

The Unsung Heroes of America's

By WILLIAM SERRIN

Labor Movement

FIFTY years ago, the hot summer of 1933, was an exhilarating time for American labor.

On June 16, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the National Industrial Recovery Act, which gave workers "the right to organize and bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing."

Almost immediately, aggressive labor leaders — John L. Lewis of the miners, David Dubinsky of the garment workers and Sidney Hillman of the textile workers — dispatched their best organizers across America. Tens of thousands of workers in industry after industry were enrolled in unions. "I organized nine locals Tuesday," Garfield Lewis, a miners' organizer, wrote from Kentucky. Successes in rubber, autos, steel and other industries followed.

Today, much seems changed in the movement. It has been seriously weakened by membership losses that have accompanied erosion in industries like autos, steel and rubber. Failure to organize in such growth sectors as high technology, banking and insurance has compounded the problem. Unions now represent only about 20 percent of American workers, down from as much as 35 percent right after World War II, and their leaders have been criticized by many younger union people for seeming out of touch, overfed, unzealous and lacking in commitment.

But in many cases, aggressive labor people, often operating out of the limelight, are working to keep the union movement alive. These people exist at all levels — shop steward, grievance chairman, union officer — but the ones who seem to best typify unionism are the organizers. They are considered the key people attempting today — although not always successfully — to stem the decline in union membership in traditional industries, says Charles



The New York Times/LESLIE WICKARBY

Teamsters

Washington, D.C.

Members: 1.1 million, down 10 percent from 1980

Major industries: Trucking, public employees (emphasizing organization of industrial and public workers)

Key States: N.Y., CA., Ill.

1982 Work Stoppages: N.A.

Organizing Gains: \$5,000 new members since January

Vicki Saporta



Craypo, a professor of labor affairs at Cornell University.

Here's a look at three of them.

VICKI SAPORTA lists her place of residence as Foster City, Calif., but mostly she lives out of suitcases and motel rooms. As an organizer on the West Coast with the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, she spends more than 200 days a year on the road.

She organizes throughout much of the West, in small towns and large, and often must set off with little notice when the union calls. She says she has almost no social life, with almost no ability to plan to go to a concert or a play. The union can call anytime, Miss Saporta says, and she must be on the road again, to another motel.

But she does the work, she says, because she fiercely believes in trade unionism. Without unions, she says, workers often get a raw deal. "Unless there are unions, unless there is contract pressure to keep employers on their toes," she says, "the profit motive gets the better of employers and workers get it in the neck."

The 30-year-old Miss Saporta, like some other union organizers or staff members, has more academic training than factory experience. Such credentials sometimes are rare in the labor movement, but they are a throwback to many organizers of the 30's, who went first to college and then into factories and mines. Intelligent and hard-working, contemporary union staff members have chosen what, in a way, are jobs in which it is generally impossible to

rise to top positions because those go to professional union politicians. But people like Miss Saporta chose union careers anyway, because they are devoted to unionism.

Raised in Rochester, N.Y., the daughter of a tailor and his wife, she studied at the London School of Economics for a semester after earning a bachelor of science degree in industrial relations from Cornell University. She had originally intended to be an attorney, but Cornell's labor and industrial relations school so impressed her that she enrolled. At Cornell, she worked one semester for the teamsters, and by graduation, she says, "the only thing I wanted to do was work with the teamsters."

In nine and a half years, Miss Saporta, a bubbling, spunky woman with black hair, says she has probably brought tens of thousands of workers into the union. She organized workers in North Carolina and Florida before moving West and recently has been organizing at a hospital in Livermore, Calif. In four days, she says, enough cards were signed for the union to request an election.

The teamsters union, she says, organizes vigorously, puts money behind its efforts, and is, in her view, "the best union in the country." In it, she says, "you find hard working people who are at their jobs day and night, not at the golf course and not on the take. You don't see mobsters in the hall."

Federal prosecutors have not been so flattering. Three of the predecessors of Jackie Presser, the current union president — David Beck, James R. Hoffa and Roy L. Williams — were convicted of crimes and ordered to prison. Mr. Hoffa disappeared in 1975, and is presumed to have been murdered. Numerous other local union officers have been sent to jail over the years. Mr. Presser remains under investigation by the Government on charges of payroll padding, although he vigorously denies wrongdoing.

"I wasn't born with a teamster spoon in my mouth, and people can understand how I can be so enthusiastic and zealous without that being my background," she says. "I developed my enthusiasm in the field, solving problems and injustices, the real need for union representation."

And her gender is sometimes an advantage because, as a woman, she says, "you get taken for granted. Employers think a woman is not tough enough to be a good organizer," she says, and when they find out they are wrong, it is, she says, too late.

One of her colleagues, Barry Feinstein, an organizing chief and New York teamster leader, says her approach works. He calls her a diligent organizer, as good an organizer as he has ever seen.

Union organizer Saporta brings new image to job

UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL

WASHINGTON — Vicki Saporta is a young, well-dressed, educated career woman — not the stereotype expected of the person tapped to convince non-union workers to join the Teamsters union.

Teamsters president Jackie Presser, who has shaken up the hierarchy of the 1.8 million-member union since taking charge last April, picked the Cornell University graduate in late August to direct his drive to woo white-collar and high-tech workers into the union.

Her demeanor belies the image of the hard-nosed truckers union, the nation's largest, but her rhetoric is loyal,



even defensive, when she is reminded of the array of Teamsters officials who have been convicted

of an assortment of major crimes.

Saporta, 31, is charged with restoring the international union's organizing department, which has been dormant for the past three years.

"To best represent our members, we need to be as large as we possibly can in order to have the kind of clout you want in terms of organizing, in terms of negotiating agreements, ... in terms of political strength," she says.

Most of the organizing — a union term for getting non-union workers to select the union as its collective bargaining agent — is done by the 740 Teamsters locals, coordinated by regional conferences.

Saporta's job is to give the effort direction from the national headquarters in Washington.

Saporta, born and reared in Rochester, N.Y., received her training at Cornell, along with studies at the London School of Economics. Her first exposure to the Teamsters came between her sophomore and junior years, when she spent the summer in Europe studying retiree programs for the union.

"I was always going to be a lawyer," she said. "But by the time I graduated, all I wanted to do was to work for a union."

Following graduation she joined the Teamsters on the West Coast.

