

# Graphic Communicator



Oct.-Nov.-Dec. 2013

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The Newspaper of the Graphic Communications Conference / IBT

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West Coast officials are redoubling efforts to build union ranks.

IBT PHOTO

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Union members protested possibility of Koch brothers controlling L.A. Times

**Kochs and Trib: No Sale**

PHOTO BY RON FINE/LOCAL 140N

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# Lopsided Pay Gap Should Worry Everyone

Here are some shocking financial facts: The top 1 percent of Americans control 40 percent of the nation's wealth.

The bottom 80 percent – the bracket that includes most everyone else – shares 7 percent.

In general, CEOs make more than 350 times the average worker. Employees typically earn in a month what the bosses do in an hour.

The numbers – from two recent studies – are alarming.

Every American – poor, middle class and wealthy – should be worried.

When things are this lopsided, the very idea of equal opportunity and upward mobility is in peril. Our most basic principles are at risk. This is supposed to be the land of opportunity where, with hard work, anyone can get ahead. Are we losing our way?

Other nations – even the most “advanced” – often are based on a class system that leaves the non-privileged behind. Americans don't like that idea. We believe in free enterprise and individual achievement. The little guy gets ahead in the United States as in no other nation.

Or does he?

For more than 20 years, the system has been tilting more and more in favor of the rich and super-rich. Financial deregulation, exotic financial deals and devices, risky bank schemes, downsizing and a general sense that greed is good – all have worked against ordinary Americans.

Unions like ours have tried to keep pace. We have fought the good fight at the bargaining table as management officials complain they can't afford to pay even a little bit more.

Their excuses are endless: last quarter profits weren't quite what were expected; the economy is too uncertain for generosity; money must be kept aside in case things get worse; pay is too high in the first place; increases for workers will make the firm less competitive.

Yes, companies sometimes find themselves in desperate shape and we always take that into consideration. No one wants to drive an employer out of business. We want the shop to flourish so our people can keep their jobs and feed their families.

But, too often, the company is just blowing smoke.

Their survival isn't the issue. Keeping every last buck for themselves is what it's all about.

That's what happens when you have the richest people in America demanding an even greater share. Their me-first approach is copied at every management level.

And how do you pad your pockets as a boss? Once innovation – the “better mousetrap” – was the way to success. For some, it

still is. But in too many cases, the path to even fatter profits is to deny working people a share in the company's good fortune.

It is short-sighted thinking – stupid, really, if you ask me.

As union members we do our best to maintain decent livelihoods. GCC/IBT wage settlements strive to make sure of that. And most workers are likely to have a few extra bucks left over when the bills are paid – enough for Mom and Dad to take in a movie, or treat the kids to a day at the amusement park, or even spring for a modest

vacation.

But with tight-fisted management policies, even union people have to watch what they spend. Under far more pressure are non-union employees like fast food workers who have been demanding a boost in the living wage or Walmart employees who want representation or all the families where both parents are working a couple of jobs just to survive.

Squeezing the economic life out of these people isn't just dumb, it's dangerous. What will become of our economy if the rich make too much and ordinary people not enough? What becomes of the nation we think of as special? What becomes of our glorious American Dream?



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## MANAGING EDITOR'S NOTE

Fall is in full swing and so is our coverage of important issues – from GCC/IBT response to the confirmation of Thomas Perez as labor secretary to a new push for organizing and boosting the membership base. From the West Coast, Dawn Hobbs reports on the decision of the conservative billionaire Koch brothers to abandon plans to buy Tribune Company – which includes the Los Angeles Times – amid widespread criticism by union members and others who feared the Kochs would compromise editorial integrity. A story on the push for representation by fast-food and other minimum wage workers shows that – despite anti-union sentiment encouraged by conservative leaders and Tea Party fanatics – many Americans realize that organized labor still offers the surest way to middle-class security. Finally, we tell the touching story of a long-ago moment when an apprentice pressman in New York had a surprise encounter with baseball's beloved Jackie Robinson – and even had to duck a snowball from the Dodger great!

–Fred Bruning

# A Living Wage – It's Basic

Corporations are squeezing workers across the globe to maximize profits and minimize wages. But workers are standing up and fighting back.

Whether it's fast-food workers in Detroit and Flint, Mich. walking off the job as part of one-day strikes held across the U.S. or mass protests across Europe, one thing is clear – workers are no longer keeping quiet.

Why is this happening? Because good-paying jobs have not been replaced after the last recession. Instead, adults trying to support their families with restaurant and retail jobs that pay poorly.

More than 36 percent of fast-food workers over 20 are raising children. But 79 percent of those in the same age group make less than \$10.10 an hour. Meanwhile, a recent report by the National Employment Law Project notes the largest losses in real wages in the last three years have occurred in the low- and middle-income job categories. And the number of involuntary part-time workers has almost doubled in the past five years.

At the same time, corporate profits are hitting an all-time high. Companies are profiting

by sending more jobs overseas and leaving working men and women with few options to support their families.

More and more states are falling under the influence of the American Legislative Exchange Council. ALEC, which acts as a go-between for corporations and lawmakers, is doing all it can to strip workers of their rights while lessening rules for big business.

But workers are fighting back. Low-wage earners walked out in the Midwest and there were protests in North Carolina and Wisconsin. In Detroit and Flint, employees from 80 fast-food restaurant sites walked off their jobs to call for the creation of a living

wage. Tens of thousands of European workers gathered in Spain, Portugal, France and Italy to say they are fed up with education, health care and pension cuts instituted by their governments to pay back the financial institutions that swindled them.

We need to get the economy moving again to rebuild the middle class. Workers' backs are against the wall. Business is booming for big corporations. Companies must do their part by paying a living wage and treating workers fairly.



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# Perez Seen as Leader Who Will Protect Workers

By Zachary Dowdy

When newly confirmed U.S. Labor Secretary Thomas Perez said in a Labor Day message that he would take a stand against those who would try to “undermine the rights of our workers,” GCC/IBT leaders cheered the strong statement and expressed confidence that unions had gained a powerful ally.

Others were encouraged by Perez’s promise to protect essential union principles like collective bargaining and the 40-hour work week while also taking a stand on immigration reform.

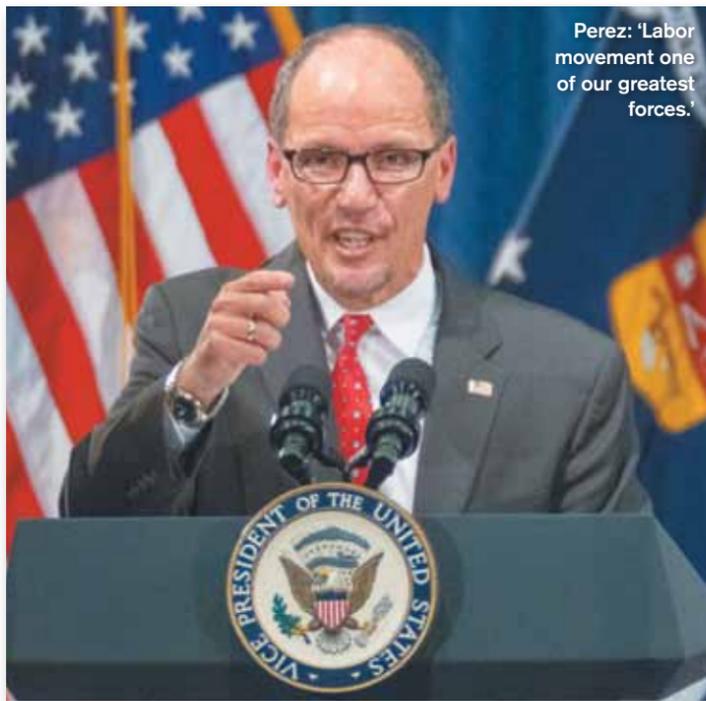
“As I grew older, I grew to conclude that it’s not God’s will that people who work a 40-hour week should live in poverty,” he said at a national labor convention. “That it’s not God’s will that a coal miner

should not live to see his children graduate. That it’s not God’s will that there are 11 million people in the shadows.”

Perez has noted that his appreciation for organized labor began early in life when a man who helped raise him was aided by a union after losing his job. Many GCC/IBT members see in Perez’s words – and life experience – evidence that the new secretary will be a strong advocate for workplace fairness.

“From what I’ve heard, I’m very excited,” said Marty Callaghan, president of Local 3-N, Boston. “He’s really going to put an emphasis on labor law enforcement.”

Callaghan said enforcement of labor laws – some weak, to begin with



Perez: ‘Labor movement one of our greatest forces.’

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

– too often have not been vigorously enforced.

“He seems to be very open about what he plans to do and very aggressive towards protecting workers,” Callaghan said.

Perez was sworn in last July and immediately began impressing labor officials and union members.

“I learned from growing up in Buffalo and working for Senator (Edward M.) Kennedy that the labor movement is one of our greatest forces for middle-class economic security,” Perez said at a national AFL-CIO convention. “President Obama’s vision of an economy that grows from the middle out can only be achieved if we continue to have a dynamic and empowered labor movement in America.”

Those words, reports of Perez’s humble working class upbringing,

his education at top universities – Brown and Harvard – and efforts on behalf of working people have impressed GCC/IBT and Teamster leaders.

IBT General President James Hoffa also said Perez’s confirmation – finally accomplished after GOP delaying tactics that have become routine – was welcome and “long overdue.”

Said Hoffa: “Our union believed Perez was the right choice for Labor Secretary when he was nominated in March. ... Secretary Perez can now get to work and help this country get back on track.”

GCC/IBT president George Tedeschi also said Perez was an

*Continued on page 10*



New boss shows a common touch.



Outside Labor building, Martin Luther King marchers in August demanded ‘Good jobs for all.’

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

## THOMAS PEREZ: UNWAVERING DEDICATION

The son of immigrants from the Dominican Republic, Thomas Perez, 52, has been a steadfast champion of minority rights and equal opportunity throughout his years in government.

His dedication to working people – and the labor movement – has been unwavering.

In interviews, Perez recalled that a family friend who helped guide him as a young person once was out of a job and received union support. “I remember vividly how organized labor served as a lifeline and support network for him and so many others,” Perez told the AFL-CIO.

Perez has spent a career in public service. Here are highlights:

- Law clerk, U.S. District Court, 1987-89
- Prosecutor, Justice Department, 1989-95
- Special Counsel to Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) and principal adviser on civil rights and criminal justice, 1995-98.
- Deputy Assistant Attorney General, U.S. Justice Department Civil Rights Division, 1998-99
- Director, Office of Civil Rights, Department of Health and Human Services, 1999-2000
- Montgomery County (Md.) Council, 2002-06
- Secretary of Licensing and Regulation, Maryland Department of Labor, 2007-09
- Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, 2009-2013

■ U.S. Secretary of Labor, 2013-

When Perez was confirmed in August by the U.S. Senate – after lengthy conservative delaying tactics – President Obama welcomed him as an individual who has “lived the American dream himself and has dedicated his career to keeping it within reach for hardworking families across the country.”

At the Department of Labor, Obama said, Perez would concentrate on the needs of middle-class families. “Tom will help us continue to grow our economy, help businesses create jobs, make sure workers have the skills those jobs require, and ensure safe workplaces and economic opportunity for all,” the president said.

In September, Perez, the only Latino member of Obama’s cabinet, was sworn in by Vice President Joe Biden.

The vice president hailed Perez as a champion of equal rights.

“That’s been the hallmark of his life, giving people a shot,” said Biden, according to NBC Latino. “It’s about equipping people.”

Perez left no doubt that he intended to make certain every American had a fair shot at success.

“The Department of Labor is the Department of Opportunity,” said Perez.

Speaking to the Washington Post, Perez made clear what would be his first order of business.

“It starts with jobs, jobs, jobs,” the secretary said.

# 'Forever' Stamp Series Hails American Workers and Print Industry

Powerhouse mechanic, riveter, coal miner, linotype operator – the United States Postal Service is honoring early 20th Century industrial era workers with a series of 12 “forever” stamps called “Made in America: Building a Nation.”

At ceremonies at the Department of Labor, Secretary Thomas Perez said the stamps celebrate traditional values of determination and hard work.

“These iconic images tell a powerful story about American economic strength and prosperity,” Perez said. “These men and women and millions like them really did build a nation.”

Eleven of the images – which also include a millinery apprentice, steelworker, railroad track walker and airplane maker – were by photographer Lewis

Hine, who specialized in labor photos. Another – of a female welder – is by the renowned Margaret Bourke-White. “Forever” stamps cost 46 cents and can be used even if postal rates increase.

“Let each stamp serve as a small reminder of the dedication, work ethic, and sacrifices that make America great,” said Postmaster General Patrick R. Donahoe.

GCC/IBT president George Tedeschi said he was delighted that the series took note of the print industry with an image of a linotype operator.

“The postal service is correct to recognize the pivotal role of the printed product in the history of our country,” Tedeschi said. “Working with colleagues represented by the International Typographical Union, our members helped produce newspapers coast-to-coast and performed a vital public service. The linotype has been replaced by modern technology but the contributions of print workers from an earlier generation should never be forgotten.”

Though the stamp series has drawn praise, its release comes as the USPS seeks to cut jobs by closing facilities and is considering elimination of Saturday delivery service.

The irony of the situation drew criticism from labor commentator Mike Hall on the AFL-CIO website.

