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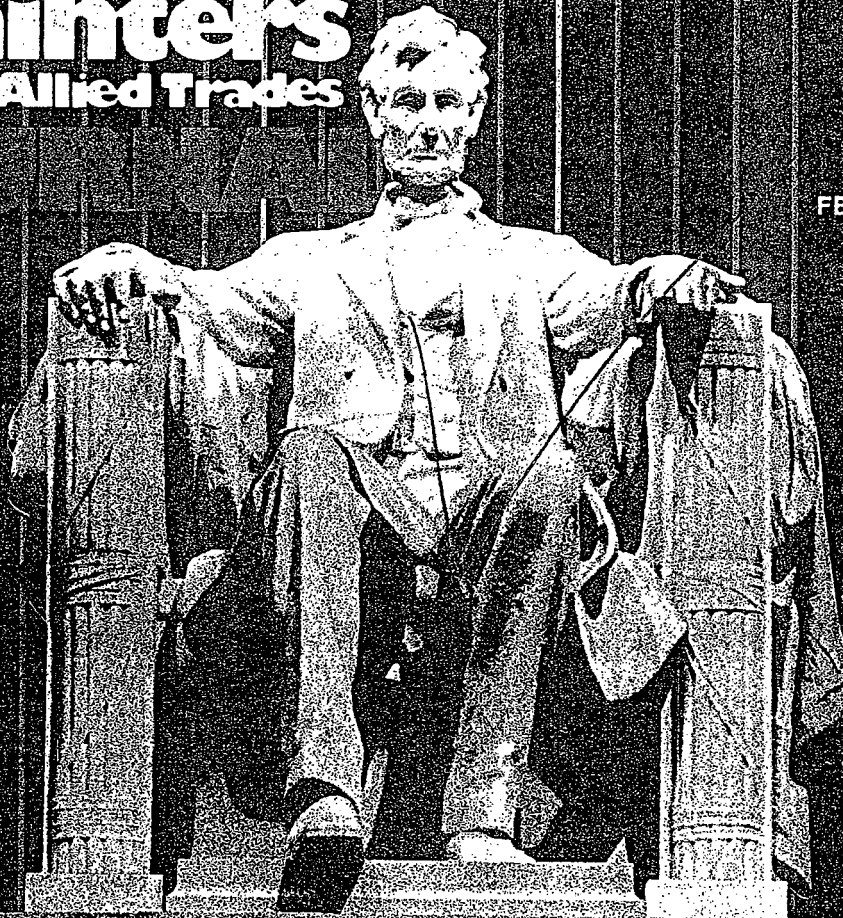
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Painters and Allied Trades

FEBRUARY 1984



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Painters and Allied Trades JOURNAL

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Robert J. Petersdorf
General Secretary-Treasurer

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Letters . . . on Deficits and Job Health

Dear Editor,

The deficit spending of the Reagan Administration is insurance we are headed for a deeper recession in the future, in spite of the vitality of the business community. Purposely created unemployment to bring down inflation has brought misery and suffering to millions and most certainly will be an issue in 1984. Wage and price controls are humane and even-handed but would cut into profits of the rich and powerful. A no-no with President Reagan.

In spite of huge cuts in social programs funding and the resulting suffering, Reagan is asking for more cuts in social spending and a raise in the already huge and wasteful military spending program.

The militant foreign policy of President Reagan and the wars he has our people dying in should most certainly be an issue in 1984. We are losing the long standing trust and friendship of our allies and deepening the enmity of our foes. A military confrontation is fast approaching unless an about-face is made. Reagan places reliance on atomic weaponry as the need for our national security. Atomic weapons that, if used, mean the extinction of life on earth.

We go merrily on developing atomic energy and weapons while the knowledge of waste disposal escapes us. These atomic wastes contaminate our natural resources, plant and animal life.

Fraternally,
Floyd Ferrell
Akron Local 841

Dear Editor,

Lech Walesa is a hero of the free world. Business, government and labor laud his fight against tyranny. He demonstrates great strength and character against great odds in his fight for just treatment for the working masses of his country.

But would the likes of a Lech Walesa really be welcome in this country? Would government embrace a man who would resist its policies which create high unemployment, reduced benefits for the elderly and needy, says the status quo is just fine in equality and creates an atmosphere which creates greater and greater profits for big business. Would business applaud a man who would expose them as greedy businessmen, paying themselves fantastic salaries, living back in their plush corporate offices making wrong decisions then saying "You, Workers!, You pay! Take a pay cut, no more Health Insurance, no Pension Plan. Take it or we'll hire someone else."

The working man is hearing that right now across America. He has seen good times and has become complacent. His stand for his share of America's wealth. This present atmosphere is a great shock to him. He is scared and does not know who to turn to. We see him on TV, smiling and saying, "Yes, I'll take my cut in order to save my job."

But let there be no mistake. Let business and government both know, the smile is just on the surface. There is great bitterness seething in the souls of these workers and they are looking for some answer other than surrender. The leadership of the working class has been wallowing in mediocrity. We feel abandoned, without a spokesman as a focal point. We know there is hope ahead though.

Someday a great leader like Lech Walesa will come along to rally and unite the working class in regaining their fair share of our wealth. No, government won't like him. They'll arrest him from time to time. The FBI will make a file on him. Business won't like him. He'll be called a hooligan and a rebel rouser. We have our backs to the wall and we're ready to come out fighting. We're just waiting for that leadership. There will be a struggle for equality to rival any we have seen in the past.

Yes, the likes of Lech Walesa will emerge someday in America; and, no, some people won't like him. But out of this turmoil, as in each turmoil that America has gone through in the past, we will emerge as an even greater symbol of freedom and equality to all the world.

Fraternally,
Joe B. Sullivan
San Diego Local 333

Dear Editor,

I just received the December *Journal*. I was reading about "Poisonous Paint the New Villain of Dynasty" on page 24. I can remember having a belly full of bricks for years from spraying pure lead paint when I was a very dumb young man. I didn't know any better and there were no laws of protection then. Also it was during the big depression of the 1930's, and you were lucky to have any kind of a job. If you didn't have a job that would kill you, you could starve to death; no one gave a damn either way.

I retired in 1974. My years as a master painter were spent in Louisville, Ky. I was recording secretary once and president of Local 118 four terms. I was president when Guy Leber was business agent and also when he moved up to general vice president of the International. We were both foremen at various times for the Du Pont Company at the Charlestown, Indiana, Powder Plant and Du Pont Neoprene Plant in Louisville. We had a very good relationship.

I can say that Guy Leber and I were always out front in the Du Pont Safety Programs. Each craft met every week for the safety meetings that each foreman had with his gang of men. For two years Guy and I led all crafts for not having a major injury or safety violation. I can say the Du Pont Company really cares about their people.

Now about poisonous paints, products, etc. I know you have read about asbestos in the school rooms and various buildings. Why don't you bring this to the attention of the Brotherhood to roll or spray the asbestos ceilings with vinyl paints to seal in all the fibres? Also the back side can be sprayed with drywall sealer, also all the asbestos pipe coverings, which we used to paint with lead paint.

Fraternally,
Owen I. Martin

Editor's Note: IBPAT/OSH has a complete library of training and public education materials on asbestos encapsulation. Several locals have already used these materials in setting up asbestos-encapsulation programs. Business Representatives or Apprenticeship Coordinators interested in receiving information on asbestos-encapsulation should contact IBPAT/OSH for complete information.