Her job as top organizer for the Teamsters will not be easy, since the union has lost more than 400,000 members in recent years from a high of 2.2 million in the late 1970s.

"Since the beginning of the year, we have picked up 65,000 new members," she said. "So we are back on the upswing once again, and they have been in our diversified areas of the union: public employees, a lot of industrial workers, some of the airline employees."

Trying to organize non-union workers to pick the Teamsters in the face of its corruption-filled past is a major obstacle, Saporta acknowledges. But in some cases, she said, it can be a plus instead of a minus.

"If they are going to go union, they want the biggest, the toughest, the strongest union that they can get," she said.

"I can't sit here and deny that we have never had our problems," she adds. "But I'd like to think our problems are behind us and the union is on a new direction and new track."

"I've been in places where they (employers) have shown people day-in, day-out pictures of women and kids getting their heads beat in on picket lines, blown-up pictures of kids crouching under cut glass because a bullet went through it, trying to portray us as a violent group. And outside, I'm out there holding a rally with kids and dogs, balloons, 'Go Teamsters' T-shirts, singing labor songs and whatever, and they get a different opinion of the union than they get inside."

At the first sign of violence, she said, the union leaves.

"You can't organize anyone by intimidating them," she said.

Unlike many unions that limit their organizing effort to a single or few industries, the Teamsters is branching out, seeking to pick up workers in diversified trades, large and small.

"We are the ones that will organize the groups of 10, 25, 35, that a lot of unions won't touch because it's not economically feasible for them," she said.

Once thought of only as a truck drivers union, the Teamsters today counts those covered by the National Master Freight Agreement at less than 9 percent of its membership.

Others members are in ware-

TEAMSTERS



UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL

Vicki Saporta with Teamsters insignia in background
... her job is to bring high-tech, white-collar workers into union.

housing, airlines, health care, and more and more are white-collar workers, an area to which the union is directing major organizing attention.

The Teamsters have about 300,000 women members, and Saporta said women in the union "are playing an ever increasing role."

She takes pride in the fact that the Teamsters is the nation's largest union.

"We're at 1.8 million, which still puts us the largest union in the country by a long shot," she said.

"We have a network throughout the country that no other organization can claim," she said.

Nevertheless, she said all organized labor must work together. And she added that the Teamsters does engage in joint organizing, bargaining and strike action with some AFL-CIO unions.

"Most of the AFL-CIO unions were built on the backs of the Teamsters union," she said. Among the cooperative moves with the AFL-CIO unions, she

said, are "no-raid" agreements, whereby unions agree not to try to organize workers in each other's jurisdictions.

But the Teamsters, with Presser taking a personal role, played a major role in stopping merger plans between two AFL-CIO unions in August — The Newspaper Guild and the International Typographical Union.

A Newspaper Guild convention had given the go-ahead earlier in the summer for a rank-and-file merger vote this fall, when Presser spoke to the ITU in San Francisco, urging that union to scuttle its merger plans with the Guild and instead join the Teamsters.

ITU convention delegates subsequently voted down the TNG-ITU merger, and the efforts were scuttled.

"The Teamsters didn't just march into the ITU convention uninvited," Saporta said.

"The ITU leadership explored the possibility of a merger with the Teamsters. And we think we had a lot more to offer the ITU than The Newspaper Guild."

MEET THE TEAMSTERS' NEW 'MISS DYNAMITE'

Over the years, top officials of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters have tended to be clones of one another: staid, old, male, unimaginative truckers. But the appointment of 30-year-old Vicki Saporta as the Teamsters' director of organizing symbolizes an attempt by the nation's largest union to change gears. A Cornell University graduate and the only woman organizing director of a major union, Saporta is likely to add respectability to the Teamsters' often-tarnished image and help the union attract women and young workers as it turns its sights toward white-collar and service industries. And the intense, demonstrative, sometimes domineering New Yorker may also lend a new aggressiveness to the Teamsters' organizing effort. "Vicki is Miss Dynamite," says Rita Devaney, a nurse at a California hospital that Saporta is trying to organize.

The choice of Saporta reflects the determination of union President Jackie Presser to replace a decade of organizing rhetoric from Teamsters presidents with action. In nine years of signing up new members—including 10 victories in 10 months in anti-union North Carolina—Saporta has proved to be "a damn good organizer," says R. V. Durham, the union's safety and health director. Saporta has also come up with ideas for spending what Presser has promised will be a flexible budget. She plans to increase the number of full-time national organizers and to funnel new money and advice to the union's 740 locals, which initiate about 2,000 organizing elections a year. She intends to spread her successful recipe for attracting workers to the far reaches of the 1.8 million-member union. "She's a missionary," says Norman Goldstein, director before the organizing department was temporarily closed in 1981. "She conveys the belief to workers that they can move mountains."

AD HOC APPROACH. In addition to a change in style, the ascendance in late August of the tailor's daughter from Rochester, N. Y., solidifies a trend, already well under way in the union, of diversification away from trucking. She says that Presser "does not see the future of the union" in trucking (page 43), which accounts for only about 10% of its members. Rather, he wants to gain members in its industrial, warehouse, and public employee divisions and in the



"Once you give people some power, for the first time in their lives, they think they can win"

VICKI SAPORTA
The Teamsters' new organizing director

fast-growing clerical, high tech, and service occupations. Says Saporta: "If we only responded to requests [from workers wanting to be organized], we'd be kept busy for the next three years."

On the theory that local unionists have a better chance to sign up other workers in the community than organizers brought in from the outside have, Teamsters locals bear the primary responsibility for organizing. The locals can ask union headquarters for money or help from national organizers who travel around the country. In a normal year, the Teamsters, which represents about 20% of union workers nationally, organizes nearly 25% of all new union members. But its ad hoc approach is inefficient. The union organizes only about

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25 workers per election victory, compared with 45 for AFL-CIO unions. And there is little communication among locals, so that organizing sometimes goes on at different divisions of the same company without one local knowing of another's involvement. Saporta's goal is to improve this traditional system in four major ways:

□ **Staffing.** "Presser says I'm supposed to find 50 of me" to staff the new department, says Saporta. This would be a fourfold increase from the current number of full-time national organizers. Since the work involves heavy travel and 18-hour days, Saporta emphasizes youth. "You need a well-schooled, well-trained bunch of young organizers," she says. It may take years to recruit them. But eventually she wants 10 new staffers assigned to each of the union's five conferences, helping locals in a defined geographical area, such as the Midwest, instead of constantly crisscrossing the country. "To be most effective, you have to know the people and the community," says Saporta. She adds that the regional approach will mean "less wear and tear on organizers."