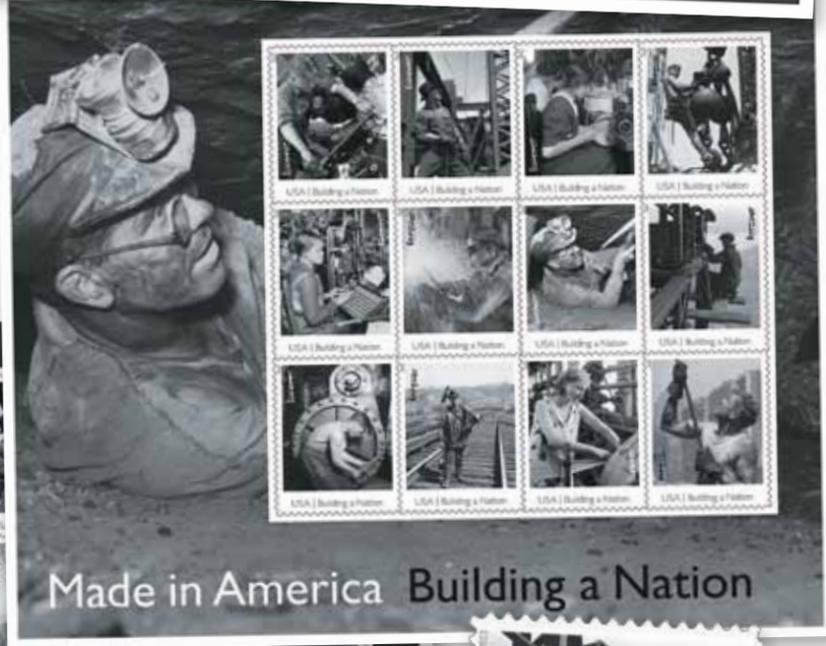
In a blog entry, Hall said USPS should afford its own workers “the same respect” as those celebrated in the stamp series. Lobbying Congress for authority to “further slash jobs and service” shows little regard for “the half a million men and women who make the postal service run,” Hall said.

Asked for response, a USPS press officer referred the Communicator to remarks by Donahoe before the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee in July.

At that time, the postmaster general said remedies were essential if the service was to meet 21st Century challenges.

“We cannot pretend these marketplace changes aren’t happening or that they don’t require us to make fundamental changes to our business model,” Donahoe told members of Congress. “We need comprehensive reform now.”

“Made in America” stamps are offered in sheets of five and 12. If the series is not available at local post offices, customers can shop at [usps.com/stamps](http://usps.com/stamps).



## Appeals Court Gives Union Victory in Severance Dispute

A dispute over severance pay has been settled by the U.S. Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals providing a victory for the GCC/IBT that a union lawyer called an “important” affirmation of fundamental contract guarantees.

The 2-1 decision overturned a lower court ruling that would have deprived approximately 250 workers in three Midwestern shops a settlement following sale of the plants by Rio Tinto Alcan to Bemis Company Inc.

Though no workers lost jobs, the Alcan contract provided severance in event the company permanently closed the plant.

Alcan objected but an arbitrator found that the sale of the plant constituted a complete closure though Bemis intended to continue operations. However, the company appealed and won in federal district court.

Representing the GCC/IBT, attorney Tom Allison of Chicago challenged the lower court decision and prevailed at the circuit level.

At issue, Allison said, was the “successor and assigns”

clause that is “standard form” for GCC/IBT contracts. The provision assures that the collective bargaining agreement in effect at the time of sale will be honored by the new owner.

Allison, of the firm Allison, Slutzky & Kennedy, said the Eighth Circuit ruling could result in nearly \$2 million in payments to GCC/IBT members at former Alcan plants in Des Moines, Iowa, and Neenah and Menasha, Wis.

Contract language clearly established that workers must receive severance if company “completely and permanently” closed the plant, Allison said, and the issue of their continued employment at the same facilities was not relevant.

The provision is intended to protect workers when ownership changes hands – a common occurrence in the world of big business and high finance.



“It’s fair because, for decades, these plants were sold from one company to the other and buyers have always honored the contracts and kept everyone on,” Allison said. “This buyer engaged in what the arbitrator found to be an attempt to take ‘opportunistic’ advantage of the situation” by altering contract provisions.

Eighth Circuit judges agreed.

“Because the arbitrator was at least arguably construing or applying the collective bargaining agreement, a federal court must defer to the arbitrator’s interpretation, and we therefore reverse,” the panel said.

Management is seeking a so-called “en banque” ruling by the full Eighth Circuit court in hopes of overturning the decision of the three-judge panel but Allison said he is confident the union position will be upheld.

“This should be the final word,” he said.

# Good News: Kochs Nix Trib Deal

By Dawn Hobbs

The ultra conservative Koch brothers are no longer in the running to purchase the Tribune chain – including the Los Angeles Times, Chicago Tribune and Baltimore Sun – much to the relief of GCC/IBT leaders who expressed satisfaction the right-wing industrialists will not be in a position to control news coverage at three of the nation's most respected newspapers.

GCC/IBT leaders feared Charles and David Koch would use the newspaper chain as a mouthpiece to promote their right-wing, anti-union agenda.

"The Kochs use their enormous wealth to push an extremist agenda that places high priority on the destruction of organized labor," said GCC/IBT president George Tedeschi. "They want to keep the advantage for their wealthy friends and right-wing political allies at the expense of the middle class. They are the last people we want running a newspaper."

A story in the New York Times said worries about a Koch takeover of Tribune "prompted protests by liberal groups and media reform groups that cast the Kochs – who are prominent donors to libertarian causes and Republican politicians – as threats to independent journalism."

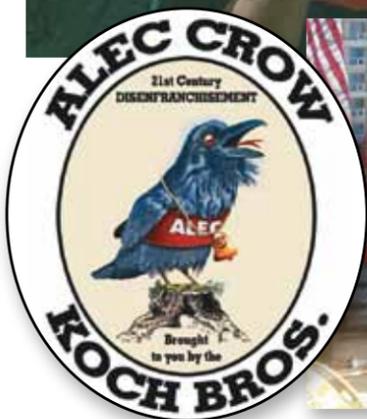
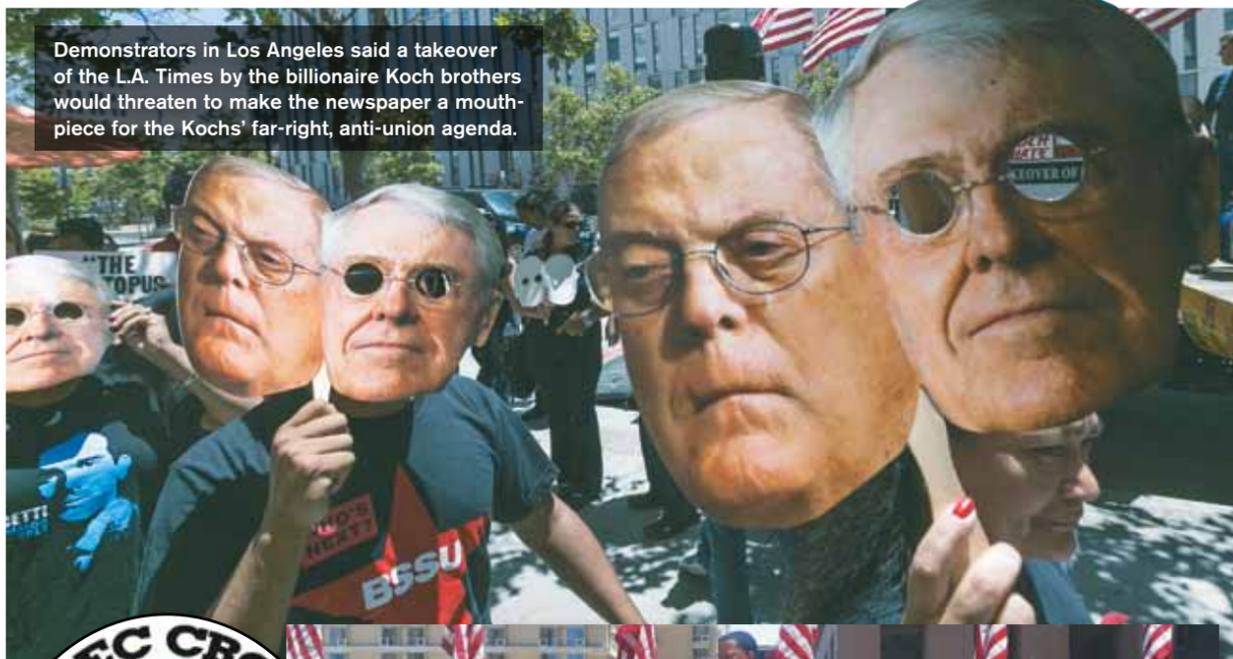
The billionaire brothers have contributed significantly to the campaigns of numerous anti-labor politicians, including Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney and Governor Scott Walker in Wisconsin, where the Koch-backed Americans for Prosperity group bought massive ads supporting Walker's effort to crush collective bargaining rights for public workers. They pour big bucks into the conservative American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), an alliance between big business and state legislators. And just last year in California, the Kochs contributed \$4 million to a state proposition that would have restricted union political activity.

Control of Tribune would have given the Kochs a powerful means of influencing public opinion and advancing their own interests, critics said.

"For the 1 percent who can't tolerate workplace democracy, growth and upward mobility in the middle class, and regulation of business excess, it's not enough to dominate the political realm, dictate to state legislatures, and clear a path for rampant corporate misconduct," said Ira Gottlieb, an attorney for the GCC/IBT in California. "They also feel compelled to cheerlead their own efforts through media ownership."

Koch ownership could have threatened professional journalistic standards, said GCC/IBT international organizer Marty Keegan. "The fact they pulled out is a great victory for fair and honest journalism."

Ron Pineda, president of GCC/IBT Local 140-N, who



worked at the Los Angeles Times for 18 years as a mailer and then 12 as a pressman, thanked the Los Angeles Federation of Labor and Teamsters Joint Council 42 and IBT Locals 63, 396, 572, 630 and 848 for their efforts in blocking the purchase.

"Our newspaper belongs in the hands of local ownership that will utilize the newspaper in ways to benefit not only the readers, but the community as a whole," Pineda said. "That would not have happened under a Koch controlled media outlet. We can only hope that new ownership will be labor friendly because our members deserve a break from the continuous anti-union treatment they experience on an all too frequent basis."

A Koch spokeswoman told the New York Times that the brothers had concluded the acquisition was "not economically viable" because Tribune-owned websites – which provide a significant stream of advertising revenue – would not have been included in the deal.

Koch Industries, a multinational corporation based in Wichita, Kan., provides products such as asphalts, chemicals, plastics and petroleum. The company's subsidiaries include Georgia-Pacific, Flint Hills Resources, Koch Pipeline and the Matador Cattle Company.

The conglomerate employs 50,000 workers in the United States and another 20,000 in 59 other countries. In 2011, Forbes ranked it as the second largest privately held company in the U.S., with an annual revenue of about \$98 billion. Charles Koch has stated the company would only publicly offer shares "literally over my dead body."

The elder brother told The Wichita Eagle in July that Koch Industries was examining acquisitions in all forms of media – not only newspapers, but also the Internet, television and the entertainment industry.

*Dawn Hobbs, a California-based freelance writer, is former crime and courts reporter for the Santa Barbara News-Press.*

## Watch Out—Jackie Robinson's Chucking that Snowball!

The recent film, "42," recalling the rookie year of Jackie Robinson, and a grandson's question summoned a cherished memory for Edward E. Downey, retired New York Times press operator and member of GCC/IBT Local 2-N.



Ed Downey

After seeing the movie, 15-year-old Erich Seeger of Little Egg Harbor, N.J. phoned his grandfather in Baldwin, Long Island, N.Y. "He wanted to know if I had ever seen Jackie Robinson play. I said better yet, I got to throw him a ball."

And he did – though not in Ebbets Field.

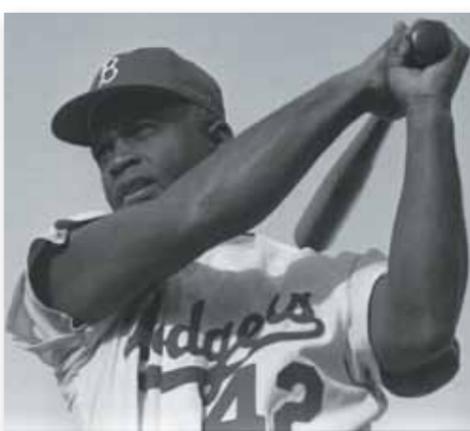
It was November or December, 1957, and piles of dirty snow were all that remained of a recent Manhattan storm. Outside a Daily Mirror printing plant on East 44th Street, apprentice pressmen were waiting for the next edition.

"We were shivering, smoking and talking," recalled Downey, one of the workers.

Across the street, a man came out of a parking garage and headed east. He was a familiar looking fellow – handsome, dressed in a camel's hair overcoat and wearing leather gloves.

"That's Jackie Robinson!" said one of the flyboys. Others said, no, it couldn't be. Downey took a look and agreed: "It's Robinson!"

In a move that astounded Brooklyn Dodger fans, the team had traded Robinson the year



LOOK MAGAZINE/JIMBO BOWMAN/WIKIMEDIA

before to the rival New York Giants. Robinson, a national hero for breaking baseball's color barrier in 1947, retired rather than make the switch.

Now, there he was, on 44th Street – a living legend.

Downey, called out, "Hey Jackie!"

Robinson waved.

Quickly, Downey scooped up some snow and packed it into a ball.

"I threw it towards him," Downey said. "Athletically, taking a few steps, he caught it easily and fired it back towards us. I couldn't field his speedball and it shattered on the wall."

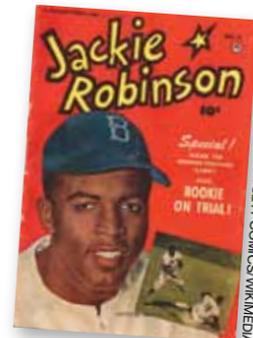
The flyboys were delighted.

"We all gave a good cheer," Downey said. Robinson kept walking.

The Dodgers left Brooklyn for Los Angeles after the 1957 season. Robinson became an executive with the Chock full o'Nuts coffee company. Battling diabetes, the beloved Dodger died at 53 in 1972.

Downey, 84, who moved from the Mirror pressroom to the Times where he worked for 30 years before retiring in 1992, says he wasn't much of a baseball fan. But playing catch with Jackie Robinson – that was something.

