was construction of the **Louisiana Offshore Oil Port** (LOOP) in the marshlands along Bayou Lafourche in southeastern Louisiana in 1980 and 1981. When completed, the $600-million LOOP would be the nation's first offshore, deep-water port for supertankers, allowing them to offload and store oil at the marine terminal located approximately 19 miles offshore in 110-foot-deep water of the Gulf of Mexico.

Other I.U.O.E.-manned jobs included members of **Local No. 701** in Portland constructing the first large-scale segmental bridge in the United States across the Columbia River to connect Portland and Vancouver, Washington, when it opened in 1983. Elsewhere that year, engineers with Baltimore's **Local No. 37** and Brooklyn's **Local No. 25** put the last of 32 tubes in place for the new **Fort McHenry Tunnel**, which was being built under Baltimore's downtown Inner Harbor. When completed in 1985, it would be the first tunnel in the world to have been constructed with tubes having been placed side-by-side in a dredged underwater trench.

But throughout those years, the union's membership slide continued, and by 1986 it was down by nearly 60,000 members from 1979. "They were a tumultuous five or six years, to say the very least, during which time the outlook for the I.U.O.E. and other building-trades unions was not exactly bright," **General President Larry Dugan Jr.**, who took over for retired General President Turner in 1985, later recalled in the April 1989 *International Operating Engineer*. "The good news is that the I.U.O.E. weathered the attacks and the setbacks."

Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 653 in Mobile, Alabama, help build the Joseph M. Farley Nuclear Generating Plant near Dothan, Alabama, in 1974.

Knowing that the collective skill of its members was its greatest asset, the I.U.O.E. incorporated its apprenticeship and training program as a "major weapon" in its counterattack against anti-union forces and expanded its training activities even as its membership declined.[2] Still, it spent $25 million on training in 1980 alone, and training that year was provided by 63 separate hoisting and portable training programs, as well as stationary programs, nationwide. An article in the February 1980 issue of *The International Operating Engineer* even prophesied:

> ***"By preserving and improving the skills of members old and new, the I.U.O.E. will meet the challenge of the '80s and beyond."***

'Scabby the Rat'
GLOBAL LABOR SYMBOL WAS BRAINCHILD OF CHICAGO LOCAL

"Scabby the Rat is a symbol of the labor movement, one which we have never hesitated to defend on the street, in court or in the halls of government. And we never will."

– I.U.O.E. Local 150 Business Manager James Sweeney, November 2019 *Local 150 Engineer* newsletter

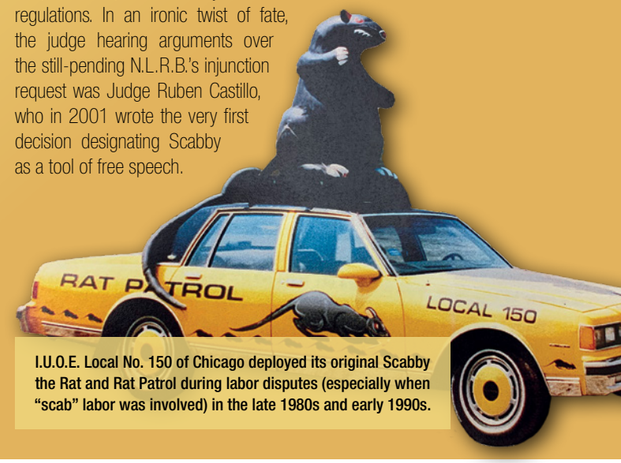
When he took over 10,000-member-strong I.U.O.E. Local No. 150 of Chicago in 1986, new Business Manager Bill Dugan was set on increasing his local's market share and membership through large-scale organizing. "Getting the results we needed required some creative thinking, to say the least," current Business Manager James Sweeney recalled in the local's November 2019 newsletter.

During a campaign to organize equipment rental and repair shops in 1987 that would later evolve into "Operation Wrench," the local decided to make the concept of a "rat" contractor "a little bit easier for the public to understand," according to Brother Sweeney. With that, Local 150 designed and commissioned several rat costumes that its organizers wore to the sites of various labor disputes. "This new method of attracting attention was particularly useful and almost as much fun as drawing straws to see who had to put on the suit every day," Brother Sweeney remembered.

Inspired by an inflatable gorilla on the roof of a car at a nearby auto dealership and the need to replace the heavy, hot costumes with something that would garner more attention, the local's Organizing Department then commissioned production of its very first inflatable rat, which sat atop an Oldsmobile owned by Brother Monte Horne that the local painted yellow and christened the "Rat Patrol." In late 1989, the local held a contest among its membership to name the inflatable rodent, which up to that point it had simply called "Mr. Rat." Brother Lou Mahieu received a leather jacket in January 1990 for his winning submission, "Scabby," while the Oldsmobile was renamed the "Scab Tracker."

"Scabby was a hit from the start," Brother Sweeney recollected. "We quickly deployed a fleet of Scab Trackers, and other unions started to as well." Local 150 also bundled Scabby and a Scab Tracker with a generator and a suit and sold it as a "Rat Pack" to other I.U.O.E. locals. Soon after, local building trades started to purchase their own Scabbys, as well, and he quickly became a fixture of Chicago's labor movement – and has since ascended to worldwide fame.

But while a steady run of judicial decisions have agreed that the use of Scabby the Rat is protected free speech under the First Amendment, it came under attack again in 2019 when the National Labor Relations Board (N.L.R.B.), acting on a long-dismissed complaint against Local 150 made by a non-union contractor, asked a federal judge to classify the use of Scabby as a picket and, therefore, make it subject to stricter regulations. In an ironic twist of fate, the judge hearing arguments over the still-pending N.L.R.B.'s injunction request was Judge Ruben Castillo, who in 2001 wrote the very first decision designating Scabby as a tool of free speech.



I.U.O.E. Local No. 150 of Chicago deployed its original Scabby the Rat and Rat Patrol during labor disputes (especially when "scab" labor was involved) in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

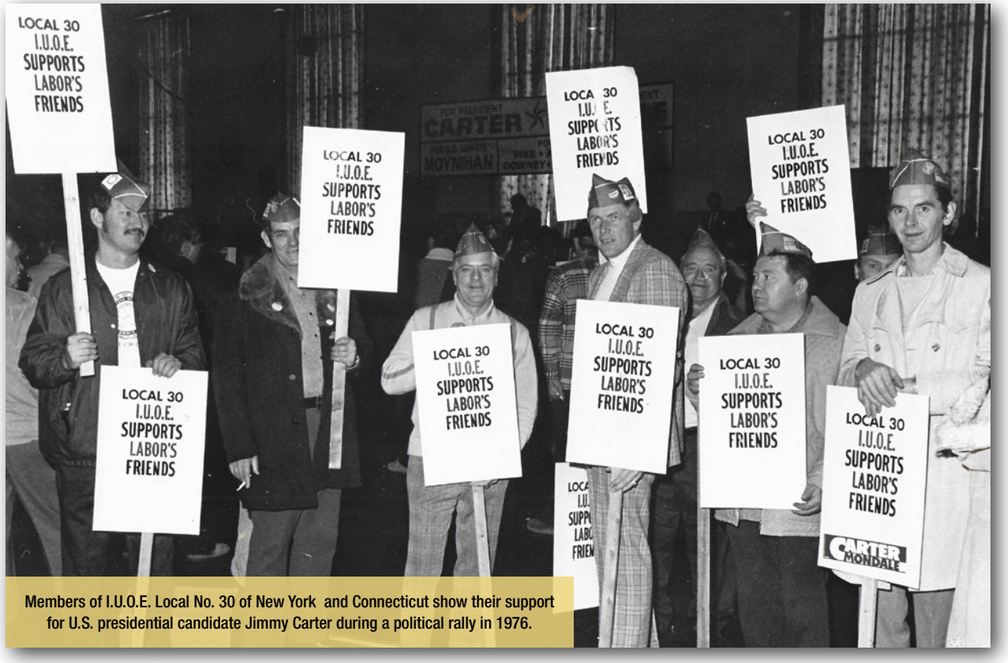
Double-breasting, the union contractor practice of setting up non-union affiliates to avoid dealing with union workers who performed the same work in the past, had also become more prevalent during the first half of the 1980s, depriving more I.U.O.E. members of jobs. To fight double-breasting, the union was at the forefront of a broad, national campaign for the adoption of U.S. House Resolution 281, the Construction Industry Contract Security Act, which would have ended the unscrupulous scheme. But while the House version passed in 1987, the U.S. Senate version of the bill was stalled in the 1990s.

Meanwhile, President Turner stepped down on May 31, 1985, for health reasons and was succeeded by then-Sixth Vice-President Dugan, a member of **Local No. 428** in Phoenix.

The new general president continued the union's aggressive response against membership decline and non-union progress. To those ends, in February 1986 the union's General Executive Board unanimously approved the first phase of a long-term organizing plan that President Dugan prepared to rebuild membership rolls and recapture a substantial share of the construction industry market.

In making organizing the union's top priority, organizer training would be the foundation of the new program. Action steps immediately taken through the plan included investing $1-million to hire and train full-time international organizers and personnel from local unions, whose initial training took place at the A.F.L.-C.I.O.'s George Meany Labor Studies Center in Silver Spring, Maryland, in 1986.

Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 406 in New Orleans perform dragline work in April 1975 to dig a hole during excavation of the site for Louisiana's first nuclear power plant, the Waterford Steam Electric Station located just west of the city, for which the operating engineers eventually moved millions of tons of dirt.



Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 30 of New York and Connecticut show their support for U.S. presidential candidate Jimmy Carter during a political rally in 1976.

President Dugan further wholly supported I.U.O.E. locals' countermeasures that manifested in 1986 alone into numerous strikes across the country by locals from Philadelphia to Santa Monica, California; from Seattle to Danville, Illinois; and from Houston to Indiana, Pennsylvania, to name a few. Endorsing those labor actions and others by operating engineers, he declared in nearly every issue of *The International Operating Engineer* that year and in 1987:

> ***"Right-wing extremists in North America are attempting to make strong unions weak and to destroy weak unions. We have no intention of letting them do either."***

What's more, former General President Turner's report to the union's 1984 Convention in April 1984 in Hollywood, Florida, advocated that at least 20 of the union's 69 stationary locals that were without full-time staff be merged. (At the time, the union also had 48 stationary locals that had full-time staffs.) Within the remainder of the decade, that objective was mostly achieved.[2]

The union's efforts stabilized its membership beginning in 1987, and before the end of the decade, its numbers showed a "respectable increase" the first months of 1989, as General President Dugan described in the April 1989 *International Operating Engineer*. What's more, more members were working, and the union did not relax as the president also declared, "We want to create an environment that when there is dirt to be moved, structures to be hoisted, buildings to be maintained, the I.U.O.E. and its union contractors do the work."

The work that was being performed by union operating engineers in 1989 included Local No. 25 mitigating a large oil spill in the Delaware River after a fully loaded tanker ran aground on June 22 and released more than 380,000 gallons of oil into the waterway. Once the I.U.O.E. members were on the scene

Members of I.U.O.E. Marine Division Local No. 25, based in New Jersey and covering the entire eastern seaboard of the United States, meet on the deck of the Dredge Georgia during a job sometime in the late 1970s.

Brother Tom McClain Sr., the only living charter member of I.U.O.E. Local No. 320 of Florence, Alabama, at the time and the local's first president and business manager, stands in 1979 in front of the house in which the local's seven signers of its charter held the local's first meeting on December 17, 1933.

two days later, the potential for catastrophic environmental impact was averted, according to the management of American Dredging Company, by more than 175 members of the local's Marine Division working around the clock for more than a week, including the Fourth of July holiday, to substantially complete the cleanup.

Picking up the pieces of a shattered San Francisco Bay Area in the aftermath of the devastating earthquake that struck there on the evening of October 17, 1989, fell on the broad collective shoulders of members of I.U.O.E. hoisting and portable Local No. 3 and stationary **Local No. 39** of San Francisco. Local No. 3 engineers were on the front lines of recovery almost immediately, conducting rescue missions, clearing debris and helping to restore vital utilities, while their cranes were soon at work on the collapsed Nimitz Freeway, the damaged Bay Bridge and other structures affected by the quake, which killed 63 people and caused an estimated $6 billion in property damage.

