

STEEL VOICE



UNITED STEELWORKERS LOCAL 1999

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Indiana Joins GOP Union-Bashing with RTW

By Michael Paarlberg

This week, the Indiana House voted to make the state "right to work". The bill is expected to easily pass the Republican-controlled Senate and Governor Mitch Daniels, whose first act as a governor was to strip state employees of collective bargaining rights, will sign it into law. It's not yet clear how soon that will occur; currently, it looks like Indiana Republicans want to have it signed before the Super Bowl on 5 February (the NFL Players' Association has been a vocal opponent of the bill).

Right-to-work (RTW) laws are nothing new – Indiana would be the 23rd state to have one. But it is notable that this has happened now in



Union protesters at the Indiana Statehouse.

a midwestern state, since RTW laws were previously a mostly southern and Rocky Mountain state phenomenon, which are mostly non-union anyway. But there are a number of myths about what RTW laws are and do.

First, let's be clear about what Indiana's Right to Work bill does not do. It does not end "compulsory union membership", or the "closed shop"; there is no such thing. Contrary to the deliberately misleading rhetoric of RTW laws' corporate sponsors, this is already illegal, and has been since 1947. Nowhere in the country can you be fired, demoted or hauled off to the gulag for refusing to join a union, right-to-work state or not.

Nor does it suddenly make it possible to refuse to pay union dues. Workers who object to how their unions spend their dues money outside of the workplace – such as on political contributions – can already choose not to pay that portion of their dues (again, right-to-work or not). In no case can a worker who is Republican be forced to support a Democratic candidate through their union dues.

Rather, right-to-work legislation, such as the bill Indiana will soon enact into law, prohibits a business from entering into a type of private

⇒ See RTW, Page 7.



My View

**Bruce Reed, Local Union
Representative**



Brothers and Sisters:

At the writing of this article it appears the "right to work" legislation is going to pass. The Legislators that have supported us have done everything possible to help us keep our Union security clauses in place but cannot stop the attack from the Republican Party, the Chamber of Commerce and the Governor of Indiana.

I hope everyone has had the opportunity to see Governor Daniels assure a Teamsters general meeting that he was not in favor of making Indiana a right to work state or change any of the Labor Laws in effect, if not contact me and I will arrange for a showing of the short video at the hall for everyone to see. He wanted their endorsement and financial support so he just lied to get it.

We will be having training and education opportunities concerning the right to work law in the near future, as soon as the final version is voted on and we

can see the language and intent.

Our Unit Presidents and Executive Board meeting is scheduled for February 25 starting at 10am, with the Sub District council meeting immediately after. All Unit Presidents and E-Board members need to make plans to attend both if possible.

We as a Nation have just honored Dr. Martin Luther King, a man of vision and a man dedicated to the rights of minorities and the working people of America, and ultimately a man who gave his life at the young age of 39 years old standing up for those visions.

On the evening of April 4, 1968 Dr. King as we all know was in Memphis, Tennessee to lead a street march in support of the striking garbage workers of the city. When Dr. King stepped on to the balcony of his hotel room to leave for the march, He was assassinated.

Dr. King lived what he preached; he lost his life standing up for what he believed to be true. To quote Dr. King on speaking for the Labor movement in 1961 he said

"In our glorious fight for civil rights, we must guard against being fooled by false slogans, such as [right to work]. It is a law to rob us of our civil rights and job rights. Its purpose is to destroy Labor Unions and the freedom of collective bargaining by which Unions have improved wages and working conditions for everyone... Wherever these laws have passed, wages are lower, job opportunities are fewer and there are no civil rights. We demand this fraud be stopped. OUR WEAPON IS OUR VOTE."

Dr. Martin Luther King, a great man of vision and history as well, totally ignored by the party in control of our state, please be ready to do as Dr. King suggested and help us vote out the people that have turned their backs on the working men and women of Indiana. It will be a long battle back, but all we have to do is vote right, Dr. King gave his life. □

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Voorhies Elected CLC President

Brett Voorhies was elected President of the Central Indiana Labor Council at the December council meeting. Brett was sworn in to his new post by AFL-CIO President Nancy Guyott during the January meeting.

transferred to the Rexnord Bearing plant both in Indianapolis. Brett was active in the union and was later hired into the political department of the Steelworkers.

Brett's father Bob Voorhies served as the President of the Central Indi-

in District 92.

The Central Indiana Labor Council gives working families a voice on the job, in local and state politics, in local and state government, and in the community.

Central labor councils bring different unions together in communities to work collectively on organizing new members, educating and mobilizing current members, strengthening cities and counties and creating a powerful voice for working families. CLCs comprise the grassroots network of the labor movement's efforts to ensure that economic, education, health care and other policies benefit working families.

The Central Indiana Labor Council's jurisdiction covers Boone, Hamilton, Hancock, Hendricks, Johnson, Marion, Morgan, & Shelby counties. □



AFL-CIO President Nancy Guyott (far right) swears in new Central Indiana CLC President Brett Voorhies.

Brett replaces outgoing President Susan Fuldauer of OPEIU. Susan still serves on the council's executive board.

Brett Voorhies is the United Steelworkers District 7 Rapid Response coordinator and political coordinator for Indiana. His responsibilities include Rapid Response and political training and education for the Steelworker locals in District 7 and Indiana respectively.

Brett is a member of Local 1999. He started his career as a Steelworker at the Rexnord Chain plant and later

ana Labor Council for 25 years. In this position, Bob was a fierce and outspoken champion for labor and made his constituents' voices heard in every proposed project, major issue, or election in Central Indiana.

Brett's stepmother Julie Voorhies is the current Marion County Recorder.

Brett is no stranger to politics having been politically active from a young age. A lifelong Democrat Brett recently was a candidate for the City-County Council. He also ran for State Representative in 2010

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Right to Work for Less

Chuck Jones, President

I am proud to be a Steelworker! I have been at the State House on a daily basis, along with hundreds even thousands of other Union Brothers and Sisters. As I write this letter the debate over "Right to Work" goes on. We have to continue to be strong. Our strength is in our solidarity. We must remain united in our efforts to defeat this bill. If you would take a few minutes, call or email your State Representative and let them know you are against "Right to Work". I am including a few quotes from some very wise men, I hope they will be an inspiration:

"In our glorious fight for civil rights, we must guard against being fooled by false slogans, as 'right to work.' It provides no 'rights' and no 'works.' Its purpose is to destroy labor unions and the freedom of collective bargaining. We demand this fraud be stopped."

