



Label Letter

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Union Label & Service Trades Department, AFL-CIO

Right Wing ALEC Draws State Battle Lines

Corporate America is taking full advantage of its "personhood" under the Supreme Court's Citizen's United decision. And, as that decision established, political money equals speech, so prepare yourself for a din of corporate-speak designed to drown out the voices of everyday Americans in the state capitol nearest you. The American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) will continue to be one of the loudest voices speaking out on behalf of America's biggest, wealthiest and most powerful corporations.

Last Fall, Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker traveled to Arizona's Goldwater Institute to sell his brand of union busting in that state and he found an eager ally in Gov. Jan Brewer who has been hard at work ever since on an agenda developed by ALEC to do away with all collective bargaining for Arizona public workers. Brewer's plan would go beyond the Wisconsin experience, even making it illegal to enter into a collective bargaining agreement with a public employee union.

ALEC's influence has infected virtually every state as evidenced by a canvass of state legislatures that shows 572 bills now pending in 33 states aimed at curtailing collective bargaining for public and private sector workers, limiting freedom of association, speech and assembly (including one in Arizona that describes picketing as "harassment"), or restricting project labor agreements.

ALEC doesn't limit itself to just trying to muzzle unions, the organization also has a stable full of "model" laws to reduce voter turnout, strangle state tax collections and cripple the Health Care for America Act while other draft laws would help expand corporate profits for its 300 corporate backers at the expense of consumers. ALEC boasts that it succeeded in getting 826 pieces of legislation introduced in state legislatures in 2009.

In Ohio, where ALEC was the driving force for SB-5, the bill that voters overwhelmingly rejected at the polls last

continued on page 3

Trumka Dissents on White House Jobs Report; Business Taxes & Regulation Not the Problem, He Says

AFL-CIO President Rich Trumka issued a scathing dissent to the report of the White House Jobs Council entitled, "Road Map to Renewal," in mid-January.

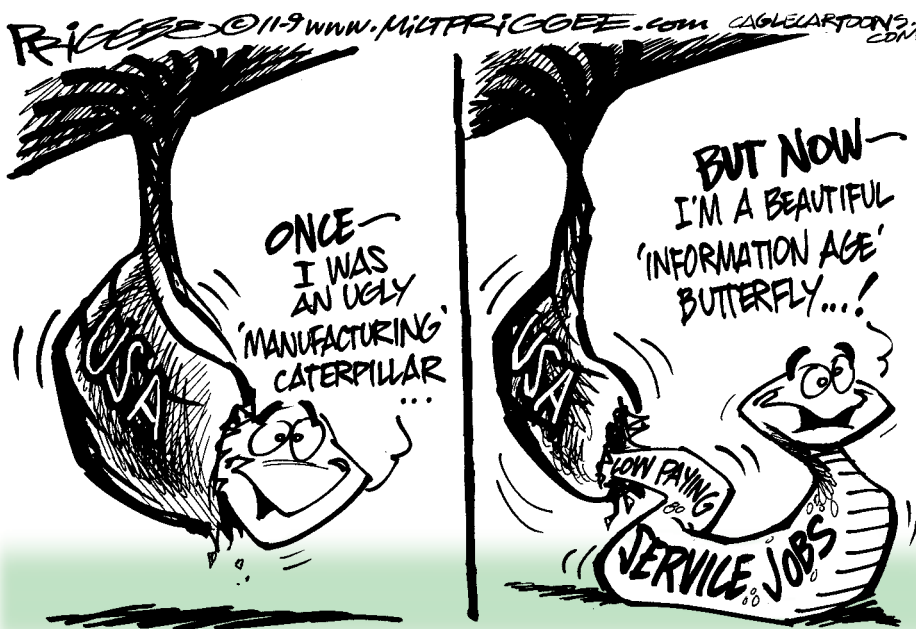
Trumka said he took issue with the report because it focused on reducing corporate taxes and regulation while ignoring the importance of a strong public education system and the role of apprenticeships in preparing young people for global competition. To read a full copy of the dissent, go to: <http://www.aflcio.org/mediacenter/prspmt/sp01172012>.

While agreeing with the general thrust and a number of the specific recommendations of the report, Trumka expressed "fundamental disagreements with the report's conclusions about the broad challenges facing the U.S. and in the priorities needed for reforms."