□ **Service.** "Every time I go to an area, they're hungry for training and assistance," says Saporta, who plans to survey all 740 Teamsters locals soon to see how active they are in organizing and what type of help they want. Out of this will come a plan for more coordination among locals, conferences, and industrial divisions in dealing with employers. The goal would be to achieve a higher level of organization, and perhaps companywide contracts, at companies such as Frito-Lay Inc., where the union already has several facilities signed up.

□ **Follow-up.** Especially after bitter organizing campaigns, it may take months for a union to win an initial contract—and much of its support can slip away as workers become frustrated or disillusioned. Indeed, of the 10 plants Saporta organized in North Carolina, only one still has a contract, Durham says. Saporta wants to stop this by keeping organizers at a plant to motivate workers until a contract is reached. This, she says, would "raise our percentage" in winning initial contracts.

□ **Better strategies.** "All too often, a union will get a call [from workers wanting to be organized] and they'll go pass out handbills," thus giving an employer time to build a strong defense, says Saporta. Her approach, which she hopes to make routine for the union, is first to analyze an employer's financial health to ensure that it can afford the workers' demands. She then moves quickly to "educate" employees so that the company cannot frighten them away from the union. And she makes workers the leaders of the campaign. "There is no substitute for

worker involvement," asserts Saporta.

At a current campaign involving 400 employees of Valley Memorial Hospital in Livermore, Calif., for example, Saporta and Rome Aloise, another Teamsters organizer, recruited a "core committee" of 40 workers. Then, after three lengthy meetings in which they briefed workers on their rights under federal labor law and the tactics they could expect from anti-union consultants, the organizers sent a letter to the hospital's administrator naming the members of the committee. Often during drives, employers fire workers because of their involvement with the union—even though it is illegal to do so. But going public early makes it harder to get away with this, says Saporta. At Valley Memorial, the core committee collected signatures in front of the administrator's office the day his letter was sent and in two days had more than the 30% required under federal law for an election. "People saw that we weren't getting fired," says nurse Devaney. "They were surprised it was legal."

LAYING IT ON THE LINE. The education in federal labor law also paid off when, in a meeting of employees called by management, Devaney contested the hospital's assertion that bargaining starts from "zero" after an election. She pointed out that the law requires bargaining to start from the "status quo" in wages and benefits. With the election likely to be held in early November, Aloise expects the hospital to begin campaigning in earnest against the union. At that point, Saporta will resort to the charismatic exhortations that endear her to many workers but alienate others. Says Devaney: "She'll yell and scream and wave her arms and she'll say, 'You don't have to take this crap anymore.'" Says Saporta: "Once you give people some power in dealing with employers, you see a change in them. They feel power for the first time in their lives, and they think they can win."

Saporta dreams of some day organizing "hundreds of thousands" of workers in a year, compared with the Teamsters' usual total of 70,000 to 80,000. But she concedes that it will not be easy. Her strategies will take months to implement. And even her strongest supporters say that in the past her intensity and ability to attract headlines have alienated other organizers. Says Durham: "She'll have to make some compromises, personality-wise. She's used to taking charge of a campaign and leading it." As organizing director, "you've got to delegate authority... to motivate people." Saporta concedes that "if it takes 18 or 20 hours a day, I expect you to be out there, because you owe it to the workers." But she adds: "It's nothing I haven't given or wouldn't do myself." ■

RISING UNION LEADERS: SOBERED BUT SCRAPPY

Times are scarcely propitious for those on the U.S. labor movement's fast track. The loss of jobs to Asia and automation, as well as the recession, has decimated many blue collar trades where unions were strongest. Organized labor's share of the U.S. work force now stands at about 20%, compared with 25% as recently as 1970. In the last few years worker givebacks, not gains, have dominated the bargaining news.

Anyone who thinks unions are exhausted, however, hasn't met the up-and-coming leaders who appear on the following pages. All are younger than 50 in a movement dominated by sexagenarians, and several have a chance to make it to the top of their national organizations. For some time they've all been helping to set the bargaining, organizing, and lobbying course in industries where the union grip remains generally secure. Though prepared to make unusual concessions, they are no push-overs. One of them led the United Auto Workers in a 205-day strike against Caterpillar Tractor that ended last April with victory for neither side.

On bargaining issues the emerging leaders display much the same stridency as labor's ruling elite. These days they're also as eager as their superiors to tout proposed government "industrial policy" schemes that would prop up ailing industries. But when confronted with unpleasant facts, they're less likely to retreat behind slogans or put all the blame on management. "High tech and robotics are here to stay," says Leon Lynch of the United Steelworkers.

On the other hand, business should expect few bargaining table love-ins with this bunch. Now that profits are climbing, they make clear, attempts to roll back wages and benefits—particularly medical benefits—will provoke rank-and-file fury. Declares Tom Baker of the Machinists: "Givebacks are acceptable only when a company is in financial straits, needs them to survive, and can prove this through its books."





VICKI A. SAPORTA

TEAMSTERS

Declining employment in old-line industries hasn't hurt the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. Since 1975 (the nation's largest union has held its membership at around 1.8 million by aggressively signing up workers in state and local government, service industries, small factories, and warehouses. Less than a tenth of today's Team-

sters are long-distance truck drivers. The union's new international director of organizing, Vicki Saporta, 31, who oversees 60 field assistants from her Washington headquarters, aims to go right on signing up the non-unionized.

A Norma Rae-like firebrand, Saporta is a graduate of the school of industrial and labor relations at Cornell, where she played on the women's varsity basketball team. Since then this self-confessed workaholic, on the road over 200 days a year, has devoted almost all her time to organizing. In 1978 and 1979, she won ten straight elections on union representation in North Carolina, three of them in factories with over 1,000 employees.

Low wages and exploitation by employers are twin evils of the service trades, says Saporta. "People think they're lucky not to be

working in a factory. But just because a place is clean doesn't mask what is going on. Some employers like to think of themselves as enlightened. But the profit motive always gets the better of them."

For any union organizer, Saporta believes, the relentless automation of semiskilled jobs poses the greatest future threat. "Most managers would like to do without workers entirely," she says, flaring with resentment. "The trouble is, robots don't buy cars and cereal at the supermarket."