"I had never forgotten the incident," Downey said. "And my grandson was really impressed."



FAVORITE COMICS/WIKIMEDIA

# Detroit Reveals America's Woes

Is Detroit just the start?

After years of decline, the city that once symbolized American ingenuity and working class prosperity filed for bankruptcy.

Motor City on the rocks. Who would have thought?

There are many reasons for Detroit's sorry state but perhaps none more scary than the most obvious: American manufacturing is nearly kaput.

The auto industry that made Detroit a thriving metropolis for decades has rebounded, yes, and that is a good thing. But even with automakers back from the brink the terrible reality remains. Good blue collar jobs are nearly impossible to find – in Detroit and just about everywhere else.

Writing in the New York Times, Nobel economist Joseph E. Stiglitz, says that fewer than 8 percent of American workers have manufacturing jobs and that the old cities of the Rust Belt are “skeletons.”

Detroit may be the most dramatic case of urban collapse but the forces underlying its woes are hardly unique.

Racial and economic segregation play a part. Cheap labor overseas is an important factor. A shortsighted, bottom-line mentality on the part of too many business operators takes blame, too. The steep decline in union membership is a grave concern. Government, too, is part of the problem – or at least those in Washington who refuse to act for the good of the country.

These days, funding for anything other than defense is almost impossible to achieve. Tea Party extremists have kidnapped the Republican Party and imposed a know-nothing brand of austerity that crimps the economy and jeopardizes the middle class. And they promise more craziness to come.

Any spending is too much in the view of these political amateurs – zealots whose economic ideas are summed up mainly by the word “no” – and their conservative corporate patrons.

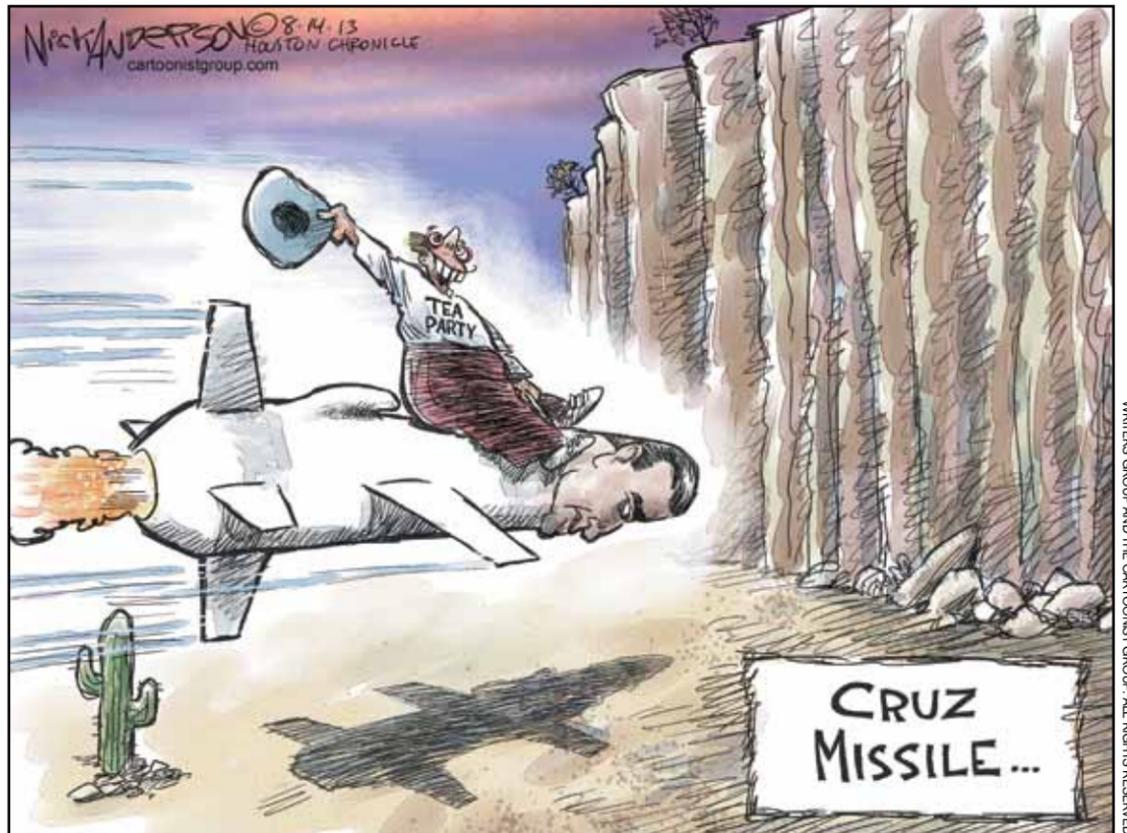
So infrastructure – bridges, tunnels, roadways – is allowed to deteriorate. Education budgets are cut. Public transportation is neglected. Other nations – China, in particular – are developing high speed rail systems that to most Americans would look like something out of science fiction. Meanwhile, Republican governors have squelched even the modest demonstration projects advanced by the Obama administration.

Mobility is no minor issue. Without adequate bus or subway service, people in metropolitan areas can't apply for better jobs. Literally, they are stranded. That's one of the things that happened in Detroit. When suburbs began to flourish, city dwellers lost their jobs and couldn't get to the new ones out of town. For them, upward mobility – that great American idea – ended, with a thud.

What Detroit reveals, says economist Stiglitz, are the troubling divisions that mark American life – disparities that should alarm anyone who believes in personal advancement and economic opportunity. The rich are doing fine and, in fact, getting richer. The poor are left on their own, overlooked by conservative policy makers who claim a free market cures all ills. Middle-class people – bedrock of the country – wonder how much longer they can manage and if their children will get a crack at success.

Some might say that Detroit is an usual case, a hard-luck industrial city that didn't adjust to changing times and got left behind in the Information Age. But there were decades when Detroit, too, seemed sure to flourish forever, when American manufacturing led the world and there was no end in sight.

Maybe Detroit will bounce back. Let's hope so. Meanwhile, we should learn the hard lessons of its sad story and demand that government invest in the future and reject the mean-spirited preachments of the hard right. Otherwise, Motor City may become a symbol not of American energy and optimism but a country stuck in reverse.



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## Point of View BY SAM PIZZIGATI

# Is the 'Free Press' Really Free?

Jeff Bezos, the CEO of Amazon.com, has bought the Washington Post for \$250 million – less than 1 percent of his \$27.8 billion personal fortune.

Has plutocracy simply and inalterably overwhelmed the nation's “free press?” Some commentators fear the worst.

Let's cut this gauzy sentimentalizing. Yes, the Graham family that owned the Post the past 80 years did perform a notable public service after the 1972 Watergate break-in. But three years later, the Grahams hired “replacement workers” to grab away jobs of striking Post pressmen.

That move broke an unwritten rule that held sway among “respectable” employers for the entire mid-20th century and helped shove the American labor movement toward a three-decade-long slide.

This steep labor descent has left the modern American workplace virtually “union-free.” Some 7 percent of America's private-sector workers now carry union cards.

At last count, no union members worked in the vast Amazon warehouses, where employees, exhausted after 12-hour shifts, can wait unpaid, for nearly a half-hour, at security checkpoints because the company fears pilfering of pricey electronic goods.

To be sure, Amazon has started making nice on some fronts. Last year, after a barrage of negative publicity, Bezos ordered air-conditioning installed in his brutally hot warehouses.

But Amazon's basic, take-no-prisoners business model is still roaring along. The online retail giant “drives local stores out of business,” notes USAction's Richard Kirsch, “while paying low wages to its non-union workers.”

That formula has made Bezos staggeringly rich and denied middle-class status to tens of thousands of American families. Workers at Amazon's distribution center warehouses, CNN reports, take home about \$24,300 a year, “less than \$1,000 above the official federal poverty line for a family of four.”

No one knows what exactly Bezos has in store for the Washington Post, since his PR people declined to make him available for interviews after announcement of the sale. Insiders say Bezos probably won't “interfere” in the Post's daily operations.

No surprise there. The Post editorial line already meshes quite smoothly with the Bezos worldview – liberal-ish on cultural issues, dependably conservative on anything like the labor movement that poses any serious potential threat to America's rich.

“So what's new?” any crusty veteran newspaper reporter might ask. America's most powerful newspaper publishers have always been, by and large, consistently partial to the privileged.

But we have had exceptions, publishers who remind us how great newspapers could – and should – be wielding their power. The most eloquent of these public-spirited publishers? That may have been Joseph Pulitzer, the widely honored moving force behind the St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

In his 1907 retirement address, Pulitzer urged successors to “always oppose privileged classes and public plunderers, never lack sympathy with the poor, always remain devoted to the public welfare, never be satisfied with merely printing news, always be drastically independent, never be afraid to attack wrong, whether by predatory plutocracy or predatory poverty.”

Don't expect any credo remotely similar to Pulitzer's admonition to appear on the Washington Post masthead anytime soon. In his home Washington state, Bezos has played the predatory plutocrat to the hilt.

Three years ago, the Amazon chief helped bankroll the defeat of a ballot initiative that would have cut taxes on Washington's small businesses and average families and modestly raised taxes on the state's rich – Bezos, included.

Veteran labor journalist Sam Pizzigati edits *Too Much*, an online weekly publication of the Institute for Policy Studies. Email: editor@toomuchonline.org

## Hands Off Obamacare

Right-wingers loved it in the late 1980s when the very conservative Heritage Foundation proposed people take personal responsibility for their health care. When he was governor of Massachusetts, Mitt Romney saw enough merit in the concept to make it the basis for his state's enormously successful health insurance plan – "Romneycare."

Then President Obama adopted the same plan as that advanced by Heritage and embraced by Romney and suddenly it was the devil's work. "Unconstitutional," yelled Republicans and their Tea Party allies until the U.S. Supreme Court said otherwise.

So far, hardliners in the House have tried 40 times to overturn the Affordable Care Act that opponents like to call Obamacare. Yet Obamacare – the President uses the term, himself – will go into full operation Jan. 1, 2014 despite what surely will be last-minute GOP attempts to make mischief and block 30 million people from getting coverage. Lots of luck.

One definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different outcome. And these days the GOP surely looks nuts. But we should not allow the party's silliness to affect national policy.

As union people, GCC/IBT members must make clear that they back the president's far-sighted health insurance initiative. E-mail or call elected officials in Washington and tell them that you value Obamacare and want no one to mess with it.

What's the big deal for union people?

Most contracts provide health coverage so

members rarely have to worry. But the ACA is something all working people are obligated to support in the interest of the nation – and their own family members who might not have employer-based insurance.

Even though only partially implemented, Obamacare is looking good.

The plan already has cut health care costs – important for everyone. It covers uninsured adult children until the age of 26. When fully in force, it will stop insurance companies from imposing artificial benefit limits and eliminates the exclusion for pre-existing conditions. A provision provides government subsidies for low-income individuals and families.

And, of great significance, Obamacare creates health insurance exchanges – a competitive marketplace that already is driving down rates in New York and California. The exchanges are a terrific idea but may tempt some companies to push workers away from employer-based insurance. Note to negotiators: Don't let it happen.

Here's the point: Obamacare already is working and – when fully implemented – promises to be a worthy complement to Social Security and Medicare. The right wing may complain about a new government program but what else would we expect? From a financial point of view, the Affordable Care Act makes perfect sense. As a remedy for those who need and deserve health services, it is a grand idea – historic and truly American.



## All the Best

### Print

#### March: Book One

John Lewis, Andrew Aydin, Nate Powell

At a time when the needs of ordinary Americans often are ignored on Capitol Hill, Rep. John Lewis (D-Ga.) continues to keep the faith. Lewis knows what it is like to battle the odds. Born to a family of sharecroppers in rural Alabama, Lewis became a civil rights activist profoundly influenced by Martin Luther King (see **Video** review below) and has never compromised his beliefs. This comic-book style volume – intended as the first of three by Lewis, co-writer Andrew Aydin and artist Nate Powell – recalls the first stages of the congressman's long, extraordinary odyssey. From lunch counter sit-ins to city hall demonstrations, John Lewis was on the front lines. He's never budged. America owes Lewis its thanks – and a heartfelt wish to keep on. **Top Shelf Productions, \$7.50**



### Video

#### King: A Filmed Record...From Montgomery to Memphis

Sidney Lumet and Joseph L. Mankiewicz, directors

Fifty years ago, Martin Luther King led a huge demonstration for "jobs and freedom" that became known as the March on Washington. A stirring event, it drew tens of thousands to the capitol where King challenged the nation to at last fulfill its promise of liberty and justice for all. To mark the anniversary, a highly-praised but rarely seen 1970 documentary tracing the brief but brilliant career of King from his days as a local preacher in Montgomery, Ala. to his 1968 assassination in Memphis, Tenn. has been released in a two-disc set. "King: A Filmed Record" – which features Paul Newman, Marlon Brando and Sidney Poitier, among many others – is more than a tribute to a fallen civil rights leader. It serves as reminder of how far the nation has come, how far it yet must travel, and how the courage and conviction of a single, unyielding person can change history. **Kino Lorber, \$24.94, Amazon.com**

### Music

#### Get Happy

Pink Martini

Easy as an evening cocktail, Pink Martini's new album offers a soothing selection from many lands and is a sure way to chase the blues after a tough day. Listening to lead singer China Forbes sing "I'm Waiting for You," the audience may feel transported to a cabaret where Humphrey Bogart runs the joint and Lauren Bacall drops by to chat. In addition to foreign language numbers, the timeless tunes on "Get Happy" include "What'll I Do," "Smile," and "Sway." But the magic of Pink Martini is that the self-described "little orchestra" does not oversell its retro roots but presses ahead with interpretations that are fresh and rare – and as intoxicating as any mixture of vodka and vermouth. **Heinz Records, \$15**

### Internet

#### Inequality for All: A Passionate Argument on Behalf of the Middle Class

<http://inequalityforall.com/>

Masquerading as a promotional device for Robert Reich's new movie, "Inequality for All," this slick website is loaded with the sort of information union people need. Reich, who served Bill Clinton as labor secretary, is appropriately outraged at the wealth imbalance that has become a standard feature of American economic life. "Of all developed nations the United States has the most unequal distribution of income," he declares in a video. In fact, says Reich, the last time things were so out of whack was in 1928 – just before the Great Depression. Essential to turning things around is an energized labor movement, he insists. "Find, start and support unions and workers rights organizations." It's the kind of endorsement we rarely hear these days. As "Inequality for All" confirms, Robert Reich knows what ails the nation and that unions are part of the cure.