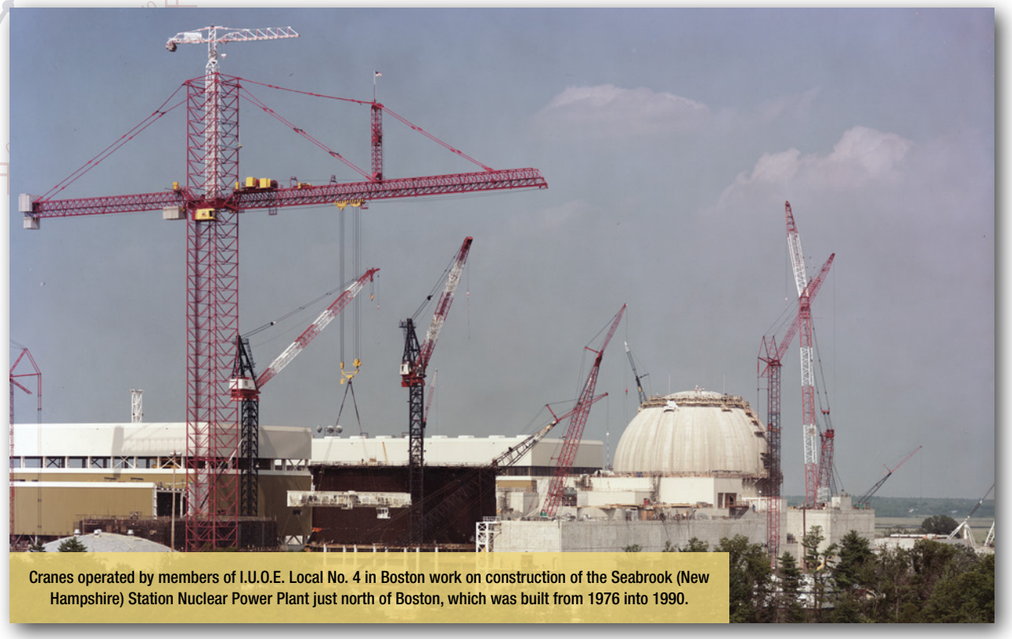
As the decade was drawing to a close, signs indicated that the I.U.O.E. recovery efforts were getting results while also making its signatory contractors more competitive. The union's modest increase of more than 2,300 new members during the first nine months of 1989 was still a gain, nonetheless, and the union was organizing in the construction, stationary, industrial and public sectors in areas that just three years earlier could not be organized. Reflecting on those achievements and the capacity for continued success, General President Dugan announced in the December 1989 *International Operating Engineer*, "Our program is working – and working well."

Innovation Fuels the Revival

General Secretary-Treasurer Frank Hanley was unanimously selected general president of the I.U.O.E. by the union's General Executive Board after Brother Dugan announced in early 1990 that health issues would force him to leave office before his term expired in April 1993. Upon assuming his new duties on February 1, 1990, with 30 years of experience in the union behind him, General President Hanley began eliminating and merging departments in the international offices to concentrate resources in key areas and place qualified people in top staff positions.[2]

The new administration also updated office equipment and computer systems, and its General Executive Board would eventually be composed of experienced and successful local business managers, according to *Union Resilience in Troubled Times*, "who would be policymakers rather than rubber-stamp approvers."

But organizing would be the union's highest priority, and the Executive Board during its April 1990 meeting unanimously affirmed three recommendations and a financial package by General President Hanley to reemphasize the international's commitment to recruiting new members by providing its locals additional incentives and resources to establish ongoing organizing programs. Announcing those initiatives in that month's *International Operating Engineer*, President Hanley stated:



Cranes operated by members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 4 in Boston work on construction of the Seabrook (New Hampshire) Station Nuclear Power Plant just north of Boston, which was built from 1976 into 1990.

> ***"Organizing nurtures and promotes our ideals and goals; it replenishes and expands our ranks and influence; it sustains our ongoing efforts to provide better and safer working conditions for our members. Without organizing, without the constant infusion of new blood, new ideas and new incentives, the union movement long ago would have reached its peak, then withered and disappeared through attrition."***

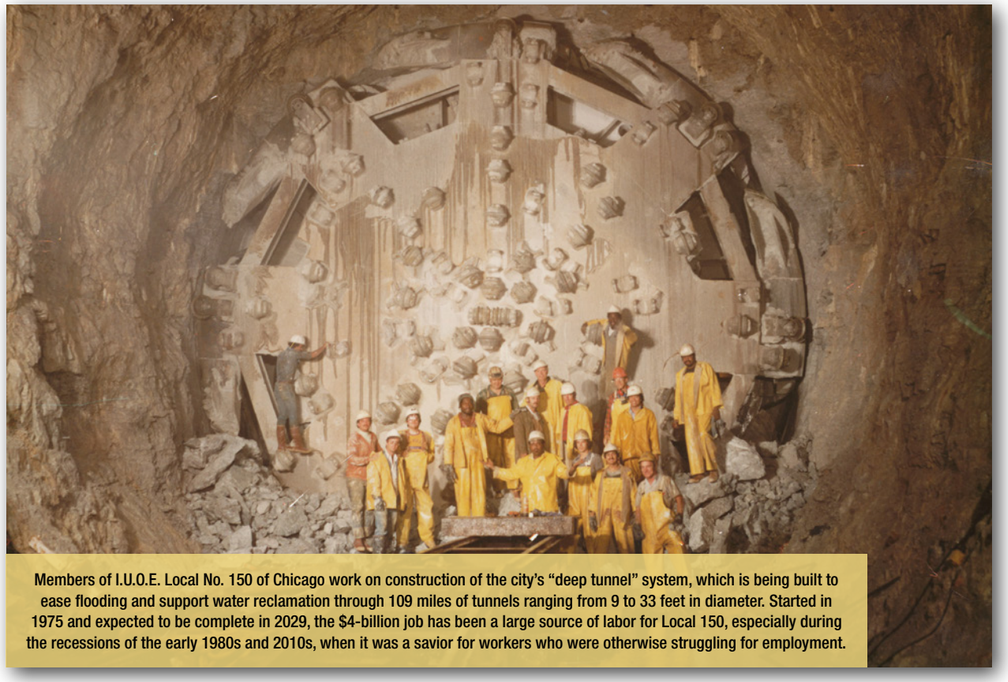
The plan called for the creation of an **Organizing Grants Program**, through which the general president would award yearly "organizing grants" to locals based on the net increase in a local's total membership in a defined 12-month period. (Just two years later, the program had paid out more than $600,000 to local unions for organizing new members.) The international also deferred one-half of the 50-cent per-capita-tax increase for each local scheduled to take effect on July 1, 1990, to encourage locals to devote more resources to organizing.

The program further immediately implemented an organizing campaign aimed at bolstering the union's share of heavy and highway construction work in a 10-state region in the south and southwest. The international would coordinate the operation through the newly chartered **Local No. 5**, headquartered in Jackson, Mississippi, to organize and represent potential members in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, New Mexico, Texas and Virginia. At the heart of the effort was an agreement with contractors from around the country that established a standard benefits package and zoned wage rates to enable signatory contractors to be competitive in bidding work in that region.

Throughout General President Hanley's time in office, which would last into March 2005, much of the international's focus was also placed on efforts to train and educate its members. In doing so, he initiated several new training and education programs and reinvigorated existing ones so that all members could have access to the resources and tools necessary to keep pace with changing technologies. "I am firmly convinced that if all of our local unions sign on and implement these programs, it won't be long before we can reclaim much of our rightful market share," he wrote in the February-March 1996 *International Operating Engineer*.

By the time 600 delegates gathered for the 34th I.U.O.E. Convention in Chicago from April 5 to 8, 1993, whose theme was "Training for the Future," the union's **Hazmat Training Program** had educated over 600 instructors and 20,000 members on working with hazardous wastes and materials; its newly initiated **business agents' training program** and **pipeline training program** were off to strong starts; and its established organizing, apprenticeship and skills-improvement training programs were again serving to give the union a competitive edge. Those efforts had helped I.U.O.E. membership to grow back to about 369,000.

Earlier that year, more than 100 business agents from locals throughout the country attended the international's first two business agents' training programs. The week-long sessions, one of which was held at the George Meany Center and the other at the Local No. 3 Training Center in Rancho Murieta, California, covered topics such as legal issues; contract negotiations; grievances and arbitrations; pipeline agreements; national agreements; maintenance and general presidents' agreements; jurisdiction; heavy and highway industries; safety and health; prevailing wage laws; hazardous materials; and the federal McNamara-O'Hara Service Contract Act that requires contractors to pay prevailing wages in certain circumstances.



Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 150 of Chicago work on construction of the city's "deep tunnel" system, which is being built to ease flooding and support water reclamation through 109 miles of tunnels ranging from 9 to 33 feet in diameter. Started in 1975 and expected to be complete in 2029, the $4-billion job has been a large source of labor for Local 150, especially during the recessions of the early 1980s and 2010s, when it was a savior for workers who were otherwise struggling for employment.

Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 324 of Michigan place a piece of track during construction of the Detroit People Mover, a 2.94-mile elevated train encircling the city's downtown area that was built from 1985 to July 1987.

Among the jobsites on which members were working was the largest-ever public-works project in the United States, Boston's **"Big Dig"** (formally the Central Artery/Tunnel Project), which rerouted the elevated central artery of Interstate-93 under the city's downtown through a 1.5-mile tunnel; built two bridges totaling 14 lanes over the Charles River; and extended the highway to Logan Airport through the new, 1.6-mile Ted Williams Tunnel under Boston Harbor. Started in 1992, the job employed more than 900 operating engineers from a dozen different I.U.O.E. locals, with the majority from Boston's Local No. 4, who operated more than 150 cranes of various types and sizes before it was completed in 2007.

By the end of 1993, the I.U.O.E. had emerged from a difficult period in its history and was in a stronger position. Its net worth had almost doubled between 1987 and 1992 from $44.4 million $83.6 million, its three pension plans were in solid financial condition and the cooperative relationship between the international and its locals was never better.[2]

The programs and other efforts undertaken by the union in the early 1990s essentially put an end to the decline it experienced the previous decade and ushered in a renaissance of sorts. Examining the union's "primary years of renewed growth in 1991 and 1992," *Union Resilience in Troubled Times* proclaims:

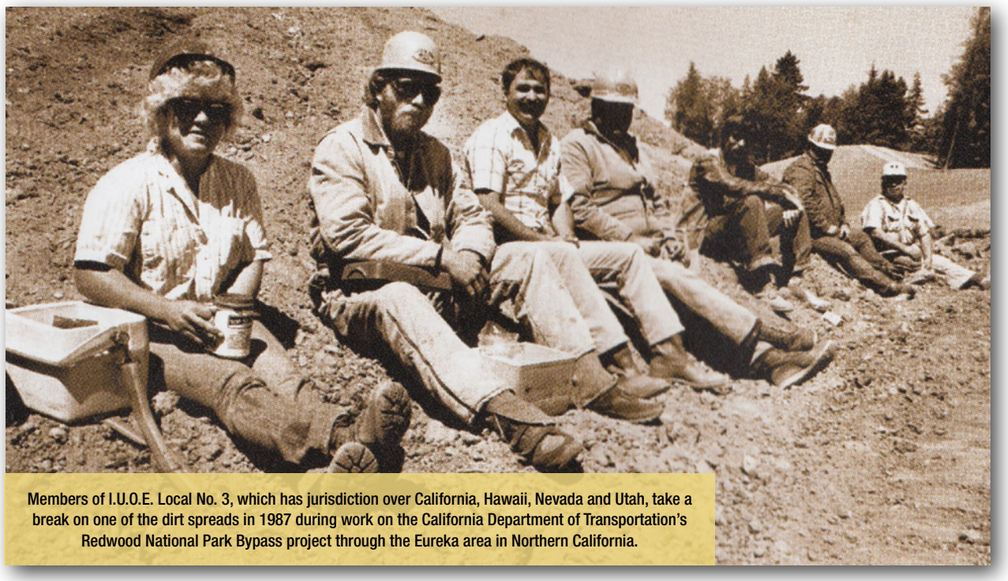
> ***"That combination of local initiative and Frank Hanley's administrative acumen and aggressive organizational initiatives have been the primary causes of the union's embryonic resurgence during the early 1990s."***

An agreement signed February 24, 1994, between the A.F.L.-C.I.O Building and Construction Trades Department and the United Steelworkers of America (U.S.W.A.) to end a 15-year jurisdiction battle had particular significance to the I.U.O.E. After the steelworkers in 1980 unilaterally negated an agreement that had been negotiated in 1977 to strictly limit activities of U.S.W.A. District 50 in the construction industry, intrusions by the steelworkers had been a constant problem and undermined hard-won, long-established I.U.O.E. wages and benefits, costing its members jobs.