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NAMEDROPPING



OUR OWN 'NORMA RAE' ... The Dec. 26 issue of *Fortune* magazine profiles Irondequoit native **Vicki A. Saporta** as one of the six most important labor union organizers in the United States today. Under a general headline *Rising Union Leaders: Sobered But Scrappy*, Saporta is cited for aggressive signing of workers into the union. The magazine calls the 31-year-old Ironde-



quoit High School graduate "a Norma Rae-like firebrand" and "a self-confessed workaholic," and points out the 10 straight victories she won for union representation in North Carolina in 1978 and 1979. *Fortune* says Saporta's chief concern is relentless automation of semiskilled jobs. "Most managers

Vicki Saporta

would like to do without workers entirely," she says. "The trouble is, robots don't buy cars and cereal at the supermarket." Saporta is a graduate of Cornell University and the daughter of **Abe and Leah Saporta** of 235 Simpson Road, Irondequoit. She lives in Washington but logs more than 200 days a year on the road. She is, after all, a Teamster.

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Dynamic Trio

Three Labor Activists Lead a Growing Drive To Sign Up Women

Many Unions Link Survival
To the Effort, as Women
Outnumber Men Workers

Can Resistance Be Overcome?

By CATHY TROST

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

When Karen Nussbaum met a group of top union men for the first time, she told her fellow labor leaders to think of her organizing efforts "as a cross between George Meany and Dolly Parton."

It is an apt description. Ten years ago, trying to prod clerical workers to fight for better working conditions, Ms. Nussbaum was afraid to use the word "organize." Now she runs 9 to 5, the National Association of Working Women—which inspired the movie "Nine to Five" with Dolly Parton as a harassed secretary—and is the president of a national union affiliated with the Service Employees International union.

In a labor movement dominated by male leadership, 34-year-old Ms. Nussbaum is part of a small but growing nucleus of women wielding real power. In addition to Ms. Nussbaum, this group includes Vicki Saporta, 31, the national organizing director for the Teamsters Union, and Linda Puchala, 36, the president of the Association of Flight Attendants, the only national union affiliated with the AFL-CIO that is headed by a woman.

New Breed

These women labor leaders are part of a new generation, younger and more activist than most of the path-cutters who preceded them. They speak the language of the women workers whom unions increasingly are trying to recruit. "Ultimately," Ms. Nussbaum says, "the key to improving the conditions for women lies in organizing the private sector."

In a nation where white males lost their majority in the work force for the first time in 1983—and where more than 1.5 million women are entering the work force each year—many unions must actively seek out women members to survive. The problem is dispelling the notion that unions are ailing institutions run by and for men.

As United States Banker magazine put it, "How can unions—stevedores and skull busters of yore—make common cause with clerical workers, tellers, data processors—a generally young, female, nonmilitant lot?"

By changing, the magazine concluded. And, indeed, the labor movement is undergoing demographic convulsions. In 1980, 30% of union members were women, nearly double the number in the 1950s. But the majority of women workers still resist unions, and some blame it on the segregated-leadership image that organized labor projects. The new female labor leaders, while they also represent male workers, have special appeal to unorganized white-collar women workers in such industries as health care, banking and insurance that traditionally have kept unions at bay.

"Labor has to go where the work force is; it has to appeal to the female who's educated and for equal rights," says Jan Medina, a nurse in Newburgh, N.Y. If that is true, says a management consultant, then "the best hope unions have of getting them are the Karen Nussbaums and the Vicki Saportas."

Dynamic Trio: 3 Labor Activists Lead Drive for Woman Unionists

Vicki Saporta

When the nurses at St. Luke's Hospital in Newburgh, N.Y., went shopping for a union, they picked the Teamsters. That they did was testament to the Teamsters' organizing director, who has helped shape a new image for the troubled union.

"I've had people who've been disappointed that we don't live up to our image," says Vicki Saporta. "They say, 'Hey, I thought you were the Mafia.' I tell them straight out, the only party that's going to break the law in this campaign is your employer."

Women and younger workers who feel estranged from the labor movement are drawn to her.

"She makes you feel good about the process of organizing and collective bargaining; it doesn't seem so antiquated," says Ms. Medina, the nurse at St. Luke's who says she was originally "extremely anti-union." That Ms. Saporta is a woman also makes a difference, she says.

The daughter of a custom tailor from upstate New York, Ms. Saporta was educated at Cornell University's industrial and labor relations school and the London School of Economics. A Teamsters organizer for more than a decade, she has a five-line telephone, a video lending library of organizing films, and a computer packed with financial and bargaining profiles of potential target companies. Her home is outside San Francisco, but she hardly ever sees it. Since Teamsters President Jackie Presser appointed her organizing director in the fall of 1983, she has lived in a hotel room near the union's Washington headquarters or on the road.

Mr. Presser said he wanted her to put the trucking-based union "back on the fast track" by organizing clerical, service and high-technology industries. But critics view the move as more of a public-relations ploy. "She's a figurehead—she's being used," says an official of another union. Even an admirer wonders whether she can negotiate the political riptides at Teamsters headquarters. "Organizers are like missionaries, and missionary priests usually don't get to be archbishops," says Tony Zivalich, a longtime Teamsters organizer who now works for the city of Atlanta.

But after more than a year on the job, petite Ms. Saporta is changing some minds. "I was a little doubtful myself, being 31 years in the Teamsters and everything was men, men, men," says Elmore Schueler, the president of Teamsters Local 445 in Newburgh. "But she sold me the first shot out. For a little girl, she can put on a powerful show."

In the mid-1970s the powerful Teamsters had 2.2 million members. This year



Vicki Saporta

they edged back to 1.9 million after bottoming out at 1.8 million. No longer just truckers, Ms. Saporta says, "we're all over the lot." But a hard-fought campaign for 3,100 health-care workers at a Massachusetts hospital ended in a lopsided defeat for the union last summer, and there have been other big losses as well. Given the declining influence of labor-unions generally, Ms. Saporta says, "it's not easy to organize anywhere today."

Nevertheless, she maintains an aggressive stance. "Workers," she says, "want someone to stand up to the company, to stand up to the cops when they say you can't pass out literature and you say, 'Yes we can. It's federal law.'" Once she was detained by authorities while passing out leaflets to workers in Yosemite National Park, and she told them: "I have a perfect right to do this. I'm not selling vacuum cleaners here."

