Lynn Williams Honored

Banquet October 6

The recipient of the Eugene V. Debs Award for 1990 is Lynn R. Williams, International President, United Steelworkers of America. In choosing Williams for this high honor, note has been taken of the progressive, activist role he has played as a labor leader for most of his adult life. He has earned a reputation from those inside and outside the labor movement as an articulate, fair-minded and tough labor leader. Probably the first Canadian born person to be named for the Debs award, his leadership has extended internationally, beyond the boundaries of North American labor organizations. He presently serves on the AFL-CIO Executive Council, and the Industrial Union Department's Executive Council.

Lynn Williams has been a union man all his adult life. He became a member of the USWA in 1947, when he joined Local 2900 after taking a job at the Inglis plant in Toronto. His first union job was as an organizer with the Canadian Congress of Labour, forerunner of the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC). He accepted a position on the USWA staff in 1956, and under his leadership the union doubled its membership in the Niagara Peninsula. In 1965, he was transferred to District 5 headquarters in Toronto and became heavily involved in bargaining, labor education, and political action. As director of that 130,000 member district from 1973 to 1977, he moved aggressively to expand safety and health programs and increase the tempo of organizing activities. Between 1973 and 1977, he served on the CLC Executive Council.

In 1977, he was elected to the position of USWA International Secretary. In 1983, he became the fifth International President of the USWA, following the death of President McBride, and was unopposed for election to full terms in 1985, and again in 1989.

Williams' tenure as president has been marked by a number of progressive programs to confront the economic and political realities of the times, and he
This An Anniversary Year
The Debs Home 1890-1990

Planning was begun more than a year ago for appropriate activities to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the building of the Debs Home. Many things were talked about, some of them have been developed, and a number of unforeseen activities and events have come along to fill 1990 with appropriate and worthwhile activities. The house was finished and occupied by Kate and Gene Debs in late winter or early spring, and there were activities at the home this spring, 100 years later. There was the Earth Day planting of a tree which hopefully will be with the Home for the next centennial. Then, April 28 we had the unveiling ceremony for plaques in the Memorial Gardens honoring Peter J. McGuire and Patrick J. Quinlan.

Raymond Berndt Recalls
A Page From The Past

An informative letter came recently from Raymond H. Berndt, in which he recollects some of the activities which helped save the Debs Home from the wrecking ball. Mr. Berndt was Director of UAW Region 3 from 1947 until 1971. He now lives in Florida, and expresses regret that he no longer can participate in foundation functions.

Berndt recalls how, at Tilford Dudley’s suggestion, he initiated efforts to get the UAW International to make a contribution toward the purchase of the Debs property. Then, on the final day of the option to buy, Mr. Berndt met Ned Bush at the bank in Terre Haute with a cheque and the purchase of the home was finalized.

He also recalled that he raised with then Senator Birch Bayh the matter of having the Home placed on the registry of National Historical Landmarks. Also, he was able to make arrangements for the Mastic Corporation in South Bend, then under contract with the UAW, to supply the siding material presently on the Home.

Those were crucial days in the life of the Debs Home, and involved some of the people and the specific actions which helped preserve the Home for succeeding generations. Without such actions there would be no centennial to celebrate. Our thanks for what they did!

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If you plan to overnight in Terre Haute the day of the banquet, you should make hotel reservations as soon as possible. Don’t put it off!
four plaques honoring pioneer labor leaders. The evening program shifts to the Hulman Center banquet hall, and the banquet program will include an appropriate piece on significant occasions in the life of the house which Kate and Gene Debs built.

The annual award banquet is always the highlight of the year for foundation members, and the focus of that event, of course, is the person being honored with the Eugene V. Debs Award. But this year some billing has to be given to the occasion of the induction of Debs into the U.S. Department of Labor’s Hall of Fame. By the way, if you belong to an organization with Washington offices, you may wish to indicate to your organization’s leadership that you would like to see your organization represented at the induction ceremony.