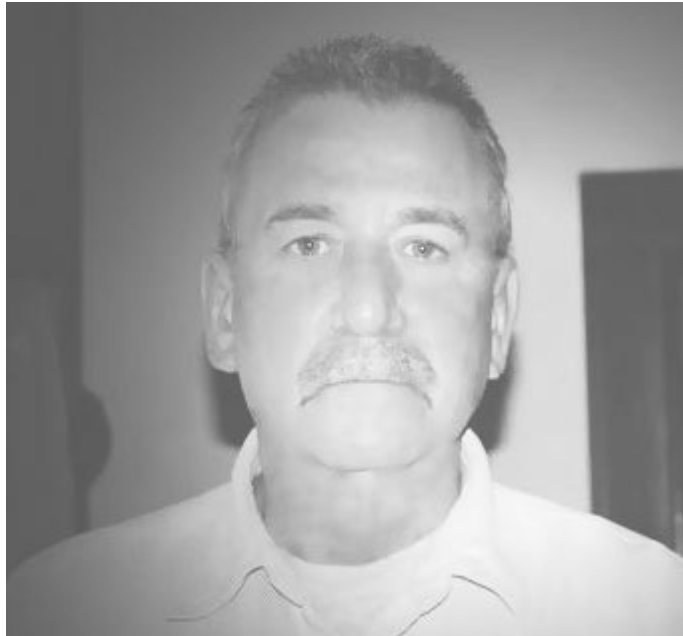
Martin Luther King Jr.

Those who would destroy or further limit the rights of organized labor—those who cripple collective bargaining or prevent organization of

the unorganized—do a disservice to the cause of democracy.

President John F. Kennedy

Every advance in this half-century—Social Security, civil rights, Medicare, aid to education, one after another—came with the support and



leadership of American Labor.

- Jimmy Carter

"History is a great teacher. Now everyone knows that the labor movement did not diminish the strength of the nation but enlarged it. By raising the living standards of millions, labor miraculously created a

market for industry and lifted the whole nation to undreamed of levels of production. Those who attack labor forget these simple truths, but history remembers them."

- Martin Luther King Jr.

"You will find people saying that they are for the so-called right to work law, but they also believe in unions. This is absurd. It's like saying you are for motherhood but against children."

- President Truman, 1947

"The labor movement is people. Our unions have brought millions of men and women together, made them members one of another, and given them common tools for common goals. Their goals are goals for all America - and their enemies are the enemies for progress. The two cannot be separated."

- John F. Kennedy

"We all do better when we all do better."

- Paul Wellstone, □



From the Sub Director's Desk

Wayne A. "Crash" Dale
Sub District 3 Director



During the past year we were very busy in the sub district negotiating contracts, arbitrating grievances, conducting our annual education conference, filing labor board charges, assisting the local unions with outstanding grievances and fighting "Right to Work for Less".

In order to better serve the local unions and the membership we have done the following:

- Updated our database to improve communication.
- Maintain copies of all current collective bargaining agreements, and all supplemental agreements, such as, but not limited to, health insurance, life insurance, dental, vision, pension and 401K.
- We have merged three (3) systems into one, reviewed each file, scanned past agreements and retained them electronically for future use, then discarding the paper form. All scanned documents are

backed up on two (2) hard drives. We use "sub files" in each file so items can be found easier.

- Conducted Steward's Training for 22 units.
- Conducted FMLA Training for 2 units.
- Created FMLA Resource Manuals and Practical Guide to Employment Law Resource Manuals for all 40 locals in the sub district.
- Engaged in two (2) strikes which have since been settled.
- Locked out at six (6) different locations. We have settled five out of the six and are still locked out at one (1) location in Shoals, Indiana.

During several months last year and continuing into this year we are "Standing Up and Fighting Back" against "Right to Work for Less." All workers in the State of Indiana are being attacked by politicians, corporations and the wealthy. We have seen these same attacks on working families in Wisconsin, Ohio, Maine, and now in our own backyard. It does not take a "Rhodes Scholar" to understand this is a concerted effort.

On the first day in office, Governor Mitch Daniels, stripped state employees of their collective bargaining rights. Last year he and his fellow representatives attacked our school teachers, police men and women that protect us, and our firefighters. Now they are attacking all workers.

It's a political leadership now out of step with historic Republicans like

Abe Lincoln and others who understood the role that union's play in this country. It was Lincoln who said that "if a man tells you that he trust America yet fears labor, he is a fool. There is no America without labor and to rob one is to fleece the other."

Governor Daniels and his administration trying to convince the citizens of Indiana that "Right to Work" is good for us because it will provide jobs for our state and it will give workers additional rights. Martin Luther King JR. said it best when he stated "Right to Work provides no work and it provides no rights."

The fact of the matter is that there are nine (9) states that are "Right to Work" and they have higher unemployment than Indiana (8.9%). They are Arizona (9.1%), Alabama (9.8%), Tennessee (9.8%), Georgia (10.3%), North Carolina (10.5%), Florida (10.6%), Mississippi (10.6%), South Carolina (11.0%), and Nevada (13.4%).

In many of these states workers do not have health insurance or pensions.

In 2008 in Oklahoma, another right to work state, 20% of all children needed some form of assistance. In 2010 that number rose to 40%. In 2012 it is predicted that 60% of all children in Oklahoma will need assistance.

"Right to Work" will lead to lower wages, reduction and or elimination of healthcare coverage, and elimination of pensions for working families in our state. Indiana families deserve better and we need to stand

⇒ See DALE, Page 8.

↳ RTW, From Page 1.

agreement with its employees, under which they can be obliged to contribute to a specific fund. Sometimes called "agency fees", "representation fees" or "fair share provisions", these cover only what unions spend to represent workers who are covered by a collective bargaining agreement. These are local deals involving, for example, the negotiation of contracts, the filing of grievances and the defence of employees in disputes with their managers.

Under what are called "duties of fair representation", unions are legally required to provide those services to all workers covered by a contract, whether they are members of the union or not. The only difference, then, is that under right-to-work laws, workers may choose not to pay for those benefits which they will continue to receive anyway: health insurance, vacations or simply established work rules such that they cannot lose their job for capricious reasons, such as being falsely accused of stealing staplers or the boss waking up and deciding to fire everyone wearing brown shoes that day, which is perfectly legal in most – which is to say, non-union – workplaces.

In other words, right-to-work laws simply incentivize freeloading. This, of course, is something RTW laws' Republican backers tend to frown upon when it comes to welfare, but seem willing to embrace as a means of starving their political opponents. Notably, such laws do not undercut unions' political activities; workers can already choose to contribute to those or not. Instead, they only cripple a union's ability to perform the mundane, everyday

functions of representing workers on the job – the very tasks Republicans say unions should be restricted to doing.

If right-to-work boosters were honest about what the laws were designed to do – which is simply to punish unions – they would still find supporters. There are, after all, plenty of politicians who hate unions for purely ideological reasons. But they are never sold that way, and Indiana is no exception. Instead, a right-to-work law will show that Indiana is "open for business", says Indiana House speaker Brian Bosma, and make the state a "magnet for job creation", promises GOP activist Grover Norquist.

