



Vol. XXXVIII, No. 3
May-June 2013

Label Letter

Union Label & Service Trades Department, AFL-CIO

We can't let the labor movement die of old age

In October 2011 the AFL-CIO, led by Secretary-Treasurer Liz Shuler, hosted its first Next Up Young Workers Summit. The Minneapolis conference was held to reach out to working people under the age of 35 because the consensus is that the current crop of union members are aging out of the workforce.

Though workers age 16 to 24 represent only 13.5 of the workforce, they account for about 26 percent of all unemployment. More than one-third of young workers are uninsured, much higher than a decade ago. Workers ages 18-35 constitute 36 percent of the U.S. workforce but account for just a quarter of union membership. Studies indicate that about 19 percent of workers ages 16 to 24 are unemployed.

For the Generation X and Y workers life since the Great Recession has been difficult.

Young workers face high unemployment, tiered pay scales, poor working conditions, lack of job security and benefits.

Referred to as "Generation Debt" by a 2010 Cornell University study "Youth and Unions" author Marlena Fontes points out that almost two-thirds of college students are taking out loans to pay for college and, as of 2005, the average debt for students who have just graduated is between \$17,600 and \$23,485. Tuition has risen two to three times faster than inflation and more students are hiking up debt on credit cards to pay for college and other expenses. Exiting college and moving into the workforce they are already bogged down with debt.

Beyond debt, these younger workers are entering into a post-industrial American economy. Because of offshoring, the popularity of hiring temporary workers, and the use of

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Chained CPI: A bad idea

Why all the fuss about changing the formula for figuring cost-of-living data from what the Department of Labor has been using for the past 20 years or so to the new so-called "chained Consumer Price Index (CPI)"?

Simply put: because it's dishonest. Using it will reduce Social Security benefits (and costs), but to claim that is a step toward reducing the federal deficit is not true because Social Security and its costs are not funded out of the federal budget in the first place.

The chained CPI isn't a real world figure. It's a fiction that assumes that if, for example, the cost of propane heating rises, the average person would switch to a cheaper alternative fuel. The 2010 report of the Commission on the Deficit called the chained CPI "a technical improvement" on the Labor Department's CPI calculations and proposed imposing it on all government programs, figuring that it would

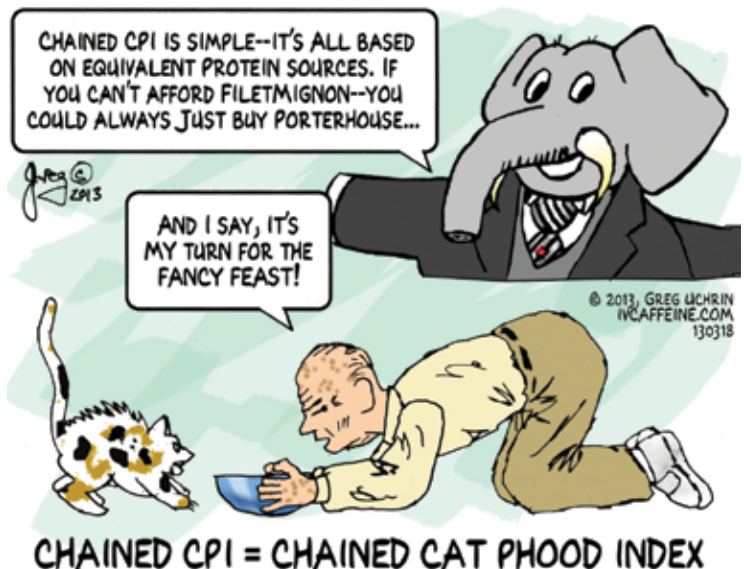
yield \$96 billion in increased revenues and reduce federal budget outlays by \$43 billion between 2012 and 2020.

High-end consumers may be able to "switch" commodities, but for the consumer who depends on public transportation, for instance, if bus or transit fares rise, there are no alternatives. So even if the increased cost isn't reflected in the index, the individual will pay it anyway.

In the real world, most people don't have the luxury of switching commodities in reaction to price increases. If the price of milk or eggs goes up, does a mother find an alternative, or does she just stop buying milk and eggs? Despite what economists would like to believe, an individual consumer's decision has little or no short-term impact on the cost of milk and eggs or public transportation.