Then in 1995, the union and General President Hanley identified another top priority: **Construction Organizing Membership and Education Training (COMET)**. A two-step program to involve the rank-and-file membership in efforts to regain construction-market share by providing them with the fundamentals of organizing on jobsites, the union began to push all of its locals to participate in COMET.

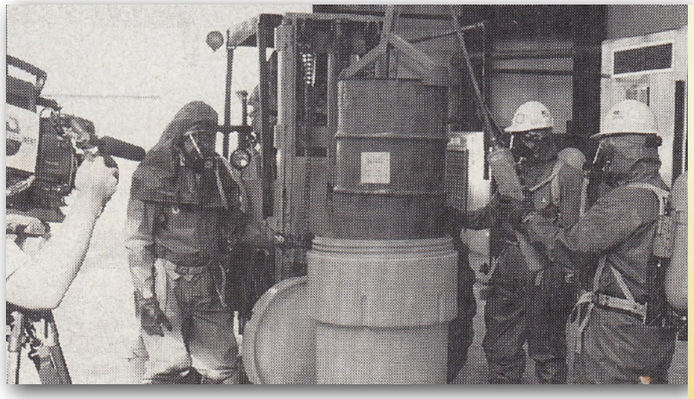
A Century of Skilled Craftsmen

> ***"One-hundred years of progress and advancement. One-hundred years of providing significant improvements in the work lives of its members. That, in essence, is the enviable history of simply the very best trade union in the United States and Canada ... or anywhere else. It is the history of our union: The I.U.O.E."***
>
> – I.U.O.E. General President Frank Hanley
> *The International Operating Engineer*,
> February-March 1996



Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 3, which has jurisdiction over California, Hawaii, Nevada and Utah, take a break on one of the dirt spreads in 1987 during work on the California Department of Transportation's Redwood National Park Bypass project through the Eureka area in Northern California.

Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 57 of Rhode Island help erect the Jamestown Verrazzano Bridge over the West Passage of Narragansett Bay in 1989. Construction on the bridge, which carries a portion of the cross-state Rhode Island Route 138, began in 1985 and was completed in 1992.



The I.U.O.E. commemorated its pending **100th Anniversary** on December 7, 1996, with a week-long celebration in mid-January that year, by which time the union numbered about 360,000 members, making it the 12th-largest organization in the A.F.L.-C.I.O. The dominant themes during the festivities were "A Century of Craftsmanship" and "100 Years of Service to the Membership."

During the week, more than 1,300 operating engineers, union officers, their guests and dignitaries from labor, management and government joined together for a banquet to mark the historic occasion. In his keynote address for the celebration, General President Hanley highlighted the union's advancement through the years and outlined a blueprint for "an even better next 100 years," declaring the union's strength was its membership. "This celebration is a tribute to the very lifeblood of the I.U.O.E., our members," he stated. "They are the true driving force behind all of our successes."

The general president further pointed out that in its 100th year since being organized by just 11 men on December 7, 1896, the union was in the "most solid financial shape" it had ever been, thanks to its officers having "kept a careful eye" on its finances and making "carefully calculated, judicious investments" of the members' monies. He also noted that his administration had cut out wasteful spending

HAZMAT TRAINING WAS FOCUS OF CABLE SHOW

The revered I.U.O.E. National Hazardous-Material (HAZMAT) Training Program was featured on a segment of The Discovery Channel's weekly "Today's Environment" show that aired in October 1994. A film crew from the show visited the union's National HAZMAT Training Center at the National Mine Safety and Health Academy in Beaver, West Virginia, in late August that year to document the center's training program, which prepares operating engineers to work in the hazardous waste and environmental fields.

As part of the production, I.U.O.E. HAZMAT instructors and members of local unions demonstrated training exercises that featured removing radioactive rods from a simulated nuclear facility; emergency response to a simulated accident involving a trailer hauling hazardous waste; the rescue of a worker trapped in a confined space; and the cleanup of a simulated hazardous waste site. Local No. 18 of Cleveland, Local No. 37 of Baltimore and Local No. 132 of Charleston, West Virginia, provided heavy equipment used for shooting the feature, which was available to over 100-million people worldwide via The Discovery Channel network.

Through the I.U.O.E. National Training Fund, the HAZMAT Training Program has been educating operating engineers, stationary engineers and other workers since 1987 through cooperative agreements awarded by the National Institute of Environmental Health and Sciences Worker Training Program. As the union celebrates its 125th anniversary in 2021, its HAZMAT program has provided safety and health training to more than 529,000 workers.

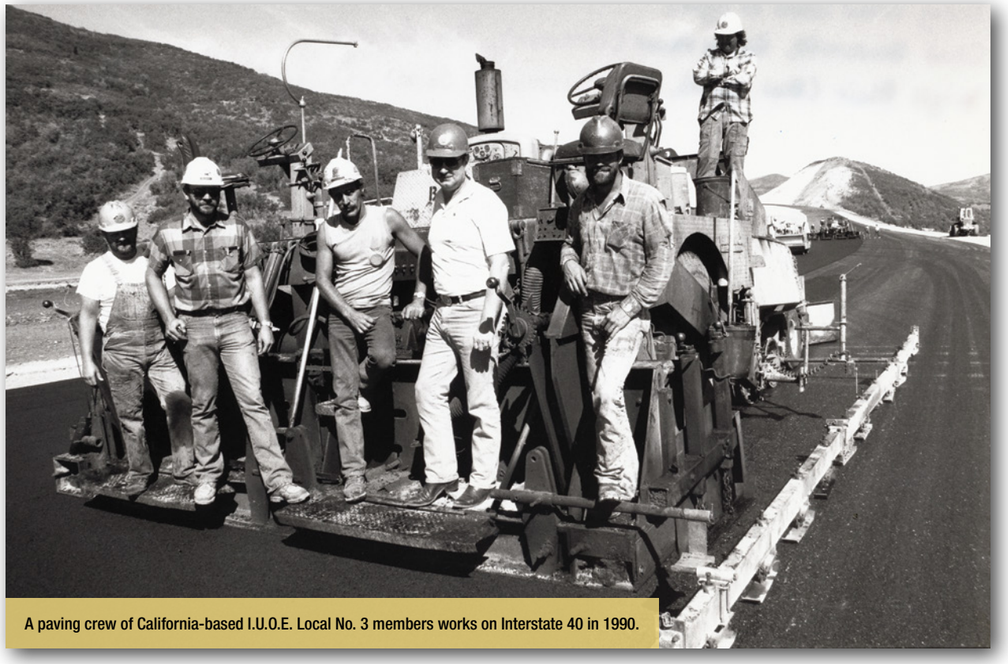
and declared he will "never hesitate to spend money on programs and requests that benefit our members and their families."

Delegates to the celebration also took part in week-long workshops covering topics such as worker health and safety; national agreements; Davis-Bacon laws; COMET programs; stationary-engineer training programs; hazardous-materials (hazmat) training and work opportunities; pension tracking; and legal issues.

As 1996 progressed, in the fall the I.U.O.E. and the U.S. Department of Energy opened their joint **International Environmental Technology and Training Center** in Beckley, West Virginia. Operated through the I.U.O.E. National Hazmat Program, the facility provides a site where U.S. companies can test and demonstrate the effectiveness of new environmental technologies, as well as assess how those technologies impact human factors such as worker health and safety.

Later that year, the I.U.O.E. and its members once again were an influential force on the political landscape as the international and its local unions expended unprecedented grassroots, financial and educational efforts in the 1996 elections. As a result, the operating engineers and all organized labor were able to shift voters' focus from the ill-advised tenets of the business-driven Contract with America to issues that concerned and motivated working Americans, such as pensions, job security, education, prevailing wages, Medicare/Social Security and healthcare, which became the defining issues of the elections.

Reaching and surpassing its century mark, the late-1990s overall was a time of steady work for the vast majority of the union's members in the United States and Canada. Included in the major jobs on which I.U.O.E. members worked over that period was construction of the **Thomas F. Eagleton U.S. Courthouse** in downtown St. Louis, the largest federal courthouse in the United States when completed in 2000, which employed 50 members of Local No. 513 from the time the project began with core and foundation work in June 1996.



A paving crew of California-based I.U.O.E. Local No. 3 members works on Interstate 40 in 1990.

I.U.O.E. Local No. 501 and other organized-labor groups participate in pickets on September 7, 1992, against The Frontier Hotel in Las Vegas as part of their six-year, four-month and 10-day strike against the hotel's owners. *(Photo used with permission of Culinary Workers Union Local No. 226.)*

Victory After More Than Six Years

LOCAL PART OF LONGEST-EVER STRIKE

Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 501 of Southern California and Southern Nevada and three other unions won the longest strike in modern-day history when a new contract with the new owner of The Frontier Hotel on the Las Vegas strip went into effect at 12:01 a.m. on February 1, 1998. The six-year, four-month and 10-day-long strike culminated in a five-year agreement that provided all workers with a "couple-dollars-per-hour" raise in wages above what the former owner was paying replacement workers.

On September 21, 1991, 550 hospitality workers walked off their jobs at The Frontier to protest unfair wages and treatment and maintained their strike line 24 hours per day/7 days per week, during which no striker ever crossed the line. Along with Local 501, Culinary Workers Union Local No. 226, Bartenders Union Local No. 165 and International Brotherhood of Teamsters Local No. 995 organized the strike.

Termination of the strike was put into motion after Phil Ruffin purchased the resort from the Elardi family on October 28, 1997, and "promised to restore the original workers to their jobs, honor union contracts and provide back pay and benefits for the strikers," according to a University of Nevada, Las Vegas, University Libraries report. The strike began after the previous owner eliminated pension plans, cut wages and healthcare benefits and gutted job-security provisions.

"Certainly, our successful waging of this strike over the years could not have been accomplished without the unending support of the I.U.O.E. and General President Frank Hanley," Local 501 Business Manager Jim McLaughlin said in the December 1997 *International Operating Engineer*, "and the many other union leaders and members who contributed so much to our efforts."

A peak of approximately 140 members of **Local No. 150** of northern Illinois and Indiana were also playing a major role in constructing the world's most-advanced coke-producing facility, the Inland Steel Company's **Indiana Harbor Works** complex in East Chicago, Indiana, which began in December 1996 with site preparation and excavation performed by the operating engineers. When completed in mid-1998, the plant could annually produce 1.33-million tons of coke, a key product in manufacturing steel.

During the I.U.O.E. 35th General Convention in Lake Buena Vista, Florida, from April 27 to 30, 1998, delegates increased the locals' per-capita tax and minimum local union dues each by 25 cents per year for the following four years. The I.U.O.E. had one of the lowest per-capita rates in the entire labor movement at $6 per member, per month, which had not been changed in 10 years, and with the new rate, it would go to $6.25 on July 1 of that year and increase by 25 cents on July 1 of the three succeeding years for a total $1 raise over four years.

The delegates also approved a constitutional amendment expanding the General Executive Board from 11 to 14 members and unanimously re-elected General President Hanley to another five-year term.

Into the final year of the decade, the century and the millennium, construction employment in North America was stronger than it had been at any time in the previous two decades and economic growth was creating stationary-engineering jobs at an unprecedented rate.

Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 37 in Baltimore take part in the local's first-ever hazardous materials training class at its training center in October 1990.

Fueled by relatively robust economies in both the United States and Canada, construction work boomed in 1999 and, in turn, spurred work opportunities in the stationary industry.

The I.U.O.E. then earmarked $15 million for a newly established **Cooperative Organizing Grant Program** in June 1999 to further encourage and assist locals with organizing by providing matching funds for up to half of the cost for a local's new staff and rank-and-file organizers. In addition to the grants, highlights of a comprehensive agenda General President Hanley outlined at the General Executive Board meeting held June 17 to 19 included development of organizing programs specifically aimed at youth and Hispanic workers.