## Guest Spot

BY FELICIA BRUCE

## Join the Green Team

In the real world of work and life there is a problem without parallel in history: climate change. And in that world, unionists can make a real difference.

Never afraid to tackle big problems, union members have the skill to forge a better future and make a cleaner world.

The issue is pressing: the United Nation has identified climate change as one of the world's most urgent issues. It will define the quality of life for future generations. And yet some deny that threat is real and try to discredit those working to solve the problem.

GCC/IBT members can do simple things now that will make a difference quickly.

Challenge climate deniers when they make false claims. Set the record straight: the threat is real.

As the old bumper sticker says: Think globally but act locally. Climate change is a worldwide phenomenon with plenty of hometown consequences. It may not be certain that a warmer atmosphere caused Hurricane Sandy last year but sea temperatures more than four degrees above normal gave the storm a super punch. And there is no doubt that floods, fires, droughts are more frequent – and all likely tied to global warming.

Reduce your "carbon footprint." Try driving less, consider a hybrid auto, use mass transportation, recycle. Be a good citizen of your community and our "global village."

Contact elected officials. If your Washington

representatives are among those who deny overwhelming evidence that climate change is largely caused by human activity tell them you'll remember that on Election Day.

Our dependence on fossil fuels must change. Investigate renewable, alternative energy sources like wind and solar. Demand that outrageous federal subsidies for oil companies be ended.

The cumulative effects of record temperatures combine to create human tragedies of enormous proportions. As we move forward, union people – and all Americans – should be committed to the goal of "going green."

We must not condemn the next generation to environmental catastrophe. Organized labor has led the way to reform in the past. Now we must do it again.

Stand up for those trying to protect the planet. And don't let the deniers – typically, short-sighted conservatives seeking to protect business interests – get away with pretending that climate change is fiction. That's a fairy tale with too scary an ending.

*Felicia Bruce, retired New York State United Teachers member and former public relations director for the Association of Municipal Employees, is an environmentalist living in Fort Pierce, Fla.*



# West Coast Organizers 'Energized'

By Dawn Hobbs

**A**t a time when organized labor is under attack and membership rolls continue to shrink, GCC/IBT West Coast officials are redoubling organizing efforts with campaigns to recruit more than 1,000 health care professionals in Southern California and 100 workers at a State of Washington print shop.

And that is just the start, organizers vow.

"We are energized and enthusiastic about these campaigns and others on the horizon – and we're determined to bring in as many new members as possible throughout the West Coast," said Marty Keegan, GCC/IBT international organizer.

In an unusual twist, one West Coast employer even reached out himself to the GCC/IBT because he realizes the benefits a unionized business can bring him and his workers.

"Printing is not what it used to be," said Fernando E. Bonada, owner of Blue Earth Printing in Culver City, outside Los Angeles. "So we opened our doors to the union so we'd be able to work with clients who only want to do business with union shops."



Slumping union membership and attacks on organized labor are prompting a new push to regain strength and protect worker rights.

IBT PHOTO

Bonada, who along with his father, Fernando V. Bonada, belonged to the GCIU years ago, noted that without unions, there wouldn't be a middle class: "These political forces that are anti-union don't realize that without a strong middle class, there's no one to buy products from the corporations. They want to devastate unions, but unions are necessary to maintain our standard of living in this country."

The unique request from an employer to unionize his business comes as West Coast GCC/IBT organizers work to gain new members and employees struggle to hold onto their jobs amid threats by owners to close their shops.

"At Blue Earth, they actually signed cards and then the employer contacted us and said his employees want to join our union," Keegan said. "This is a rare one. Let me tell you – I wish I had more of these."

Bonada's innovative approach to get new business should be recognized by other struggling print shop owners, organizers said.

Now, he'll be able to use the GCC/IBT bug and apply for the Allied Trade symbol, as well – each essential to boosting business.

"This is an exception to the rule," said Ron Pineda, president Local 140-N, Los Angeles. "But other owners should consider this approach. We'll do our best to send him union business and now all the union benefits will be available to his employees."

In fact, on Sept. 16, cheering Blue Earth employees



PHOTO BY JORGE PEREZ

In a rare move, Blue Earth Printing of Culver, Calif. invited the GCC/IBT to represent workers. Celebrating are (l-r), international organizer Marty Keegan, Gilbert Bonada, Sheldon Ferdinand, owner Fernando Bonada, Vivian M. Escalante, Osmen Molina, Adan A. Ramirez and GCC/IBT Local 140-N President, Ronnie Pineda



## Hard-pressed Workers Seek Partners in Battle for Better Pay

**W**ith fast food and discount store workers staging massive protests nationwide demanding higher pay and labor leaders vowing unorthodox – and somewhat controversial – steps to increase dwindling membership, GCC/IBT leaders say there may be potential prospects for gains as hard-pressed employees seek powerful partners in their effort to recoup ground lost in the recession.

At a recent AFL-CIO convention in Los Angeles, federation delegates announced unions would represent not only organized workers, but unorganized ones as well – a gutsy and unconventional move for unions which, since the 1940s, have only represented workers after a majority vote to do so.

The innovative strategy is worthy of attention, GCC/IBT leaders say. "It's a bold approach," said GCC/IBT President George Tedeschi. "Like all other labor leaders, I'll be watching to see how the plan works out."

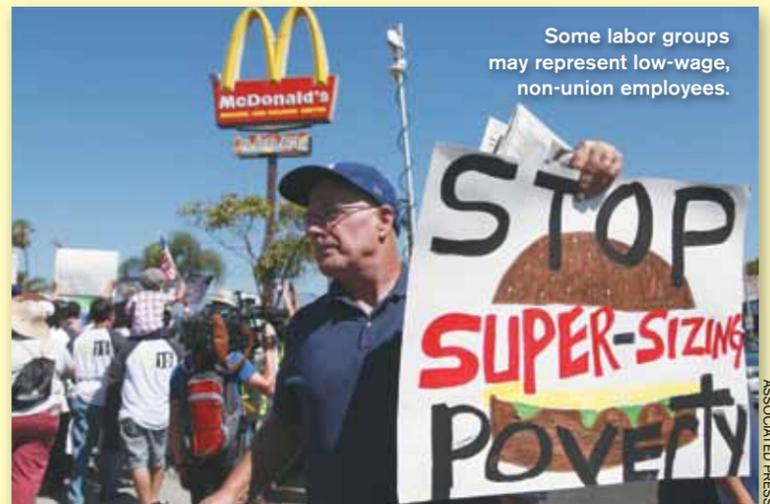
There is, indeed, need for innovative ideas to boost membership, but organizers warn unions should be cautious about their affiliations.

"I feel the idea of letting the unorganized in makes sense, but I have some serious concerns about certain other organizations that do not share our views on workers' rights to organize," said Marty Keegan, international GCC/IBT organizer. "But I do feel there is room for progressive organizations who are aware of working class needs."

The nontraditional approach, some labor leaders noted, may be the infusion needed for unions to survive.

"We need to start forming new relationships that reflect the new employment reality," said Brian Earl, president of GCC/IBT Local 767-M, Seattle.

Earl pointed to the ever-growing segment of independent contrac-



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Some labor groups may represent low-wage, non-union employees.

tors, especially in the high tech sector, who are ineligible for benefits because they are not considered "employees" even though they frequently work long term for a company.

"Employers are doing everything they can to avoid hiring 'employees,'" he said. "In these cases, we could form relationships – and maybe even organize them – so they could, at the minimum, get benefits. I think we need to at least take a look at this."

As financial pressures mount, thousands of non-union employees nationwide have taken to the streets to protest their plight.

ratified their first contract, negotiated by GCC/IBT Representative Mike Huggins.

“We have always been a family and a team, but we have a better bond now – knowing that we have a louder and stronger voice,” said Blue Earth employee Vivian Escalante. “We are excited because the GCC and Teamsters have so many different avenues and options for networking. We are very happy employees and know that things will only get better.”

Just east of Culver City, a much larger and intense organizing effort is underway at Kaiser Permanente on Sunset Avenue in Los Angeles.

In this situation, the National Union of Health Care Workers (NUHW), an independent association, raided the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), which originally represented the 1,156 registered nurses at Kaiser. After a year of unsuccessful negotiations, the Kaiser-Sunset nurses contacted GCC/IBT organizers, who launched a full campaign and filed for an election last year.

An election would have already occurred there had NUHW not filed charges against Kaiser alleging it showed favoritism to SEIU during the initial campaign and election. Two of the charges remain on appeal with the NLRB and continue to block the nurses right to an election. When balloting is allowed, the election will be the largest for the Teamsters involving registered nurses in a decade. The IBT already represents more than 35,000 health care professionals nationwide.

“We feel confident that we will win this election because it’s now been three years these nurses are working without a contract – that’s three years with no pay raises,” said Keegan, who is heading up the campaign.

The Kaiser-Sunset nurses are looking forward to becoming Teamsters.

“I want a union that has the power to negotiate with a company as large as Kaiser,” said Charles Garfield.

Xochitl Lares agreed: “The Teamsters have a long-standing history with the beginning of the labor movement in America and I feel they are a strong union that can get us the contract we need.”

Edith Cortez is also eager to become part of a team: “I want a union that believes in democracy – where we have a voice and will be included in meetings and decisions.”

Another nurse, Sun Yu, said: “The Teamsters will give us democracy, autonomy and representation.”

Approximately 1,400 miles north of Los Angeles in the Tacoma-Seattle area, GCC/IBT organizers are in the early stages of organizing 30 pressmen and 60 mailers employed by a nationally known printing chain.

“We are quietly building a committee internally,” said Keegan, who is working with Brian Earl, president of GCC/IBT Local 767-M, Seattle. Keegan is optimistic: “We have a good shot of bringing this in.”

In more than 50 cities, low-wage workers at fast food outlets, including McDonald’s, Burger King and Wendy’s, and at discount giant Walmart, staged massive demonstrations over Labor Day weekend demanding decent wages and the right to organize.

Entry level jobs that once offered teenagers a way to pick up spending money have become the primary income for many adults struggling to support a family. Typically, these employees earn \$7.25 per hour, or approximately \$15,000 per year. Workers are calling for an increase to \$15 per hour.

GCC/IBT leaders say it is unacceptable that fast food giants and their \$200 billion industry refuse to pay employees a living wage.

“Many of these people are just trying to pay the rent and provide meals for their kids but get nowhere when they talk to employers about better pay,” Tedeschi said. “Fast food chains and big discount stores are making a bundle but never give an inch. The minimum wage must be increased. These hard-working Americans must be protected.”

Ron Pineda, president of GCC/IBT Local 14-N, Los Angeles, echoed Tedeschi’s sentiments and urged unions to take action.

“CEOs at these chains are reportedly making 300 percent more each month than their average wage employee and they believe a second job or government assistance is the answer?” Pineda said. “Unions are the only way to solve this problem because it is the only way for them to have their voice heard.”

—Dawn Hobbs

# Union Leaders Back ‘Obamacare’

By Zachary Dowdy

On Oct. 1, up to 25 million Americans without health care coverage became entitled to insurance through the Affordable Care Act, a mammoth – and union-backed – piece of legislation that likely will go down as the hallmark of President Barack Obama’s domestic policy.

Union leaders have long praised a government-sponsored health care reform plan as antidote to rising health care costs that have crippled working families with debt. And while the country’s strongest and largest unions backed what is often called “Obamacare,” some have done so with reservations.

Overall, GCC/IBT leaders are on board with a plan that has some kinks but is considered a vast improvement over what came before it.

“Though we may have concerns with specific provisions of the ACA, we share the president’s goal of ensuring that every American has affordable access to top-quality health care,” said Teamsters General President James P. Hoffa on the eve of the act’s implementation. “It is on this main point that we disagree wholeheartedly with the efforts of extreme right-wing Republicans to gut the ACA. Any suggestion otherwise is simply political posturing.”

GCC/IBT President George Tedeschi joined Hoffa in condemning the Tea Party-driven campaign to defund the entitlement program while applauding the benefits of ACA for working families.

“No one in a country as great as ours should be without health care insurance,” said Tedeschi. “Unions have long made employer-supported insurance a priority for members. But not everyone is fortunate enough to have a strong labor organization like the Teamsters behind them.”

Tedeschi said millions of Americans who could not previously afford health insurance and lived in fear of injury or illness, now have an alternative. Republican opposition is outrageous, he said, but not surprising.

“The GOP opposed Social Security when Roosevelt got it passed in 1935 and Medicare when Lyndon Johnson launched the program in 1965,” he said. “They were wrong in both cases and they are wrong now in their fierce opposition to the Affordable Care Act. Republicans are only proving again that they favor the privileged and do little for ordinary people.”

Republicans in Congress have tried more than 40 times to repeal the Affordable Care Act and at one point in the fall shut down government over the issue. But the ACA sign-up period began on schedule Oct. 1 and drew so much response that government computers were temporarily overwhelmed.

“I think for the most part people that didn’t have it before and want health care are going to be able to get it,” said Michael LaSpina, president of GCC/IBT Local 406-C, Long Island. “What kind it is I don’t really know but something’s better than nothing. That’s the good side – you’re going to get some kind of health care.”

Ralph Meers, president of Local 527-S in Atlanta, welcomed the law but, like many, said he hoped the program would be even more comprehensive. Some of the concessions Obama was forced to make in crafting the law should be strengthened in the future, Meers said.