Changing the current CPI formula seems like a minor point until you dig a little deeper and discover how that

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May, June and July, into early Autumn bring a plethora of weddings. Friends and family deserve the best for their new union—union-made gifts.

Editors note: as with all Do Buy lists this list does not include all available union-made products and services. We welcome your suggested additions and invite you to add your products to our online database at www.unionlabel.org

Do buy: Wedding gifts

Buy your wedding flowers through the Union Plus flower delivery service provider, Teleflora for a 20 percent online ordering discount. Go to the Union Plus page (www.unionplus.org) for more information.

Stock the bar at your wedding using United Farmworkers produced wines:

- Chateau Ste. Michelle
- Columbia Crest
- St. Supery
- Dollarhide Ranch
- Scheid Vineyards Inc.
- Balletto
- Charles Krug
- C.K. Mondavi
- Gallo of Sonoma
- Papagni Fruit Company

- Pillowtex Pillows, Comforters, Sheets, Toppers (GMP)
- Pyrex (USW)
- Regalware (USW)

- Weber Grills (Novelty Workers)
- White-Westinghouse (IUE-CWA)

Can't decide what to buy? Give a gift card to the following stores:

- Albertsons
- Fry's
- Giant
- Kroger
- Macys
- Meijer
- Safeway
- Vons

Staffed by members of the UFCW.

Help the newlyweds set up their home with these union-made products:

- All-Clad (USW)
- Anchor Hocking (GMP)
- Claus Kitchen Knives & Lawn and Garden Tools (UAW)
- Corelle Dishware (USW)
- Cutco Cutlery (USW)
- Electrolux vacuums (IAM)
- Fiestaware (GMP)
- Homer Laughlin (GMP)
- Libbey Glassware (GMP)
- Picuzzi photo books, canvas images (GCIU)

Package your gift card or gift in an American Greetings card (**Teamsters**).

Visit **UniteHere!**'s website for your event location or to stay at a union hotel when attending an out-of-town wedding (<http://www.hotelworkersrising.org/HotelGuide/>).



Cory McCray

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD
OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS



Coming out of high school, I wasn't sure what I wanted to do, but my mom called up the Department of Labor and asked for a list of all the available apprenticeships in Maryland. By pure luck, I ended up in the IBEW Local 24's program. It appealed to me because the wages were good and steadily increased for the entire five years of my apprenticeship. I didn't know many people in Baltimore who made wages like that.

I wanted to make sure I held onto what I was earning. I followed the lead of journeyman electricians around me and invested my earnings, buying houses in Baltimore with an eye to becoming a businessman. That got me more involved in the local community.

Meanwhile, to preserve my foundation, I got involved in the union's activities. I volunteered for events. I attended union meetings. I went to the parties. Three weeks

out of my apprenticeship, the Local 24 business manager asked me to come on staff. I became only the second African American on their staff and a young one, too (in my 20s surrounded by a lot of 50-somethings).

When Ernie Grecco, the president of the Metro Baltimore Council of the AFL-CIO, decided to rejuvenate the Young Trade Unionists, he asked my business manager to put me on the organization. Becoming a part of that organization broadened my horizons. I saw the wider world of labor.

My business manager shifted my direction. The whole experience overall, I've gained a new sense of what our local community needs. I'm active in Baltimore, I'm active in the IBEW and I'm active in the Young Trade Unionists. If my mom hadn't made that call to the Dept. of Labor, I don't know where I'd be today. ■

Spotlight the label: **AFGE at a glance**

The American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) is the largest federal employee union representing 650,000 federal and D.C. government workers nationwide and overseas. Workers in virtually all functions of government at every federal agency depend upon AFGE for legal representation, legislative advocacy, technical expertise and informational services.

AFGE believes that all unions should belong to the house of labor and has been nationally affiliated with the AFL-CIO since AFGE was founded in 1932. At AFGE's national convention in 1997, the delegates took the importance of affiliation one step further, voting for each of its 1,100 Locals to affiliate with their AFL-CIO state federations. This makes AFGE one of the few nationally affiliated unions to have all of its Locals affiliated at the state level. National President J. David Cox and National Vice President for Women & Fair Practices Augusta Y. Thomas are active participants in the AFL-CIO, working to enhance and energize the labor movement.