METRO

BUSINESS NEWS/C 14-15



SOUTH BEND TRIBUNE ■ THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3, 1985



Tribune Photo/ DENNIS WHITE

Vicki Saporta, right, director of organizing for the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, meets Wednesday with South Bend Community School Corp. secretaries, perhaps the next group to be

organized by Local 364 of the Teamsters. From left are Marcia Samarich, Cindy Montgomery, Gayle Farrell, Barb Ferraro and Marcella Kovatch. Fran Lein, back to camera, sits on the table with Saporta.

Union official 'tells it straight'

By **GAIL HINCHION**

Tribune Staff Writer

No sweet talking for Vicki Saporta. The only woman organizing director of a major American union tells it straight, tells it fast, tells it like there is nothing to argue about.

"We are on the forefront of organizing clerical workers," Saporta said Wednesday at the start of a two-day visit to Local 364 of the Teamsters union. She is director of organizing for the International Brotherhood of Teamsters.

"Our contracts for secretaries are the best," she said with certainty. "We have practiced comparable worth. We have implemented it in the public sector."

She has been speaking about why the Teamsters are the right union for the South Bend Com-

munity School Corp. secretaries. She speaks with the authority of almost 10 years with the union in offices across the country.

A committee of secretaries who want to organize selected the Teamsters 18 months ago. "They came to us," Saporta pointed out.

"Organizing is a matter of education. Once the people understand what the union is about, they would choose ours," she said. Organizing usually is left to the local units. But Teamsters President Jackie Presser reactivated a national organizing assistance operation and sought Saporta, 33, to run it.

Some secretaries hesitate to organize, and some hesitate to organize with the Teamsters, in part because of the masculine image the union has. Some are

concerned the Teamsters would not be right for clerical workers, or for workers in the public sector.

The secretaries are gentle people. Some have gotten teary-eyed when discussing organizations. Teamsters business agent Robert Schulz said the fact Saporta is a woman — and might better reach these women — was considered when local union leaders asked her to visit.

"This local doesn't need my help," Saporta countered, praising local leaders for the 18-month campaign they conducted for a referendum on whether secretaries should organize. The workers are to vote by mid-November.

Teamsters officials were to negotiate with Superintendent Robert A. Fallon today on whether

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Saporta

from Page C1

the referendum ballot will bear the Teamsters name, Schulz said. He wants the secretaries to vote for or against the Teamsters instead of voting for or against organization in general.

"We're not even worried about winning an election. We're worried about putting together a contract that addresses the issues they're concerned about," Saporta said.

ta said.

Meeting with secretaries Wednesday night, Saporta assured them that the union has a long history with clerical workers and with workers in the public sector.

"Most people don't really understand what we're about as a union. We are the most diversified union in the country," she said.

"We are on the forefront of organizing clerical workers," she said.

"We've represented clerical unions since 1950," she said. "We've been in public works since the 1940s."

In a series of contract negotiations in San Bruno, Calif., the union succeeded in upgrading half the clerical workers' jobs because they were found comparable to the jobs of more highly paid employees, she said.

Saporta's observations about why women organize should strike home with secretaries, whose efforts began with what they consider unfair assignment procedures.

Money usually isn't the biggest problem, she said.

"Most of the time, it's working conditions that make them place the phone call," she said.

"They want a way to deal with problems they have on the job, to make their jobs fair," she said. "They're looking for a grievance procedure. They are also looking to be treated with some dignity."

"They need a sense of security and a sense of recognition which nobody can have without a union contract," she said.

A Celebration of Man At His Best

This second annual edition of the best-selling Esquire Register is the result of an extensive, ongoing search to identify those American men and women under forty who compose a dynamic new leadership class. In selecting and profiling more than one hundred individuals, Esquire honors those whose talent and determination are the guiding forces of this changing society. And in an exclusive survey undertaken by the editors of Esquire, the values and opinions of the leadership class are revealed for the first time.



HONOREES

Lyn Abramson	Larry Kopald	Deborah Redding
Richard Andrews	Ira Kurzban	Frank Rich
Richard Axel	Yik San Kwoh	Jacques Robinson
Steven Ballowe	Jessica Lange	Charlene Rollins
William Howard Beasley III	Cyndi Lauper	Bruce Rosendahl
Janelle Bedke	Lois Lee	Julie Rosenfeld
Paul Bertolli	Annie Leibovitz	James Rothman
Larry Bird	Ted Lemon	Gerald Rubin
James Blinn	Rokelle Lerner	Jesse Russell
Ruben Bonilla Jr.	Candy Lightner	Vicki Saporta
Robert Bowman	William Lindsey	John Sayles
Thomas Cech	Brian Ludwig	Andrew Schmookler
Arthur Cohn	Yo-Yo Ma	Eric Schrier
Marilyn Adams Coleman	Francesca Martin	Peter Serkin
Rafael Collado	Michael McClary	Peter Shire
Shayne Del Cohen	Bobby McFerrin	Fred Smith
Paul DiBello	Celeste McKinley	Molly Smith
Esther Dyson	Robert Metcalfe	Rick Smolan
Charles Fefferman	Pat Metheny	David Soren
Susan Gendrich	Meredith Minkler	Bruce Springsteen
David Gibson	Russell Mittermeier	Kirk Stauss
Corey Goodman	Mark Morris	Paul Steinhardt
Ray Reynolds Graves	David Mueller	Frank Swain
Marilyn Greene	Richard Mulligan	Mark Talbott
Sanford Grossman	Eddie Murphy	Nelson Strobe Talbott
James Gusella	Barbara Naiditch	Lawrence Taylor
Alan Guth	Peggy Noonan	Bob Telson
Chris Hardman	Mark O'Connor	Jeanette Thomas
Dennis Hayes	Dave Okimoto	Bennie Thompson
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Carol Hodne	Sean Penn	Garry Trudeau
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Denis Johnson	John Raimondi	M. Jane Weaver
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Marguerite Kay		Steven Wright

