

FEATURES

As I See It / George Tedeschi 2
Outlook / James Hoffa 2
Managing Editor's Note / Fred Bruning . . . 3
Commentary / Thomas Mackell Jr. 3
Point of View / Harold Meyerson 6
Bottom Line / Jerry Morgan 7
Guest Spot / Douglas Nowakowski 7

Photographs that Mirror the 'Human Condition'



PHILIP TAYLOR PHOTOGRAPHS

PAGE 5

Marcus Hedger Wins His Job Back



PHOTO BY DAVID ISHAG

PAGE 11

Convention Shows Pride & Solidarity of GCC/IBT



IBT PHOTO BY FRED NYE

PAGE 8-10

TOP STORY

Get Ready To Fight For Union 'Survival'

By Fred Bruning
Graphic Communicator



BIG STOCK

UNION OFFICIALS, DELEGATES FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY AND TOP TEAMSTER leaders vowed at the third GCC/IBT convention in Las Vegas to safeguard rank-and-file members from workplace injustice and build a stronger union movement amid economic jitters, political uncertainty and fierce anti-labor maneuvering by big money interests.

"When people rise to the occasion, it shows," said GCC/IBT president George Tedeschi.

Against a backdrop of Donald Trump's ascendancy as presumptive GOP presidential candidate, global financial upheaval and Washington gridlock, convention goes at the June 23-25 meeting said it was essential to show strength and solidarity.

Failure could be fatal.

Leaders at the third GCC/IBT convention in Las Vegas warned that powerful enemies have 'openly declared war on labor unions' and urged that members become well informed and politically active to assure worker-friendly candidates prevail in this pivotal election year.

"We've got a fight on our hands," James P. Hoffa, IBT general president told GCC/IBT delegates. "We want to make sure you're here in 100 years."

Ken Hall, the IBT general secretary-treasurer, also sounded a warning.

The billionaire Koch Brothers and shadowy business group called the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) are among those dedicated to one goal – "wiping out the middle class" – by consolidating wealth for the very few and crippling the union move-

continues on PAGE 16

COMMENTARY

Americans Must Reject Extremism, and Trump

PAGE 3

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Unions, Obama Rally for Flint



OFFICIAL WHITE HOUSE PHOTO BY LAWRENCE JACKSON

Groups representing organized labor – including a GCC/IBT contingent – demanded that city and state officials be held accountable for a drinking water crisis that put Flint, Michigan residents at risk while President Barack Obama visited the city to check on progress – and test upgraded water, himself. Also addressing the problem were Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia Mathews Burwell, left, and Gina McCarthy, Environmental Protection Agency administrator. PAGE 14

Don't Spend 2016 Stuck on Sidelines

THERE WAS PLENTY OF GOOD SOLID UNION TALK AT THE GCC/IBT convention in Las Vegas inside and outside the meeting hall – everything from organizing to negotiating strategy – but we didn't stop there.

With a presidential election fewer than six months away, politics was a prominent – and appropriate – theme. There's a lot on the line.



Voting for a national leader is a solemn obligation of citizenship. For union people, backing a candidate – and party – committed to protecting workers and the labor movement is no less essential a task.

For months, I have been saying at every union gathering I attend that we have to be engaged in the political process. We cannot sit on the sidelines. We must be informed and ready to counter the arguments of

labor's ardent enemies.

In Vegas, I repeated the message.

"Don't kid yourselves, the stakes are high," I told delegates. "The right wing is getting stronger and more extreme. Organized labor is a target. We have to protect ourselves."

Secretary-Treasurer/Vice President Bob Lacey sounded a similar alarm, and so did a number of other speakers.

There was a sense of urgency in our words, and there needed to be.

Unions have been taking a beating for years and the far-right zealots who now control the Republican Party would be delighted to see us disappear.

That's why state GOP leaders impose regressive right-to-work laws around the country. If Republicans hold the Senate and House and win the White House – watch out. There will be a push for a national version of right-to-work, count on it.

