



Cornell University
ILR School

Labor Research Review

Volume 1 | Number 12
*Up Against the Open Shop: New Initiatives in
the Building Trades*

Article 8

1988

Question

Susan Eisenberg

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@ILR. It has been accepted for inclusion in Labor Research Review by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@ILR. For more information, please contact catherwood-dig@cornell.edu.

© 1988 by Labor Research Review

Question

Abstract

Poem

Keywords

union, organizing, construction, Susan Eisenberg, poetry

Question

*When will these arms
that can raise*

*from a cavity in the earth!
complex interlacings of concrete/steel/wood/pipe/wire
that have function
that stand against gravity
against time—
wizardry we name 'building'—*

*when will these arms
marbled with the genius
to perform miracles, ask themselves the question
every two-year-old repeats incessantly: why?*

*'why' hotel rooms with gold faucets
when thousands are homeless?*

*'why' tourist trinkets flaunted
in glass-arched boutiques
and elderly hidden in windowless rooms?*

*'why' a planet hostages
to nuclear reactors, ignoring
humbler solutions: sun wind earth?*

*When will these arms
that craft and construct
link elbows with the homeless
with the silenced
with the future*

*and ask why
with the full thunder of their power!*