



## Statement of Principles

### WORKING PEOPLE *NEED* UNIONS

We formed our union because we could not depend on employers to provide us with dignity, a measure of security, and a rising standard of living. And, over the years, we did make impressive gains. But our objectives remain far from fulfilled, and, with even our past gains under attack, **WE NEED UNIONS TODAY AS MUCH AS WE EVER DID.**

### DEMOCRATIC UNIONISM

Unions are voluntary organizations. We can only be effective if the membership knows the union truly belongs to them. This means a union which reflects the goals of its membership, allows the members full participation, and encourages workers to develop their own skills and understanding.

Internal democracy also means we view each other as **EQUALS**. Racial discrimination or sexual harassment violate our principles, undermine our solidarity and erode our strength. We not only oppose such responses but will actively work to overcome them.

### UNIONS AND A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY

In our society, private corporations control the workplace and set the framework for all employees. By way of this economic power, they influence the laws, policies, and ideas of society. Unions are central to our society being democratic because:

Unions bring a measure of democracy to the place of work, which is so central to people's lives.

Unions act as a partial counterweight to corporate power and the corporate agenda in society more generally.

### SOCIAL UNIONISM

Our collective bargaining strength is based on our internal organization and mobilization, but it is also influenced by the more general climate around us: laws, policies, the economy, and social attitudes. Furthermore, our lives extend beyond collective bargaining and the workplace and we must concern ourselves with issues like housing, taxation, education, medical services, the environment, the international economy.

Social unionism means unionism which is rooted in the workplace but understands the **IMPORTANCE OF PARTICIPATING IN, AND INFLUENCING, THE GENERAL DIRECTION OF SOCIETY.**

### BUILDING TOMORROW

Unions were born out of struggles to change the status quo. Our successes extended progress beyond unions themselves, and our struggles became part of a **SOCIAL MOVEMENT** for a more humane society here and for peace and justice internationally. These struggles were first steps towards developing the confidence that change is possible and that our vision of society is **NOT JUST A DREAM.**

*We are proud of the leadership role we have played, aware of the difficulties continued progressive change will face, and committed to building the social solidarity that can take on this challenge.*