A century ago Gene Debs was a young man devoting his considerable energies and talents to the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen, as its Grand Secretary and Editor of Locomotive Firemen’s Magazine. It is most encouraging and gratifying that the story of Gene Debs is still being told and he is increasingly being given his appropriate place in American history.

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**Two Books On Labor**

Among recently published books dealing with Debs is Edward K. Spann’s *Brotherly Tomorrows* (Columbia University Press). In this work, Spann, a director of the Debs Foundation traces the development of what he calls Radical Social Idealism from Robert Owen’s experiment at New Harmony to the collapse of Debsian socialism during the World War I era. Debs is the leading figure in each of the last three chapters of the book, first as a figure of hope and then as a figure of tragedy in a story of the rise and fall of radical idealism in America.

Also recently out is *Tall Annie*, by Virginia Law Burns, which is a biography of Ana K. Clemenc, who was an early 20th century activist in the copper mining communities of Michigan’s Upper Peninsula. Tall Annie is written largely for a young audience, and is published by Enterprise Press, Bath, Michigan. Both books should be available in better libraries across the country, and can be ordered through your local book store.
Four Pioneers
of Labor
Memorialized

Within a month of when Eugene Debs and three other historic figures will be inducted into the Labor Hall of Fame in Washington, four outstanding pioneers of the labor movement will be inducted into the Debs Home’s Memorial Garden. These four individuals contributed much to the formative years of the American labor movement, sometimes at personal cost.

Mother Jones is a legend larger than life, who on occasion worked with Debs among miners to motivate and inspire strikers and their families. Sidney Hillman was the forceful and dynamic leader of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union, and his political activism had considerable impact on progressive American politics early in this century. Philip Murray, as a key figure in the formation of the Congress of Industrial Organization, and first president of the United Steel Workers of America, helped bring to reality the industrial type of unions Debs advocated. Patrick Gorman was one of those strong labor leaders who followed the Debsian tradition. Gorman and a few other “progressives” organized a commemorative service in honor of Debs in 1955 on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of Debs’ birthday. He served many years as president of the Eugene V. Debs Foundation. His major contributions to organized labor came from his leadership position in the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen of N.A. Known as “Mr. Amalgamated,” his vision and forceful leadership eventuated in the formation of the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union, AFL-CIO and CLC.

These four plaques will go on the north section of the garden’s memorial wall. They bring to twelve the labor movement pioneers memorialized at the Debs Home. The unveiling ceremony is scheduled for 3:30 p.m. the day of the banquet. We hope to have a large turnout for all the events of the day. At a minimum, banquet guests should make every effort to come early enough for the unveiling ceremony, before or after which they may tour the Home, then proceed the two blocks to the banquet site.
Coal Camp Memories
A Banquet Day Special

When Hallie Marie was a little girl, life was simpler. She walked to a one-room school and her biggest problem was that “mean, ole Jimmy Kent.” But life goes on in a coal camp of the 1920’s and Hallie Marie grew up. She fell in love with Jimmy Kent, married him and raised a family in the coal camp known as Kayford. Life didn’t seem so simple now, and Hallie Marie found out just how hard it was to make ends meet. After Jimmy dies in a mine accident, Hallie Marie is faced with raising the children alone.

“Coal Camp Memories” is a one-act play, one-woman play. It was written and performed by Karen Vuranch who researched the topic by talking to those who lived in the coal camps. Hallie Marie’s story is a composite of many people who lived during those times.

The play chronicles the life of Hallie Marie Jones. From an exuberant ten year old, to a demure teenager, to a young wife, to an old woman wise with years. Vuranch applies the make-up that completes the aging process in front of the audience. During these scene changes, traditional musicians play Appalachian music.

Vuranch created the play from recollections of those who lived in the coal camps. However, the production grows with each performance. “So many times after a performance, someone from the audience would come to me after the show with another family story or vignette,” said Vuranch. “I have tried to incorporate as many of these stories as I can.”

Karen has a background in theatre. She studied theatre at Ashland College in Ashland, Ohio and has performed in both professional and community productions in West Virginia and Ohio.