He said the report "downplays the need for a proactive role for the government" and "fails to address the significant additional revenues needed" to solve problems on an appropriate scale.

Trumka and UFCW President Joe Hansen are the only two labor representatives on the 27-member Council. Major corporations, entrepreneurs, holding companies and business think tanks are heavily represented.

continued on page 3





2012 UAW UNION-BUILT VEHICLES

UAW CARS

BUICK LACROSSE
 BUICK VERANO
 CADILLAC CTS
 CHEVROLET CORVETTE
 CHEVROLET CRUZE
 CHEVROLET MALIBU
 CHEVROLET SONIC
 CHEVROLET VOLT
 CHRYSLER 200
 CHRYSLER 200 CONVERTIBLE
 DODGE AVENGER
 DODGE CALIBER
 FORD FOCUS
 FORD MUSTANG
 FORD TAURUS
 LINCOLN MKS
 MAZDA6
 MITSUBISHI ECLIPSE
 MITSUBISHI ECLIPSE SPYDER
 MITSUBISHI GALANT

UAW SUVs/CUVs

BUICK ENCLAVE
 CADILLAC ESCALADE ESV
 CADILLAC ESCALADE/HYBRID
 CHEVROLET SUBURBAN
 CHEVROLET TAHOE /HYBRID
 CHEVROLET TRAVERSE
 DODGE DURANGO
 FORD ESCAPE/HYBRID
 FORD EXPEDITION
 FORD EXPLORER
 GMC ACADIA
 GMC YUKON/HYBRID
 GMC YUKON XL
 JEEP COMPASS
 JEEP GRAND CHEROKEE
 JEEP LIBERTY
 JEEP PATRIOT
 JEEP WRANGLER
 LINCOLN NAVIGATOR

UAW TRUCKS

CHEVROLET COLORADO
 CHEVROLET SILVERADO/
 HYBRID**
 FORD F SERIES
 GMC CANYON
 GMC SIERRA/HYBRID**
 RAM 1500*

UAW VANS

CHEVROLET EXPRESS
 FORD E SERIES
 GMC SAVANA

CAW CARS

BUICK REGAL
 CHEVROLET CAMARO
 CHEVROLET IMPALA
 CHRYSLER 300
 DODGE CHALLENGER
 DODGE CHARGER

CAW SUVs/CUVs

CHEVROLET EQUINOX
 FORD EDGE
 FORD FLEX
 GMC TERRAIN
 LINCOLN MKT
 LINCOLN MKX



CAW VANS

CHRYSLER TOWN & COUNTRY
 DODGE GRAND CARAVAN
 VOLKSWAGEN ROUTAN

**LOOK FOR THESE EXCITING UAW-BUILT
VEHICLES IN THE 2013 MODEL YEAR!**

DODGE DART
 FORD FOCUS BEV (ELECTRIC)
 FORD FUSION *
 FORD TRANSIT VAN
 MITSUBISHI OUTLANDER SPORT CROSSOVER



These vehicles are made in the United States or Canada by members of the UAW and Canadian Auto Workers (CAW). Because of the integration of United States and Canadian vehicle production, all the vehicles listed that are made in Canada include significant UAW-made content and support the jobs of UAW members.

However, those marked with an asterisk () are produced in the United States and another country. The light-duty (LD) crew cab versions of the vehicles marked with a double asterisk (**) are manufactured only in Mexico; other models are made in the United States.*

When purchasing one of these models, check the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN). A VIN beginning with "1" or "4" or "5" identifies a U.S.-made vehicle; "2" identifies a Canadian-made vehicle.

Not all vehicles made in the United States or Canada are built by union-represented workers. Vehicles not listed here, even if produced in the United States or Canada, are not union made.

Inshoring: The New Normal?

It's not quite a trend when seven major U.S. corporations get together to search for small businesses to act as "local sources" for their supply chain, but it is an indication that offshoring is losing some of its luster.

AT&T, Caterpillar, Bank of America, Citigroup, Pfizer, UPS and IBM recently announced a joint effort to identify small businesses in the U.S. to sign up on a contractors network. The initiative is open to any of the 9 million small businesses in the U.S. However, only 200 had submitted the formal application as of January.