“I don’t think we have any options except to support the Democrats,” he said during the first days of October’s government shutdown. “Republicans are the party of ‘no.’ They just never were going to give up anything and they just frustrated him and the negotiations over health care. But I’m a strong supporter of the president and the plan.”

Hoffa also made clear that while he favored some adjustments to the plan, right-wing claims that he, and other major labor leaders, wanted the law repealed were untrue.

In particular, Hoffa demanded that Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas), a Tea Party crony, and conservative Sen. David Vitter (R-La.) to “cease and desist” from issuing misleading statements in “their destructive campaign to hobble the president and the nation.”

The IBT leader said “constructive criticism” by union leaders in regard to certain aspects of the ACA should not be mistaken – or described – as opposition.

GOP tactics put ordinary people at risk, Hoffa said. “Working Americans are fed up with the continued cycle of holding the government and the economy hostage to achieve some empty political victory,” he said. “Working families are the only people hurt by Republican maneuverings to shut down the government and play Russian roulette with the debt ceiling.”

Zachary Dowdy is a reporter at *Newsday* and editorial unit vice president of Local 406-C, Long Island.

## KEY FEATURES OF AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

The Affordable Care Act – called “Obamacare” first by President Obama’s critics and now by the chief executive, himself – already has provided Americans advantages unavailable before. Prominent features include coverage for dependent children until age 26, free preventive services and lower cost prescription drugs for Medicare recipients.

Beginning next year:

- All Americans have access to affordable health insurance options.
- A new “marketplace” established by the law allows individuals and small businesses to compare health plans.
- Middle and low-income families receive tax credits covering a significant portion of the cost of coverage.
- Insurers barred from discriminating based on pre-existing conditions.
- Annual limits on coverage eliminated.
- Increased support for Medicaid protecting the poorest Americans.

Despite relentless attempts by conservative forces on Capitol Hill to undermine the ACA, Democrats insist the law will not be rescinded. Administration officials say they are confident that when the plan is fully in effect, Americans will embrace it as they do Social Security and Medicare. At that point, President Obama remarked, Republicans are not likely to call it “Obamacare” any longer.



# American Dream at Risk if Country Forgets Average Joe and Jane

By Thomas J. Mackell Jr.

Life in America is defined these days by endless financial chicanery on Wall Street, selfish corporate CEOs, big business-controlled media and the intrusive, post-9/11 national-security state.

Americans who want nothing more than to earn a good living and take care of their families find themselves battling forces they can't control.

In 2011, workers in households earning \$40-60,000 had a 7.8 percent unemployment rate. In households earning under \$20,000, unemployment was 24.4 percent. The unemployment for households earning more than \$150,000 was 3.2 percent. No surprise: The well off remain well off.

Yes, we want to restore the middle class but what do we do for those who are even less fortunate and have been left behind? How do we provide them with the dignity of real value-creating jobs?

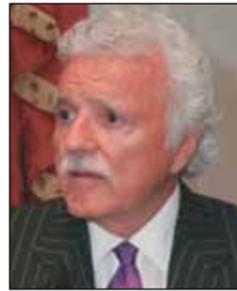


Our political and business leaders must get serious and truly work for the interests of every American by providing strong economic development with plenty of new jobs.

There must not be a select few who prosper – those born into the right families or who hit upon a billion-dollar idea. If we forget the Average Joe and Jane – union members and other hard-working folks who have made this country great – we will abandon the American Dream.

Reform is essential. We have laws in place that are devoted to keeping the rich richer and the poor poorer. These will not change until the vacuous legislators make a commitment to change the system.

Government leaders of both parties – from Bill Clinton to former Speaker Newt Gingrich – changed the dynamics of our trade deals and shipped jobs out of America. Clinton



Thomas J. Mackell Jr.

also worked with former Senate Banking Committee chairman Phil Gramm to unravel the Glass-Steagall law which separated brokerage firms and commercial banks. When that occurred we fast learned what happens when you put the fox into the chicken coop. The wheels came off the train in the financial crisis as a result.

Are we at the place in America where, as a recent AFL-CIO Facebook post suggested, the “USA should invade the USA and win over the hearts and minds of the population by building roads, bridges and putting the locals to work.”

Not such a bad idea. With a do-nothing Congress and endless Republican obstructionism, the country is stalled. Time for the ordinary citizens to say, “Enough.” Time for us to remind our leaders and their wealthy benefactors that this isn't their country, alone. It's ours, too, and we won't be pushed aside any more.

*Thomas J. Mackell Jr. is president of the Association of Benefit Administrators, former chairman of the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond and author of, “When the Good Pensions Go Away: Why America Needs a New Deal for Pension and Health Care Reform.”*

## TRAINING AND PREPARATION STRESSED AT MIDWESTERN STATES CONFERENCE

Union power depends on well-prepared leaders – and, increasingly, the future of the labor movement does, too.

GCC/IBT officials, organizers and trainers delivered that fundamental message at a three-day Midwestern States Conference in St. Louis where delegates were urged to upgrade skills and build knowledge in order to better serve members and deal more effectively with management.

“Our labor leaders and the people who attend conference are our future,” said Marty Hallberg, vice president of the conference and a GCC/IBT general board member. “Without training and tools, we are going to fail.”

Essential to success is energizing the base – rank-and-file members who may take union membership, and responsibilities, for granted, officials said.

“The main message is that we have to utilize the membership and make them part of the solution,” said international representative Phil Roberts, who ran training sessions. “We derive our strength from our membership. To solve problems and be more successful, we must have a stronger membership.”

Thirty delegates from 14 locals attended workshops aimed at enhancing effectiveness in areas of contract negotiations, constituent service, handling grievances, among other basic union responsibilities – “things that



PHOTO BY STEVE NOBLES/DOI

Delegates were told they must energize members, fight complacency, and upgrade skills. ‘Without training and tools we are going to fail,’ said conference vice president Marty Hallberg.

every local leader needs to know,” said Steve Nobles, conference secretary-treasurer.

Because of financial pressures facing GCC/IBT locals and the labor movement, in general, the Midwestern group no longer holds sessions twice a year. However, Hallberg noted, an extra day has been added to what now is an annual event to allow for additional training time.

“We extended to fit more education in,” said Hallberg.

Information is vital – but so is commitment, delegates were told.

Apathy is a potent enemy in organized labor, warned several speakers including GCC/IBT secretary-treasurer/vice president Robert Lacey and GCC/IBT conference organizers Richard Street and Rickey Putman. Union members must take a greater role in the work of their locals. In particular, delegates were told, rank-and-file unionists should help increase membership.

“They should get out and help organize,” Street said. Expanding on the idea, Leslie Miller of the IBT communications department, urged delegates to improve communication with members with social media favorites like Facebook and Twitter – modern tools that can be valuable assets in organizing drives.

No doubt, said Hallberg, that unions are under pressure. People are worried about pension and health care issues and job security, he said. “We’re coming out of the worst economic times in recent history.”

Despite challenges facing the GCC/IBT as the print industry continues to be transformed in the Information Age, delegates went home in an upbeat mood, officials said.

“We put in a lot of work in three days,” Nobles said. “They were very optimistic when they left.”

The Midwestern States Conference will hold its 2014 meeting in Detroit.

## Perez ‘Excellent Appointment’

Continued from page 3

outstanding choice for the nation’s top labor post.” By all reports, Perez has a keen interest in workers’ rights and understands that decent jobs, and strong unions, are necessary if the middle class is to survive,” said Tedeschi.

Continued concerns about unemployment were evident in August when Americans observing the 50th anniversary of the March on Washington and Martin Luther King’s “I Have a Dream” speech stopped in front of the Labor Department building to stress the need for job creation.

“Good jobs for all,” marchers called out.

Perez has made clear in public comments that he understands the vital role his department plays in assuring a stable labor environment and his background suggests the secretary will take a hands-on approach in protecting workers and their families.

In Maryland, Perez served as secretary of the state’s Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation and helped reform lending and foreclosure regulations in an effort to halt the rising number of foreclosures threatening Maryland homeowners. Perez also pushed for an overhaul of Maryland’s workforce development system to ensure workers were better equipped to meet demands of the modern job market.

“I think it’s an excellent appointment,” said John Agenbroad, Executive Officer/Secretary-Treasurer at GCC/IBT District Council 3 in Cincinnati. “I think he’ll meet

the rubber where it hits the road and will make things happen.”

Agénbroad praised outgoing labor secretary Hilda Solis but said he was certain Perez was a worthy successor who would “hit the ground running.”

And, said Agénbroad, Perez will face significant challenges at a time when the labor movement has been weakened by anti-union legislation in several battleground states and an obstructionist Congress consistently blocks proposals intended to aid the middle class.

“I don’t know how we can get any legislation through right now in this dysfunctional Congress,” Agénbroad said, adding that he nonetheless remains convinced that Perez can make a difference. “I’m hopeful but I just don’t know how we can get anything done.”

Ralph Meers, president of Local 527-S in Atlanta, shared that sentiment.

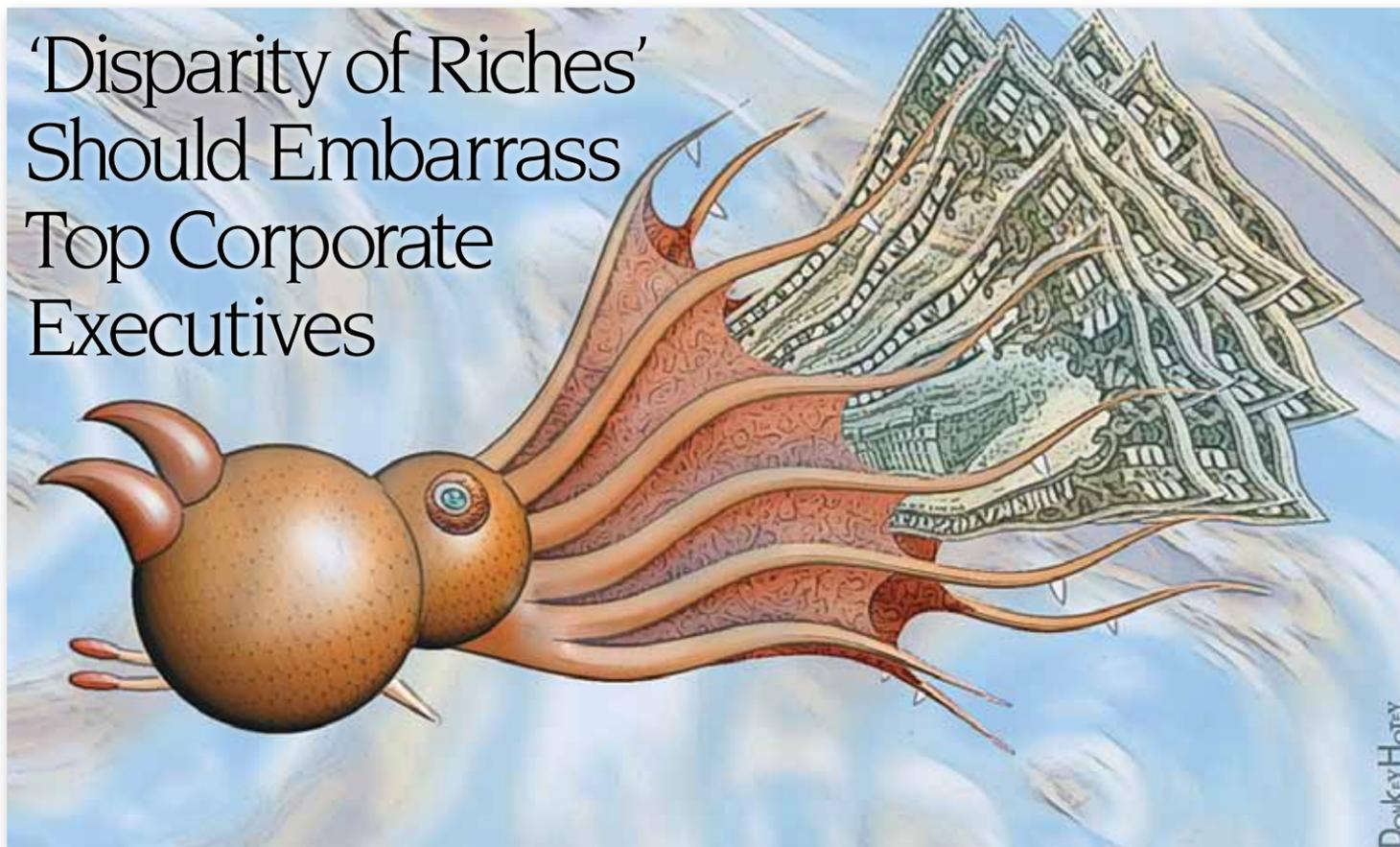
He said the climate has been so overwhelmingly anti-union that he finds it extremely difficult for any one person – Perez or Obama – to turn the tide.

But, Meers said, he is certain Perez will do all he can to protect workers and the unions that protect them.

“I definitely was encouraged by the good indications and reports about his background but I’m at the point where I’m not sure that we’re getting everything that we ought to be getting from the politicians and from the Democratic party. But Perez is a little bit of positive news.”

*Zachary Dowdy is a reporter at Newsday and editorial unit vice president of Local 406-C, Long Island.*

# 'Disparity of Riches' Should Embarrass Top Corporate Executives



**I**t's good to be the boss.

A recent investigation by the Institute for Policy Studies finds that the pay gap between chief execs and rank-and-file workers is wider than ever.

In 1993, the spread was 195-1. Now corporate bigwigs make 354 times the ordinary Joe and Jane, according to "Executive Excess 2013," an IPI paper that reviewed 20 years of executive compensation.

"Two decades have essentially recalibrated our nation's moral sensibilities," the report said. "The outrageous has become the everyday."

Teamster General President James Hoffa said the situation was shameful.

"The CEOs should be embarrassed by the disparity of riches," Hoffa said.