AFGE takes seriously its responsibility to help provide good government services while ensuring that government workers are treated

fairly and with dignity. The union supports a meaningful transformation of the federal workplace to improve the way services and benefits are delivered to the American public.

As a labor union, AFGE is in a unique position because it is not currently afforded the same full scope collective bargaining rights as workers in the private sector. For this reason in addition to negotiating working conditions at the bargaining table, AFGE coordinates a full-scale legislative and political action program to monitor issues that impact the government work force. When Congress debates funding of vital government programs administered to the public by government workers or tackles employee health care issues, AFGE is on the scene representing its members.

AFGE represents government workers who are the vital threads of the fabric of American life. Government employees inspect the food we eat and the places we work; they protect citizens from the illicit flow of drugs, maintain the safety of our nation's borders, care for our nation's veterans, serve as a vital link to Social Security recipients, maintain the District of Columbia's infrastructure, keep the national defense systems prepared for any

danger and much, much more. AFGE is proud to make America work.

The union is headquartered in Washington, D.C., and is divided into 12 geographical **Districts** consisting of some 1,100 **Locals**. More than one-half of AFGE's members are consolidated into agency-wide bargaining units. Agencies with the highest concentration of union membership include the Department of Defense, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Social Security Administration and the Department of Justice.

Of the 1.75 million people employed by the federal government, only 250,000 are based in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area. The majority work in federal offices across the nation as police officers, mechanics, lawyers, correctional officers, environmentalists, nurses, mine inspectors and more. The range of jobs performed by both D.C. and federal government employees is impressive and so is their work. ■



change ripples through the economy. Economists do agree that substituting the chained CPI for the current formula results in a lower figure. The official CPI as measured by the Labor Department is widely used, not only to determine increases in Social Security and tax rates, VA allowances and benefits, Medicare and Medicaid reimbursements, but also in the private sector to set salaries, changes in rental rates, insurance payouts and expense allowances, all of which affect millions of Americans.

The chained CPI would increase taxes and reduce benefits for the poor and middle classes, yet it would not impose any additional sacrifice on the richest one percent of Americans.

If the chained CPI formula had been in effect since 2000, Social Security benefits, for example, would have been cut by 5 per-

cent as of this year, and that factor would be increased the further along you go. And, according to the Tax Policy Center, the impact on taxes would be an increase for the middle class and the poor while the super rich would remain untouched because they are already paying the top rate (and they understand what a bargain that is).

True, the initial tax impact for most families would only be \$100 a year, but that increase would compound over the years.

The point is that, once again, the poor and the middle class would lose benefits and experience increased taxes, while the 1-percenters would not experience any change whatsoever.

In the private sector, collective bargaining agreements linked to cost-of-living formulas would yield smaller increases, despite the fact that the real cost-of-living would have increased

beyond what the chained CPI indicates.

Calling benefit cuts and tax increases something else doesn't make the pain any easier to endure for those who get hurt. But, political decisions are often made on that basis. Recall the words of Walter Mondale in his 1984 acceptance speech to the Democratic National Convention:

"Let's tell the truth. It must be done, it must be done. Mr. Reagan will raise taxes, and so will I. He won't tell you. I just did."

—**Walter Mondale's acceptance speech to the Democratic National Convention, July 19, 1984**

Professional politicians say that little bit of candor was the seed that destroyed Walter Mondale's presidential campaign. Is that why the White House jumped on the idea of changing the way the cost-of-living index is figured? If so, shame on them. ■

freelancers and contractors, young workers find themselves overwhelmingly unemployed or underemployed in every sector.

Union membership does make a difference. Unionized workers ages 18-29 earn, on average, 12.4 percent more than their non-union counterparts.

Since the AFL-CIO launched its initiative, affiliated unions have followed the AFL-CIO's lead and created young workers' groups within their own organizations to help build their organizations.

Organizations like the Oregon AFL-CIO's "Young Emerging Labor Leaders" (YELL), AFSCME's Next Wave, AFGE's "Young Organizing Unionists for the Next Generation" (YOUNG), CWA's "Next Generation Network," and "Baltimore's Young Trade Unionists" are just a few of the groups that will mold the next generation of union activists.