Business bloggers and publications are spotting other indications that boardrooms are beginning to realize that sending work off to China, India and other far off points did not bring about the economic boom they had expected. When transportation costs, carbon footprints and loss of control are factored into cost calculations, manufacturing and even service sourcing in far off places looks more expensive than domestic costs.

As a report by the consulting firm Accenture notes: *"Companies are beginning to realize that having offshored much of their manufacturing and supply operations away from their demand locations, they hurt their ability to meet their customers' expectations across*

a wide spectrum of areas, such as being able to rapidly meet increasing customer desires for unique products, continuing to maintain rapid delivery/response times, as well as maintaining low inventories and competitive total costs," and that *"managing supply operations that are separated far from where demand occurs has weakened their overall operational planning, forecasting and general flexibility, while in some cases driving up costs with the need for complex network management. In some cases, this situation has limited the companies' competitive advantage."*

There is another factor to consider: while the purchasing power of the U.S. middle class is shrinking, the middle class in the developing world is expanding. China, for instance, is the largest market for automobiles today.

According to the World Bank, developing nations accounted for 56% of the world's middle class in 2000; By 2030, 93% of middle class will be in the developing world, with China and India accounting for most of that expansion.

Therefore, multi national corporations are going to concentrate their growth plans in those areas and unless the U.S. middle class begins to grow again, there won't be much point in expanding productive capacity here. ■

Trumka, continued from page 1

Trumka also took issue with the report's conclusions that regulatory reform and reduced corporate taxes will address problems of U.S. competitiveness going forward. "Corporations as a group pay too low a share of taxes to support the kind of infrastructure investment and education/skills upgrades that are so urgently needed at this time."

Trumka criticized the corporate emphasis on an educational system "focused exclusively on providing

business with an endless supply of workers" rather than providing a strong public education system. The report "also ignores the critical and constructive role that teachers, workers and their unions can play, both in supporting education reform that empowers and rewards great teachers and in providing ongoing skills development, in partnership with business and government, through apprenticeship and other training programs." ■

ALEC, continued from page 1

November, 43 percent of the House of Representatives, are enrolled as members of ALEC—only one, Michael Stinziano, is a Democrat. (Stinziano says he has resigned his membership.)

Membership in ALEC has its privileges—including full "scholarships" for needy lawmakers who "can't afford to pay their way" (or can't find a way to bill the state) to ALEC conferences where they rub shoulders with corporate lobbyists at cocktail parties and golf outings. The New York Times reported on February 13, 2012 that Virginia legislators had billed their state \$230,000 to attend ALEC conferences since 2001.

Lawmakers who introduce or co-sponsor ALEC-inspired legislation get more than just a pat on the back from the ALEC machine. They can count on ALEC to supply press releases, white papers, media lists, and help getting on radio or television to promote the proposals. Of course, the organization and its corporate members can be counted on to make generous donations to re-election campaigns for cooperating lawmakers.

Funded by Wal-Mart, Coca Cola, Koch Industries, AT&T and others, ALEC boasts that well over one-third of all state legislatures are in its thrall. That means that these state lawmakers—Republicans and some Democrats—will be offering more bills to muzzle all unions (Right to Work), curtail public sector union rights to bargain or even exist, privatize state services, cut taxes for corporations and open up new profit opportunities and giveaways to business.

The Center for Media and Democracy has an excellent website tracking ALEC's people, programs and plans—www.alecexposed.org—which is worth visiting. The Center recommends that citizens concerned about the insidious effects that ALEC is having on state governments should take four steps:

- 1) Spread the word and share information about ALEC on social media and join the ALEC exposed Facebook page;
- 2) Expose ALEC legislators while uncovering the use of tax dollars to pay "dues" for them to participate as well as those who accept "scholarships" that pay for attendance at ALEC events;
- 3) Keep an eye on new legislation often modeled or directly lifted from ALEC drafts. Ask media covering the state legislature to report on such findings; and
- 4) Share your findings. Tweet what you learn with the hashtag #ALECexposed or email confidential tips to: editor@ALECexposed.org. ■

How to Buy Union Made Tires

The U.S. Department of Transportation requires that all tires sold in the United States carry a code which shows, among other things, the company and plant that made the tire. The code would look like this: DOT BE XX XXX XXX