Demonstrating its dedication to fostering a productive and diverse membership, particularly in view of the increasing numbers of minorities and women who were entering the labor market (in 1998, 24 percent of I.U.O.E. apprentices were minorities and 21 percent were female), the I.U.O.E. reached out to the growing number of Latino-Americans in the building-and-construction and building-services industries. Such efforts were underscored on January 25, 2000, when the union signed a five-year Memorandum of Agreement with the U.S. Department of Energy to establish and implement a national **Hispanic Outreach Program** to provide Latinos with the tools to make them skilled, productive operating engineers.

Introduction of those programs and others once again displayed the union's commitment to organizing as a primary means of increasing the strength of the I.U.O.E. and its locals.

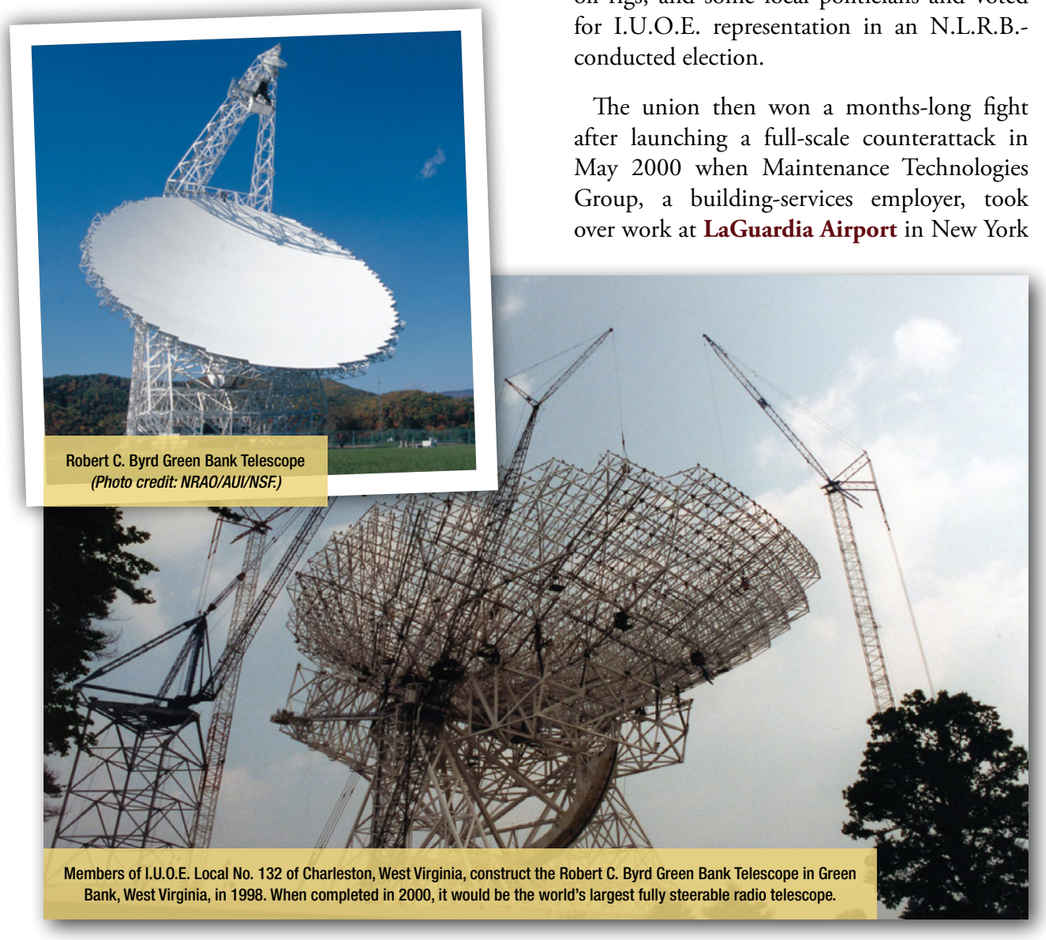
Momentum Paused by 9/11

As the I.U.O.E. moved into the new "Y2K" millennium, it was in excellent financial condition as the result of wise investments and thoughtful, attentive expenditures. The union was also well-positioned to service its members through a host of programs, which General President Hanley reminded nearly 300 representatives from locals throughout the United States and Canada attending the 2000 General Executive Board open session in January would remain the union's main mission:

> *"Servicing our members is the rock-solid foundation for all that we have accomplished in our 100-plus years of existence. ... It is the principle that will guide the I.U.O.E. through its next 100 years and beyond."*

The union's organizing activities were also continuing to yield dividends, and by August 2000, it had gained nearly 10,000 new members over the preceding year alone. Indicative of the increased organizing activity, backed by the Cooperative Organizing Grant Program, were a number of significant wins registered by local unions, including some 830 workers at the J. Ray McDermott fabrication yard in Amelia, Louisiana, voting for **Local No. 406** of New Orleans to serve as their collective-bargaining representative. The employees withstood a virulent anti-union campaign by the company, which builds large offshore structures such as oil rigs, and some local politicians and voted for I.U.O.E. representation in an N.L.R.B.-conducted election.

The union then won a months-long fight after launching a full-scale counterattack in May 2000 when Maintenance Technologies Group, a building-services employer, took over work at **LaGuardia Airport** in New York



Robert C. Byrd Green Bank Telescope
(Photo credit: NRAO/AUI/NSF.)

Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 132 of Charleston, West Virginia, construct the Robert C. Byrd Green Bank Telescope in Green Bank, West Virginia, in 1998. When completed in 2000, it would be the world's largest fully steerable radio telescope.

Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 772 of Hamilton, Ontario, participate in the City of Hamilton's Labour Day parade in 1999 while also on strike against the city's Hamilton-Wentworth Water and Wastewater Treatment facilities and operator Azurix Corporation of Houston, Texas. The 16-week strike ended soon after with the local securing a settlement agreement that contained many of the terms it had sought.

Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 148 of St. Louis and their families rally during an extended contract disagreement with the Fairview Heights public-sector municipality in mid-eastern Illinois that the local represents. The union eventually won the dispute.

City and immediately discharged I.U.O.E. members who were long-time employees in the maintenance unit at Delta Airlines and hired replacement workers at reduced wages and benefits. After a protracted campaign, the union won a new contract with the company on October 25 that recognized the I.U.O.E. as the exclusive collective-bargaining agent for regular employees of the company. As part of the settlement, the company would also rectify a similar situation at **Newark Airport**.

Plentiful work and conditions for the vast majority of I.U.O.E. members and their families continued into the next year as the result of a robust national economy and the impact of I.U.O.E. legislative and political activities. The international's tireless work in Congress that resulted in more than $37.6 billion in federal funds being appropriated for the fiscal year for highways, bridges and other transportation projects translated into jobs for operating engineers.

I.U.O.E. members from Local No. 14, Local No. 15 and locals from across the United States and Canada were the first building-trades craftspeople at **"Ground Zero"** following the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center. That morning, Islamic militants hijacked four commercial passenger airliners and flew two of them into the Trade Center's Twin Towers and a third into the Pentagon just outside Washington, D.C., while the fourth plane crashed in a field near Shanksville, Pennsylvania, after passengers overtook their hijackers.

The attacks killed a total of 2,977 people, including seven total members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 15, Local No. 94 and **Local No. 138** of Long Island who lost their lives when the Trade Center towers collapsed.

Soon after the attack, operating engineers were at the Ground Zero site of the destroyed towers, volunteering their skills and services to help in rescue efforts. Ultimately, more than 500 I.U.O.E. members operated and maintained approximately 175 pieces of heavy equipment for recovery and cleanup at the site, and another roughly 100 members from

As I.U.O.E. Local 825, New Jersey, member Brother Tony Maglionico works on the construction site of the new Goldman Sachs Tower in Jersey City in August 2001, his machine frames the World Trade Center's Twin Towers in Lower Manhattan, which would be destroyed the following month when terrorists flew commercial airliners into the buildings on September 11.

I.U.O.E. HEROES SHINED, PERISHED IN 9/11 ATTACKS

"Among the countless heroes of September 11, 2001, were the operating engineers at the World Trade Center, the people responsible for the nuts and bolts of the center's air-conditioning, electrical systems, heating and plumbing. Their jobs and their intimate knowledge of the buildings meant that they were among the first to respond when the first plane struck at 8:48 a.m.

"Some of the 40 engineers on hand that day helped firefighters to attach hoses in the pump rooms. Others rushed to inspect mechanical systems or assist emergency medical teams. When the word came to evacuate the building, many helped to get people out."

– *New York Times*, May 29, 2005 (On the occasion of the May 26 unveiling of the 9/11 Memorial Mural at I.U.O.E. Local No. 94 of New York City.)

Seven brave I.U.O.E. members lost their lives in the September 11, 2001, (9/11) terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City after terrorists flew commercial airplanes into the center's two towers, causing them to collapse and taking the lives of 2,753 people, including these members:

William Krukowski, Local No. 15
Fred Sheffold, Local No. 15
Vito DeLeo, Local No. 94
John Griffin Jr., Local No. 94
Charles Magee, Local No. 94
Dave Williams, Local No. 94
Vincent Danz, Local No. 138

International Association of Fire Fighters President Harold Schaitberger, whose union lost 343 members during the attack, praised the I.U.O.E. in remarks to over 300 delegates attending the open session of the union's General Executive Board meeting held November 9 and 10, 2001, saying "If it wasn't for I.U.O.E. members risking their lives in a treacherous, unstable site, the fire fighters could not have made the rescue and recovery efforts they did. It was your help, your caring that allowed us to bring many of our brothers home in a dignified way. … There are no greater group of heroes, no greater patriots than your members and all union members working there."

Shortly after the attack, each family of the seven I.U.O.E. victims was provided with generous donations from the union's International Disaster Relief Fund to help them in their time of need.

New York City' Local No. 94 also commissioned artist Cliff Miller to create a mural to grace the outside wall of the local's offices in Manhattan to memorialize the local's four members who perished when trying to lead others to safety when the World Trade Center towers collapsed. The group portrait was unveiled during a ceremony on May 26, 2005.

This mural, on display in a window of the I.U.O.E. Local No. 94 union hall in Manhattan in New York City, depicts members Brother John Griffin Jr., Brother Charles Magee, Brother Vito DeLeo and Brother David Williams, who were killed during the 9/11 terrorist attack on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001.

locals No. 14 and No. 15 ran the heavy equipment at the landfill site in Staten Island where the debris from Ground Zero was taken.

The I.U.O.E.-operated equipment involved in the operation included some 20 cranes, one of which was a Manitowoc 21,000 with over 300 feet of boom and a lift capacity of 1,000 tons and another a Caterpillar 345 Ultra High excavator with an 80-foot-long reach and shears that could slice through steel beams. Union survey engineers helped guide the work, referring to the original blueprints from when the complex was constructed in the early 1970s to lessen the possibility of further catastrophes while the debris was being removed.

Members of the union's **National Hazmat Project Emergency Response Team**, headquartered in Beckley, West Virginia, were on the scene two days after the attack and were critical to the safety and health of their fellow members working at Ground Zero, as well as workers from other crafts and agencies, firefighters and police officers. The hazmat team members set up a command post to help monitor the air quality and to distribute protective gear and respirators.