Actual evidence in this regard is highly doubtful. Currently, the state with the highest unemployment in the country, Nevada, is a right-to-work state, as are six of the top ten states in jobless rates. The last state to adopt a right-to-work law, Oklahoma in 2001, has seen manufacturing jobs decline by a third since its passage.

But Bosma is not one to let economic reality get in the way of political expediency. Nor is Indiana Governor Mitch Daniels, who was against right-to-work before he was for it. He's pledged to sign the bill into law, but as recently as 2006 declared to the Teamsters:

"I'm a supporter of the labor laws we have in the state of Indiana and I'm not interested in changing any of them – not a prevailing wage law and certainly not a right-to-work law."

What's changed since then? Daniels says it's the recession, which

hasn't really changed. He doesn't say it's his elevated national profile resulting from speculation over a presidential run, culminating in his being tapped to deliver the GOP's response to Obama's state of the union address earlier this week.

Maybe, it's a genuine change of heart. Either way, Daniels' Damascus conversion is symbolic of much broader changes within his own party. Union membership wasn't a particularly partisan issue in years past. President Nixon expanded organizing rights under his administration. Ronald Reagan was a former union president himself. As Daniels' 2006 speech shows, Republicans until recently used to make at least halfhearted attempts to reach out to some of the more conservative unions – typically, the Teamsters and Carpenters. Not any longer.

It's not that unions have moved much to the left. Rather, it's Republicans who have tacked so sharply to the right, precisely on those mundane workplace issues on which there was once a consensus: the right to organize, the right to bargain, the idea that free riders should pay their fair share. It can be seen in the assaults on union rights in neighboring Ohio and Wisconsin, and the GOP's quixotic (and self-defeating) crusade against the National Labor Relations Board – not even a union, but a nonpartisan mediating agency.

The days of the pro-labor Republican are gone, probably forever. "We cannot afford to have civil wars over issues that might divide us and divert us," a different Mitch Daniels once said. Now, Republicans believe, they can. □

Stand Up to "Right to work"

By Peggy Scotten

It's tax time again and while gathering my W2's and other records, I began to wonder how our government would like it if I decided I no longer wanted to pay my tax bill. If enough of us decide we no longer want the high cost of taxes. We get taxed for everything we do these days, state and local taxes, seems like everything I do is taxed. Then you begin to really think about taxes and one part of that tax is a deduction of union dues, yes they are tax deductible.



With RTW our government wants to do away with unions. I remember in bargaining for our company contract and my union brothers and sisters were trying to explain to our salaried counterpart; if our wages are cut or jobs cut where is your job? What changes would that mean to them? Did they believe they were going to benefit from these changes? If we lose our job where would your job be? Are you hearing me now? If our union jobs are lost by RTW where is our government thinking our country will benefit? How's that going to work?

Our forefathers fought for a way of

life that our government is trying to take away. Do you realize the benefits of having a union, I know you can think of the things they did but can you think of losing those things one thing at a time? Can you see the future and see your children and grandchildren making a living and supporting families without those things.

Please get educated and don't think of the short term things RTW Republicans want you to see, yes you could save a monthly fee and there could be an increase of jobs paying \$10.00 per hour. What will you do when your boss doesn't care for you or maybe cares for someone else more?

Did you think of that? Equal Opportunity Employer would be a thing of the past. Think of the way companies will change why wouldn't they... we have problems and fight for workers rights every day.

America was built by working people and the working man or woman needed unions to give a fair job market to all American's not the chosen few.. Come on!! Ask someone who works without a union, ask how much they make an hour and ask them about retirement or how about their health care. We need Unions today as much as we needed them yesterday... This is our country and we have to have someone with time

to fight and money to fight... I love my Country! I can fight as my forefathers and will not let their vision of what it should be for one and for all!

Do you remember when Ronald Reagan ordered the air traffic controllers back to work and people lost their jobs and rights at work? That was the beginning of our government's attack on unions.. They couldn't do it then so here it comes again. What about Bill Clinton's NAFTA which got our ass kicked so bad we pay the price today?

I have only one more thing to say, from the bottom of my heart... Where will your job be without your union? **STAND UP FIGHT BACK!!!** We need you to fight for your rights!! To fight for your union!!

STAND UP FIGHT BACK!!!

↔ DALE, From Page 1.

together to fight this battle.

I want to thank Union President, Chuck Jones, and Business agent, Bruce Reed and all local 1999 members that have spent countless hours at the state house, attending rallies, writing letters, calling their elected representatives and "Standing Up and Fighting Back." Your local union has been there from day one leading this fight and on behalf of our union I want to thank you for being leaders in the labor movement.

We the People

If you are concerned about the collapse of the middle class, you should be concerned about how American campaigns are financed. If you wonder why the United States is the only country in the industrialized world not to have a national health care program, if you're asking why we pay the highest price in the world for prescription drugs, or why we spend more money on the military than the rest of the world combined, you are talking about campaign finance. You are talking

unlimited, unaccountable corporate cash in political campaigns. Corporations were equated with people. A century of laws regulating business spending on elections were upended. In one fell swoop, five justices fantasized for corporations a right never conceived by the founders whose preamble to our Constitution begins with the words, "We the people..."

The ruling not only poisoned our political process. It contaminated

to think twice about how to cast that vote. Not to put too fine a point on it, you will see politicians being adopted by corporations and becoming wholly owned subsidiaries of corporate entities.

We already have seen what kind of damage Citizens United can cause. In the first election after the decision was handed down, corporations in 2010 poured hundreds of millions of dollars into independent organizations not formally affiliated with parties or candidates. About half of the \$300 million spent by independent organizations came from undisclosed sources. In 60 of the 75 congressional races in which power changed hands, the unaccountable outside groups backed the winners. They spent freely and overwhelmingly on negative ads. The early phases of this year's elections bear witness to projections that the Citizens United effect will be much worse. Karl Rove has announced plans to raise \$240 million. The Koch brothers promise to spend \$200 million. It's fair to assume the Chamber of Commerce will spend at least as much. The Super PAC supporting President Obama, Priorities USA Action, aims to play in the same league. Hundreds of millions more will be in play.

It's a virtual certainty that all of this spending will fundamentally distort our democracy, tilting the playing field to favor corporate interests, discouraging new candidates, chilling elected officials and shifting the overall policymaking debate even



about the unbelievable power that big-money interests have over every legislative decision.

An already horrendous situation was made much worse two years ago this month when the Supreme Court ruled in *Citizens United v. the Federal Elections Commission* that multinational corporations have a constitutional right to spend whatever they want to influence election outcomes. A bare 5-4 majority lowered the floodgates on unchecked,

the legislative process. It cast a permanent chill over all policymaking. Will the merits or the money tip the balance when an issue comes before Congress? What do you think? If the question is on breaking up huge banks, for example, every member of the Senate and the House, in the back of their minds, will ask themselves what the personal price would be for taking on Wall Street. Am I going to be punished? Will a huge amount of money be unleashed in my state? They're going

⇒ See PEOPLE, Page 13.