Performances are at 7:30 p.m., Friday, October 5, and 10:30 a.m., Saturday. Both are in the University School auditorium, which is situated across the street west of the Debs Home. The foundation is pleased to make this dramatic presentation available to its members and banquet guests, and to the general public. Tickets may be ordered by request to P.O. Box 843, Terre Haute, IN 47808, or by calling 812-237-3443. Tickets are $5.00 for adults and $2.50 for students. A dinner ticket serves as a free pass to either performance.
has received acclaim for his active role in world labor circles by promoting trade policies and human rights. He is an advocate for workplace participation initiatives to give workers greater input in the workplace, the implementation of employee stock ownership plans, and the multi-company Career Development Institute offering job training and educational services for union members and their families.

Recent honors for Mr. Williams have included “Outstanding Human Rights Contributions Award” from the International Labor Organization (1989), and the “Labor-Management Cooperation Award” from the Work in America Institute (1990). We are pleased to honor him with the 1990 Eugene V. Debs Award, and trust that many of you will be able to join us October 6 for the day’s celebration.

Fuel For Thought

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This double whammy of energy price crunch and population crush is setting the stage for disaster.

It’s O.K. to be concerned about what higher oil prices are doing to your pocketbook, and could do to your job. It may well be, however, that in the long run, your standard of living and that of your children will be effected much more adversely by the deterioration of the economies and the continued rampant population growth of many countries in Africa, Asia, and Central and South America. What is happening in these countries is guaranteeing the world an abundant supply of double cheap labor for generations to come.

Membership Dues: The Eugene V. Debs Foundation

NAME ________________________________

STREET __________________________________________

CITY ___________________ STATE ____ ZIP ___

☐ $ 5.00 - Student Member ☐ $100.00 - Sustaining Member
☐ $10.00 - Regular Member ☐ $250.00 - Life Member
☐ $25.00 - Supporting Member ☐ Other ____________ ____________

Amount

Enclose remittance. Make checks payable to the Debs Foundation.

The Debs Foundation
P.O. Box 843
Terre Haute, IN 47808

Your dues and contributions are tax deductible. The Foundation owns and maintains the Debs Home and offers several educational and cultural programs. We are a voluntary organization with no paid staff.

HALL OF FAME

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range of national labor legislation in the first half of the 20th century. Gompers needs no introduction here. Cyrus Ching, a highly progressive corporate executive as de facto Director of Industrial Relations for U.S. Rubber Company, established the reputation as a progressive manager who could be seen as “the workers’ man in management.” In 1947, Ching became the first director of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, the creation of which independent body was considered perhaps the least controversial of the provisions of the Taft-Hartley Act.

Last year’s honorees in the Labor Hall of Fame need no introduction here: John L. Lewis, George Meany, A. Philip Randolph and James P. Mitchell (Secretary of Labor in the Eisenhower administration). The composition of the 1990 group of honorees is, as this writer sees it, in itself a tribute to Gene Debs’ heroic life. Debs’ progressive advocacy of industrial unionism came to reality in such labor organizations as Reuther’s United Auto Workers, and Debs’ political agenda was considerably advanced by the Wagner Act, legislation which is regarded as labor’s Magna Carta and named after its sponsor, Senator Robert Wagner. Henry J. Kaiser, industrialist, was known for his company’s highly progressive labor relations policies and health care plan.

The induction ceremony will be conducted near mid-November. Richard Conn of FDL recently spent two days in Terrre Haute working with us on the materials to be included in Debs’ kiosk. One feature of each display is a painting commissioned for this purpose, so a likeness of Gene Debs and other carefully selected memorabilia will make this an appropriate memorial for the man, and an attractive, educational experience for the many visitors to the Department of Labor foyer. We tip our hats to FDL and its Labor Hall of Fame selection committee for recognizing Eugene Debs’ unique contributions to American social life.
ANNUAL AWARDS BANQUET
TERRE HAUTE

October 6 1990

HONORING
LYNN K. WILLIAMS

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Friday, October 5
7:30 p.m. - Coal Camp Memories: A Dramatic Interpretation
(University School Auditorium, across west of Debs Home)

Saturday, October 6
10:30 a.m. - Coal Camp Memories, repeat of Friday evening
1:30 p.m. - Documentary Film on Debs' Life
(Holmstead Hall 102, ISU campus)
3:00 p.m. - Reception at Debs Home
3:30 p.m. - Plaque Unveilings at Debs Home
6:00 p.m. - Social Hour and Reception (cash bar): Hulman Center
7:00 p.m. - Banquet Honoring Lynn Williams: Hulman Center

On Saturday the Debs Home will be open from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.