Business & Industry

BRASH INNOVATION, EXPLOSIVE GROWTH, SHREWD MOVES

THE ESQUIRE
1985 Register

HONOREES

- William Howard Beasley III** A man of steel
Janelle Bedke & Robert Metcalfe Heroes of Silicon Valley
Marilyn Adams Coleman Poultry's grade-A consultant
Rafael Collado Computerizing the Bronx
Esther Dyson Getting the word processed
David Gibson Making Kansas City a hot commodity
Sanford Grossman The economics of information
Dennis Hayes The man behind the modem
Larry Kopald From advertising with love
Ted Lemon American wine with a French accent
David Mueller A commuter airline takes off
Bob Pittman Igniting a cultural explosion
Lewis Ranieri Wall Street's roof raiser
Jacques Robinson Management as the mother of invention
Jesse Russell A breakthrough in telephone technology
Vicki Saporta Improving the state of the unions
Kirk Stauss One man's hunger project



Bob Metcalfe:
*"I'm only comfortable
working with
Type-A, aggressive,
hypercompetitive people."*

Janelle Bedke:
*"I don't work on
weekends."*

Jesse Russell

Software designer
Whippany, New Jersey
Born April 26, 1948



Jesse Russell has a unique habit. He likes to grab hold of a napkin and a ball-point pen to sketch quick diagrams of complex processes—like the transmission of the cellular-tele-

phone. One of the first computer engineers in the United States to specialize in digital-systems design (he entered the field back in 1972), Russell now heads an innovative band of fifty engineers and scientists at AT&T's Bell Laboratories

in Whippany, New Jersey. Last year the division designed the software for a new cellular mobile phone that will allow conference calls and call forwarding for motorists. That software system was named the best new product of 1984 by *New Product Development Newsletter*, which monitors emerging technologies.

When asked the secret of his success, Russell answers, laughingly, "Arrogance." An engineer, he maintains, "can't accept that a problem can't be solved." Certainly that's been his philosophy throughout his thirteen years with Bell, a period in which he has done everything from circuit and terminal design for digital

telephone equipment to mathematical modeling and complex software design. But Russell is also conscious of his responsibility as a black professional. He devotes a large portion of his personal life to minority recruitment and counsels minority technical employees already at AT&T. In addition, he lectures at career programs in Tennessee and Ohio to encourage minority youths to pursue careers in science and engineering. A better role model would be hard to find: in 1980 this Stanford alumnus became the first black ever to win the Outstanding Young Engineer of the Year award from the Society of Electrical Engineers.

Vicki Saporta

Union organizer
Washington, D.C.
Born September 11, 1952



She's been called Miss Dynamite, a Norma Rae-like firebrand. And with all that heat, it's not surprising that Vicki Saporta, thirty-three, has been hugely successful as director

of organizing for the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. In her two years on the job, Saporta, the daughter of a Rochester, New York, tailor, has helped raise Teamster membership from 1.7 million to its current 1.9 million with her recruitment

of factory and clerical workers and other nontruckers. More important, Saporta is helping dispel the union's image as a hide-bound haven for gangsters. "You don't see any mobsters in the hall," she says. "The Teamsters are hardworking people who are at their jobs day and night, not out at the golf course or on the take."

Probably no one in the union, though, works harder than Saporta herself. Although she maintains an address in Washington, D.C., she spends about two hundred nights a year on the road. Often seething with the barely contained anger that was once a hallmark of the labor movement, Saporta drives home the point that



eternal vigilance is necessary to keep management from exploiting employees. "Some employers like to think of themselves as enlightened," Saporta says. "But the profit motive always gets the better of them, and the workers get it in the neck."

Kirk Stauss

Farmer
Spirit Lake, Iowa
Born June 28, 1947



It always disturbed Iowa farmer Kirk Stauss that America's way of combating world hunger was to "feed grain to livestock so we could sell steak and pork chops to starving people."

It seemed so much more practical just to stick with the basic grains, as did his family, which has been farming 1,200 acres of corn and soybeans for three generations in the northwest corner of Iowa. So about five years ago Stauss, who has an M.B.A.

and was working as a bank examiner when he took over the family farm, set out to blend his crops into a kind of trail mix that would be highly nutritious, taste good, and wouldn't spoil. "We wanted a product that you could just open up and start eating," he says. After a series of failures he tried an extrusion method that quickly (about fifteen seconds) and relatively coolly (about 300 degrees) cooked the grain into an edible blend. Three hundred grams of his concoction, now called Nutrameal, provides 1,100 calories and the minimum nutritional requirements for an adult male.

Through food brokers Stauss sells Nu-

trameal to governments around the world, helping to feed the hungry in the Far East, Africa, Central America, and the Caribbean. "We're trying to sell this as a food supplement," Stauss says. "We try to give you everything you need, but we'd rather say it's not the only thing you have to eat all day." Even so, he's doing his best to make Nutrameal appetizing. The blend comes in a variety of flavors: curry, cocoa, cinnamon, chicken, and the original corn. And beginning in January you won't have to be indigent to crave Nutrameal: Stauss plans to market a line of snack chips in U.S. health-food stores under the Freedom Farms label.

Reinventing the telephone

The capital's Norma Rae

Finding ways to feed the world

BUSINESS

Democrat and Chronicle

ON THE MOVE

Read about job changes and promotions among area business people on **4F**.

SUNDAY

AUGUST 31, 1986

ROCHESTER

NEW YORK

THE ORGANIZER

Rochester native directs campaigns for the Teamsters

By John Campbell

Democrat and Chronicle

WASHINGTON — Vicki Saporta has a big office overlooking the U.S. Capitol, a house across town and an eager research staff to tap.

But Saporta, 33 years old, is not a corporate attorney or an investment banker.

Since 1983, she's been the director of organizing for the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, the nation's largest labor union and the only employer she's ever had since leaving her native Rochester to attend Cornell University in Ithaca.

IN HER DOZEN years with the Teamsters, Saporta, a trim, vivacious woman, has seen enough drama to fill several lifetimes.

"What really got me hooked was after I started," she said. "I sat and listened to these people's stories, and couldn't help feeling for them. Then it was, 'OK, how do we get going?'"

Early on, some employers spread false rumors of a sexual nature to try to discredit Saporta, recalled Rome Aloise, another Teamsters organizer in San Francisco.

They threatened to fire activist workers during her organizing campaigns. Police have arrested her for littering as she handed out union leaflets.

As her reputation for organizing has spread, more and more employers have retaliated by hiring expensive anti-union consultants.

"WHEN THEY find out Vicki's there, they bring in the howitzers," said Aloise. "Consultants have gotten very sophisticated in the past few years. They take the offensive much more."