Pay is just part of the lopsided equation.

Institute researchers found that high-paid bosses often were wipeouts when it came to performance – but don't necessarily pay a price.

IPI said 38 percent of the 500 highest earners wound up getting fired, had to pay settlements or fines tied to fraud charges or led companies that needed bailout money after the 2008 financial calamity.

For corporate types, a pink slip can be a lucky lottery ticket.

Researchers said 27 CEOs scored severance and "golden parachute" payments that averaged \$47.7 million for a combined value – taking the 27 together – of more than \$1.2 billion. Fired workers on the shop floor are lucky if they get a handshake on the way out, union officials note.

"We expect executives to be rewarded more than working people, but the ratio is way out of whack,"

sputters through five years of Great Recession and tepid recovery," the paper noted.

Sarah Anderson, who worked on the report, said the problem was linked to a sense of entitlement typical at large companies.

"This is not just a problem of a few bad apples," Anderson said in an Inter Press Service story on the Common Dreams website. "Rather, it's about a corporate culture that's encouraging CEOs to demand this type of compensation – even though it's bad for workers, shareholders and taxpayers."

Tedeschi said it's time for corporations to get their priorities straight.

"What makes the front office worth so much more than the back shop?" he asked. "Try running the operation without the workers and we'll see who matters most."

## Open Enrollment Period Begins October 15, 2013!



The International Brotherhood of Teamsters is proud to announce the open enrollment period for the TEAMStar Medicare Part D Program. This annual open enrollment period will begin on October 15, 2013 and end on December 7, 2013.

Teamster retirees and spouses who are currently enrolled in Medicare Parts A and/or B qualify for TEAMStar Medicare Part D coverage. Enrollment packets will be arriving in the mail soon. If you didn't receive an enrollment packet or need another one, please call us and we will send you one. Don't wait! The open enrollment period is for a limited time.

### Enjoy the following TEAMStar Part D Program benefits:

- **Competitive union group rates** – TEAMStar Medicare Part D is not available to the general public. The rates and benefits are set by your union.
- **Union Preferred Pricing** – certain Preferred Generic drugs are available for as low as \$2 at a Union Preferred Pharmacy.
- **Coverage Options** – three unique plans that offer different levels of security to Teamsters.
- **Coverage through the donut hole** – if you select the Platinum Plan you can get coverage for most generics at a low copay after you get to the Coverage Gap.



To get additional information or an enrollment packet, visit our website at [www.teamstarpartd.com](http://www.teamstarpartd.com) or call 1-877-577-3880.

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## Le secrétaire Perez est perçu comme un ami des syndicats et des travailleurs

Par Zachary Dowdy

Quand Tom Perez, le secrétaire d'État au Travail des États-Unis nouvellement confirmé dans ses fonctions, a déclaré à l'occasion de la fête du Travail qu'il allait s'opposer à ceux qui essaieront de « saper les droits de nos travailleurs », les dirigeants de la CCG-FIT ont salué ses propos fermes et se sont dits convaincus que les syndicats avaient gagné un allié de poids.

D'autres ont été encouragés que Perez promette de protéger les négociations collectives – un principe fondamental du syndicalisme – et le caractère sacré de la semaine de travail de 40 heures.

« En vieillissant, j'en suis venu à la conclusion que ce n'est pas Dieu qui a voulu que ceux qui font des semaines de 40 heures devraient vivre dans la pauvreté, a-t-il dit lors d'un congrès syndical national. Ce n'est pas Dieu qui veut qu'un travailleur dans une mine de charbon ne vive pas assez vieux pour voir ses enfants décrocher un diplôme. Ce n'est pas Dieu qui a voulu qu'il y ait 11 millions de personnes qui vivent dans l'ombre. »

Perez a commencé très jeune à apprécier le travail syndiqué, quand un homme qui avait aidé à l'élever a reçu le soutien d'un syndicat après avoir perdu son travail. Pour beaucoup de membres de la CCG-FIT, les propos de Perez – et son expérience de vie – montrent que le nouveau secrétaire sera un ardent défenseur de l'équité au travail.

« Je suis très emballé par ce que j'ai entendu, a indiqué Marty Callaghan, président de la section locale 3N de Boston. Il va vraiment insister pour faire respecter les droits des travailleurs. »

M. Callaghan estime que les lois du travail – à commencer par celles qui sont plutôt

faibles – n'ont trop souvent pas été appliquées avec suffisamment de vigueur.

« Il semble dire franchement ce qu'il compte faire et être très déterminé à protéger les travailleurs. »

Assermenté en juillet dernier, T. Perez a aussitôt commencé à impressionner les responsables syndicaux et les membres des syndicats.

« J'ai appris, en grandissant à Buffalo et en travaillant pour le sénateur (Edward M.) Kennedy, que le mouvement syndical est une de nos plus grandes forces pour la sécurité économique de la classe moyenne, a affirmé T. Perez lors d'un congrès national de la FAT-CIO tenu le 10 septembre. La vision qu'a le président Obama d'une économie qui prospère grâce à la classe moyenne ne peut devenir réalité que si nous continuons à avoir un mouvement syndical dynamique et puissant en Amérique. »

Ces paroles, le fait que T. Perez vienne d'un milieu ouvrier humble, ses études dans des universités prestigieuses – Brown et Harvard – et ce qu'il fait pour les travailleurs ont impressionné la CCG-FIT et les dirigeants des Teamsters.

James Hoffa, président général de la FIT, a aussi indiqué que la confirmation de T. Perez dans ses fonctions – après que les Républicains ont usé des tactiques habituelles pour retarder le processus – était bien accueillie et « s'était faite attendre ».

« Notre syndicat estime que Perez était le bon choix pour le poste de secrétaire d'État au Travail quand il a été nommé en mars... Le secrétaire Perez peut maintenant se mettre au travail pour aider le pays à se remettre sur les rails. »

George Tedeschi, président de la CCG-FIT, a ajouté que T. Perez était un candidat

de choix pour occuper le plus haut poste de la nation dont relèvent les travailleurs. « Il est incontestable que Perez s'intéresse sincèrement aux droits des travailleurs et comprend qu'il faut des emplois décents, et des syndicats forts, pour que la classe moyenne puisse survivre. »

Il était évident que le chômage demeurerait une préoccupation constante quand les Américains rassemblés en août à l'occasion du 50e anniversaire de la marche sur Washington et du discours de Martin Luther King « Je fais un rêve » se sont arrêtés devant le Département du travail pour insister sur la nécessité de créer des emplois.

« De bons emplois pour tous », ont-ils scandé.

T. Perez a indiqué clairement qu'il comprend le rôle essentiel que son ministère joue pour assurer un environnement syndical stable et ses antécédents laissent entendre que le secrétaire va adopter une approche pratique pour protéger les travailleurs et leurs familles.

Au Maryland, T. Perez a été secrétaire au Département d'État du travail, des permis et des règlements, et il a contribué à réformer les règles qui régissent les prêts et les forclusions dans un effort pour mettre un terme au nombre grandissant de forclusions qui menacent les propriétaires résidentiels au Maryland. T. Perez a aussi insisté pour qu'il y ait une refonte du système de perfectionnement de la main-d'œuvre du Maryland afin de s'assurer que les travailleurs soient mieux équipés pour répondre aux exigences du marché du travail actuel.

« Je pense qu'il s'agit d'une excellente nomination, a déclaré John Agenbroad, directeur général et secrétaire-trésorier du conseil de district 3 de la CCG-FIT à Cincinnati. Je crois qu'il va agir et faire

bouger les choses. »

J. Agenbroad a rendu hommage à Hilda Solís, la secrétaire d'État au Travail sortante, mais il s'est dit convaincu que T. Perez était un successeur valable qui allait « foncer ».

Et comme J. Agenbroad l'a indiqué, T. Perez va devoir relever des défis de taille alors que le mouvement syndical a été affaibli par des lois antisyndicales dans plusieurs États hostiles et un Congrès obstructionniste qui bloque systématiquement les propositions destinées à aider la classe moyenne.

« Je ne sais pas comment nous pouvons arriver à faire passer des lois en ce moment avec ce Congrès dysfonctionnel, a-t-il déclaré, ajoutant qu'il demeure néanmoins convaincu que T. Perez peut faire une différence. Je suis confiant, mais je ne sais tout simplement pas comment nous pouvons arriver à obtenir quoi que ce soit. »

Un sentiment partagé par Ralph Meers, président de la section locale 527-S d'Atlanta.

Comme il l'a indiqué, le climat est tellement antisyndical qu'il trouve extrêmement difficile pour qui que ce soit – Perez ou Obama – d'inverser la vague.

Mais R. Meers est convaincu que T. Perez va faire tout en son pouvoir pour protéger les travailleurs et les syndicats qui veillent sur eux.

« Je suis vraiment encouragé par les indices et les rapports favorables sur ses antécédents, mais j'en suis arrivé à douter que nous obtenions tout ce que nous sommes en droit de recevoir des politiciens et du Parti démocrate. Mais T. Perez est un peu encourageant. »

*Zachary Dowdy est journaliste à Newsday et vice-président de l'unité de rédaction de la section locale 406-C à Long Island.*

## Secretario del Trabajo Tom Pérez: aliado de sindicatos y trabajadores

Por Zachary Dowdy

Cuando el recién confirmado Secretario del Trabajo, Tom Pérez, declaró en un mensaje del Día del Trabajo que adoptaría una postura en contra de quienes intentarían « socavar los derechos de nuestros trabajadores », los líderes del GCC/IBT celebraron su enérgico mensaje y manifestaron su confianza en que los sindicatos habían adquirido un poderoso aliado.

Otros se sintieron alentados por la promesa de Pérez de proteger la negociación colectiva – principio fundamental del movimiento laboral – y la inviolabilidad de la semana laboral de 40 horas.

« A medida que fui madurando, llegué a la conclusión de que no es la voluntad de Dios que la gente que trabaja 40 horas por semana deba vivir en la pobreza », dijo en un congreso nacional de trabajadores sindicalizados. « Que no es la voluntad de Dios que un minero del carbón no viva lo suficiente para ver a sus hijos graduarse. Que no es la voluntad de Dios que haya 11 millones de personas en las sombras. »

Pérez ha mencionado que su apreciación por el movimiento sindical comenzó temprano en su vida, cuando un hombre que ayudó a criarlo recibió la asistencia de un sindicato luego de perder su empleo. Muchos miembros del GCC/IBT ven en las palabras de Pérez – y en sus experiencias en la vida – evidencia de que el nuevo Secretario será un enérgico defensor de la imparcialidad [justicia] en el lugar de trabajo.

« En base a lo que ha llegado a mis oídos, me siento muy entusiasmado », dijo Marty Callaghan, presidente de la Local 3N en Boston. « Verdaderamente va a concentrar el esfuerzo en hacer cumplir las leyes laborales. »

Callaghan dijo que la aplicación de las leyes laborales – algunas de por sí débiles – con

demasiada frecuencia no se ha exigido vigorosamente.

« Da la impresión de ser muy abierto en cuanto a lo que tiene intención de hacer y muy enérgico respecto a la protección de los trabajadores », dijo Callaghan.

Pérez juró su cargo el pasado mes de julio y de inmediato comenzó a impresionar favorablemente a los funcionarios y miembros de los sindicatos.

« Aprendí, por haberme criado en Buffalo y haber trabajado para el Senador (Edward M.) Kennedy, que el movimiento obrero es una de las mayores garantías de la seguridad económica de la clase media », declaró Pérez ante el congreso nacional de la AFL-CIO el 10 de septiembre. « La visión del Presidente Obama de una economía que crece desde el medio hacia afuera sólo se puede lograr si continuamos teniendo un movimiento laboral dinámico y con fuerza en los Estados Unidos de América. »

Esas palabras, más lo que se ha informado acerca del origen humilde, de clase obrera, de Pérez, de su formación en las mejores universidades – Brown y Harvard – y de sus esfuerzos a favor de la gente trabajadora, han causado impresión en los líderes del GCC/IBT y los Teamsters.

El Presidente General de la IBT, James Hoffa, agregó además que la confirmación de Pérez – finalmente lograda a pesar de las tácticas dilatorias del Partido Republicano, que ya se han vuelto costumbre – era bienvenida y « que llegaba con mucho retraso ».

Dijo Hoffa: « Nuestro sindicato estaba seguro de que Pérez era el candidato correcto para Secretario del Trabajo cuando lo nominaron en marzo... ahora el Secretario Pérez puede poner manos a la obra y ayudar a redirigir este país por buen camino. »

El presidente del GCC/IBT, George Tedeschi, dijo también que Pérez es una

selección sobresaliente para el principal puesto laboral de la nación. « Según todo lo que se ha informado, Pérez siente un profundo interés por los derechos de los trabajadores y entiende que es necesario tener empleos decentes – y sindicatos fuertes – para que la clase media sobreviva », dijo Tedeschi.

La persistente preocupación por el desempleo se manifestó en agosto cuando los estadounidenses que celebraron el 50 aniversario de la Marcha Hacia Washington y el discurso « Tengo una visión » de Martin Luther King se detuvieron delante del Departamento de Trabajo para subrayar la necesidad de crear empleos.

Los que marchaban corearon: « Buenos empleos para todos ».

Pérez ha dejado claro, en comentarios públicos, que tiene bien claro el papel vital que desempeña su departamento en garantizar un entorno laboral estable, y sus antecedentes sugieren que como secretario va a participar activamente en la protección de los trabajadores y sus familias.

En Maryland, Pérez se desempeñó como secretario del Departamento del Trabajo, Licencias y Reglamentación, y ayudó a reformar el reglamento de los préstamos hipotecarios y ejecuciones, en un esfuerzo por detener la creciente ola de ejecuciones hipotecarias que amenazaba a los dueños de hogares en Maryland. Pérez también impulsó la revisión del sistema de capacitación de la fuerza laboral de Maryland para asegurar que los trabajadores estuvieran mejor preparados para las exigencias del mercado laboral actual.

