



R. Thomas Buffenbarger  
International President

Commentary

# Ethical Practices Redefine Labor Movement's Future

Al Hayes, shown on the cover of this *IAM Journal* testifying at a congressional hearing, did what was right. His enormous courage and visionary leadership are worth remembering -- and honoring -- in the months and years ahead.

Hayes set the standard for integrity. He knew the difference between right and wrong. And he acted on that knowledge day in and day out.

Going along to get ahead, taking the easy road, cutting corners on the truth -- those were concepts that Al Hayes rebelled against with every fiber in his body.

Al Hayes showed how aggressive organizing went hand in hand with the spirit of solidarity to give renewed strength to workers. He grew the IAM from 518,000 to 825,000 members during his four terms as international president. He led the IAM back into the AFL in 1951, and pushed hard for the merger of the AFL and CIO in 1955.

Al Hayes was a reformer. For a decade, he led the AFL-CIO's Ethical Practices Committee and did what others believed to be impossible. He set -- and successfully defended -- a much higher ethical standard for all those who would lead the American Labor Movement.

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