On the theory that young workers today retain information better from television than from print, the recent breed of pinstriped consultants uses videotape "dramatizations" of workers coping with a union drive.

Consultants these days camp out for a month at their client's work place, rather than coming in just before a union election.

But Saporta can turn the enemy's tricks to her advantage. For instance, she coaches workers by showing them an anti-union videotape before their boss makes them watch it.

SAPORTA EVEN convinced one employer to appear in a videotape she produced. Len Martin, who owns an apparel-marking firm in Rome, Calif., talks in the film about his unsuccessful fight to defeat a Teamsters organizing drive in 1984.

"Business isn't democratic, it's autocratic," he says. When unions come in, he sums up, they make the work place more democratic.

That cameo demonstrates Saporta's charisma. "I charmed him," she said.

Abuse rolls off her back. When anti-union workers in North Carolina circulated cartoons mocking her as a savior on a white horse, Saporta appeared at a rally astride a real horse.

She has combined such touches of



Gannett News Service

Vicki Saporta has worked for International Brotherhood of Teamsters for 12 years.

humor with fiery exhortations and careful spadework behind the scenes.

If a company official threatened (illegally) to close down a plant before succumbing to the union, Saporta made sure a group of employees presented him with a form guaranteeing the closing. Asked to sign the form, she said, the company official usually dropped the threat.

More important, according to many who know her, Saporta has a knack for understanding workers' problems and gaining their trust.

"She helps people get angry, to realize they can't depend on someone else for control in their life," said Ellen Gallant, an organizer with the Communications Workers of America Local 1170 in Rochester.

Gallant recalled Saporta's work in North Carolina: "As someone just entering the labor movement, it was real in-

spiring to watch her. Most of us were accustomed to seeing men in roles of authority — the 'stick with me kid' types."

In a field still dominated by graying men, Saporta and other young labor leaders are starting to reflect the diversity of their rank-and-file membership. More women and minority-group members have moved into the top ranks at local and regional levels.

Only a few have risen to top national staff positions, however, and Saporta is among the most prominent.

"Vicki is one of the brightest stars in the labor movement today," said James Medoff, a labor economist at Harvard University. "She has positively affected the image of labor and the Teamsters when their image overall is not very good."

Others in labor criticize Saporta for

TURN TO PAGE 6F

Rochester native top Teamsters organizer

FROM PAGE 1F

fiercely defending a union whose reputation has been tarnished by decades of connections to organized crime. Her 1983 appointment as organizing director by union President Jackie Presser, they contend, merely helped the union present a more respectable public face.

"Her main job is to talk to you in the media," said Kenneth Paff, an official with the dissident group Teamsters For a Democratic Union in Detroit. "She doesn't have a real power base. Our problem is with her boss."

A labor leader in Rochester, who asked not to be identified, said, "She's a figurehead. When the Teamsters leadership gets questioned about the Mafia, they bring her in to beat it back."

The union was expelled from the AFL-CIO in 1957 for corruption and has been dogged by its Mafia connections. Three of Presser's predecessors were indicted, and Presser has pleaded innocent to racketeering, embezzlement and other federal charges.

The President's Commission on Organized Crime early this year said four big-labor unions, including the Teamsters, are controlled or influenced by organized crime.

These allegations have surfaced frequently, Saporta acknowledges. But she's impatient with questions about them, and prefers to discuss them in the context of her organizing drives.

"A lot of times people call us because they want the biggest, toughest union they can find," she said. "They might be unhappy when we don't live up to our image. But at the first sign of violence we're out of there. You cannot organize people by threatening them, or intimidating them. The only thing that works is education."

Others note that corruption in unions does not look as significant when compared with business crime. Medoff and Richard Freeman, another labor economist at Harvard, cited surveys of large U.S. corporations by *Fortune* magazine and American Management Associations. The surveys revealed a higher incidence of crime, including bribery, tax evasion and arson, than was found in similar surveys of union members.

"They've had problems at the top," Medoff said of the Teamsters, "but it's wrong to infer that means they have problems in the middle or the bottom."

The Teamsters' legal problems haven't detracted much from the main accomplishment of Saporta and her staff — bringing tens of thousands of workers into the union.

Teamsters membership fell from 1.9 million in 1980 to 1.6 million in 1983, as job losses, particularly in trucking and basic manufacturing industries, offset recruiting. But Presser has increased the union's political and lobbying staff since he became president, and Saporta said membership has climbed back to 1.9 million.

In the Rochester area, the Teamsters represents 6,000 workers, said Thomas Kenny, a local Teamsters official.

Organizing hasn't solved all the Teamsters' problems, however. Of the 10 plants Saporta organized in anti-union North Carolina, only one reached a contract. After her initial campaigns in those plants, she had to turn the members over to less sophisticated local union representatives.

Saporta has tried to improve that type of servicing by keeping organizers in a campaign through the first contract, said Nick Salvatore, a professor of labor history at Cornell and a former Teamster.

"She's working within a flawed structure. Everything focuses on the marble palace," he said, referring to the Teamsters headquarters. "You don't have the



Saporta knows all the unionizing tricks.

strong intervention by local leaders."

The Teamsters has devoted much of its recent organizing efforts to service industries such as health care, insurance, government and other fields full of female and young workers. Teamsters organizers often take on small units that other unions ignore, observers say.

The Teamsters union has also made a point of raiding other unions for members, the TDU's Paff claims, pointing to the unsuccessful drive to merge with the International Typographical Union. "Raiding is easier and quicker," he said.

Saporta responded that the Teamsters union has a no-raiding agreement with many unions, and has faced outside raiding itself.

Last year, she said, the Teamsters union was involved in 1,600 elections

supervised by the National Labor Relations Board, roughly half the number of 1980. But those figures don't count organizing drives among public employees and some others regulated by the government, such as the current effort to sign on 2,500 flight attendants at Republic Airlines.

Many of the 700 Teamsters locals do organizing on their own, with assistance from Saporta and her staff of five. When a local calls for help, the organizing and research departments can provide a financial and labor-relations analysis of most major companies. Saporta also trains local Teamsters officials, lectures at universities, produces videotapes to use in organizing drives and commands some of those drives by phone.

The work involves long days, although Saporta has more free time now than when she traveled nine months of the year as a field organizer, living out of suitcases and sometimes working around the clock during crucial moments of a campaign. Outside of work, Saporta, who's single, likes to sail and play basketball or tennis.