"We can't let the labor movement die of old age. It is imperative that we educate, involve, energize and encourage the next generation of trade unionists to rebuild the middle class," said Union Label Department President Rich Kline. ■

Labor Board rules Cablevision actions illegal

The National Labor Relations Board in April issued a complaint charging Cablevision with making illegal threats and offering improper inducements to its employees in the Bronx and elsewhere to discourage them from voting to unionize.

The Communications Workers of America (CWA) has been battling Cablevision for more than two years, seeking to organize the cable workers in the New York metropolitan area.

The complaint issued by the NLRB's regional office for Manhattan and the Bronx is accusing Cablevision's chief executive, James L. Dolan, of illegally telling the Bronx workers that they would be excluded from training and job opportunities if they voted to unionize. The board also stated that Cablevision had improperly offered raises and improved benefits to workers in the Bronx and elsewhere to deter them from joining the union.

According to a January 30, 2013, statement from CWA, 22 workers

were illegally locked out and fired at Brooklyn Cablevision for "attempting to discuss the lack of good-faith bargaining by the company." The more than 300 workers at the Brooklyn Cablevision location had voted, almost a year earlier, to join the CWA, in one of the first successful organizing drives in the largely non-union cable industry. All but one of the locked out workers were rehired after CWA, community and political leaders pressured the company during protests last month.

CWA filed the unfair labor practice in January, just before the firings, alleging that the company was engaging in bad-faith bargaining.

"The NLRB charges back up what we've been saying since before the 22 workers were fired in January," **said Chris Calabrese, executive vice president of CWA Local 1109.** "There's no excuse for any business, much less one that benefits from a City-granted monopoly, to egregiously violate labor law like this," he said. ■

American Crystal Sugar workers approve contract

In a fifth vote, locked-out Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers Union (BCTGM) workers at American Crystal Sugar voted 55 percent to accept the company's contract offer.

Workers had been locked out of their jobs for 20 months. The contract was first rejected by workers in the summer of 2011, leading to the lockout.

John Risky, president of BCTGM Local 167G, said that he would work to make sure "everything is right" for workers returning to the company.

Crystal Sugar locked out 1,300 union workers on August 1, 2011, after they overwhelmingly rejected the proposed five-year contract that would have raised wages but significantly increased workers' health care costs by transferring them from a union plan to the Company's health plan. In addition to higher out-of-pocket expenses the workers rejected the broad "management rights" language included in the contract. ■

Panera Bread workers still without contract

Bakers at six Panera Bread franchises in Michigan, were the first in the country to unionize last year, but more than a year after the historic vote to join the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers Union (BCTGM), the company still refuses to meet with the union.

In the battle for union recognition, bakers at the West Michigan franchises are seeking health care and respect from the company, Bread of Life LLC. The company has fought the union from the beginning, and in March, shortly after the workers voted to join BCTGM, the company filed a certification objection with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB).

The company operates 50 franchises in Michigan and California.

The bakers' difficulties are only exacerbated by the fact that Michigan became the 24th right-to-work state earlier this year and the ruling by D.C. Circuit Court that President Obama's three recess appointments to the NLRB were invalid. The Court ruling has put many of the Board's rulings, including the Panera decision, into question. ■

Why unions matter more than ever

By Edward Smith

When I travel across the country, I often hear from business leaders, politicians and even union members who say unions don't matter anymore.

They say there was a time and place for unions—but that has passed. They cite the fact that union membership in the U.S. stands at less than 12 percent. They cite the Wisconsin recall, the passage of right-to-work laws in Indiana and the 2012 Democratic National Convention taking place in Charlotte, N.C., a city with one of the lowest union membership rates in the country. Unions don't count, they say.

They are wrong. Unions matter today more than ever.

If we want to rebuild the American middle class, we need strong unions. It's no coincidence that the decline of the middle class began with the decline in union membership. From one-third to one-fifth of the growth in inequality can be explained by the decline of unions, according to a 2011 study in the *American Sociological Review* by Bruce Western of Harvard University and Jake Rosenfeld of the University of Washington.

We see the result of this decline every day. More Americans are working in low-wage jobs and are without health care and the means to save for retirement.