After visiting and inspecting the World Trade Center site, General President Hanley sent an impassioned message to the entire membership in an article in the October-November 2001 *International Operating Engineer*:

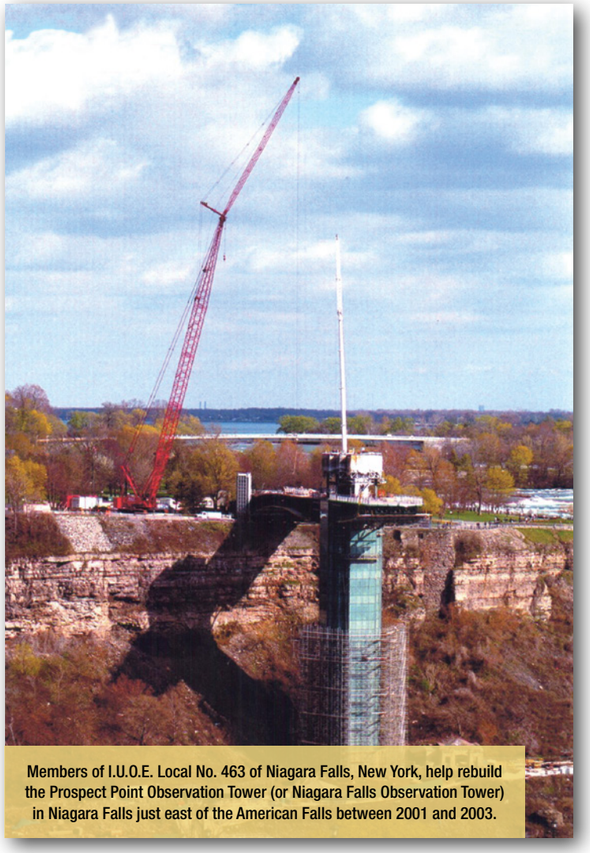
"To observe our members at work is mesmerizing. These operating engineers are doing this job because they have a genuine desire to help in any way they can, because they understand the loss and anguish suffered by so many in this tragedy. They are hardworking, selfless and dedicated people who are giving their skills to get a gruesome job done right because they care. They care deeply about the victims, many of whom were family members, close friends, union brothers and sisters."

I.U.O.E. members and international officers on site to clean up the aftermath of the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in New York City on September 11, 2001.

In the longer-term aftermath of the September 11, 2001, attacks, and recognizing the critical role operating engineers fulfill in such emergency situations, in July 2002 the union established the **I.U.O.E. Homeland Security Division** and the **National Emergency Response Center** in conjunction with the federal Office of Homeland Security. The center's programs would prepare members to deal safely and effectively with emergencies as first-responders. In January 2004 during his address at the I.U.O.E. General Executive Board open session, National Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge recognized the I.U.O.E. for its role in homeland security, stating, "Our nation thanks you for your patriotism, your actions and your continuing commitment to homeland security."

More than two years earlier, shortly after "9/11" (as the attacks have become known) while he and the many other I.U.O.E. members were working on cleanup of the World Trade Center site, **Brother Kenny Klemens** of Local No. 14, like so many other members, was adamant in his resolve:

> *"The men who broke me in as an engineer built these towers. I feel it's my duty to them and as an American to be here ... and as an operating engineer to help with the cleanup and to rebuild."*



Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 463 of Niagara Falls, New York, help rebuild the Prospect Point Observation Tower (or Niagara Falls Observation Tower) in Niagara Falls just east of the American Falls between 2001 and 2003.

More Wins and More Goodwill

With the events of 9/11 emblazoned into its collective spirit, the I.U.O.E. forged ahead and in early 2002 greatly expanded its organizing and political programs. By that time, it was deeply involved in leading the fight on a number of critical legislative issues that had the potential of creating hundreds of thousands of jobs in the construction industry and related services, the topmost of which were budget proposals on federal highway spending and a comprehensive energy bill.

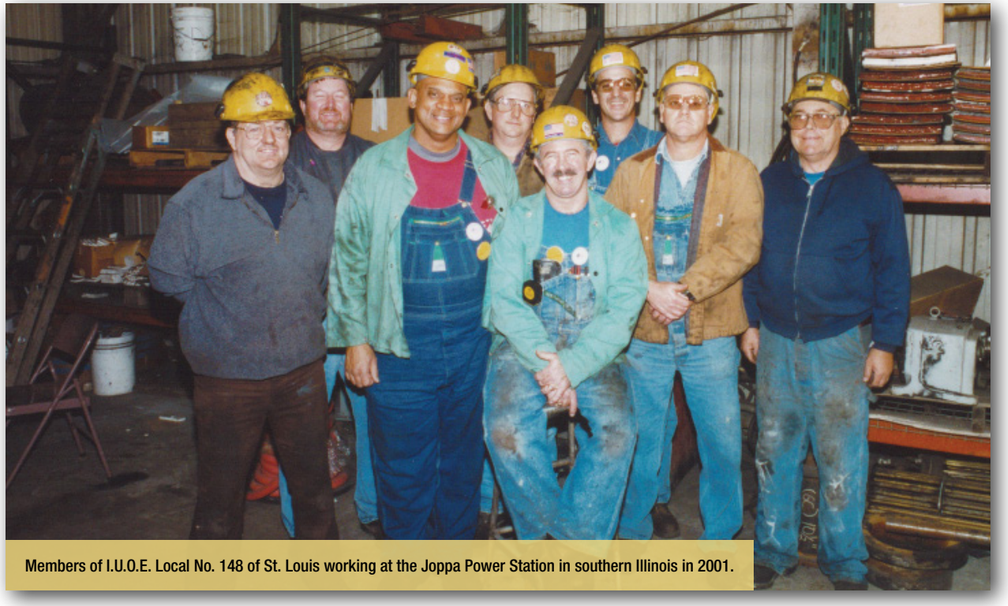
One particular effort alleviated a projected funding shortfall of $23 billion per year for investments needed over the coming 20 years to replace aging and failing pipes and to meet the mandates of the Clean Water Act and Safe Drinking Water Act. The I.U.O.E. joined the **Water Infrastructure Network**, a broad-based coalition of local elected officials, water-service providers, state environmental- and health-program administrators and engineers formed to encourage greater federal funding assistance to help preserve and protect the health, environmental and economic gains provided by the nation's water and wastewater infrastructure.

The following year during the I.U.O.E. 36th General Convention held April 7 to 11 in Lake Buena Vista, 610 delegates again unanimously re-elected General President Hanley to another five-year term. They also ratified a number of constitutional amendments that included an increase in the per-capita tax from $7 to $7.75 on July 1, 2003, and to $8.25 July 1, 2005 – which would still be one of the lowest rates in the labor movement.

The delegates also approved resolutions calling for increased participation in the political-legislative arena to support the passage of jobs-creating legislation such as investment in infrastructure projects, to protect Davis-Bacon prevailing wage laws, to oppose repeal or weakening of the Service Contract Act, and to oppose passage of any fast-track trade legislation lacking core labor and environmental protections. They further approved a measure designating organizing as a priority interest of the I.U.O.E. and urging the union to "continue to pursue innovative programs and strategies to further its organizing efforts and to increase membership participation in those efforts."

Among the ongoing organizing victories gained by I.U.O.E. locals around the country, in 2004 Local No. 39 joined with Service Employees Local No. 1292 to organize over 550 public-sector employees working for Tehama County, California, with the operating engineers representing 475 of the workers. Meanwhile, **Local No. 18** of Cleveland, Ohio, secured a first contract for 210 workers at Ralston Foods in Lancaster, Ohio, with a four-year agreement that was ratified by an 80-percent margin among the employees.

General President Hanley retired on March 1, 2005, and was succeeded by **General Secretary-Treasurer Vincent J. Giblin** after the General Executive Board voted for him to serve out the unexpired term, which would run until the next I.U.O.E. Convention in the spring of 2008. A 40-year member of the



Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 148 of St. Louis working at the Joppa Power Station in southern Illinois in 2001.

I.U.O.E., Brother Giblin began his career working in the stationary-engineering trade in 1964 in his home state of New Jersey with **Local No. 68**.

But before stepping down, in early 2005 General President Hanley joined the general presidents of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters, the International Association of Ironworkers and the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers and U.S. Labor Secretary Elaine L. Chao in signing a pact encouraging alcohol- and drug-free workplaces in a cooperative effort to improve worker health and safety. Through the alliance, the organizations would be better able to provide union members and the construction industry with information, guidance and training resources that communicate the benefits of drug-free workplace programs and better protect workers' health and safety. To help accomplish those activities, the unions would focus especially on educating workers on safety hazards created by the abuse of alcohol and other drugs in workplaces.

That year, after more than two years during which passage of a national infrastructure bill was the primary focus of I.U.O.E. legislative endeavors, the U.S. Congress finally passed the largest infrastructure legislation ever, the $244-billion reauthorization of the Federal Public Transportation Act in the form of the **Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act**, which was signed into law on August 10, 2005. An I.U.O.E.-led coalition of building-trades unions successfully lobbied to have comprehensive Davis-Bacon prevailing-wage provisions in the measure to protect members' wages when working on federally funded projects. Over the four-year life of the bill, it would create an estimated 47,000 jobs, half of which would be in the construction industry, for every $1 billion in funds.

The I.U.O.E. then took aim at alleviating escalating healthcare costs for its members, beginning with the union's first-ever **Healthcare Initiatives Conference** held August 17 and 18 in Washington, D.C. Approximately 150 international vice presidents and trustees, local union business managers, union health and welfare fund administrators and trustees participated in the meeting, whose focus was to provide a united effort to curb rising healthcare prices. During the conference, the union formally introduced four innovative healthcare programs designed to ease the financial and quality-of-services pressures adversely affecting its Health & Welfare funds. While the programs were strictly voluntary for its locals, one of the key roles of the I.U.O.E. international office would be negotiating pricing structures and facilitating business arrangements between participating locals and healthcare vendors.

Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 772 of Hamilton, Ontario, employed at the city's water treatment plant and Business Manager Greg Hoath (center) celebrate their successful 6-1/2-year legal battle over lost wages after an appeals court awarded the some 120 current and former members a total of $800,000. The back-pay award came about as the result of a dispute with the City of Hamilton and American Water Services centered on contractual wage obligations that were frozen and deferred under government legislation – for which Local 772 was the only union in Ontario to successfully challenge the legislative implications on its negotiated agreement.

Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 612 of Tacoma, Washington, work on construction of the new, eastbound, second span of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge across the Tacoma Narrows strait of Puget Sound in 2004 for its opening three years later (by which time the original bridge would be reconfigured to carry westbound traffic).

Later that very month, the I.U.O.E. again responded to a devastating crisis after Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast region on August 29, 2005. One of the worst natural disasters in the history of the United States, the storm affected to varying degrees more than 1,300 I.U.O.E. members with **Local No. 406** in New Orleans; **Local No. 407** in Lake Charles, Louisiana; **Local No. 624** in Jackson, Mississippi; **Local No. 653** in Mobile, Alabama; and region-wide Marine Division Local No. 25, based by then in New Jersey. In response, the union established the **I.U.O.E. Hurricane Katrina Relief Fund** soon after the hurricane hit to help members and their families who were victimized, and countless other members and locals from throughout the union generously answered the appeal for assistance by donating a total of $2.3 million.

To recognize the support his local and the others received, Local No. 406 **Business Manager Don Schiro** addressed the 2006 I.U.O.E. General Executive Board open session on behalf of those locals whose members were affected by Hurricane Katrina and would receive assistance from the relief fund, saying:

"I can tell you that the most uplifting thing to happen to those operating engineers who suffered from Katrina was the response to their plight of

our brother and sister I.U.O.E. members, our sister local unions and our international union. Your outpouring of kindness, caring and assistance was truly moving."

Business Manager Schiro went on to tell those attending the meeting and, in essence, the entire union:

> ***"You opened your hearts and extended your hands to those members in dire need. That is what the I.U.O.E. is all about."***

Up & Down: Jackpot to Slump

Addressing a growing national healthcare crisis became another chief objective of the I.U.O.E. during the 2000s, and into the second half of that decade the union was working intensely to resolve the issue through collective action such as information-sharing and coalition-building. To support those efforts, the union established a new **Health Care Initiatives Department** in 2006 to work with its locals to confront challenges facing their health and welfare funds. The department did this by assisting locals in making informed decisions, offering cost-cutting opportunities for healthcare services, and facilitating communication and the exchange of key information.

Among the many women who have impacted their locals throughout the I.U.O.E., Sister Diane Smalec of Local No. 399 in Chicago was a pioneer in many ways, having started her career as Local 399's first female trainee engineer at Chicago's Hyatt Regency Hotel and later becoming the first female engineer employed at that hotel, the first female chief engineer at Chicago's McCormick Place Convention Center and the first female to serve on the local's Executive Board. Sadly, Sister Smalec was killed in an automobile accident on April 7, 2006, at age 50.

Meanwhile, work in the pipeline industry in both the U. S. and Canada was thriving – and would continue to flourish for many years to come as, beginning in 2006, related jobs already scheduled for the next three years in the U. S. consisted of 63 projects with a total of more than 10,000 miles of pipe. What's more, in Alberta, Canada alone, some 12 projects with a total of 2,200 miles of pipe were scheduled at the time.