"She's driven," said Carolyn Jacobson, a staff member of the Bakery, Confectionary and Tobacco Workers union in Washington and a close friend of Saporta's.

Vicki A. Saporta almost didn't come into the labor movement.

"She always wanted to be a lawyer," recalled her mother, Leah, a homemaker who lives at 235 Simpson Road, Irondequoit. While at West Irondequoit High School, Saporta excelled in her studies, played numerous sports and placed second in a regional level of the Miss Teenage America competition, said her father, Abe, a tailor.

Cornell's School of Industrial and Labor Relations looked to Saporta like a good foundation for a career in criminal law. In the summer after sophomore year, she took a Teamsters-sponsored job

as a counselor for a group of teen-agers touring Europe. Besides the usual tourist attractions, the group walked through factories and met with labor leaders.

After completing a year at the London School of Economics and graduating from Cornell, Saporta talked her way into a \$12,500-a-year organizing job for the Teamsters Western Conference. (She wouldn't disclose her current salary, but TDU said she earns about \$90,000 a year.)

Saporta's first assignment was to organize workers for the concessionaire at Yosemite National Park. She lost the election, but learned valuable techniques such as swapping information and staff with environmental groups.

Other assignments took Saporta to towns large and small, from Utah to Chicago to Sweden. The scenes may have changed, but she saw a common struggle among workers for a stronger voice in their lives.

She also met a common obstacle — the fear of being fired for supporting a union. Last year, the NLRB ruled that one in 25 workers who voted for a union was fired illegally, 10 times the rate reported 30 years ago, said Medoff of Harvard. The actual rate is much higher, he said, because many fired workers never complain to the NLRB.

Saporta's approach is to make a large group of workers the leaders of a campaign, to go public soon after and to bring in Teamsters retirees or rank-and-file members to talk about the union.

"If you've got one spark plug signing up 80 workers, the company can make a point by firing that one," she said.

"Once you build that committee, you can sign up hundreds, even thousands in a week or two. People will come in for that initial meeting with their heads down. Then they get mad, then they get scared to death. When they realize no one's being fired, they have a whole new attitude. They sense power for the first time."

Working Profile: Esther Peterson

Everyman's Advocate

By IRVIN MOLOTSKY

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Dec. 7 — Since the 1930's Esther Peterson has been enlisting young soldiers in her fights for laboring young soldiers in her fights for women's rights, trade unionism and consumer protection. Now, at 80 years of age and with a battalion or two of her followers in the field, she is still seeking recruits.

The battle metaphor was suggested by one of those young followers, Ellen Haas, executive director of Public Voice, a consumer organization. "She has inspired a whole army of consumer activists," Ms. Haas said. "She has combined warmth with toughness to coax Presidents and members of Congress to oppose consumer abuse."

Two hundred people from all the varied parts of Mrs. Peterson's life gathered in Washington this weekend for a birthday party at the Woman's National Democratic Club.

Some were from Government, since Mrs. Peterson served in the White House as the consumer adviser and the Labor Department as head of the Women's Bureau. Some were from the consumer movement; her interests in that field extend to this day in her role as a consumer representative at the United Nations. Some were from the diplomatic corps, for Mrs. Peterson put her activism aside for a time to accompany her husband, Oliver, now deceased, on his Foreign Service assignments abroad.

Attack on Consumerism Seen

Mrs. Peterson herself professed to wonder what the fuss was about, asking what was so magical about an 80th birthday and suggesting that 85 was a rounder number.

She sipped coffee the other day in her house and discussed the state of various issues today, finding consumerism under attack. "It's gone down during this Administration," said Mrs. Peterson, who served three Democratic Presidents. "One problem is that it has people working on laws who don't believe in them. Scanlon is a good example."

Mrs. Peterson's reference was to Terrence M. Scanlon, whose elevation to the chairmanship of the Consumer Product Safety Commission she opposed. Mr. Scanlon, however, had praise for her: "While we have not always agreed on the best means of achieving goals, her energy and dedication have been an inspiration."



The New York Times/Ken Brown

Public television recently carried a documentary film, "Women of Summer," about a 1930's project at Bryn Mawr College that gave working women a taste of education. One of the leaders was a dark-haired, forceful woman who taught physical education and drama. She was Esther Peterson, practically unchanged today except for the graying of her hair. The forcefulness remains, especially when she compares the influence of consumerism in government today with that of the Kennedy, Johnson and Carter Administrations she served.

"Carter approved an executive order I asked for banning the export of a list of things considered too hazardous to be used in the United States," Mrs. Peterson said. "Poorer countries liked the list because they couldn't afford the research for themselves. Reagan canceled that order."

To Ralph Nader, one of her greatest contributions was not in government but in linking two of her other interests, labor unions and consumerism. "She has stressed that workers are consumers," he said, "and she also said that we have to be concerned about third-world consumers."

And unlike many leaders in the consumer movement, Mrs. Peterson has also worked in business, as the consumer representative at the Giant supermarket chain from 1970 to 1977, when she became President Carter's consumer adviser. "Izzy Cohen is coming" to the birthday party, Mrs. Peterson noted with some happiness,

referring to the chain's president. "He never comes to these things."

O'donna Mathews, who worked at Giant for Mrs. Peterson and succeeded her at Mrs. Peterson's suggestion, said, "Esther, in a sense, trained and sensitized Giant executives to listen to the consumers."

"She is an extremely young 80," Mrs. Mathews said. Perhaps this is due to the fact that she has such a rich past but is not rooted in it. Her attitude seems to be the same as it was at the Bryn Mawr sessions for working women, always learning, always making fresh discoveries.

Learning From a Teamster

Her latest discovery is Vicki Saporta, head of organizing for the teamsters. Mrs. Peterson is almost aghast that the teamsters, no longer dominated by trucking and warehousing, are doing a better job of organizing women than the traditional unions she had worked for. She comes from the old school of organizing — clothing and garment workers and teachers.

She appeared recently before the teamsters and was introduced to Ms. Saporta, "one of the most clear-headed people I've ever met."

Mrs. Peterson came away having learned something from a far younger person, saying, "We have to find new ways to organize."

Ms. Saporta was equally impressed by Mrs. Peterson, saying, "She was wonderful — she was everyone's favorite speaker."