Unit 07 Carrier

Dear Brothers and Sisters

With the New year we have ramped up production. We have called back all our laid-off employees and added 50 new hires. This brings our hourly work force to 1188 employees. All of our assembly lines are two shift operations, and running full production. This is a very good sign and our hope of a recovering economy.

The "Right-To-Work" legislation could have a crippling affect on our Union. A critical part of the Union is the arbitration process. All of our contractual rights and work rules are protected. But when there is a dispute between the Company and the Union that cannot be worked out in the grievance process, we then have arbitration to turn to. This is expensive but necessary to keep the Company in check. If and when the Right-To-Work law is passed it could greatly reduce our ability to arbitrate.

None of us want to reduce the power of the Union. Our fathers and grandfathers fought for the rights we have today. We have seniority rights, equalization of overtime, defined pension plan, vacation time, medical insurance, medical leave, dental insurance and a living wage. The General Assembly and Governor Daniels are trying to reduce these rights. The old saying goes, "Divide and conquer" and that is the agenda of the Daniels administration.

Don't be fooled by the name Right-To-Work. We will continue to work.

But will we continue to have our Union protection?

In Solidarity
George Gann
Unit 07 President

Unit 09 Quemetco

Brothers and Sisters,

Things are going well for us here at Quemetco. Work is very steady with no expectation of a slow down in the near future.

Construction continues on the new Wet Electrostatic Precipitator (WESP). It should be complete and operational this spring. The WESP is a \$20 million dollar environmental control that will further reduce our emissions from the plant. The addition of this new equipment has also added new jobs to the plant as well.

We received a decision from the arbitrator on the Battery Wrecker Leadman grievance. The arbitrator sided with the company. He stated that the company had not violated the contract in their awarding of the bid. We still have one grievance on the Painter bid awaiting arbitration. An arbitrator has been selected and we are awaiting a hearing date. There are several other grievances awaiting third step.

We have had payroll issues since the company has switched to a new system for payroll. The biggest issue we have had has been with vacation checks. In the past we have received our vacation check the

week before the vacation. This resulted in employees receiving two checks the week before vacation, a check the week of vacation, and no check the week after vacation. The company notified us in December that the new system would not pay vacations a week in advance. We told them that was not acceptable. They resolved that issue to where we would get our vacation checks as we had in the past. After the first of the year we discovered that now the payroll system would not pay the check we should receive during the week of vacation until the week after vacation. This resulted in some members who were expecting it to not get a check when they were supposed to get it.

We have been polling the members to find out how they want the issue resolved. Either receiving their vacation check during the week of vacation or receiving it the week before vacation and no check during the week of vacation. We will continue to work with the company to resolve this issue.

Several members of Local 1999 including myself have been at the statehouse voicing opposition to the "Right to Work" legislation. We have been joined by other Steelworkers as well as members of UFCW, IBEW, Painters, Laborers, UAW, and Teamsters among others. I would like to personally thank everyone who has been at the statehouse and who have called and written their legislators on this anti-worker issue.

The "Right to Work" legislation is being pushed by Governor Daniels and the Indiana House and Senate Republicans. The Indiana Chamber of Commerce and the Ameri-

can Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC).

What is the Indiana Chamber of Commerce? The simplest way to describe them would be to say they are the union for the companies. The Chamber lobbies lawmakers on behalf of the companies in Indiana. If you visit their website you will see across the top of the page their motto "Taking Care of Business"

What is ALEC? ALEC is not a lobby; it is not a front group. It is much more powerful than that. 98% of ALEC's revenues come from corporations, corporate trade groups, and corporate foundations. Through ALEC, behind closed doors, corporations hand state legislators the changes to the law they desire that directly benefit their bottom line.

Now let's consider why the Indiana Chamber and ALEC are pushing for "Right to Work". They are both backed by the companies. They get their money from the companies. They lobby for the companies. Now they must be pushing for "Right to Work" because it is good for..... workers companies. I think you get the idea.

I Would like to congratulate fellow Steelworker and member of Local 1999, Brett Voorhies on his recent election to President of the Central Indiana Labor Council. Brett follows in the footsteps of his father Bob Voorhies who was President of the labor council for 25 years. Brett has been our District 7 Rapid Response coordinator for several years.

In Solidarity,
Kelly Ray Hugunin
Unit 09 President

Unit 10 Sumco

At the beginning of 2012 we signed a new 2yr contract, this new contract is the building blocks for the future:

- Company paid union time
- Stronger job bidding and pay
- Probationary overtime
- Wage increase for 2012 and 2013 (after a 2yr freeze)
- New S&A package (after not have one for 2 1/2 yrs)
- One ex floating holiday paid
- 401k added to contract with a match
- One ex personal day

These are just small step, for now.

In just a few month we will be voting in new and old members for local and unit officers, GOOD LUCK to each of you that puts your name in the hat, remember you are the building block to the future of our Union.

In Solidarity,
Leo Hedden
Unit 10 President

Unit 13 Diamond Chain

Brothers and Sisters,

It's Friday afternoon at 3:30. You clock out to go home and open your paycheck when you get to your car. \$447.00 take home pay for the week. Forward to the same time next Friday. You get in your car, open your check and it reads \$388.00

take home pay for the week. Both checks are for 40 hours pay. When you get home, you have a letter from the company that reads, "As of midnight tonight, you are no longer covered by a medical plan. On Monday, you walk into your plant forgetting to put your safety glasses on. You get to your department and put them on and go to work. At around 3:15 that afternoon, you are called to the HR office and are terminated for not following safety procedures. What can you do about all of this? Nothing, because you no longer have a Union in place. You think back to when the company told you that if you decertify from your Union, it won't be as bad as those greedy thugs say it will. Boy, were you wrong. You lost 14% of your bargained wages, you lost you're bargained for benefits, and now you lost your job with no way to defend yourself in the grievance procedure. BUT, you opted not to pay your Union dues after "right-to-work" was passed. You saved around \$12.50 per week in dues.

I know this sounds pretty extreme, but it is possible. The legislation that is in the Statehouse right now and that has everyone in an uproar is what I am talking about. It is called "right to work". The truth is that it is anything but. It does not provide you a right to work. What it provides you is the ability to opt out of paying your Union dues. It also says that the Union still has to represent you. Now, if I went to a YMCA and wanted to use their facilities, I would have to pay my "dues" in order to do so. Same at a golf course. There are places that have an annual fee to become a member, and only members are al-

⇒ See CHAIN, Page 12.