To prepare for that work and more, the international union increased its skills training endeavors and placed particular emphasis on the pipeline sector. In doing so, from November 2006 to April 2007, the union would conduct 14 three-week-long pipeline training programs at different sites around North America.

Citing the need to respond to "today's construction industry," on March 1, 2006, the I.U.O.E. withdrew from its affiliation on an international level with the A.F.L.-C.I.O Building and Construction Trades Department and joined the Laborers' International Union and the United Brotherhood of Carpenters in forming the **National Construction Alliance** (N.C.A.). In explaining the union's separation from the Trades Department, General President Giblin noted in the Winter 2006 *International Operating Engineer* that through the N.C.A., the I.U.O.E. would have the "four critical standards" that it could not get in the Trades Department and which eventually led to the disaffiliation: weighted voting by member unions; expedited resolution of jurisdictional disputes; strict budgetary controls; and decisive, effective leadership.

Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 66 of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania and their families participate in the city's 2006 Labor Day parade, which is one of the largest in the country.

The broad goals of the newly created N.C.A. were lifting working and living standards for all construction workers, increasing the union share of the construction market and helping union contractors compete in the construction industry by forging more cooperative working partnerships. In particular, the organization would focus on expanding union presence through organizing in areas where there was little or no union influence; establishing a credible influence on Capitol Hill through enhanced legislative-political activities; and making union contractors more competitive by delivering skilled, quality labor in a more-efficient manner.

However, two years later the I.U.O.E. General Executive Board voted on February 28, 2008, to withdraw from the N.C.A. should the laborers "prove unwilling to suitably resolve" jurisdictional disputes with the operating engineers. Subsequently, soon afterward the I.U.O.E. and the carpenters' union formed the **National Construction Alliance II**.

(The I.U.O.E. would re-affiliate on an international level with all the building-trades unions in 2012 when it rejoined the A.F.L.-C.I.O. Building Trades Department, which would be renamed **North America's Building Trades Unions** [NABTU] in 2015. N.C.A. II would end on December 16, 2013, and be replaced in 2014 by the **National Infrastructure Alliance**, which would be responsible for the administration of the National Heavy & Highway Agreement negotiated between the National Infrastructure Contractors Association and the ironworkers, carpenters, laborers and operating engineers unions.)

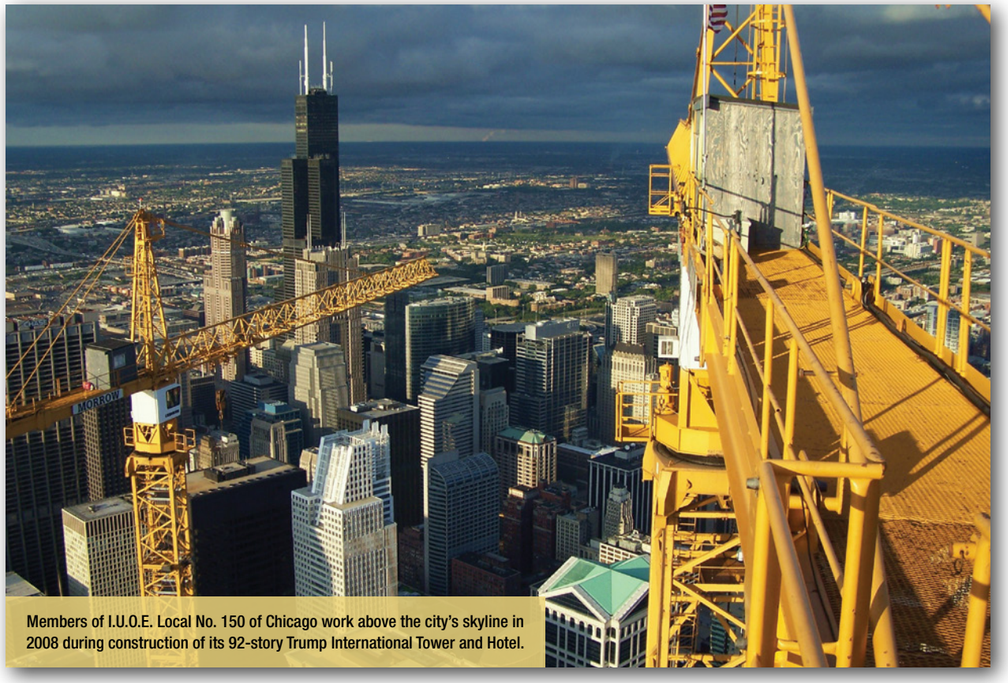
Back during the mid-2000s, operating engineers with Local No. 12 "hit the jackpot," as the Winter 2007 *International Operating Engineer* declared, when construction started in 2006 on MGM Mirage's massive new $7.4-billion **CityCenter** on a 76-acre site in the heart of the Las Vegas Strip. The largest privately financed project in the history of the United States, the 17-million-square-foot CityCenter construction required the use of more than 150 operating engineers working three shifts, six days per week, to complete its six structures, including a 60-story 4,000-room hotel and casino, for its opening in December 2009.

With employment conditions for operating engineers strong in virtually every geographic region of the United States and Canada and its membership growing, the Great Recession from late-2007 to mid-2009, the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression, slowed the union's momentum.

However, additional massive jobs manned by I.U.O.E. members that were underway during that time included rebuilding the World Trade Center complex beginning in April 2006. Members of I.U.O.E. locals No. 14 and No. 15 were operating the cranes and dirt-moving equipment on the $18-billion project, which included construction of the $4-billion **Freedom Tower** (1 World Trade Center) that at 1,776-feet tall would be the tallest building in the Western Hemisphere when it opened on November 3, 2014.

Through the combined skills of some 300 member engineers, the $114-million, 1,900-foot-long **Hoover Dam Bypass Bridge**, suspended 890 feet above the Colorado River, was on its way to becoming the largest concrete support arch in North America when it was completed in October 2010. Another 165 operating engineers with **Local No. 520** of southeast Illinois and more than 20 other I.U.O.E. locals were also making history while building the 1,600-megawatt **Prairie State Energy Campus** in Washington County, Illinois, the largest power plant under construction in the United States before it was completed in 2012 as the largest coal-fired power plant in the country.

In the shadow of the recession, 695 delegates from 105 locals attended the 37th I.U.O.E. Convention from April 27 to 30, 2008, in Las Vegas. The delegates took to heart the convention's theme, "New Day – New Way – Together," in unanimously adopting 25 constitutional amendments and 19 resolutions, unanimously re-electing all international officers and adopting an **I.U.O.E. Code of Ethics** "to guide the future conduct of union officers, representatives and employees."



Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 150 of Chicago work above the city's skyline in 2008 during construction of its 92-story Trump International Tower and Hotel.

Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 66 of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania erect a windmill as part of a power-generating windfarm project in September 2009.

The I.U.O.E. also broke new ground in 2008 with its political action after fundraising gains made by its Engineers Political Education Committee allowed the union to significantly increase its political activities in several critical areas – including for the first time in history launching a country-wide voter-registration program from international headquarters. As part of that effort, the union mailed more than 100,000 voter-registration forms to members in 35 states and instituted a vote-by-mail or early-vote effort in 29 states covering 229,000 members, increasing members' participation in the political process. In a major new initiative, 43 I.U.O.E. headquarters and field staff were also assigned to work directly with locals in the key election battleground states of Washington, Nevada, Minnesota, Michigan and Pennsylvania prior to the general election. Those efforts eventually led to significant election-night victories for operating engineers on November 4, 2008, including the election of labor-friendly Senator Barack Obama as the 44th U.S. president.

Work then continued on one of the several pipeline jobs employing I.U.O.E. members, the nearly 1,000-mile-long **Alberta Clipper Pipeline**, a crude-oil line from Hardisty, Alberta, to Superior, Wisconsin, that had begun in 2008, after the U.S. State Department gave final permit to the project on August 20, 2009. The large undertaking employed hundreds of members of **Local No. 49** of Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota and **Local No. 139** of Wisconsin in the United States and similar numbers in Canada before the pipeline was placed into service on April 1, 2010.

Well-Prepared for a Comeback

Poor national economies that struggled to fully recover from the Great Recession severely stifled much of the I.U.O.E. again as many of its members endured resultant hardships, including protracted periods of unemployment, into and during the early 2010s. In response, the union worked relentlessly on Capitol Hill and a number of other fronts to secure legislative assistance for its members and all workers, with particular emphasis on job-creating measures.

Among myriad job-creating measures the union vigorously promoted at that time, it played a key role in having Congress pass legislation that applied Davis-Bacon prevailing wages on all $111 billion of U.S. Department of Energy-supported commercial loans to developers and owners of innovative energy projects. Into and during early 2010, seven substantial loan guarantees totaling almost $11 billion that would produce jobs for I.U.O.E. members were issued.

Other legislation for which the I.U.O.E. successfully lobbied and were passed into law in 2010 included the American Workers, State and Business Relief Act that extended unemployment and COBRA benefits to workers through the end of the calendar year; and the HIRE Act (Hiring Incentives to Restore Employment) that among other actions extended the transportation law through the end of the year and transferred nearly $20 billion from the federal government's general fund into the Highway Trust Fund, an important provision for operating engineers.

As poor employment conditions lingered, on September 14, 2010, the I.U.O.E., along with the plumbers and steamfitters, laborers, teamsters and electrical-workers unions; the A.F.L-C.I.O.; and the Pipeline Contractors Association, announced the signing of a union-friendly Project Labor Agreement with the TransCanada Corporation (now TC Energy) for a significant portion of U.S. construction of the proposed $7-billion **Keystone Gulf Coast Expansion Pipeline** Project (also known as **Keystone XL**). The agreement would provide TransCanada with a well-trained workforce in the United States for the ambitious project to build a new, 1,700-mile crude-oil pipeline from Alberta, Canada, to Gulf-shore refineries in Texas.

More than 1,000 members of I.U.O.E. **Local No. 178** of Dallas-Fort Worth, **Local No. 450** of Houston and Local No. 627 worked more than 2-million total manhours to help complete the 487-mile Gulf Coast segment of the Keystone XL from Cushing, Oklahoma, to Port Arthur, Texas, between 2012 and 2014. However, in January 2012, the U.S. Department of State delayed a decision on issuing a permit for the

Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 701 in Oregon lift a retired Boeing 747-100 jetliner onto the top of the under-construction Evergreen Space Museum's Wings & Waves Waterpark in McMinnville, Oregon, in 2010, after which four large slides were installed to run from inside the fuselage to a landing pool 62 feet below.

Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 14 and Local No. 15 of New York City help build the new One World Trade Center (or Freedom Tower), the main building of the rebuilt World Trade Center complex in Lower Manhattan that would replace the Twin Towers of the original World Trade Center destroyed in the terrorist attack of September 11, 2001.

Cranes operated by Local 14 and Local 15 members place the final components of the spire at the top of the new One World Trade Center on May 10, 2013, making the structure a total height of 1,776 feet – a reference to the year in which the U.S. Declaration of Independence was signed. The building would open on November 3, 2014.

