



Leo W. Gerard
International President

November 5, 2008

To: All USW Local Leadership and Staff

Today we celebrate one of the most significant victories in our union's history! The election last night of Barack Obama signals an end to the presidency of George W. Bush and his era of unparalleled attacks against American workers and their unions, as well as the economic well being of our members and their families. The founders of the many unions that now form our USW union, on whose shoulders we stand, could often only dream of the victories for workers that we now have within our grasp.

The Bush Republican nightmare has ended, time for change has come and America's future is bright!

I have never been more proud or humbled to be the president of this great union of ours. I can't begin to thank each of you enough for your dedication and tireless efforts to make this election a tremendous success. President-Elect Obama could not have won this election without your efforts. This victory is as much yours as it is anyone else's, and for that you and our members should be very proud.

During the Bush years, I know many of us suffered under the weight of his brutal economy. Many have lost their jobs or live in constant fear of it. Many have lost their health care or feel it slipping away. Many are worried about the retirement security they have long planned on enjoying after a lifetime of hard work. Many have lost their homes or are on the brink of foreclosure. Many have had to tell their children or grandchildren that attending college is no longer an option. Many have prayed for this day to come. That day is now here because of your hard work.

Today on your behalf, I have shared our collective congratulations with President-Elect Obama and have told him how proud we are of him. I told him again of the economic burdens USW members are carrying and how we now are able to see the light at the end of the long, dark tunnel we have been in for eight years.

I reminded him of your tireless efforts to elect him for the change he will bring. I told of the hundreds of thousands of phone calls, neighborhood house visits and countless one-on-one workplace contacts you have made and of the personal sacrifices you have given. I also told President-Elect Obama that we understand the economic chaos he has inherited and the massive effort it will take to turn this country around.

Finally, I let him know that we will, in the best USW tradition, work even harder to promote his agenda for change that will help working families move forward and to make sure the plans he has become reality.

President-Elect Obama has seen what our support has meant to his campaign. He now knows the Steelworkers. He understands that we never quit, never back down, never back up and will not be distracted for one second from the goal that we have worked so very hard for. Our work is not over – it has only just begun.

The Employee Free Choice Act, health care reform, trade that protects workers and creates jobs, retirement security and other critical worker issues are now within our reach, and I have pledged to President-Elect Obama that the USW will not rest until these become law.

President Obama will never be able to accomplish these changes alone. We must be the ones to drive this agenda forward and turn our plans into reality. Nothing that was ever worth so much came for free. Power is not relinquished without struggle. We must put all of our efforts into this, and we will!

The USW will, as we have throughout our history, lead the fight in congress and across America to secure this future for workers and for our children and grandchildren. It's who we are, and it's what we do.

This is our time! We must seize this moment, and in doing so, we will rewrite the future.

So, celebrate our victory and rest up today, for tomorrow we begin to drive our agenda forward for us, our families, our union and all of those who will come after us that will stand on our shoulders to realize the American dream.

In solidarity and with great appreciation for all you have done,



Leo W. Gerard
International President

Att.

c: USW International Executive Board
All USW Activists