The two symbols (either two letters or a letter and a number) that follow "DOT" indicate the company and the plant where a tire was manufactured. For example, the above code indicates a tire made by B. F. Goodrich in Tuscaloosa, AL. The following is a listing of all U.S. and Canadian unionized tire plants and their DOT codes. By comparing this list to the code on the tire you are buying, you can be certain you are getting a USW-made tire. ■

Cooper Tire Workers Join Sugar Workers on Journey for Justice

Bakery Workers and Steel Workers are marching the 1,000 miles between Fargo, ND and Findlay, OH, on a Journey for Justice to dramatize their struggles against corporate greed. Some 1,000 Cooper Tire workers represented by USW, have been locked out of their jobs since just after Thanksgiving 2011. Their counterparts, 1,300 employees of American Crystal Sugar, were locked out from seven sugar

beet processing facilities in Minnesota, North Dakota and Iowa. March organizers say the group will make stops throughout the six states on their route. Supporters can follow the progress of the march on the campaign's blog at: <http://crystalgreed.com/journey/for/justice/>. On February 23rd, USW announced a tentative agreement to end the Cooper Tire lockout. A ratification vote was set for February 25th. ■

New York Hotel Workers Win Landmark Contract

The New York Hotel Trades Council (NYHTC)—a group of eight local unions in the hotel industry—concluded a breakthrough agreement covering some 30,000 hotel workers in New York City. Union members overwhelmingly approved the seven-year pact that provides a 29% wage increase, health care coverage with no out-of-pocket or co-pays for the workers and increased employer pension contributions. The pact covers most New York hotels with the exception of Blackstone-managed New York Hilton and the Waldorf Astoria. Another provision in the agreement

provides a special alarm button to be carried by housekeepers, room service waiters and certain other workers whose work takes them into patrons' rooms.

NYHTC is an umbrella organization of eight local unions with leadership drawn from UNITE HERE, USW, Operating Engineers, IBEW and the Office Employees International Union. Stressing its grass roots commitment, the Council's slogan is: "we answer only to our members." NYHTC is planning organizing forays into hotels beyond the confines of New York City, including New Jersey and New York State. ■

CODE	COMPANY, CITY
BE	B. F. Goodrich Tuscaloosa, Ala.
BF	B. F. Goodrich Woodburn, Ind.
VE	Bridgestone/Firestone Des Moines, Iowa
YE	
YU	
8B	
D2	Bridgestone/Firestone Lavergne, Tenn.
E3	
W1	
Y7	
2C	Bridgestone/Firestone Morrison, Tenn.
4D	
5D	
UP	Cooper Findlay, Ohio
UT	Cooper Texarkana, Ark.
JU	Goodyear Medicine Hat, Alberta
PC	
UK	
DY	Denman Tire Warren, Ohio
JJ	Goodyear Gadsden, Ala.
MD	
PU	
DA	Dunlop Buffalo, N.Y.
JN	Goodyear Topeka, Kan.
MJ	
PY	
JE	Goodyear Danville, Va.
MC	
PT	
JT	Goodyear Union City, Tenn.
MK	
TA	
JF	Kelly-Springfield Fayetteville, N.C.
MM	
PJ	
CC	Yokohama Tire Salem, Va.

* Any Goodyear racing tire made in the United States is a USW-made tire.

** Any Goodrich racing tire or off-the-road tire made in the United States is a USW-made tire.

In addition to company brands, these codes will also appear on "Associate Brand" and "Private Brand" tires manufactured at the above plants. The key, then, to being sure of getting a USW-made tire is the DOT code. Be sure and check it with this listing.

BANKRUPTCY: The 'Twinkie' Defense by Hostess Brands

Bakery Workers President Frank Hurt expressed outrage at efforts by Hostess Brands to blame its financial problems on workers wages and benefits. In a release by the union in early February, Hurt said: "I find it deeply offensive and highly disingenuous for the company to claim that its financial woes are the result of its union contracts and pension and health coverage obligations. We contend that the company is in dire financial shape because of a string of failed business decisions made by a series of ineffective executives who have been running this company for the past decade."

Late last year, the Wall Street Journal reported that increasing prices for sugar, flour and other ingredients and the rising cost of fuel for deliveries were hindering profits on annual sales of about \$2.2 billion, but somehow those issues seem to have disappeared in the company's court pleadings six months later.