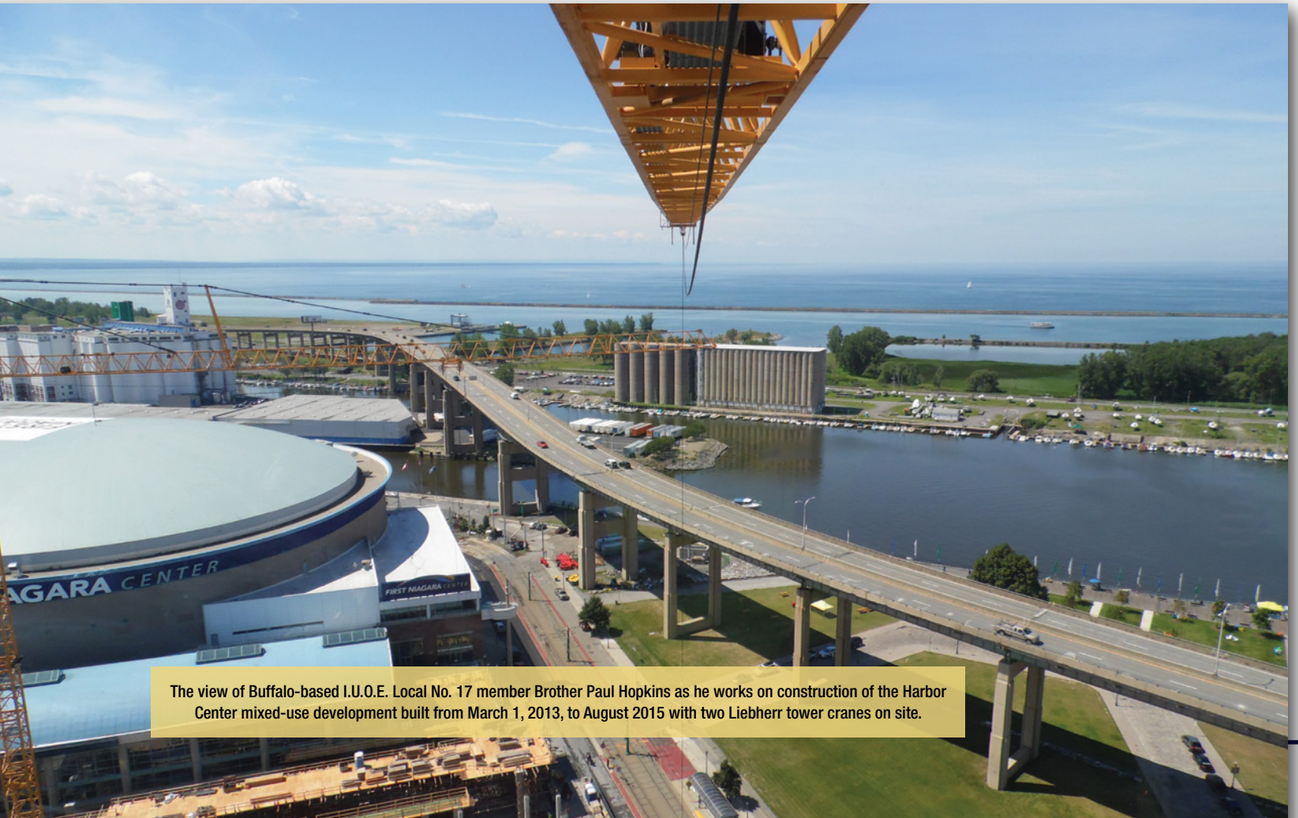
northern portion of the pipeline, required because the project crossed the international border between the United States and Canada, citing potential environmental concerns.

Following that announcement, I.U.O.E. **General President James Callahan**, who had ascended to the union's top office in November 2011, vowed "to work with our partners in labor and the industry to bring vital energy projects like Keystone XL online and to create the kind of high-paying, skilled jobs that are so vital to our economy, our members and their families." But ongoing delays of the permit were continued by then-President Obama, after which President Donald Trump on January 24, 2017, signed an executive order to expedite final permit approval for the pipeline, which was granted in March, before new President Joe Biden signed an executive order on January 20, 2021, to revoke the permit granted to TC Energy and stop the work.

Meanwhile, the I.U.O.E. did not sit idly by on other fronts, and in early 2011 the union launched a new activist program in an effort to engage every member to advocate for good-paying jobs. "It is time we change the way we do things," General President Giblin said in reassessing the union's political program. With those goals, the new program urged members to register through the union's website to receive email action alerts from the I.U.O.E. **Engineers Action and Response Network** that would enable them to easily contact elected officials regarding legislation to create and protect jobs for operating engineers.

General President Giblin retired in November 2011, at which time Brother Callahan, a third-generation operating engineer who was serving as the part-time general secretary-treasurer and Local No. 15 business manager, took over the position. The General Executive Board had earlier elected Brother Callahan to complete President Giblin's unexpired term through April 2013.

Cranes operated by members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 49 of Minneapolis erect the city's new U.S. Bank Stadium, which was built from December 2013 to July 2016 to serve as home of the Minnesota Vikings of the National Football League, among other uses.



The view of Buffalo-based I.U.O.E. Local No. 17 member Brother Paul Hopkins as he works on construction of the Harbor Center mixed-use development built from March 1, 2013, to August 2015 with two Liebherr tower cranes on site.

Prior to his appointment as general secretary-treasurer on July 1, 2011, Brother Callahan was seventh vice president of the international while also business manager of his home local. Upon the resignation of **General Secretary-Treasurer Christopher Hanley**, the General Executive Board during its May 24, 2011, meeting voted to transform the position of general secretary-treasurer – which had essentially been unchanged since at least 1938 – from full-time to part-time and ruled that "the occupant shall not be required by virtue of election to relinquish local union office."

Passage of a highway bill, the **Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act**, whose job-creating capability for operating engineers dwarfed that of any other single piece of legislation, was the top legislative priority for the I.U.O.E. during the 2012 congressional session. With the union's efforts, Congress approved the $105-billion highway measure, clearing the way for operating engineers and other construction workers to get back to rebuilding the country's vital transportation network after President Obama quickly signed the bill.

But on October 29, 2012, Hurricane Sandy unleashed its superstorm-level fury on the northeastern United States, decimating communities, including the homes and vehicles of more than 500 I.U.O.E. members, some of whom lost nearly everything they owned. Despite the overwhelming devastation and personal loss, thousands of operating engineers mobilized, using their skills to assist rescue crews and utility workers in gaining access to homes and communities cut off by flood waters or buried beneath sand and debris.

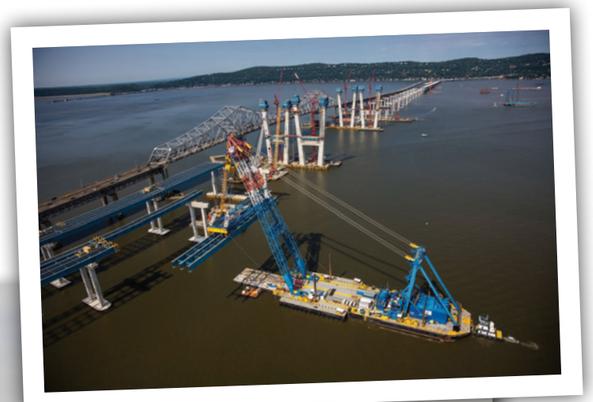
In the wake of that disaster, that year the **I.U.O.E. National Charity Fund** paid out over $1.7 million in claims resulting from the hurricane and other natural disasters in the

Gulf Coast region. In total, the union's locals and many individual members donated close to $500,000 to the fund.

The 38th I.U.O.E. General Convention, held in Hollywood, Florida, from April 28 to May 1 the following year, asked delegates and attendees to "Honor the Past, Shape the Future." In doing so, delegates unanimously adopted 17 constitutional amendments and 27 resolutions dealing with organizing; training; occupational health and safety; prevailing wage; economic and labor issues; and pension and healthcare benefits, in addition to various other issues. The convention also unanimously elected General President Callahan to his first full term, as well as all officers serving with the international at the time.

That year, investors had begun increasing their financing of capital construction projects again, especially in the energy sector for new and improved pipelines; expanded oil and gas refineries; renewable sources such as wind and solar; and construction of new liquefied-natural-gas export facilities. With the surge of work and more expected to come, and the fact that large numbers of skilled craft workers would be retiring within the next five to ten years, the construction industry was facing a shortage of skilled craft workers needed to properly build and maintain the facilities.

In response, the I.U.O.E. began expanding its training capacity on several fronts. Those efforts included the **National Training Fund** developing a specific training program for members working in refineries and petro-chemical plants and the **Stationary Engineers Apprenticeship and Training Trust** (SEATT) setting a new standard for petro-chemical-industry skill training.



Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 137, which represents operating engineers in the southeast New York counties of Westchester, Putnam and Dutchess, work on construction of the new Tappan Zee Bridge (officially named the Governor Mario M. Cuomo Bridge) over the Hudson River, which was built from spring 2013 into June 2020 to replace the original Tappan Zee Bridge that was the longest bridge in the state when it was completed in December 1955.

Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 57 of Rhode Island and Marine Division Local No. 25, based in New Jersey and covering the eastern seaboard of the United States, set the foundational structures for a new wind-energy project by placing five 400-ton steel jackets to support wind turbines in the open ocean, three miles off the coast of Block Island at depths of about 100 feet underwater, in 2015. The Block Island site, developed by Deepwater Wind, would be the first offshore wind farm in the United States once completed.

Together with its advanced training programs, the I.U.O.E. also began instituting a comprehensive organizing strategy to help convince contractors that the union can supply them with the highly skilled employees they required for the coming construction glut.

Flourishing natural-gas production in the United States continued to benefit operating engineers, who were in high demand within the industry during the first half of the decade. The epicenter of the natural gas business, the Marcellus Shale beneath Ohio, West Virginia, Pennsylvania and New York, was the largest shale gas deposit in North America and was a source of steady work for operating engineers within the region.

One of those related projects, the $1.3-billion **Brunswick County Power Station** in rural southern Virginia, for which construction had begun in September 2013, put many Norfolk-based Local No. 147 operating engineers back to work after some "pretty lean years," the Fall 2014 *International Operating Engineer* reported. After it would be completed in April 2016, the 1,360-megawatt power station, fueled by natural gas coming out of the Marcellus Shale, would replace electricity from two aging coal-fired plants that were to be retired for economic and environmental reasons.

As projects large and small, public and private throughout the United States and Canada began to "roar back to life," as General President Callahan pronounced in the Fall 2014 journal, that year the I.U.O.E. experienced an increase in manhours and steadily improving employment. In fact, in some regions, locals were challenged to keep pace with requests for

skilled workers – but were able to successfully meet those demands. What's more, the international was able to systematically recruit and replace, mainly through attrition, a full force of international representatives in the field and new department heads at I.U.O.E. headquarters that year, about which the general president announced, "I am pleased to report that these appointments have already begun to improve our operations and alter jurisdictional standings for the I.U.O.E."

Keeping Good Times Rolling

As positive momentum carried over into the second half of the 2010s, locals across the I.U.O.E. reported an increase in manhours throughout all of its traditional hoisting and portable work. Having experienced a shortage of crane operators in parts of the United States and Canada the year before as work proliferated, General President Callahan put out a call in the Winter 2015 *International Operating Engineer* to push locals and the membership to organize and recruit non-union engineers into the union while work was plentiful, declaring:

> ***"Our commitment to organizing, in both hoisting & portable and stationary, is steadfast and we will continue to deploy the resources needed to compete in this expanding market."***

To also further protect the health and safety of its members as they were out in the field and on an increasing number of jobsites, the union held the inaugural meeting of its new **I.U.O.E. Safety and Health Committee** on January 14, 2015, at its headquarters in Washington, D.C. The initial 11-member team was composed of I.U.O.E. members representing various backgrounds such as crane operators, heavy-equipment operators, stationary engineers, pipeline engineers and training instructors, and its mission was to represent I.U.O.E. interests during policy and rulemaking proceedings by providing real-world feedback and advice to I.U.O.E. **Safety and Health Director Donald Booth**.

Members of I.U.O.E. Marine Division Local No. 25, based in New Jersey, change cutter teeth on a hydraulic cutter suction dredge during a project in the union's southern jurisdiction in 2015.

The union's all-out programs were seemingly having their intended effect, as into 2015 its members were being employed in

These participants in Project: Accelerate!, a free, seven-week program that introduces women to career opportunities in construction across the State of Michigan, spent the fourth week of their course in the summer of 2017 at the I.U.O.E. Local No. 324 Construction Career Center in Howell, Michigan, learning about and operating heavy equipment. With I.U.O.E. participation, the program, which is sponsored by a coalition of businesses, trade unions and colleges, allows women to gain hands-on experience with the tools of the trade, such as the cranes, excavators and other equipment these women operated at the 555-acre, world-class Local 324 training facility.

areas that were historically not friendly toward unions. Perhaps most notably, union engineers were at work on construction of a number of large, complicated stadiums in states with so-called "right-to-work" laws, including the $1.6-billion, 71,000-seat **Mercedes-Benz Stadium** in downtown Atlanta, Georgia. Even without a project labor agreement, members of I.U.O.E. **Local No. 926** worked for seven signatory contractors on the retractable-roof facility between the start of construction in May 2014 until it opened in August 2017.

