

Eduardo Diaz Union-To-Union International Solidarity Fund

In 1960, CWA took the bold and unusual step of establishing Operation South America (OSA). The purpose was to provide financial, technical, and material support to workers in different countries in Central and South America, the Caribbean area as well as to the Cuban Telephone Workers in Exile. In 1961, the program proved so successful that we made it an ongoing CWA-wide program.

The structure of Operation South America has been from the beginning straightforward and simple. Small project plans are developed by the regional office of the Communications International (C.I.) and put before CWA Districts. Each participating District selects a project to sponsor. The funded unions or activists, in turn, provide periodic activity reports. C.I. verifies implementation and CWA staff monitors overall performance. The modest contributions provided by OSA have in many instances sustained struggling unions and kept them afloat.

Much has happened in the world since OSA was started. No one could have imagined the power and clout of the multinationals, the rapid globalization of the workplace, the exploitation of workers in developing countries by Multinational Corporations, the use of prison and child labor, the historic collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the prominent role which the Polish labor movement played in its demise.

The world is a different place and the needs of labor activists in developing countries, although just as urgent today as in the past, are much broader and more directly intertwined with our own well-being. As difficult as it is to organize unions in many of the countries of the world, it is at least twice as difficult for women to gain a voice on the job. Women have emerged as the most exploited of any group of adult workers.

CWA has always been a leader in International Solidarity. Our work in this area has always been guided by the belief that we can create a better world where all workers, whichever country they live in and whichever industry they are working in, must have the right to join and organize unions. To continue that important endeavor,

Resolved: That we commend the difficult and at times life threatening work that has been done over the years by union activists around the world. And celebrate their tireless efforts to raise the living standards of workers by organizing free and independent unions.

Resolved: That Project South America shall be known in the future as Union-to-Union: A Program of International Solidarity.

Resolved: That the Union-to-Union Project will be voluntarily funded by CWA Locals at a minimum of \$.10 per member per year and at a level decided by each District.

Resolved: That every District shall select its own Union-to-Union project from choices offered by CWA Headquarters in consultation with our Secretariat, Communications International or the AFL-CIO Solidarity Center.

Resolved: That special priority be given to assisting the living standards of working women by sponsoring Union-to-Union projects aimed at organizing and empowering women workers.