⇨CHAIN, From Page 11.

lowed. There is no difference! This bill is about destroying Unions, not creating jobs. The only jobs it will create are low paying jobs. How can you create a tax base on low paying jobs? It is a proven fact that when you create good paying jobs and expand the middle class, those people will pay taxes on higher wages and spend that money, paying sales tax on what they buy. The Republicans don't want you to know these facts. They also don't want you to know that 7 out of the 10 poorest states in the country are right to work states. They have lower wages and have fewer benefits than non right to work states. Our governor, Mitch Daniels has created plenty of non union jobs during his tenure. If you don't want to pay union dues, go to work at one of them. When you have a union, you get a say in a safer work place, better wages and benefits. You also have a say in who runs your union. And the beautiful thing about that is, if you don't like the job they are doing, you vote someone else in the next time. Don't let your displeasure with your leadership make you think you would be better off without a union. Now, that \$12.50 per week in union dues doesn't seem so bad does it?

If this law passes, you can expect your management to start portraying your union in a bad way. They may send you printed information or even show films to make us look bad. The word Union stands for solidarity. If there were ever a time to stand together in solidarity, the time is now!

In Solidarity,
Mike Hensley
Unit 13 President

Unit 17 Mid America Extrusion

We finished the year slow. We shipped 530,000 pounds of aluminum in October. We shipped 425,000 pounds in November and 420,000 pounds in December. That was not bad for December considering we were down for two weeks.

Business is improving in this new year as we have brought back the third shift and recalled all union employees.

I have no new grievances to report at this time. In closing I would like to thank everyone for the continued solidarity in the fight against the "Right to Work" law.

In Solidarity,
Howard W. Davis
Unit 17 President

Unit 27 Air System Components

Do Not Be Mislead About "Right to Work"

In late 2004 a group of employees in a small factory in Lebanon, Indiana wanted to improve our working conditions. There were several safety issues occurring in our workplace that everyone was aware of but we didn't know how to properly address the problems. There were also situations where some of our co-workers were being harassed

and treated unfairly by members of management. Employees were aware of the safety issues and accustomed to some employees being mistreated by management but we were afraid of the consequences if we objected to management's behavior.

Many employees at our location have families. Out of fear for our jobs, we had to tolerate unsafe working conditions and overlook being treated unfairly by some members of management. Indiana is an employment at will state and we realized if we dared speak out against management they could retaliate by making our life miserable in the workplace or management could fabricate a reason to terminate our employment.

Eventually employees came to the realization that working conditions were not going to improve. They were getting worse. We were concerned and scared about the thought of contacting someone to help us for fear of retaliation from the company but something had to be done. Afraid of the consequences, we decided we needed help from a union.

Initially we didn't know much about unions. We knew they helped workers but we were also aware they had strikes and we would have to pay union dues. Slowly and rigorously we educated ourselves about becoming a union shop. After getting over eighty percent of the employees to sign cards indicating they wanted union representation, the company began to take us serious. Soon after they knew we had enough cards signed to have a National Labor Relations Board elec-

⇨See ASC, Page 14.

↳PEOPLE, From Page 9.

further in the direction of giant corporate interests and the super-wealthy.

So now we face a choice. Americans can let Citizens United remain the law of the land, or we can have a functioning democracy. We can't have both. We choose democracy. With no reason to think that this court will reconsider its decision, we need a constitutional amendment.

Yes, legislative reforms could mitigate the damage. We should require better disclosure rules. We should make shareholders approve corporations' political spending. We should provide public financing of elections, but entrenched money interests have thwarted that for decades.

But nothing can truly cure the problem unless Citizens United is overturned with a constitutional amendment.

The Saving American Democracy Amendment in the Senate and a companion proposed in the House by Florida Representative Ted Deutch would do just that. The amendment would establish that constitutional rights belong to real people, not for-profit corporations. The amendment would prohibit corporations from making election-related expenditures. It would clarify that Congress and states have the power to regulate campaign spending, overturning the doctrine that election contributions and expenditures constitute First Amendment-protected speech and therefore may be subject only to limited restrictions. And it would affirm that nothing in the amendment limits freedom of press.

It's no easy thing to enact a constitutional amendment, but momentum for an amendment is building. People who have honest differences of opinion understand that there is something profoundly disgusting with what is happening in Washington and that there is something wrong with American democracy when you have a handful of billionaires and businesses putting hundreds of millions of dollars into the political process. Very few people think that has anything to do with American democracy. The American people desperately want to restore our democracy and return to rule by all of the people, not corporations and the super-rich.

Bernie Sanders is a United States Senator from Vermont. Robert Weissman is the president of Public Citizen. □

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↳ **ASC, From Page 12.**

tion, the company started their own campaign.

We were forced to watch videos of how the union would negatively affect us and how it was not beneficial to the company or its employees and would cause violence in the workplace. The company used every tactic available to discourage us from unionizing. We soon started to hear stories of how the company might close if the union was voted in. Nobody wants to lose their job. These were very intense times and caused a lot of diversity in the workplace.

By the time the NLRB election was about to take place to see if we would become unionized, everyone was on edge and wondering what would happen if we did not win. There were adamant supporters of the union that were obviously going to have life rough if we did not win. All the videos and lectures we heard about the negative impacts of unions were surely going to haunt

us. The company wanted us divided and that is exactly what they did.

We won by only one vote in the election. I clearly remember the human resources manager crying after the votes were counted. I wondered why she would cry. All we wanted were some safety issues resolved and to have a set of rules in place that would provide us some dignity and basic rights in the workplace.

After we obtained a contract, we realized we were no longer subject to the arbitrary whims of management. We could not be arbitrarily fired for voicing our objections to unsafe working conditions. Safety in the workplace has advanced considerably since we organized. We now have a safety committee required by our contract. When management treats employees unfairly, we can object to their mistreatment without fear of retaliation or being fired. Since unionizing we do not have to tolerate unsafe working conditions and mistreatment in the workplace. We are now educated on labor issues and know what is

right and wrong in the workplace and what we have to take to make things right. The union has educated us about what we can do when we are mistreated in the workplace.

Right to Work legislation is currently being considered by the legislature. Right to Work legislation is a step backwards for working middle-class Americans. If Right to Work legislation passes, working conditions can be expected to rapidly regress backwards to where they were prior to employees becoming unionized. Employees will lose their voice about safety issues in the workplace. Unsafe working conditions will prevail.

Employees are not fooled by the empty promises politicians are using to support Right to Work legislation. Our legislators claim it will make our state progress and without it our state will regress. After going through what myself and others at our facility have been through, we know about progression and regression. We know about unsafe working conditions, harassment, and retaliation by management.

I cannot fathom life without our union contract, and will not settle for anything less. Right to Work is no different than the other misinformation our company provided prior to our election to become unionized. Today we are a strong union that has a strong bond in and out of our workplace. Politicians can be assured that we are not fooled by the empty promises they use to support pending Right to Work legislation.

