

February 17, 2005

TO: All CWA Members, Retirees and Activists

SUBJECT: Preliminary Observations on CWA Trip To India!



(Beverly Hicks, Pete Castelli, Steve Tisza, Kalai)

I have just returned from an historic trip to India sponsored by the AFL-CIO American Center for International Labor Solidarity Center and the Communications Workers of America International Exchange Program. It was truly an experience of a lifetime for Beverly Hicks, Administrative Assistant to the CWA District 3 VP and me.

I especially want to thank Pete Castelli, Field Representative of the AFL-CIO Solidarity Center, Sri Lanka Office and Kalai a member of his staff in Sri Lanka, who is the Consultant for the Solidarity Center's India Program. Pete and Kalai, along with leaders of the ITPF (IT Professional Forum) in Mumbai, Chennai and Bangalore, coordinated our field visits to various Call Centers, IT Enabled Services Centers, Medical Transcription Centers, BPO's, Multimedia and Animation Centers, Software Development Centers, Healthcare Services and Medical Claims Processing Centers, etc. We also met with various Indian Trade Union Representatives and members of the India Press in these cities. Pete and Kalai are true unionists and very dedicated to their assignment with the AFL-CIO Solidarity Center and deserve much credit for the success of our trip. Beverly and I will jointly prepare a report on our visit to India in the near future, to be published in the CWA News.

India was without a doubt an eye-opening experience for me. Even though India on the whole is a third world country and poverty is widespread, what's happening in India is incredible. After a week at home recovering from a very full agenda, jet-lag, the flu and gathering my thoughts about my experiences in India, I am more convinced than ever that unless the joint policies of the United States Government and Corporate America are changed, our grandchildren will be the first generation of Americans who will grow up not having it as good as their parents and America will be well on our way to becoming a third world country.

On the other hand, Indian Government and Indian Corporations have been working together, especially since the advent of the Internet Revolution and the many jobs related to the IT sector. The outsourcing of American call center, medical transcriptions, help desks, etc is just the beginning of the millions of jobs India is preparing to receive from American corporations. The joint policies of the Indian Government and Indian Corporations are creating a new class of workers in India to fill these jobs and IT jobs of the future with the educated youth of India. Although their pay is 1/10th of comparable American wages, they are "middle class" for Indian workers. Hence, a new class of college-educated workers is being created in the Indian society.

I believe the shortsighted policies of the United States Government and Corporate America are devoted to bottom line profits and higher CEO pay and bonuses at the expense of American middle-class families. Together, this US corporate/government cabal would rather utilize the youth of America as cannon fodder in Iraq, Afghanistan and in the near future, Iran, rather than keeping current good-paying middle-class and high-tech American jobs of the future in America, solely because of cheap labor and higher profits. Perhaps, when the first job of a CEO of an American corporation is outsourced offshore, the US government and corporate America will come to the table to address this important issue in a positive way. If they don't, America will soon become a third world country.

In addition to a joint CWA report on our visit to India, I plan to continue with periodic reports on what I experienced while I was in India and will post them on our local website.

In Unity-Strength & Solidarity:

**Steve Tisza, President
CWA Local 4250
Chicago**