The fall business meeting will be Sunday, October 7,
at 9:00 a.m. at the Debs Home

Dinner Ticket Order
($20 per ticket)

Name ____________________________

__ x $20 = $____________

tickets

amount enclosed

Tickets must be paid in advance.
Please check one of the following options.

☐ Mail my tickets to the following address:

_________________________ ____________________

☐ Hold my tickets at the door, in the name of ______________________

Make checks payable to the Debs Foundation.
Mail to the Debs Foundation, Box 843, Terre Haute, IN 47808.
Inquiries may be directed to Charles King, 812-237-3443.
Opinion
Chalk One Up For The Extremists

At the spring 1990 business meeting a resolution was approved to be sent to American Telephone and Telegraph Company expressing concern over the decision to stop future contributions to Planned Parenthood of America (PPA) programs. The resolution expressed approval for AT&T's past record of substantial contributions to PPA's teen pregnancy prevention programs, but expressed grave concern that AT&T has responded to threats of consumer boycotts from extremist groups by announcing the discontinuation of financial contributions to PPA. These so-called right-to-life groups have found that more visible strategies a small, activist group can successfully "politicize" an issue so that large corporations stay away from the suddenly controversial programs.

The page and a half response was from Jane Redfern, Senior Vice President, AT&T Foundation. The letter was addressed to this writer as though the resolution were one person's views. She assured me that it had been a difficult decision for them, but one not driven by pressure exerted by anti-abortion groups. (Would they ever admit otherwise?) AT&T Foundation has contributed nearly $500,000 "to this fine organization" over the last 25 years, she wrote, and without question PPA's educational programs "have helped countless families and individuals."

The letter went on to say: "It's also clear that Planned Parenthood's national organization has assumed a central role on the issue of abortion itself. This may be appropriate for Planned Parenthood, given its own charter and purpose."

This account is incorrect in several important regards. The implicit message throughout the letter is that AT&T's contribution, earmarked for Teenage Pregnancy Prevention Programs, was helping to "promote a political cause or point of view." There has been no evidence that PPA was misusing designated funds, nor was AT&T expected

to "follow PPA into this debate." The fact is that PPA entered the abortion debate reluctantly. It was a last resort to launch a media campaign for pro-choice which would rebut the anti-abortion activities of the pro-lifers, a response to strategies which included picketing and blocking of PPA clinics, and threats to organize consumer boycotts of products sold by corporate contributors to PPA.

No matter what they say, it is obvious that the threat of consumer boycott worked on AT&T. Planned Parenthood goals have been simple, expressed in a couple of slogans: "every child a wanted child," and "children by choice." Its programs educate and assist families in planning the number and spacing of their children. Its purposes are strongly pro-choice and pro-quality of life. It is an organization worthy of your support.

Fuel For Thought

You have a right to be concerned about what is happening to your gasoline prices due to the Mid-East crisis. But think what the hike in oil prices is doing to the economies of developing nations. These developing countries need rapid economic growth to provide jobs and consumer goods for their people. Only through economic growth will their rates of unemployment be brought down, and men and women not be forced to work for a mere fraction of what an American worker is paid. Higher energy prices greatly hamper economic growth.

These countries face in addition to the energy price crunch, the crush of explosive population growth. Most are growing close to three times as fast as the U.S. population, and at current growth rates will double their numbers in less than 40 years. Their attempts to reduce the rate of population growth have been severely hampered by the Reagan Administration's decision, continued by the current administration, to withhold U.S. contributions to the United Nations Commission on Population Activities.

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