In Solidarity,
Dustin Martin
Unit 27 President



Emblematic of 1 Percenters, Cooper Tire Punk'd Workers

By Leo Gerard

Four years ago, Cooper Tire told its workers they'd have to sacrifice to save the company. With a straight face, Cooper executives said it was essential for the corporation's survival that workers take tens of millions in pay and benefit cuts.

The workers understood the link between their livelihoods long term and Cooper's success. Dedicated and loyal, they accepted the cutbacks. Soon afterward, city and state officials granted Cooper millions in subsidies.

Management didn't share in the workers' and taxpayers' pain, though. The top dogs rewarded themselves with millions in pay increases and a shiny new corporate jet.

Cooper punk'd the workers and taxpayers.

This isn't an aberration. It's a pattern. Corporate executives, the 1 percenters, slash workers' wages, then give themselves big bonuses. CEOs tell mayors and governors their businesses are in such dire shape that they may close or move offshore. Government officials dutifully shovel truckloads of taxpayer cash into CEO hands, then the CEOs grant themselves more perks. The television show Punk'd, in which actor Ashton Kutcher humiliates famous people, took a five-year hiatus. The 1 percenters gave workers and taxpayers no such break. Punking the 99 percent for profit has only escalated.

At Cooper, 1,050 members of the United Steelworkers union in Findlay, Ohio agreed in 2008 to give the company \$30 million in concessions when executives cried destitute at the negotiation table. The next year, after witnessing the same sad song and dance, Ohio officials began transferring \$2.5 million from taxpayer pockets to corporate coffers.

Cooper 1 percenters also bought themselves a corporate jet and, for \$17 million, a Serbian tire company. Since January of 2009, Cooper posted \$360 million in income before taxes.

The workers who took the cutbacks and taxpayers who subsidized the company got punk'd.



Between 2008 and 2011, though, Cooper awarded its executives two pay hikes and double bonuses. The year after Cooper told workers they had to suffer for the company, Cooper CEO Roy Armes got a 50 percent pay increase. The next year, in the middle of the recession, his bump was 19 percent, giving him a package worth \$4.7 million in 2010.

Then, this year, Cooper top dogs went back to the bargaining table with Steelworkers. Despite the big profits, they demanded more concessions. They planned to punk those workers again.

When workers in Findlay rejected

⇒ See COOPER, Page 16.

↳ **COOPER, From Page 15.**



a vague proposal from the company but offered to continue working under the terms of the old contract while talks continued, Cooper locked them out.

This would be disturbing if Cooper were a rogue company. But what's more alarming is that it's not. Profitable companies routinely blackmail workers and townspeople. They threaten to close or move to Mexico or China if workers won't take cuts and if politicians won't grant tax breaks. After the demands are met, the corporate executives shower themselves with cash.

Think of hugely-profitable Wal-Mart. The largest retailer in the world told its workers in October that it would substantially cut health care coverage for part-timers and significantly increase premiums full-timers must pay. By contrast, Wal-Mart's CEO Mike Duke made sure he wouldn't suffer. He had the board of directors change the way his pay is calculated when it looked like declines in sales at some stores would mean less compensation for him.

No matter his performance, the CEO is richly rewarded. No matter

their performance, workers get cut. Punk'd.

This holds true on Wall Street too, where bank performance this year was lackluster. After declines in bank stock value, mid-level workers learned in recent weeks their bonuses would shrink. But not so for CEOs. Shares in Citigroup, for example, fell 44 percent, but its CEO, Vakram S. Pandit, was awarded a \$16.7 million retention bonus as well as \$3.7 million in stock while many Citigroup workers were told last week they would receive no bonus or a small one.

Mitt Romney's Bain Capital is another example. It operates just like other vulture capital firms. They buy struggling companies, borrow against the assets, fire workers, cut the pay and benefits of the remaining ones, and take a huge chunk of that money and give it to vulture capital executives. Often the purchased companies, struggling under the excessive debt, go bankrupt, killing all the workers' jobs.

The Wall Street Journal evaluated

77 deals Bain made while Romney was there. Of those companies, 22 percent closed or went bankrupt within eight years of the Bain investment. Even so, Bain executives made millions for themselves off those deals.

At the same time, Bain took hand-outs from taxpayers. Phil Mattera of Dirt Diggers Digest provides a list of tens of millions in taxpayer-financed subsidies Bain companies collected.

Workers and taxpayers got punk'd.


This isn't a criticism of free enterprise or capitalism. It's about civic duty and patriotism. A corporation has obligations to more than just its executives and shareholders – especially when the Supreme Court contends it's a person. Every person is beholden to the community and country that provide nurture, protection and support. A corporation is accountable to its workers, its customers, its community, its country.

The executives who run American corporations have forgotten that. Or they reject it. These are the same CEOs who rail against regulation ensuring public safety and laws ensuring worker rights. They don't want to be told they can't pollute or let explosive methane collect in mines. And they don't want to be told they can't fire workers just for trying to form unions.

A little more regulation and a little less taxpayer subsidy might remind corporations of their obligations.

Workers and communities aren't asking for the power to punk employers. They're just asking not to be punk'd. □

CORPORATE GREED AT COOPER TIRE
FLAT OUT WRONG!



When Cooper Tire hit hard times, USW Local 207L members in Findlay, Ohio sacrificed:
 ↳ \$31.2 million of concessions in the 2008 contract negotiations.

Taxpayers in the City of Findlay and the State of Ohio also stepped up with grants and abatements:
 ↳ The state alone has provided Cooper Tire with \$2.5 million in subsidies since 2009.

Since January 1, 2009, however, Cooper Tire has made \$448 Million dollars in Operating Profits and posted an income (before taxes) of \$360 million.


Executives have rewarded themselves handsomely:
 ↳ Its top five executives in 2010 took home more than \$9.5 million and bought themselves a shiny, new corporate jet.
 ↳ In addition, two wage increases and double bonuses were given to management personnel.

And what about the workers, the men and women, who build the tires?
 ↳ The members of USW 207L wanted to continue working while negotiating a fair contract.

Instead the company locked them out and is now replacing its highly-skilled workforce with out-of-state workers with who-knows-what kind of expertise.

TELL COOPER TIRE: THIS IS FLAT-OUT WRONG

www.stopcooperfire.org



SUPPORT 207L **END THE LOCKOUT COOPER!** **UNITED STEELWORKERS USW**

Unions Make the Middle Class

Without Unions, the Middle Class Withers

By David Madland, Karla Walter, Nick Bunker

Why should anyone—especially those who are not union members—care that union membership is at record lows and likely to fall even further? Because if you care about the middle class, you need to care about unions.

Critics of unions claim they are unimportant today or even harmful to the economy, but unions are essential for building a strong middle class. And rebuilding the middle class after decades of decline and stagnation is essential for restoring

our economy.