Union jobs can still offer workers good salaries, pensions and health care benefits that give families the economic security to send kids to college or trade schools, to invest in their communities and to have a secure retirement. This is not some socialist ideal. It is the American dream—and unions have helped ensure that more Americans have a chance to live it.

Unions also matter if we want to retool and retrain our workforce for the global economy. Employers regularly talk about not being able to find skilled workers. New union training programs are a critical component of the answer to this problem. At their own expense, unions and union contractors provide training and apprenticeship programs that teach the latest construction and building techniques with a focus on safety.

This training allows U.S. workers compete with anyone in the world. These union training programs should be encouraged, and the workers who graduate should be put back to work rebuilding the nation's infrastructure—and our economy.

More importantly, unions matter because who else will speak on behalf of workers? The U.S. Chamber of Commerce speaks for the interests of business, and AARP speaks for the interests of the elderly. But without unions, who would speak for workers?

If workers are to have a share in our future prosperity, they need unions to advance their issues. Otherwise, the voices of corporations, the rich and the well-connected will drown out the voices of average American workers.

For unions to remain strong, we must remain united at the ballot box. We must support each other's causes and leaders and support the common interests of organized labor—the right to collectively bargain for wages and benefits. Union members must vote in their self-interest, not against it.

Unions matter. They mattered in the past; they matter today; and unions must remain strong if they are to matter in the future. If unions do not stand united and do not fight for the needs of working Americans, then Labor Day is meaningless. It will be just a day off in September.

That matters to me—and it should matter to you.

Edward Smith is the president and chief executive officer of Ullico Inc., the only labor-owned insurance and investment company. He has been a member of Laborers' Local 773 for 44 years. ■



Ohio AFL-CIO hosts largest Union Sportsmen's event ever

UNION SPORTSMEN OHIO DINNER HIGHLIGHTS CONSERVATION EFFORTS

The Ohio AFL-CIO held the 1st Annual Ohio State Conservation Dinner in March boasting more than 500 attendees, making it the largest Union Sportsmen's Alliance (USA) event to date. Forty-five Local Unions, District Councils and Corporate partners contributed a minimum of \$1,000 each to support the USA's Boots on the Ground conservation projects. The funds will go towards the USA's efforts to unite the union community, to educate future generations of sportsmen and women, conserve wildlife habitat and volunteer for projects that improve access to quality places to hunt, fish and shoot.

The USA now has over 6 million members, making it "larger than the NRA and next two largest sportsmen's organizations combined," according to USA CEO Fred Myers.

"In 2012, the members of the Ohio AFL-CIO overwhelmingly adopted a resolution at our Conference to support and get engaged with the Union Sportsmen's Alliance," said Ohio AFL-CIO president Tim Burga.

"Many union members in Ohio are die-hard sportsmen and women, so we're proud to support an organization dedicated to their interests and to preserving the future of our outdoor heritage," said Burga.

The dinner was held at the UA Plumbers & Pipefitters Local 189 Hall and was the eighth in a series of Union Sportsmen's Alliance public events.

The event was planned by a group of 15 volunteers, who spent approximately 250 hours on the event. A Weatherby Ultra Mark V Custom Sporter was auctioned and 63 firearms with a value in excess of \$20,000 were given away in raffles and auctions. The event raised \$71,000. ■



Unions seek renewed worker protections in Chapter 11 reform

"If employees are called upon to sacrifice in order to resurrect their bankrupt employer, bankruptcy law must require that everyone from the break room to the board room shares the pain," said IAM General Secretary-Treasurer Robert Roach in testimony to the American Bankruptcy Institute (ABI) Commission to Study the Reform of Chapter 11. "While Chapter 11 bankruptcy can provide struggling companies an opportunity to re-group and avoid liquidation, it is increasingly abused as a means to get a leg-up on the competition by placing an undue burden on employees and retirees. Companies are increasingly using bankruptcy as a means to take what they can from employees outside of the normal collective bargaining process, not just what is needed for a corporation to survive."

Roach's sentiments were shared by executives from the Air Line Pilots Association, the United Steelworkers and the Transport Workers Union who also testified at the hearings aimed at reforming Chapter 11 law.

The mid-March hearing, was just one in a series of hearings being held by the American Bankruptcy Institute focusing on reforming Chapter 11.

