



UAWD Remembers Victor G. Reuther

by [Justin](#) | Jun 3, 2020 | [Press Release](#) |

Justin Mayhugh, UAW Local 31 — “Today, on the 16th anniversary of his passing, we celebrate the life and leadership of the great UAW icon, and solidarity unionist, Victor G. Reuther.

Although widely known for playing a pivotal role in organizing the Big Three automakers in the 1930’s and for being the younger brother of long-time UAW President Walter Reuther, it was Victor’s actions in the 1980’s that are perhaps the greatest inspiration to solidarity unionists within the UAW still to this day.

In the mid-80’s, as the Administration Caucus continued its turn towards the ideology of the team concept and jointness with the Big Three, Victor came out of retirement to support Jerry Tucker and the New Directions Movement. He bravely spoke out against the ever-increasing bureaucracy that the UAW was becoming.

It is not lost on myself and many others that Mr. Reuther could have easily rode off into the sunset in his retirement had he remained quiet about the union’s turn to an anti-solidarity ideology. No doubt he would have been hailed as a hero by the Administration Caucus. But Victor Reuther was a man of integrity, and a man beholden to the bedrock principles of unionism — equality, and solidarity among all workers. So he spoke out boldly against what he saw as a betrayal of the membership at a great personal risk to his reputation within the UAW. Because of this insistence to speak the truth about the direction of the UAW, he was black-listed by the International leadership of the very same union he spent his entire life fighting for. UAWD holds Victor Reuther in the highest regard, along with other UAW leaders such as General Baker, Jerry Tucker, and many others who sacrificed personal advancement within our union to courageously stand up for the best interests of the membership.

Today, we celebrate the vision, courage, and amazing life of Victor G. Reuther.”

Travis Watkins, UAW Local 167 — “Victor Reuther, the youngest of the Reuther brothers, was a man of tremendous integrity and courage.

At the age of twenty-four, Victor was instrumental in organizing the Flint Sit Down Strike of 1936-1937. This would be the pinnacle moment of the beginning of the United Auto Workers. Victor spent much of his life educating and speaking on the value of labor and trade unionism solidarity throughout the United States, Europe, and Canada. His dedication to our UAW membership was unwavering to the very end. So much so, that when Victor saw the direction of International “jointness” and “Team Concept” with the corporations, he came out of retirement in strong opposition.

He also spoke on the necessity of a more democratic union. It began with the ability of the membership having an equitable vote in selecting our International representatives. Today, the UAWD honors this great man as we continue to fight to carry Victor’s voice, principles, and commitment to our membership.

My thoughts are with the Reuther family on the anniversary of Victor’s passing.”