« Pienso que es un nombramiento excelente », dijo John Agenbroad, Funcionario Ejecutivo y Secretario-Tesorero del GCC/IBT para el Consejo del Distrito 3 en Cincinnati. « Me parece que va a dar batalla sin amedrentarse y que conseguirá que cambien las cosas. »

Agenbroad tuvo palabras de elogio para la Secretaria del Trabajo saliente, Hilda Solís, pero dijo que estaba seguro que Pérez sería un digno sucesor que « comenzaría a trabajar a toda carrera. »

Y, añadió Agenbroad, Pérez va a enfrentarse a desafíos muy significativos justo en un momento en que el movimiento obrero se ha visto debilitado por la legislación antisindical en varios estados cruciales, y en el que un Congreso dedicado a la obstrucción bloquea constantemente propuestas de ley dirigidas a ayudar a la clase media.

« Dada la disfuncionalidad de este Congreso, no sé cómo vamos a poder conseguir la aprobación de ninguna ley », dijo, agregando que, no obstante, sigue estando convencido de que Pérez puede aportar mucho. « Estoy esperanzado, pero no sé cómo vamos a poder lograr algo. »

Ralph Meers, presidente de la Local 527-S en Atlanta, comparte ese sentimiento.

Dijo que el clima actual es tan apabullantemente contrario a los sindicatos que lo considera en extremo difícil que un solo individuo – ya sea Pérez u Obama – pueda cambiar el rumbo de la corriente.

Sin embargo, dijo Meers, está seguro de que Pérez va a hacer todo lo que esté a su alcance para proteger a los obreros y los sindicatos que los protegen.

« Definitivamente me sentí animado por las buenas referencias y los informes acerca de su origen, pero me encuentro en un punto en que no estoy seguro de que estemos obteniendo todo lo que deberíamos obtener de los políticos y del Partido Demócrata. Pero Pérez es una pequeña noticia positiva. »

*Zachary Dowdy es reportero del diario Newsday y vicepresidente de la unidad editorial de la Local 406-C, en Long Island.*

# In Memoriam

Listed here are GCC/IBT members for whom death benefits were paid, according to the Membership Department of the office of the GCC/IBT secretary-treasurer. Locals wishing to list members who died but did not participate in the death benefits program should contact the Graphic Communicator.

DEATH BENEFIT CLAIMS PAID			Local	Date of Death
<b>APRIL 2013</b>				
1B	Thomas A Adams	02-20-13	999ML Glenn T Brockett	12-07-11
1B	Alice H Kabes	02-17-13	999ML Melvin Wilson	02-10-13
1B	John P Nilo	02-03-13	2289M Robert F Gregory	02-05-13
1B	Alice Norby	09-30-12	2289M Donald Mccomb	03-04-13
1L	Stanley Gerlack	02-26-13	6505M Nadine D Fee	01-01-13
1L	Henry L Miller	12-18-12	6505M Michael J Kemmis	03-08-13
1L	Seymour Rubenstein	03-05-13	6505M John M Meissner	08-06-11
1M	Raymond E Rower	01-21-13	6505M David J Morgan	02-23-13
2N	Louis F Boccia	03-04-13	6505M William A Wolf, Sr	01-23-13
2N	Francis M Brennan	03-02-13		
2N	William A Mckinney	02-13-13		
2N	Anthony O'Connor	12-14-08		
2N	Robert Schmalz	02-14-13		
2N	Joseph A Tedeschi	02-24-13		
3N	Eugene F Martin Jr	02-20-13		
3N	Paul G Shaughnessy	02-25-13		
8N	Alan Hartman	02-20-13		
14M	Anna Pozzuoli	01-30-13		
16C	Richard L Young	02-05-13		
24M	Thomas A Hennen	03-03-13		
29C	Richard D Dowling	02-06-13		
29C	Curtis G Heyn	01-02-13		
41M	Claude Allard	08-20-12		
41M	Claude Paquin	11-24-12		
49C	Carl E Fay Jr	01-16-13		
72C	Harold A Jennings	03-28-12		
77P	Junior J Koester	02-15-13		
77P	Brexston O Lemere	11-22-11		
119B	Salvatore J Galante	02-13-13		
261M	Robert A Schroeder	11-14-12		
285M	William E Sweeney	01-05-13		
355T	Ernest E Gibson	12-15-12		
355T	Robert M Helinski	02-13-13		
388M	Carl W Kauk	01-12-13		
388M	Burton O Young	02-06-13		
432M	Dale A Dicks	02-10-13		
455T	Gilbert W Asmus	02-15-13		
455T	Guy D Dodd	08-07-11		
458M	Anthony H Gergas	06-09-00		
458M	Robert O Landwehr	03-09-13		
458M	Fred McDonald	02-01-13		
458M	Delores Mitchell	12-30-12		
458M	Eugene S Ptaszek	03-17-13		
458M	William C Qualkenbush	02-23-13		
458M	Paul H Scherner	02-28-13		
458M	Edward J Schmitt	03-09-13		
458M	Ralph E Schneck	03-01-13		
458M	Francis X Zemrowski	02-14-13		
501M	Herbert N Fujiwara	01-14-13		
508M	Judson B Baker, Sr	09-25-12		
508M	Walter B Haynes	02-23-13		
508M	Paul W Rhodes	02-25-13		
518M	Clarence Brecount Jr	02-25-13		
546M	Vern Carr	03-16-13		
546M	Carl E Pogalies	11-10-11		
546M	Walter J Runevitch, Jr	03-02-13		
555M	Bernard Claveau	03-13-13		
571M	Gerald H Orman	02-12-13		
572T	Alan L Turner	01-13-13		
612M	Mary Szabocisk	02-06-13		
619M	Edward N Green Jr	11-25-12		
767M	Arnold Yoho	12-03-12		
853T	Charles H Cook	01-22-13		
853T	John R Reyes	01-13-13		

Local	Date of Death
14M	William B Sweeney, Jr 03-01-13
16N	George Boyer 11-30-11
16N	Edward J Carney 04-28-13
16N	Edward J Piotrowski 11-02-12
16N	Willard F Taylor, Jr 03-01-13
17M	Garnet L Shambaugh 04-09-13
24M	Charles F Arnold 12-24-12
24M	Louis C Blauth 03-27-13
24M	Joseph P Lijewski 03-14-13
24M	Leonard E Shuder 04-03-13
24M	Assunta M Vestri 03-28-13
29C	Dale R Lian 05-06-13
72C	Glen F Messier 04-08-13
72C	Robert L Pettit, Sr 04-11-13
77P	Vincent J Bressers 03-25-13
77P	John R Mcallan 03-06-13
77P	Janette B Perry 04-25-13
100M	Alex Gordon 11-29-12
100M	Beverly Major 02-05-13
119B	Amador Carrasquillo 04-05-13
119B	Wilhelmina A Coakley 02-24-13
119B	Concetta Competiello 02-21-13
119B	John Gangemi 04-06-13
119B	Marie C Nadal 09-25-12
119B	Frank Novara 04-21-13
119B	Domingo Ojeda 03-18-13
119B	William Peck 04-07-13
119B	Anna Petrucelli 03-01-13
119B	Isidore Schiffrin 04-20-13
119B	Erwin Schwartz 03-26-13
119B	Margaret Stassi 05-04-13
137C	William Bowen, II 04-22-13
146P	Glenn A Davis 02-24-12
146P	Ora L King 03-06-13
197M	George L Gourley 01-23-13
197M	Noah W Jackson, Sr 12-30-11
197M	Morris T Smith 03-11-13
235M	Antoinette R Mesh 04-18-13
235M	Ted R Rose 01-30-12
261M	Anthony J Caruana 03-09-13
261M	Carl Gustafson 10-20-04
261M	Frank Lehner 10-30-12
264M	Conrad A Desmarais 02-15-13
264M	Francis Narey 03-16-13
264M	James H Worton 11-28-12
270M	Donald L Bolman 01-30-13
285M	Sarah M Lilla 03-10-12
285M	James N Piercey 03-30-13
367M	Edward G Sparkman 01-27-13
388M	Herman J Gnocchi 08-30-12
388M	Morris Harris 01-12-13
406C	Richard Petrosino 03-22-13
458M	Darrel Athey 12-10-12
458M	Richard R Birch 03-27-13
458M	William R Bonk 03-27-13
458M	Joseph J Buzinski 03-06-13
458M	Albert Fianza 02-21-13
458M	James E Jacobson 08-03-12
458M	William G Knoll 01-15-13
458M	Donald C Koch 03-30-13
458M	James B Pick 04-07-13
458M	Gloria M Recksieck 01-01-13
458M	James Stack 03-21-13
458M	Thomas C Van Sickle 04-25-13
458M	Edwin J Waluska 02-24-13
458M	Charles J Woychek Jr 04-03-13
508M	Leo C Goubeaux 03-26-13
508M	James N Schuler 04-02-13
508M	Janet J Skitt 03-02-13
514M	Dollie E Richmond 04-04-13
514M	Joseph J Wroblewski 02-05-12

Local	Date of Death
518M	Junior L Hutchcroft 04-11-13
543M	Reuben Keller 04-07-13
546M	Richard L Elek 04-16-13
546M	John A Horvath 04-17-13
546M	Michael F Kosir 01-04-13
546M	Edwin R Schultz 04-11-13
546M	Harold Weisman 04-21-13
555M	Jean-Marc Bedard 03-30-13
555M	Jean C Lavigne 03-22-13
555M	Simone Lefort 01-01-13
555S	Michelle Mcafferty 03-23-13
568M	Margaret L Holycross 03-29-13
568M	Franklin D Hoskins 04-02-13
568M	Bernard P Knox 03-01-13
568M	Marvin L Martin 01-28-13
571M	Mary E Joiner 02-22-13
572T	Gerald A Dimse 04-19-13
572T	John B Glenn, Jr 01-30-13
572T	Edward R Hack 03-29-13
572T	Robert J Hayes 03-15-13
572T	Edmund J O'Brien, Jr 02-10-13
572T	Orlan T Riggs 03-21-13
572T	Mary G Wakefield 03-29-13
575M	Wayne E Ferree 03-14-13
575M	Luella C Houchin 06-20-03
577M	Rudolph A Mozer 01-14-13
600M	Yvonne M Engelson 03-02-12
600M	Robert L Fabrizio 03-21-13
600M	George Kaloostian 04-09-13
600M	Daniel J Maher 04-10-13
600M	Christine Markowski 02-19-13
612M	John J Burns 02-28-13
612M	John Gillen 12-02-12
612M	John E Lara 04-22-13
612M	Christopher J Murphy 04-07-13
612M	Robert A Romaine 04-13-13
619M	Kenneth Bardsley 01-29-13
619M	Cecil Smith 03-05-13
625S	Bernice Guarasci 03-10-13
625S	Charles R Winters 09-08-11
767M	Joe E Aston 04-04-13
767M	William C Burch 03-18-13
767M	Leonard R Day, Sr 04-02-13
767M	John E Schmiedeskamp 03-05-13
767M	Louis E Stein 04-01-13
767M	William G Suelzle 04-14-13
767M	Ella Mae Tufts 01-29-13
853T	Virginia Atwood 02-19-13
853T	Joseph A Caravello, Sr 03-14-13
853T	Florence B Demare 03-15-13
853T	Leno Freschet 02-28-13
853T	Steve M Lucero 03-21-13
853T	Adi Petrocchi 03-03-13
853T	Ronald Rose 02-28-13
999ML	James E Abel 03-26-13
999ML	Ralph A Bruns 10-23-12
999ML	David I Davis 02-19-13
999ML	Antoinette E Frizzell 08-06-11
999ML	Chester Johnson 01-11-13
999ML	Harold B Lomax 03-25-13
999ML	Billy D Phillips 02-07-13
999ML	Jack K Spicer 01-30-13
999ML	Congetta A Tenan 03-23-13
2289M	Donald W Brazier 03-25-13
2289M	Roy R Henderson, Jr 03-23-13
2289M	Albert J Kreucher Jr 04-19-13
2289M	James R Kuhn 05-06-13
2289M	Robert W Mitchell 02-11-13
2289M	Edward J Mitri 03-01-13
2289M	Carmen Scicluna 05-02-13
2289M	Milo H Tosch 04-26-13

Local	Date of Death
6505M	Charles F Barrett 03-02-13
6505M	Georgia E Brockmeier 03-04-13
6505M	Edwin C Fahlkamp 03-10-13
6505M	Wanda Foster 03-15-13
6505M	Donald C Herzinger 03-15-12
6505M	Eddie Kirksey 03-25-13
6505M	Richard M Lipsky 06-15-12
6505M	John Sardino 03-12-13
6505M	Natividad Valdez 02-24-13

DEATH BENEFIT CLAIMS PAID		
<b>JUNE 2013</b>		
1B	Olga A Jepsen	02-04-07
1B	Beatrice A Julie	04-11-12
1B	Thomas F Leopold	05-09-13
1L	Mark W Battista	04-09-13
1L	Marvin E Brown	03-25-13
1L	Thomas Fico	03-15-13
1L	Joseph Rafanello	04-13-13
1M	Horace W Marshall	07-29-11
2N	Peter J Bonowitz	12-11-12
2N	Edward R Filippone	04-29-13
2N	Charles L Halloran	04-15-13
2N	Robert Millar	05-01-13
2N	Anthony Perna	04-26-13
2N	Ronald A Reuss	05-13-13
3N	Douglas E Macrae	05-30-12
13N	James L Centers	01-07-13
14M	Gilda Fargoniere	03-20-13
14M	Jennie Jarvis	05-11-13
14M	Robin Olmeda	05-11-13
14M	Ruth M Tasch	04-26-13
17M	Pearl Smith	05-10-12
23N	Wayne Kenke	05-05-13
38N	Gerald C Sindel	09-05-07
41M	Romeo Gentile	05-10-13
72C	Philip B Swann	12-20-12
119B	Victor Font	11-14-08
119B	Edward Grant, Sr	04-29-13
119B	Herbert L Johnson	04-25-13
119B	Hugo N Ochoa	05-14-13
119B	Anthony Scumaci	05-11-13
137C	Phillip T James Jr	02-26-13
137C	Leon F Shiffer	12-26-12
264M	Edward J Dzialo	01-29-12
264M	Joseph W Mangini	04-16-13
285M	Edward D Sagin, Sr	04-14-13
458M	Edward P Abelseth Jr	04-30-13
458M	James Bartelli	05-07-13
458M	John Brandt	12-09-12
458M	Ruth R Demet	11-13-01
458M	Harold E Kumpf	05-19-13
458M	Raymond A Mehren	05-15-13
458M	Martin F Nicketta	04-30-13
458M	Raymond A Noble	05-19-13
458M	Marcella M Voss	01-10-13
458M	William J Zelasko	05-09-13

**CORRECTION**  
Column headings on the "In Memoriam" page were incorrect in the July-August-September edition of the Communicator. Wording should have been: "Death Benefit Claims Paid." On the same page, names for March death benefit claims appeared under the second of two columns marked "February."