Roach pointed out that, increasingly unionized employees are bearing the brunt of the financial burden in company restructuring.

The discussions focused mainly on Section 1113 of the U.S. code that gives

debtors the authority to ask a bankruptcy court to reject labor contracts.

A labor-supported bill introduced by Rep. John Conyers (D-Mich.), H.R. 100, the *Protecting Employees and Retirees in Business Bankruptcies Act*, seeks to strengthen the standards the debtor must meet in order to win approval for a labor agreement modification or termination.

USW General Counsel David Jury says the bill would "Force a debtor to justify worker concessions with a detailed business plan, establish a presumption against rejecting a CBA when executives receive incentive pay or bonuses during or in the six months before bankruptcy, and require the court to make a finding that the debtor's proposal would not cause the purchasing power of the affected employees materially diminish."

Lack of a business plan was an issue in the 2011 bankruptcy of American Airlines, said James Campbell Little, president of the TWU. "There were not market-tested projections or a business model against which all constituents were being asked to make sacrifices."

In prepared testimony retired bankruptcy Judge Steven Mitchell stated, "Authorizing companies to reject a CBA or terminate retiree benefits were easily the most difficult decisions I had to make." No one on the panel disagreed that the current process is puts workers' jobs and retirement security at greater risk.

The ABI's plans to issue its recommendations in April 2014. ■

IAMAW seeking to organize Jeld-Wen workers

On the heels of its successful campaign to organize workers at IKEA's U.S. manufacturing facilities, the IAMAW has launched a campaign to organize workers at Jeld-Wen. Jeld-Wen is the world's third-largest manufacturer of doors and windows with operations in 21 countries and every IAM territory.

The IAM Woodworkers Department Director Bill Street says the key issues in the campaign include unsafe working conditions, abusive and unresponsive management, hostility and surveillance of union supporters and widespread use of temporary workers. The IAM launched the campaign in response to calls from

employees at the company's Yakima, Wash., Chiloquin and Klamath Falls, Oreg. and Rocklin and Vista, Calif., facilities.

Similar to the IKEA campaign, the Jeld-Wen campaign has been backed by the Building and Wood Worker's International (BWI) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) because of the global presence of the companies.

The current organizing drive has been met with resistance from the company, with IAM calling out the window manufacturer for a series of labor rights violations. Last month BWI issued a report stating that the company had violated several of the ILO core standards as well as U.S. labor law. ■

AFL-CIO NATIONAL BOYCOTTS

MARCH-APRIL 2013)))))))



HOSPITALITY, TRANSPORTATION & TRAVEL

SUBMITTED BY UNITE HERE!

- › **GLOBAL**, Hyatt Hotels
(*with exceptions, see box, below)
- › **ANCHORAGE, AK**, Hilton; Sheraton
- › **ARLINGTON, VA**, Hilton, Crystal City; Sheraton Crystal City
- › **BALTIMORE**, Sheraton Baltimore
- › **CHICAGO**, Congress Plaza; Westin Chicago Northwest; Wyndham Suites
- › **IRVINE, CA**, Embassy Suites Irvine
- › **LONG BEACH, CA**, Hilton Long Beach;
- › **LOS ANGELES**, Wilshire Plaza
- › **SACRAMENTO**, Arden West, Hilton Sacramento
- › **SAN DIEGO**, Le Meridien
- › **WASHINGTON, D.C.**, Westin City Center

SUBMITTED BY United Steelworkers (USW)

- › **PALERMO PIZZA**

ENTERTAINMENT & RECREATION

SUBMITTED BY Communications Workers of America

- › **ECHOSTAR DISHNETWORK**
Satellite Television Service

SUBMITTED BY International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW)

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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 & Municipal Employees

- › **GLEASON, DUNN, WALSH & O'SHEA**
- › **HARDIN, LAZARUS AND LEWIS, LLC**
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OTHERS

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

- › **AMERICAN CRYSTAL SUGAR**

› 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

– **The call to 'Boycott Hyatt' – DOES NOT include hotels with current ILWU agreements or those with current UNITE HERE agreements**

Current ILWU hotels: Hyatt Regency Maui Resort & Spa and the Grand Hyatt Kauai, which have current collective bargaining agreements with the International Longshore and Warehouse Union.