Unions make the middle class strong by ensuring workers have a strong voice in both the market and in our democracy. When unions are strong they are able to ensure that workers are paid fair wages, receive the training they need to advance to the middle class, and are considered in corporate decision-making processes. Unions also promote political participation among all Americans, and help workers secure government policies that sup-

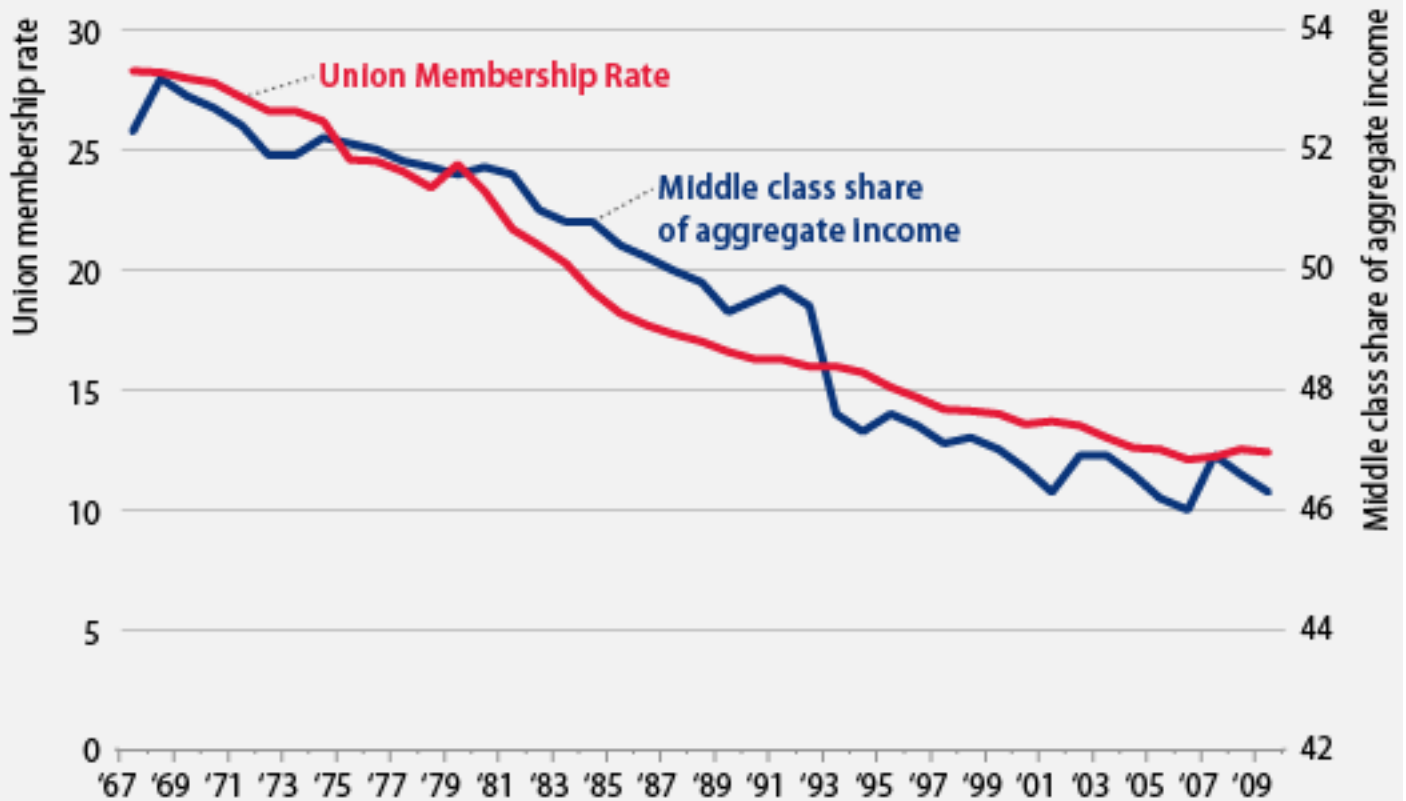
port the middle class, such as Social Security, family leave, and the minimum wage.

But as unions became weaker over the past four decades, they are less and less able to perform these functions—and the middle class withered. The percentage of workers in unions steadily declined largely because the legal and political environment prevents private-sector workers from freely exercising their

⇒ See UNIONS, Page 18.

Ties that bind

As union membership rates decrease, middle class incomes shrink



Original figure by David Madland, Karla Walters, and Nick Bunker. Sources: Union Membership Rate is from Barry T. Hirsch, David A. Macpherson, and Wayne G. Vroman, "Estimates of Union Density by State," Monthly Labor Review, Vol. 124, No.7, July 2001. Middle Class Share of Aggregate Income is from United States Census Bureau.

↩ **UNIONS, From Page 17.**

right to join or not to join a union. Membership in private-sector unions stands at less than 7 percent today, from around 30 percent in the late 1960s. Public-sector unionization remained stable for decades—it was 37 percent in 1979 and is 36 percent today—but is now under significant threat from conservative political opposition and could start declining as well. All told, less than 12 percent of the total workforce is unionized, and this percentage is likely to continue falling.

Without the counterbalance of workers united together in unions, the middle class withers because the economy and politics tend to be dominated by the rich and powerful, which in turn leads to an even greater flow of money in our economy to the top of income scale. As can be seen in Figure 1, the percentage

of unionized workers tracks very closely with the share of the nation's income going to the middle class—those in the middle three-fifths of income earners.

In recent years, the middle class accounted for the smallest share of the nation's income ever since the end of World War II, when this data was first collected. The middle three income quintiles, representing 60 percent of all Americans, received only 46 percent of the nation's income in 2009, the most recent year data is available, down from highs of around 53 percent in 1969.

The middle class weakened over the past several decades because the rich secured the lion's share of the economy's gains. The share of pretax income earned by the richest 1 percent of Americans more than doubled between 1974 and 2007, climbing to 18 percent from 8 percent. And for the richest of the rich—the top 0.1 percent—the gains

have been even more astronomical—quadrupling over this period, rising to 12.3 percent of all income from 2.7 percent.

In contrast, incomes for most Americans have been nearly flat over this same time period, and median income after accounting for inflation actually fell for working-age households during the supposedly good economy in the recovery between 2001 and 2007. The importance of unions to the middle class is not just a historical phenomenon, but is relevant to our lives today. To be sure, not everything unions do benefits the broad middle class, but unions are critical to defending the middle class, and their resurgence is key to rebuilding the middle class.

Indeed, it is hard to imagine a middle-class society without a strong union movement.

Across the globe, the countries with the strongest middle classes all have



Unions give workers a greater voice not only by promoting political participation among all Americans—ensuring that more of the middle class vote and get involved in politics—but also by being an advocate on behalf of the middle class in the daily, inner-workings of government and politics.

strong union movements. And in America today, states with higher concentrations of union members have a much stronger middle class. The 10 states with the lowest percentage of workers in unions all have a relatively weak middle class, with the share of total state income going to households in the middle three-fifths of income earners in these states below the average for all states.