Hostess emerged from another bankruptcy in 2009 that took five years during which they cut some 17,000 workers and cast off scores of facilities. Hostess was

infused with around \$130 million from two hedge funds—Silver Point and Monarch—and Ripplewood Management. Now those firms want to be first in line to get their cash while Hostess wants to abrogate its union agreements.

In its bankruptcy filing, Hostess wants cheaper health insurance with higher co-pays and deductibles, an end to the 40-hour per-week guarantee and overtime premiums, elimination of retiree health care and retiree life insurance. The company also insists on wage freezes for unionized workers through 2015. Hostess says it wants to close an additional eight or nine production plants, but refuses to disclose the locations.

By contrast, company CEO Brian Driscoll is demanding a new pay package of salary, bonuses and incentives of \$3.5 million. If Driscoll doesn't get what he's asking for, company lawyers say, he won't be around to use his skills to get the company turned around.

BCTGM, with 5,500 members, and the Teamsters with around 6,600 employees are the largest unions with Hostess Brands contracts. Other unions representing work-

ers in the company include the Machinists, Operating Engineers and the UFCW.

New York Federal Bankruptcy Judge Robert D. Drain has appointed BCTGM's International Secretary-Treasurer and Director of Organizing David Durkee and Bob Bergin, executive director of the Bakery Confectionery Union and Industry International Health & Pension Funds, as members of the Creditors' Committee that will oversee the process. Representatives of the Teamsters and other union pension funds also serve on the Creditors' Committee. Drain's track record indicates he's not shy about tossing union workers under the bus. He was the presiding judge in the Delphi bankruptcy which cost the UAW and IUE thousands of jobs. He was also the presiding judge in a case involving the UFCW and A&P Supermarkets where workers got the short end of the stick.

"We remain hopeful that solutions can be found to ensure the permanent continuation of Hostess Brands. We will work with the stakeholders throughout the process to find a solution that protects the interests of our members and helps enable the company to remain a viable business entity," Hurt concluded. ■

Sears Doesn't Answer

The Union Label Department recently offered some marketing advice to the struggling Sears and Kmart chain stores. In a letter to CEO Edward Lampert of the Sears Holding Co., UL&STD President Rich Kline offered a friendly suggestion that the company might want to set itself apart and take advantage of the growing consumer sentiment in support of U.S.-made products. Why not, he asked, set aside some prominent shelf space to display Made-in-the-USA and Union-Made products?

Over a month later, the Department was still awaiting a response from the company. "If Sears won't respond, perhaps some

other retailer will see the opportunity," Kline remarked. He said the Department will consider reaching out to Label Activists to canvass retailers who might be interested in taking the challenge. Among the ideas being considered would be asking individual retailers to pledge to display Union-Made-in-the-USA products, in return, the Department would publicize the merchant's cooperation and encourage patronage through Union Label publications, its website and various social media.

Readers can weigh in on this topic. E-mail your thoughts to info@unionlabel.org. ■

Candy Strikers Back to Work in Oakland

Workers at the American Licorice Company ended their nine-week strike on February 13, 2012 after voting to approve a new agreement with the candy company in Union City, CA.

Bakery, Confectionery and Tobacco Workers Local 125 went back to the bargaining table in early February to finalize the deal. Local President Donna Scarano said the family-owned company that makes licorice candies sold as Red and Black Vines, Ropes and Strawberry Ropes had agreed to a three-year contract to get its workers back on the job.

The unit has lost members over the years due to technology, and many of the workers who had gone out on strike had been with the company throughout their working lives, many joined the company when it first opened in the Oakland suburb 40 years ago. The least senior employee on the roster has 15 years on the job. ■

NEW BOARD MEMBERS

President Rich Kline welcomes two new vice presidents to the Department's Executive Board. Robert Roach (left) of the IAM replaces Warren Mart and Mike Linderer (center) of the IBB replaces Don Caswell. Mart and Caswell have retired from their respective union posts.



Living Union

The Union Label Department is undertaking a project to graphically illustrate the range of union-made-in-the USA products and services available to America's consumers. The project envisions a day when thousands of consumer choices for union products and services—from purchasing appliances to engaging in home improvement services or buying an automobile—will be available at the click of a button on a smart phone or a home computer.