## NOTICE ON WORKER OBJECTIONS TO AGENCY FEES

Annual notice is hereby given of the policy on worker objections to agency fees which has been adopted by the General Board in response to the United States Supreme Court's 1988 decision in Beck v. CWA. The policy sets forth a formal procedure by which an agency fee payer may file an objection to the payment of that portion of his or her dues which is attributable to expenditures for activities which are not germane to collective bargaining. The policy applies only to agency fee payers who work in the United States. The policy applies to the Conference, district councils, and local unions.

Agency fee payers (also referred to as "financial core members") are those individuals covered by a union security agreement who meet their financial obligations by paying all dues, fees, and assessments, but elect not to become or remain actual members of the union. Agency fee payers may not exercise the rights of membership such as running for union office, electing union officers, ratifying contracts, and voting on strikes. They may be eligible to receive strike benefits if they are participants in the Emergency and Special Defense Fund, but they are not eligible to receive benefits from the Graphic Communications Benevolent Trust Fund whose benefits are for members only.

The policy adopted by the General Board includes the following elements:

- The agency fee payable by objectors will be based on the expenditures of the Conference, district councils, or local unions for those activities or projects normally or reasonably undertaken by the union to advance the employment-related interests of the employees it represents. Among these "chargeable" expenditures are those for negotiating with employers, enforcing collective bargaining agreements, informal meetings with employer representatives, discussing work-related issues with employees, handling employees' work-related problems through the grievance procedure, administrative agencies, or informal meetings, and union administration. Based upon an independent audit by the Conference's auditors, it has been determined that seventy-nine and twenty-six one hundredths percent of the Conference's expenditures for the year ending December 31, 2012 were for such activities. Because at least a great proportion of district council and local union total expenditures are spent on "chargeable" activities as are spent by the Conference, in calculating the amount of

local union dues to be paid by objectors, district councils and local unions may exercise the option of presuming that the Conference's percentage of chargeable activities applies to the district council or local union also. Alternatively, district councils or local unions may calculate their own percentage of chargeable activities.

- Objectors will be given an explanation of the basis for the fee charged to them. That explanation will include a more detailed list of categories of expenditures deemed to be "chargeable" and those deemed to be "nonchargeable" and the accountants' report showing the Conference's expenditures on which the fee is based. Objectors will have the option of appealing the union's calculation of the fee, and a portion of the objector's fee shall be held in escrow while he or she pursues that appeal. Details on the method of making such a challenge and the rights accorded to those who do so will be provided to objectors with the explanation of the fees calculation.
- Objections for the year 2014 must be filed on or before December 31, 2013 for current agency fee payers unless a prior objection was filed on a continuing basis. Timely objections are for one year and will expire on December 31, 2014 unless they are filed on a continuing basis. Objections filed on a

# Joseph H. Gast: 'His Word was Trusted'

Joseph Henry Gast, a former GCIU international vice president and Navy veteran known for straight talk at the negotiating table and a profound sense of fairness that won him admiration from union members and management officials alike, died August 10 at the Baptist Health Palliative Care Unit in Louisville, Ky. He was 84.

Cause of death was pneumonia, according to Gast's daughter, Lynn Stevenson.

Organized labor was a passion for Gast, said Joyce Gast, his wife of 59 years.

"He lived his union work," she said. "He wanted to help people."

Gast became a union member in 1949 after going to work at Southern Gravure – now Southern Graphic Systems (SGS) – in Louisville.

A photoengraver, Gast served as president of Local 25 of the Lithographers and Photoengravers International Union which merged with Local 54-B of the International Brotherhood of Bookbinders to become Local 552-M of the Graphic Arts International Union, now GCC/IBT Local 619-M.

In April, 1979, Gast became an international vice president of the Graphic Communications International Union and continued at the post until retirement in 1992.

Joyce Gast said her husband was a "compassionate" and widely respected man who drew praise from company executives and legal officials. "They said that he was an honest guy, they trusted him, and enjoyed working with him because he was always fair."

From an early age, Gast proved a responsible and industrious person.

His father died when Gast was 16 and the young man quit school to take care of the family, according to Joyce Gast. He joined the Navy and was assigned to duty on Midway Island in the North Pacific. After military service, Gast returned to Louisville and, encouraged by friends at Southern Gravure, applied for a job.

At one point, his wife said, Gast earned a high school equivalency degree and subsequently graduated from the University of Louisville where he majored in business and economics. By then a union official, Gast knew he needed every advantage to deal effectively with management. "He said that if he was going to be up against company lawyers he needed all the education he could get," Joyce Gast recalled.

His academic background and knack for effective communication served Gast well as a union representative.

"Joe goes back many years like I do," said John Agenbroad, president of Local 508-M, Cincinnati, and secretary of GCC/IBT District Council 3. "I don't know anyone in my union career whose word was more trusted. He was a real trouper. He was great in negotiations and employers liked him. He would never sandbag an employer. If he said a contract would be ratified, he would do everything in his power to get it ratified."

In retirement, Gast continued a deep interest in union matters.

"He would come to local meetings and did political action work," said Israel Castro, president of 619-M. "He was always involved at the local level." GCC/IBT organizer Rick Street, who is based in

Louisville, said Gast had been a "mentor" and was a model of union leadership. "He could be gruff," Street said, "but he was fair."

Gast's devotion to organized labor coincided with an interest in political matters and current events, said his daughter, Lynn Stevenson. "He gave me my love of politics," said Stevenson who said her father often emphasized the importance of good citizenship and, after she turned 18, made sure she voted every Election Day.

Right-wing attacks on organized labor and rising anti-union sentiment dismayed her father, Stevenson said. "We discussed how basically we couldn't understand how some people didn't get it," she said.

Though Gast had many interests – including woodworking and landscaping – family came first. "He was a great Dad," Stevenson said. "Always there when I needed him."

In addition to his wife and daughter, Gast is survived by sisters, Dorothy Myers and Georgia Dee Mattingly; brothers, Tony Gast and Mike Gast; granddaughters, Jessica Piercy and Laurel Ballard; and a great-grandson, Eli Piercy.

The family asks that expressions of sympathy be in the form of contributions to the Baptist Health Palliative Care Unit at Baptist Health Louisville, 4000 Kresge Way, Louisville, Ky. 40207.



Joseph Henry Gast

PHOTO COURTESY GAST FAMILY

# Bill Beresh was 'Always for the Worker'

At the annual North American Newspaper Conference meeting earlier this year, former GCIU international organizer Bill Beresh asked a delegate the number of members in his local. The man answered but Beresh told him the tally sounded low.

What union leaders must remember, Beresh said, was that they represent not only members but their families – everyone who depends on the wages and benefits provided by a decent contract – and that, in a way, those people are in the local, too.

"He was just one of a kind," said Howard Brown, president of Local 1-C, Washington, D.C., a friend of Beresh for more than 40 years who was taking part in the conversation in Scottsdale, Ariz. "Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week – that was Bill."

The Scottsdale conference was the last union function attended by Beresh, who died Sept. 2 at Mercy Medical Center in Baltimore of complications related to pancreatic cancer. He was 72.

"I will miss him and so will many others," said Brown. "Everybody loved him."

William E. Beresh, who retired as an organizer as of Dec. 31, 2004, began his print career in 1960 at an Amalgamated Lithographers of America shop in Maryland where he worked as a sheetfed offset pressman.

He was a shop steward, recording secretary and an executive board member of Local 18-L, Baltimore – 18-L became Local 582-M which no longer operates – and president of the unit from 1989-1995 when he took the GCIU international job. Beresh also served on the Allied Trades Council of Baltimore and the Metropolitan Baltimore AFL-CIO Council.

His wife of 44 years, Claudia, said her husband had

great devotion to the principles of organized labor and his responsibilities as an organizer. "He loved it," she said. "He was always for the worker."

When Beresh was considering a run for the presidency of Local 18-L, his wife recalled, the couple knew he would make several thousand dollars less as a union official than pressman. "I told him if you don't do it, you'll always regret it and he won and became president of the Baltimore local," Claudia Beresh said.

Though he was enthusiastic about organizing, Beresh told the Communicator in an interview after his retirement that the job was "tough" because employers use "fear, intimidation and all kinds of 'carrot-dangling'" to put pressure on workers and discourage union representation.

In Scottsdale this year, Beresh said in another talk with the paper that organizing was never more important given dwindling union membership. "We have to see organizing as perpetual," he said. "We can never give up."

GCC/IBT President George Tedeschi said determination and commitment made Beresh outstanding in the organizer role.

"Bill knew that management would do everything in its power to frighten workers and block organizing efforts but he remained strong," Tedeschi said. "Organizing is never easy. Bill was a gentle, thoughtful man, but nobody pushed him around. As a friend and union brother, he will be missed."

Howard Brown also mentioned Beresh's easygoing nature and measured approach. "I never saw any temper in him," Brown said. "Everybody knew Bill as a steady, calm, level-headed individual with the right

word at the right time."

After retirement, Beresh did fund-raising work for the Knights of Columbus Council 9729 in Forest Hill, Md. – he was a Fourth Degree Knight – and continued serving as usher at St. Ignatius Roman Catholic Church, Hickory, also in Forest Hill, as he had for 25 years.

Claudia Beresh said the couple traveled extensively. They visited Ireland three times and Hawaii twice. In June, the two went on a cruise to Anchorage, Alaska. At the time, she said, her husband had not been diagnosed with cancer. "We didn't know," she said.

Though he no longer worked as an organizer, Beresh remained deeply interested in labor issues and the welfare of GCC/IBT members. Howard Brown said Beresh continued offering advice and support nearly to the end of his life. His wife said Beresh's devotion to the labor movement never diminished. For Bill Beresh, "it was always, always, always union," Claudia Beresh said.

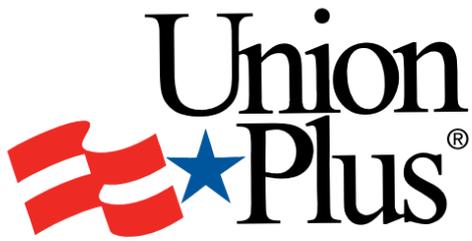
In addition to his wife, Beresh is survived by a daughter, Kathleen Gwyther of Pylesville, Md.; sons, Daniel of Fallston, Md. and Michael of Jarrettsville, Md.; brother, Robert of Selbyville, Del.; and six grandchildren.

Donations in memory of Beresh can be made to Catholic Relief Services, Attention: Donor Services, P.O. Box 17152, Baltimore, Md. 21298-8452



William E. Beresh

PHOTO COURTESY BERESH FAMILY



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# A Perfect Picnic

The meaning of Labor Day often is overlooked – but not by the executive board of GCC/IBT Local 3-N, Boston. For the second year, 3-N officials sponsored a holiday picnic for members, families and retirees. The event at Savin Hill Park in Dorchester, Mass. guaranteed a “good time,” said vice president Stephen Sullivan, and served as a tribute to organized labor. “The idea was that this is the one holiday to honor labor and our accomplishments,” said Sullivan. “We hope to use it as a tool to educate our children and community on the sacrifices made by labor and its importance for the future of our middle class in America.”

The picnic, supported by fund-raising efforts conducted throughout the year, drew a crowd of 200. Sullivan said 3-N plans to make the Labor Day outing an annual affair. “It was a huge success,” he said.



PHOTO BY STEPHEN T. SULLIVAN/LOCAL 3-N

# Cartwright Wins Georgia AFL-CIO ‘True Blue’ Award



Cartwright (center), with Georgia AFL-CIO president Charlie Flemming and secretary-treasurer Yvonne Robinson, is known as a ‘go-to guy.’

When you need a friend, Georgia labor leaders know, Dale Cartwright is there.

Cartwright, executive board chairman of Atlanta GCC/IBT Local 527-S, “is the go-to guy for anything we need,” said Eddie Williams vice president and secretary-treasurer of the local and president of the North American Specialty Conference.

In recognition of Cartwright’s contributions to the labor movement, the Georgia State AFL-CIO honored him with a “True

Blue” award presented annually to union members who have given outstanding service.

“He is someone you can always count on to show up and do the right thing,” said Georgia AFL-CIO communications director DeLane Adams. “He’s a vital part of the labor movement in Georgia.”

Cartwright, a former press operator at MeadWestvaco, Atlanta, who now works as plant safety director, said the award was unexpected. “You’re not supposed to get rewarded for doing what you are supposed

to do,” Cartwright said. “I was blown away.”

The recognition was “humbling,” Cartwright said, and particularly meaningful because it reflected well on 527-S and the GCC/IBT. “It makes my local and the international look great to be recognized for what we do,” said Cartwright, an Air Force veteran who has a wife, Tracey, four children and 18 grandchildren.

Williams hailed Cartwright’s dedication to organized labor and union members.

“He goes above and beyond,” said Williams. “Dale is truly True Blue.”

## Funny Business

