



## Sears Workers Organize in Puerto Rico

### Local 901 Adds 500 New Members

Continuing their streak of organizing victories, Local 901 in San Juan, Puerto Rico recently organized 500 new members. The promotion/sales workers and technicians at Sears voted by a 2-1 margin for the union.

The workers sought out the Teamsters because of worsening conditions having a direct effect on their quality of life. First, Sears cut medical benefits, then discontinued their pension plan.

“One problem led to another,” said Heriberto Zayas, a Sears employee. “Now that we’re Teamsters, it’s like belonging to a new family.”

#### Decisive Vote

“The pension issue is the workers’ main concern—they want to get pension benefits back,” said Jose Ayala, Local 901’s President. “But they also are seeking higher wages and better working conditions.”

The technicians install and repair refrigerators, stoves, air conditioners and other appliances. The promotion/sales workers are the people who call residents’ homes offering extended warranties on the systems and appliances.

“This is a very good victory for all these hardworking men and women,” said German Vazquez, Local 901’s Secretary-Treasurer. “We will soon begin negotiating a strong contract that will address the workers’ concerns.”

#### Cuts Hurt Families

Zayas, who works in the Receiving Department, has worked at Sears for nearly 14 years. The cuts in medical coverage have made it difficult for him, his wife, and the couple’s two children, 5 and 3.

“They keep on cutting our benefits. If they kept this up, we’d be working for nothing,” Zayas said.

Santiago Rosado-Rueda, a sales employee who has worked at Sears for about 10 years, is happy to be a Teamster. “It’s the best move I’ve made,” he said. “We need more job security,

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## Election 2004: A Clear Choice for Working Families

### Bush for Big Business, Kerry for Workers

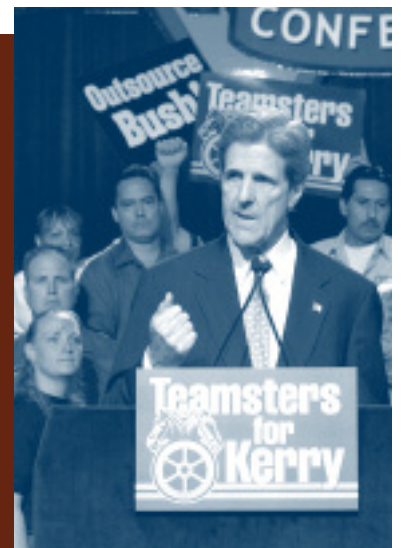
Since taking office, George W. Bush has made it clear what his attitude is toward the needs of working families. From health care to retirement security to jobs and trade, this administration consistently has worked for its Big Business contributors and against the men and women across this country who work for a living.

Still, many people are asking: How would a second Bush term affect the needs and

challenges of working families? During his acceptance speech at the Republican Convention in early September, Bush shared his vision for working families, if he’s given a second term in office. In his speech, the President set his sights on basic worker benefits.

“Many of our most fundamental systems—the tax code, health coverage, pension plans, worker training—were created

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*Senator Kerry at the Teamsters Unity Conference*





## A Message from Industrial Trades Division Director Stephen J. Mack

# The Road Ahead

**“Improving the road to the future is within our grasp.”**

The Industrial Trades Division has seen a gain in membership through successful organizing campaigns and had the opportunity to negotiate solid contracts for our members in recent months. These victories have been rewarding, but they were not always easy to reach. Our members are being asked to climb many hurdles in the current economic environment to gain the fair compensation and respect they deserve.

Attacks on the standard of living and dignity of those working in the industrial trades are being waged. While many of our jobs are not being shifted overseas, some are. It is up to all of

us to thwart those attacks and put an end to the labor and trade policies that allow them to happen.

John Kerry is the candidate who will have the strength, insight and willingness to make those changes. Kerry understands the troubles facing the working men and women of this country and is supportive of labor’s mission. We must be united in our effort to help him win the election in November. The determination and solidarity of all our members can and will make the Teamsters a powerful force for change. Improving the road to the future is within our grasp.

# Fre-Mac Workers Choose Local 287

## Workers Faced Relentless Union Busting

On June 14, 30 workers at Fre-Mac Industries demanded a voice on the job and turned to Local 287 for representation. The workers, who unload cars and trucks from rail cars at the Milpitas, California facility, voted 25-3 in favor of joining the union.

The company, which had operated without a union for 32 years, pulled out all the stops to bust the union. They replaced management and brought in an out-of-state lawyer and union buster.

“We just had to stick together and know what we wanted to

do,” said John Avina, a Fre-Mac worker and one of the newest Teamsters.

The workers were subjected to captive audience meetings, one-on-one meetings, threats and promises of change.