As this project evolves, it will include interactive social media applications and a web presence inviting unions, their members and others to submit information and to browse products and services that interest them.

“The intention is to create a new platform that is engaging and useful so that people will return to it again and again while they're shopping or when they make plans for travel or entertainment,” said UL&STD President Rich Kline.

At one time, the annual Union Industries Show served this purpose

“until the logistics and expense of producing such a show made it impractical to continue,” Kline explained. “Technology now offers the opportunity to work with our unions and their employers to present their union-made products in an attractive setting and sharply define how union workers add value and quality to the products they make. More importantly, this virtual showcase reaches all corners of the nation, providing a far wider audience than we could draw from annual trade shows.”

Kline said the Department will call on affiliated unions and their communications professionals as the first development step to explore ways to get the information the Department already has on its website into the hands of millions more people to make them more informed consumers. Kline said the Department has engaged the services of Mosaic Learning, an all-union company that develops curricula for a number of unions and joint labor management training programs, to begin designing the platform. ■

Public Banking Conference Set for Philly

The Public Banking Institute is hosting the Public Banking in America Conference in Philadelphia in March, 2012 as a result of the significant increase in desire for monetary and banking reform to involve solutions that further the public interest.

The purpose of the conference is to recognize the changes brought about by the Occupy Wall Street movement, to examine the constitutional foundation for a democratic economy, to discuss the role of public banking throughout the world and specifically in North Dakota, and to provide direction and guidance to people who wish to further public banking in their city, county or state.

The intended audience is state policy-makers, legislators, banking professionals, economists, independent business organizations, community organizations, and anyone interested in this important subject. ■

Walk In My Shoes

ANDREW CROOM, INSULATOR AVONDALE SHIPYARD, NEW ORLEANS

As president of the New Orleans Metal Trades Council, most days now I'm on steward time, going around the shipyard and talking to people who have problems on the job or on safety issues and since they started talking about shutting down the yard 18 months ago, people have plenty of problems. I get questions about the severance package, about the layoffs—and they're laying off between 70 and 150 people a month.

I haven't been working in the trade for some time now, but when I was, my job was to apply rubber tubing around pipes, sealing fiberglass, or insulating air conditioning ducts. I might do some stud welding, too.

All this work was done inside ship holds—lots of tight spaces. When you're insulating ducts or chilled water pipes you just follow the line wherever it goes.

I started right out of high school. We didn't have an apprenticeship program

in the yard like we do now. I was just assigned to a mechanic until I picked up the skills.

Until 1972, we were all working with asbestos products—fitting it around hot pipes two to four inches thick. Asbestos was in the cement, it was in the cloth we used to wrap pipes. We all had to go through testing—x-rays and such. A lot of guys got sick. I got a touch of exposure.

Most of the folks here are like me, lots of years on the job and we don't really know what's going to happen once we finish that last Navy ship—due for launch sometime in 2013. Still, they're working hard and looks like they're going to get a productivity bonus in June. They're still working lots of overtime to meet the schedules. But, unless somebody comes along and begins building some commercial ships, we're just done. ■



Andrew Croom is President of the New Orleans Metal Trades Council, representing 5,000 workers at the Avondale Shipyard in New Orleans.

AFL-CIO NATIONAL BOYCOTTS

JAN-FEB 2012



HOSPITALITY, TRANSPORTATION & TRAVEL

SUBMITTED BY UNITE HERE

- ANCHORAGE, AK**, Hilton; Sheraton
- ARLINGTON, VA**, Hilton, Crystal City; Sheraton Crystal City
- BALTIMORE**, Sheraton Baltimore
- BOSTON**, Hyatt Harborside Logan; Hyatt Regency
- CAMBRIDGE, MA**, Hyatt Grand
- CHICAGO**, Congress Plaza; Hyatt Regency Chicago; Hyatt Regency O'Hare; Hyatt, Park Hyatt; Westin Chicago Northwest; Wyndham Suites
- INDIANAPOLIS**, Hyatt Regency
- IRVINE, CA**, Embassy Suites Irvine
- LONG BEACH, CA**, Hilton Long Beach; Hyatt Regency Long Beach
- LOS ANGELES**, Wilshire Plaza
- SACRAMENTO**, Arden West, Hilton Sacramento, Hyatt Regency Sacramento
- SAN DIEGO**, Westin Emerald Plaza