Our analysis, more fully described in the body and appendix of this report, indicates that each percentage point increase in union membership puts about \$153 more per year into the pockets of the middle class—meaning that if unionization rates increased by 10 percentage points (about the level they were in 1980)—then the typical middle class household would earn \$1,532 more this year. This figure indicates how much better off all members of the middle class would be—not just those who are union members—if unions regained some strength. And these gains would continue year after year. To put these results in context, our analysis indicates that increasing union membership is as important to rebuilding the middle class as boosting college graduation rates, results that while shocking to some, are consistent with previous research.

In our democracy, when workers are joined together in unions they are able to more forcefully and effectively speak for their interests. Unions give workers a greater voice not only by promoting political participation among all Americans—ensuring that more of the middle class vote and get involved in politics—but also by being an advocate on behalf of the middle class in the

daily, inner-workings of government and politics.

This provides a check on other powerful political interests, such as corporations and the very wealthy, and ensures that our system of government has the balance of interests that James Madison, a chief framer of our constitution, thought necessary to properly function. This counterbalancing role is essential for democracy to function properly and respond to the interests of all Americans.

In the workplace, workers who join together in unions are able to negotiate on more equal footing with their employers, providing a check on the inherently unequal relationship between employer and employee. As George Shultz, secretary of labor during the Nixon administration and secretary of state during the Reagan administration argued in support of trade unions, in “a healthy workplace, it is very important that there be some system of checks and balances.”

Indeed, the ability of workers united together to provide a check on corporate power was the very reason Congress guaranteed private-sector workers the right to join a union, writing in the findings section of the National Labor Relations Act of 1935:

The inequality of bargaining power between employees who do not possess full freedom of association or actual liberty of contract and employers who are organized in the corporate or other forms of ownership association substantially burdens and affects the flow of commerce, and tends to aggravate recurrent business depressions, by

depressing wage rates and the purchasing power of wage earners in industry and by preventing the stabilization of competitive wage rates and working conditions within and between industries.

And government employers, like corporations, sometimes need to be reminded by organized workers to treat their employees fairly. That’s why Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. traveled to Memphis in 1968 to help city sanitation workers gain recognition for their union as they faced low pay, terrible working conditions, and racist supervisors. Even the conservative icon Ronald Reagan recognized that public sector workers should be able to join unions and collectively bargain. Reagan signed a bill to grant municipal and county employees the right to do so when he was governor of California.

Critically, the benefits of workers having a voice in the economy and in democracy spill over to all of society. In these ways, unions make the middle class. The challenge of rebuilding the middle class will take a long time, but would be impossible without a clear understanding of what makes the middle class strong. This paper will explore in detail why we need to do this and how we need to go about it. To rebuild America’s middle class, we need to rebuild the labor movement. It’s that simple—and that challenging. □

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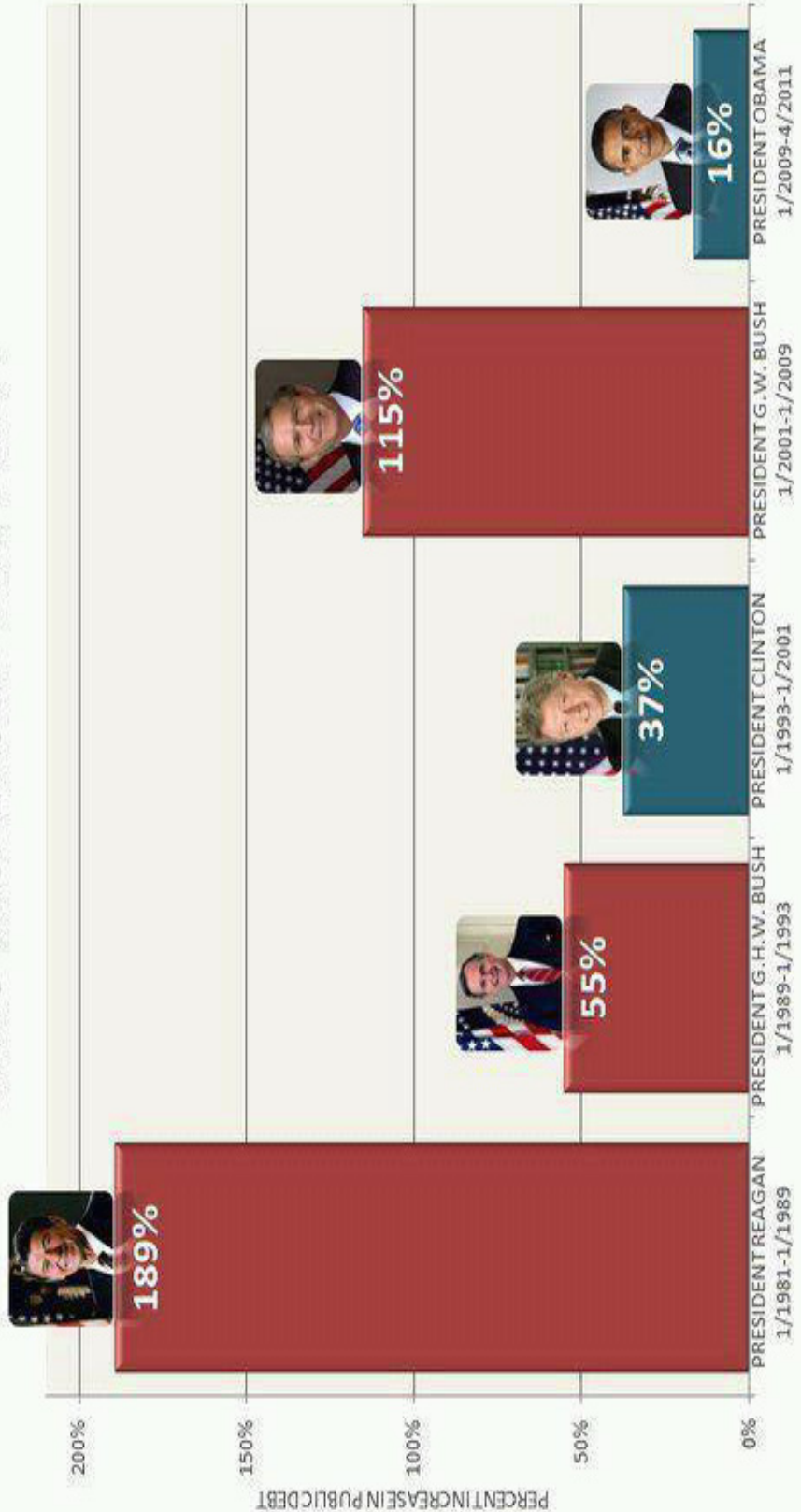
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WHO INCREASED THE DEBT?



SOURCE: TREASURY DEPARTMENT

OFFICE OF THE DEMOCRATIC LEADER, 5/3/11