“They stayed strong through it all,” said Douglas O’Neal, Secretary-Treasurer of Local 287, based in San Jose. “We’re proud to welcome them to the Teamster family.”



## Sears Workers Organize in Puerto Rico *continued from page 1*

better health benefits, better pay and we need to get the pension plan back.”

“I look forward to a strong Teamster contract so that our lives can be improved,” he said.

In the past, Sears workers have tried to form a union, but the company resisted, Zayas said. “I want to honor those who tried before to join a union. Their efforts opened the doors for us today,” he said.

# ELECTION 2004: A Clear Choice For Working Families

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for the world of yesterday, not of tomorrow,” the President stated. Clearly, Bush intends to use the power of his office to continue undermining—and in some cases abolishing—critical health and retirement programs.

He also laid out his plan to advance his assault on core labor rights. Just days after his administration implemented new regulations that will take overtime rights away from 6 million working Americans, Bush pledged in his speech to go even further in a second term. He called for new “labor law reform”—including flex-time and comp-time programs—that would enable more companies to force their employees to

work expanded and constantly changing schedules without any additional compensation.

## **Kerry-Edwards: Renewing America’s Commitment to Working Families**

Fortunately, John Kerry and John Edwards know that health coverage, pensions, and worker training are not things of the past. These two leaders have proven their commitment to working families, as both of them have earned lifetime labor voting records of better than 95 percent.

The Kerry-Edwards health care plan would make the same insurance that



members of Congress use available to all Americans, ensuring that everyone has access to affordable, quality health care. Right now they are leading the fight in Congress to allow for the re-importation of safe, approved prescription drugs from Canada, drastically reducing the costs of medication for seniors and other working Americans.

Kerry and Edwards would also bring a renewed commitment to job creation and fair trade to the White House. They will close tax loopholes that encourage companies to move overseas, and they will put an end to the Bush administration’s “outsourcing” agenda, which has caused 1 million American jobs to leave the country.

“Working families and union members find themselves facing the greatest challenges and, perhaps, the bleakest future in fifty years,” said Jim Hoffa, Teamsters General President. “Fortunately, we can do something about it. By voting the issues that matter most to us—health care, retirement security, jobs and trade—we can help renew our nation’s commitment to the values that built our economy and created the middle class. We can put America back to work!”

*for more information log on to*  
**[www.TeamstersForKerry.org](http://www.TeamstersForKerry.org)**

## A SECOND BUSH TERM:

### *What Would It Mean for Working Families?*

**HEALTH CARE:** 3 million retirees will lose their employer-provided prescription drug plan due to George Bush’s sham prescription drug plan, and 5.2 million more people are without health insurance today than four years ago. With a second term in office Bush will be able to move forward plans to privatize Medicare and establish “medical savings accounts” which would allow wealthier Americans to buy their way out of the health care crisis.

**RETIREMENT SECURITY:** 10 million working Americans—including many Teamsters—saw their retirement plans put in jeopardy when the President used a veto threat to prevent Congress from enacting meaningful pension relief for multi-employer pension plans. **The President will continue to promote an agenda that harms traditional pension plans and their participants**, while at the same time undermining laws passed in recent years to reign in corporate CEOs who doctor the books and lie to investors.

**JOBS AND TRADE:** 2 million more Americans are out of work today than at the beginning of the Bush administration, and 1 million jobs have gone overseas due to Bush’s outsourcing policies. **Bush administration officials have already stated their intention to enter the United States into more job-killing trade deals, and the President himself committed during his convention speech that he would continue his “free trade” agenda.**

# A Message from General President James P. Hoffa



## Vote!

Every working man and woman who cares about their future—the future of their jobs, the future of their health care and retirements, and the very future of our country—should vote for John Kerry

and John Edwards on November 2.

Let's cut through the spin and campaign rhetoric and simplify the presidential race to what it is really all about. The Bush/Cheney ticket is for corporate interests while John Kerry and John Edwards stand with working Americans.

Kerry and Edwards support the right to organize. They have rallied workers on picket lines. John Kerry was once a warehouse driver and member of

Teamsters Local 25. John Edwards has worked in a mill. Can you imagine Bush or Cheney—both former CEOs—on a picket line? You would also have to be dreaming to think Bush/Cheney would do anything to strengthen workers' rights at the expense of corporate profits.

Don't be fooled by wedge issues, comments taken out of context and savvy advertising. The choice is clear. A John Kerry administration would welcome labor as a partner in Washington. Four more years of George Bush could destroy what it has taken 100 years to build. On

November 2, stand up for working families and elect public officials like John Kerry who will build our middle class rather than destroy it. And remember, every vote counts.

Fraternally,

**Let's ... simplify the presidential race to what it is really all about. The Bush/Cheney ticket is for corporate interests while John Kerry and John Edwards stand with working Americans.**

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