- SAN FRANCISCO**, Hyatt Regency Embarcadero; Hyatt, Fisherman's Wharf; Hyatt, Grand Stockton; Le Meridien
- SANTA CLARA, CA**, Hyatt Regency, Santa Clara
- WAIKIKI, HAWAII**, Hyatt Regency
- WASHINGTON, D.C.**, Westin City Center

SUBMITTED BY International Longshore & Warehouse Union (ILWU)

- WAIKIKI, HAWAII**, Pacific Beach Hotel, Management: HTH

ENTERTAINMENT & RECREATION

SUBMITTED BY Communications Workers of America

- ECHOSTAR DISHNETWORK** Satellite Television Service

SUBMITTED BY International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW)

- SINCLAIR BROADCASTING** 55 stations in 33 U.S. Markets. Go to www.unionlabel.org and click "Boycotts" to find the stations in your area

LEGAL

SUBMITTED BY American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees

- GLEASON, DUNN, WALSH & O'SHEA**

OTHERS

SUBMITTED BY Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers & Grain Millers International Union

- R.J. REYNOLDS TOBACCO CO.** Camel (cigarettes, snus, orbs, strips and sticks), Pall Mall, Winston, Salem, Doral, Kool, Misty, Capri. Santa Fe Natural Tobacco Co. is a non-union sister company of RJR producing Santa Fe Natural American Spirit cigarettes.



How Do You Show Your Label Pride?

(FROM SMWIA JOURNAL NOV/DEC 2011)

Members of the Sheet Metal Workers International Association carry these labels with them to the job. They affix the labels in a conspicuous place on the products they install and maintain—ductwork, HVAC systems, fire safety dampers, signs and much more—to show consumers, contractors and other trades their pride in the work they do. How do you show your Label Pride? ■



Label Letter

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In This Issue...

Trumka Dissents on White House Jobs Report	1
Do Buy UAW-Made Cars, Trucks & SUVs	2
Inshoring: The New Normal?	3
How to Buy Union-Made Tires	4
BCTGM Battles Hostess Brands Bankruptcy	5
Living Union.	6
How Do You Show Your Label Pride?	7

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EndNotes

By Rich Kline, *President, UL&STD*

Jobs, Better, But A Long Way to Go



The latest jobs report is mildly encouraging, but it's way too early for victory laps. The job increases don't constitute even a full percentage point gain. As has been noted else-

where, the "real" unemployment figure, the U6 rate that includes the underemployed, the discouraged jobseekers and long-term jobless, is around 15 percent not 8.1 percent.

Yet, we continue to hear—and from both political parties—cries of concern about... taxes and deficits and protecting the income of the richest Americans from paying their fair share. This despite government's obligation to address the needs of the many in what is an on-going Katrina-like catastrophe of job loss, homelessness and other recessionary ills.

Oliver Wendell Holmes, a Supreme Court Justice unlike many we have today, said that taxes are the price we pay for a civilized society. Unfortunately, the recent evidence points to a much-diminished desire to maintain either a civil discourse or a civil society by our political class.

Republican presidential aspirants revile each other endlessly, only taking a breather now and again to revile President Obama. They are as one, however, devoted to the goal of tax cuts for the rich, protecting the so-called job makers, and shrinking small government even further which just about rules out any chance of emerging from the recession without visiting devastating damage to many more Americans.

President Obama has adopted some of his opponents philosophy and he too is fixing his gaze upon the tax codes. He has no excuse for taking up the trickle-down cause. For the Republicans, well, trickle-

down Reaganomics is an article of faith reinforced by the grantees of the tea party and the donors behind the super-PACs.

*For the
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It's time to get real. We need an industrial policy that addresses globalization, technological advances and the needs of each generation of Americans. The young need education, job training and a way to go to college if they wish. Those of working age need a stable and growing economy. Older Americans need their pensions, Social Security and other government programs. We all need roads and schools and ports and bridges and so on.

The rich are doing quite well. They should enjoy their blessings. They have their blessings because they live in the United States. They

should pay their fair share.

As AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka wrote: The answer lies in the view that we share with so many of our fellow Americans: that our country has become dominated by the interests of the wealthiest 1% at the expense of the remaining 99%. ■