Elsewhere, in Florida – a notorious "right-to-work" state – operators from **Local No. 487** in Miami were involved in the two-year, $400-million renovation of that city's **Sun Life Stadium** from 2014 until it was completed in January 2016, including installing a state-of-the-art canopy around the top of the facility.

I.U.O.E. members also built stadiums in more-union-friendly states (based on their lack of "right-to-work" laws) at that time, including the $1.3-billion **Levi's Stadium** in California's San Francisco Bay Area, for which operating engineers from Local No. 3 were one of the first to break ground and had to deal with the state's more-stringent seismic requirements during construction from April 2012 to July 2014. In Minnesota, after Local No. 49 had for years been an outspoken supporter of a new stadium, the local's members helped build the $1.1-billion, enclosed **U.S. Bank Stadium** from December 2013 to July 2016, during which it was the largest construction project in the state.

New and emerging energy technologies also continued to bolster I.U.O.E. employment, and none more so than construction of the **Block Island Wind Farm** beginning in 2015, which would be the first commercial offshore wind farm in the United States when brought online in December 2016. Working under a project labor agreement with Deepwater Wind, more than 60 operating engineers with **Local No. 57** of Rhode Island and Local No. 25 placed five foundational installations for the 30-megawatt farm's five turbines three miles off the coast of the state's Block Island at depths of about 100 feet in the Atlantic Ocean. After the engineers

erected the turbines, they were then connected to the mainland by an underwater cable.

Yet another strong source of employment for I.U.O.E. members was put in place when the federal Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (or FAST Act) was made law in the United States on December 4, 2015, allowing state and local governments to move forward with critical transportation projects such as new highways and transit lines with the assurance of federal financial backing. Representing an overall investment of $305 billion, the FAST Act would keep thousands of operating engineers employed on ongoing projects while creating thousands of new job opportunities for the members over the ensuing five years.

The union made even more progress in 2016, during which it conducted its **Jurisdictional Best Practices** training sessions at 12 different locals, which were attended by roughly 100 business managers and business agents. The training was part of what the union called its "all-hands-on-deck approach" that had already led to the successful resolution of eight impediment-of-job-progress complaints filed before the "Plan for The Settlement of Jurisdictional Disputes" (a tool established by NABTU and five major construction-industry employer associations), with all rulings going in favor of the I.U.O.E.

In Canada that year, the union was extremely active in securing various agreements in the pipeline industry, including an arrangement on the $12-million TransCanada Pipeline Limited providing first right of refusal on all of its projects when entering the construction phase. The union also successfully lobbied the Canadian Federal Government for approval on three projects involving Enbridge Energy Partners totaling $7.8 billion and Kinder Morgan's proposed $6.8-billion Trans-Mountain Pipeline expansion.

As the economy continued to support strong employment for I.U.O.E. members through 2017 and into 2018, demand for the union's skilled operating engineers remained high. As such, the I.U.O.E. further strengthened its position within the industries it serves when it opened its **International Training & Education Center**, a state-of-the-art training facility near Houston, Texas, in April 2018.

Many of the more than 40 members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 150 of Chicago who worked at the Newton County (Indiana) Landfill in 2018 stand tall during a break from moving 1.2-million yards of dirt. *(Photo courtesy of Local 150 and member Tony Walker.)*

Cranes operated by members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 15 of New York City construct multiple highrise buildings in the new Hudson Yards mixed-use, planned development in the Chelsea and Hudson Yards neighborhoods of Manhattan in July 2018.

Staying Strong into Year 125

When more than 600 delegates convened for the I.U.O.E. 39th General Convention on May 6, 2018, in Hollywood, Florida, they were fully prepared to embrace the convention's theme, "The Future is Now," and take on current challenges the union was facing while also maintaining the positive gains it had made over the previous few years. In doing so, the delegates passed 32 resolutions dealing with skills training; occupational health and safety; prevailing wage; economic and labor issues; and pension and healthcare benefits. They also voted unanimously to re-elect General President Callahan to a second full, five-year term, as well as the entire international staff of **General Secretary-Treasurer Brian E. Hickey**, 14 international vice presidents and five trustees who represent members from every region of North America.

While also helping to get more union-friendly candidates elected at local, state and federal levels around the United States, the union played a major role in most of the labor movement's significant triumphs that year, including a victory in Missouri when voters in August balloting rejected that state's proposed anti-union "right-to-work" law. A massive statewide campaign in which all I.U.O.E. locals were heavily involved culminated in a resounding 67-percent of voters voicing their opposition to the effort to weaken Missouri's unions.

As a result of those and other positive developments, including its locals winning 75 percent of their N.L.R.B. elections for union representation in shops around North America, the union grew in numbers – despite an overall decrease in union membership in the labor movement in 2018. During the year, the I.U.O.E. would add more than 6,000 new members to boost its total international

Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 30, which covers parts of New York and Connecticut, march in the 2019 New York City Labor Day parade.

membership to about 395,000 – a nearly 10-percent increase from the economic downturn the union endured a decade earlier.

Its organizing campaigns and political activities still proving successful, 2019 was another extremely productive year for the I.U.O.E.'s operating engineers throughout North America, during which the union continued to grow membership and gain market share while working on major projects including the $1.2-billion expansion of Terminal 5 at **O'Hare International Airport** in Chicago. Among many union-wide organizing victories that year, a multi-local drive on a hydrovac contractor in the northeast gave more than 200 workers their first union contract, and later that fall a campaign involving several locals in the eastern United States organized more than 340 workers into the I.U.O.E. by October.

In Canada, employment of I.U.O.E. members in 2019 improved over the previous year, as well.

Concurrently, the union experienced an extremely high rate of success with contract grievances settled and won by I.U.O.E. regional directors and international representatives under a myriad of international and national agreements. What's more, several national contractors entered the wind-turbine business that year, and ongoing conversations and negotiations with those employers helped ensure that the I.U.O.E.'s equity and jurisdiction in that market were properly and securely protected.

To sustain and expand that growth, the union continued to widen its training programs and set the standards for others to follow in the hoisting and portable, pipeline and stationary engineering industries. As such, the International Training & Education Center's 2019-2020 Pipeline Training Program alone offered 175 classes during the training season, and throughout 2019, the facility conducted nearly 125,000 total training hours for members.

By year's end, a surge in membership put the union at a 10-year high of more than 400,000 members. Following a drop off in 2008 after a steady rise in membership in the 1990s and 2000s, the efforts of I.U.O.E. headquarters and field staff in the organizing and special projects departments, as well as the work of locals showcasing the union's unparalleled training, state-of-the-art equipment and promising career paths, drove the continued increase in new members during the 2010s.

Despite its many gains, among the challenges the union faced in 2019 were ongoing infringements by other crafts on the traditional work jurisdiction of the I.U.O.E., which was compounded by the N.L.R.B.'s continued support of the I.B.E.W. position that their outside-lineman branch was not bound to the Plan for the Settlement of Jurisdictional Disputes. By year's end, while some positive progress had been made with the I.B.E.W., little could be accomplished and the outside linemen continued to expand their scope of jurisdiction into work traditionally handled by operating engineers.

Regardless, as 2019 was coming to a close, General President Callahan optimistically reflected in the Fall *International Operating Engineer*, "This past year, like so many, had its highs and lows, but our union marches forward with unity and strength. We are ready for the challenges and opportunities that await us in the new year."

But the momentum the I.U.O.E. had built as it moved into and through early 2020 was abruptly and tragically checked when the global, lethal **coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic** struck the United States and

Locals throughout the I.U.O.E. have a long and proud history of supporting community and charitable causes. Here, Local No. 904 in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador in Canada donates $1 million to the Janeway Children's Hospital Foundation in December 2019, which at the time was the largest donation ever received by the foundation.

I.U.O.E. Local No. 4 in Boston, some of whose members and Business Manager William McLaughlin (fifth from left) are shown here, partners with Boston Children's Hospital every year for a blood drive at the local's training center.

Canada beginning in January. Nationwide responses to the outbreak included prohibition and cancellation of large-scale gatherings, stay-at-home orders and school closures.

The union operating engineers in the United States and Canada were likewise adversely affected by the impact of the pandemic. By March in the I.U.O.E. northeast region, for example, many states had taken dramatic steps to curtail the spread of the virus, and the State of Pennsylvania shut down construction entirely. Notably, work on the new, $6-billion **Shell Oil Company Pennsylvania Petrochemicals Complex**, an ethylene cracker plant in Potter Township, Pennsylvania, was stopped, affecting the employment of over 500 I.U.O.E. members, and on March 15, the City of Boston shut down all construction projects, idling a large number of members in that area. The union's stationary locals in the northeast were seriously affected as well, as many universities in which they were employed closed and, therefore, required only minimal on-site staffing.

The virus also had a major impact on locals throughout Canada, as most had closed their offices by March 2020 and their business representatives and staff were working remotely. Meanwhile, construction sites around the country were operating at reduced capacities as the result of new government regulations and safety protocols.

By April, after Washington, D.C., city officials ordered certain businesses to close, much of the I.U.O.E. international staff was also working remotely. As the pandemic persisted, by June the entire Construction Department was working at full capacity off site as the result of stay-at-home mandates put in place to curb COVID-19.

However, the I.U.O.E. did respond to the crisis to help address the needs of its membership. During a special meeting on April 27 held via teleconference, for instance, the union's Executive Board, noting that the nationwide shortage of personal protective

Members of I.U.O.E. Local No. 132 of Charleston, West Virginia, employed by Blue Flame Pipeline work on a project in Middlebourne, West Virginia, in 2019.

As they each wear a face covering to help protect against the COVID-19 coronavirus during the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, Outreach Coordinator John Hartwell (left) of I.U.O.E. Local No. 324 in Michigan gives instructions on operating an autonomous spyder crane to three Detroit Workforce of the Future participants during an event for the union-sponsored pre-apprenticeship program for high-school students at Detroit Metropolitan Airport on July 21, 2020.

masks was "of major concern," approved funding for purchasing masks for all locals' staff and members.

Meanwhile, the union's Stationary Department coordinated with the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences to create a **virus response training resource** for members. The PowerPoint demonstrating the response training specific to the I.U.O.E. was presented via webinar on April 13, 2020, with over 100 I.U.O.E. leaders attending. Two additional webinars focusing on helping members to cope with stress and hardship during the pandemic were presented on April 27 and May 11.

The COVID-19 pandemic continued throughout the year and into 2021, taking hundreds of thousands of lives across the globe, including several I.U.O.E. members and retirees throughout North America. Employment for the union's operating engineers did improve, however; in its western region, for example, overall man hours for hoisting & portable locals were near normal for the fall season, although work for stationary locals was still down as a result of the disease.

Subsequently, **Western Regional Director Derek Donley** expressed the uncertainty of the times, even as employment conditions seemed to be improving, during the General Executive Board meeting of October 8, 2020, when he concluded his report by stating, "The overall work picture is up in the air as the nation continues to battle this health crisis."

In 2021, as the I.U.O.E. approaches the 125th anniversary of its founding and, along with the entire world, continues the fight against the pandemic, the union remains a diversified trade organization that represents operating engineers working as heavy equipment operators, mechanics and surveyors in the construction industry and stationary engineers who work in operations and maintenance in building and industrial complexes. The I.U.O.E. also represents nurses and other health industry workers, public employees in a wide variety of occupations, and a number of job classifications in the petrochemical industry.

With its focus squarely on the well-being of all those members, the union is committed to fostering its training, organizing and member-welfare programs. As such, the I.U.O.E. is well-prepared to progress beyond the pandemic and all other challenges – as it always has – and into its next 125 years. ■

"I am very proud of our rich heritage, which for many of us includes multiple generations of I.U.O.E. members. I would like to thank our forefathers, including my own grandfather, for helping to build the foundations on which this great organization stands today. Without the pride and determination passed down from our founders and previous generations, we would not have the opportunities that we have today and which we will pass along to the next generation of operating engineers.

Every day across the United States and Canada, we can see evidence of our labor. As we celebrate 125 years, let us honor those who came before us and those who work beside us by recommitting ourselves to leave our union even stronger for future generations. That is our greatest tradition."

– I.U.O.E. General President James T. Callahan