Current UNITE HERE! hotels: Hyatt Hotel (Highway One Monterey); Hyatt Regency Monterey; Hyatt Penn's Landing (Philadelphia); Hyatt Regency Dearborn (Michigan); Hyatt Regency Denver at the Colorado Convention Center; Hyatt Regency Washington on Capitol Hill; Hyatt Regency Atlanta; Hyatt Regency Mission Bay Spa and Marina; Hyatt Regency on King (Toronto); Park Hyatt Toronto; Hyatt Regency Vancouver; Grand Hyatt New York; Hyatt Rosemont; Hyatt Place San Jose; Andaz 5th Avenue; Andaz Wall Street; Hyatt Place Braintree (Mass.); Hyatt Regency Long Beach; Hyatt Pike Long Beach

POLICY GUIDELINE FOR ENDORSEMENT OF AFFILIATES' BOYCOTTS

The AFL-CIO Executive Council has developed policy guidelines that regulate how the federation endorses boycotts undertaken by its affiliates. To get AFL-CIO sanction, boycotts should be directed at primary employers.

THE GUIDELINES INCLUDE THESE PROVISIONS:

- › All requests to the national AFL-CIO for endorsement must be made by a national or international union
- › Any affiliated union with a contract in force with the same primary employer will be contacted by the AFL-CIO to determine whether there is an objection to the federation's endorsement.
- › Affiliates will be asked to provide the AFL-CIO with background information on the dispute in a confidential information survey. Prior to endorsement of the boycott, the executive officers, or their designees, will meet with the national union's officers, or their designees, to discuss the union's strategic plan and timetable for the boycott, or other appropriate tactics, and to discuss the federation's role.
- › The national or international union initiating the boycott is primarily responsible for all boycott activities; the AFL-CIO will provide supplemental support.
- › Boycotts will be carried on the AFL-CIO national boycott list for a period of one year, and the endorsement will expire automatically at the end of that time. National and international unions may request one-year extensions of the listings for actions where an organizing or bargaining campaign is actively in place.

(These guidelines were adopted by the AFL-CIO Executive Council in April 2011.)

PERIODICALS
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WASHINGTON, D.C.

TIME VALUE

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EndNotes

By Rich Kline, *President, UL&STD*

DON'T BE ABUSED BY THE NEWS, READ THE

LABOR PRESS



Are you feeling abused by the news media? You might be when you read that bakers not bankers are responsible for the Hostess fiasco. Or, that the disabled deserve denigration as done by NPR's Planet Money. Or that union members at American Crystal Sugar were greedy, if not stupid, to be fighting for the their rights.

Corporate ownership of media has always given the 1% an advantage. The owners of media get to set policy, adopt editorial positions, ignore the news that they choose to keep hidden, and propa-

gandize and slant however they wish. Just consider the photos that depict working people and labor leaders in connection with a news story, rarely does the positive moment get any attention.

Corporate media has corporate goals. The folks atop media empires are connected to the folks atop other empires. Their interests intertwine. So don't expect any fairness when it comes to issues faced by union members.

Where can your voice be heard, your views read? The Labor Press and Labor Media provide us with the other side, the side that is frequently ignored and most often distorted.

If you are finding it tough to get an accurate picture of Labor, go to the source: the Labor Press, in its various formulations. Check the AFL-CIO's website along with our own at unionlabel.org. Look at the websites and Facebook pages of unions, your own and others, to get accurate news that reflects the concerns of working people.

You can also look for local television and radio shows that offer a perspective on Labor not often found on major media. For example, Chester Dunham's The Dunham Report on radio in

Savannah, Georgia, covers labor's issues, as does Charles Showalter's Union Edge, which originates in Pittsburgh. These labor activists are bringing labor news and views to many listeners in and out of the Labor Movement.

The truth is out there, but you have to look for it. ■



Label Letter

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Label Letter is published bimonthly by the Union Label & Service Trades Department, AFL-CIO. Subscriptions to members only. USPS #424-530. Periodicals postage paid at Washington, D.C. Postmaster: Send corrections of address to Room 209, 815 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006. Phone: 202-508-3700.

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Vol. XXXVIII, No. 3 ISSN 0161-9365