Let's be clear. I'm not slamming Republicans out of partisan pas-



sion. But for more than a generation the party has drifted from its roots. Would Teddy Roosevelt recognize the modern GOP? Would Dwight Eisenhower? The party of Lincoln? Not anymore.

With far-right billionaire backers, obstructionist schemes and disproven notions of trickle-down economics, Republicans have positioned themselves on the extreme outer edge of the American political spectrum.

After years of stoking fear and distrust of government, the GOP got its just rewards in the primary season when disaffected voters shunned the "establishment" in favor of so-called "outsider" candidates like Donald Trump and Ted Cruz. Incredibly, Trump now is the party's standard bearer. Mainline Republicans are in a panic, and no wonder.

Despite upheaval in party ranks, Republicans are regrouping. They are rallying around Trump who could be tough to beat in the fall. At our convention, I tried to sound a warning and urged leaders to go back to their locals with a strong sense of purpose and commitment. I told them to work for politicians who support the middle class – and do not wage a war on workers.

Wherever we gather – in a convention auditorium or local union hall – let's pass the word: Get involved. Study the issues. Honor your country and preserve the great American labor movement. Strong and united, we are sure to prevail.

OUTLOOK

Demand Stronger Workplace Safety Rules

TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS should be making the workplace safer but deaths and injuries on the job are still a major concern.

The Department of Labor reported that 4,679 workers were fatally injured on the job in 2014, up two percent from the previous year. Meanwhile, a report issued last month by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) said employers noted more than 10,000 severe work-related injuries in 2015, resulting in 2,644 amputations and 7,636 hospitalizations.

Since companies have only been required to report such injuries within 24 hours as of last year, the document said the reported number of severe injuries likely does not detail the full extent of the problem.

"OSHA believes that many severe injuries — perhaps 50 percent or more — are not being reported," the report said. It added: "Because the majority of first-year reports were filed by large employers, we believe that many small and mid-sized employers are unaware of the new requirements."



Forty-six years ago, Congress passed the Occupational Safety and Health Act, promising every worker the right to a safe job. Decades of struggle by workers and their unions have resulted in significant improvements in working conditions.

But as government figures show, the toll of workplace injury, illness and death remains enormous. Some Teamsters within the union's 22 trade divisions and conferences are particularly at risk, suffering very high rates of job injuries and fatalities.

Certain populations are also more at risk than others. Latino and immigrant workers, who often work in the most dangerous jobs and are exploited by employers, often have no union protections and are afraid to speak out.

Hundreds of workers are fired or harassed by their employers each year simply for voicing job-safety concerns or reporting injuries. Whistleblower and anti-retaliation provisions are not adequately protecting workers who try to exercise their legal rights to speak out on workplace safety issues.

We need to join hands to seek stronger safety and health protections and better standards and enforcement. To quote Mother Jones, a small woman but a giant in the American labor movement, "Mourn for the dead and fight like hell for the living."



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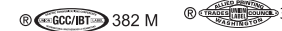
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EDITOR'S NOTE

FRED BRUNING MANAGING EDITOR

New Look Designed To Serve You Better

IT'S BEEN NEARLY 10 YEARS SINCE WE GAVE THE COMMUNICATOR a more modern look. About time for a tune-up.

Page One is brighter, more varied and serves as a kind of index for must-read material inside. This arrangement permits us to highlight top stories – coverage of the GCC/IBT convention last month, for example – while emphasizing other important news.



Columns by GCC/IBT President George Tedeschi and IBT General President James Hoffa now fill Page Two giving the presentation a sleeker, uncluttered look. Page Three includes commentary by labor expert Thomas Mackell Jr., a few words from me and, most times, a brief story on labor issues at the bottom.

The suggestion for a fast-moving and versatile approach comes from President Tedeschi. Layout specialist Dave Borucki of Evans Design & Marketing interpreted the idea and transferred it to the printed page. Dennis Murphy, production chief at The Kelly Companies, saw the process through to publication.

Our coverage in this first upgraded edition reflects a wild, unpredictable, and, to many, unsettling, election season.

Defying the predictions of most political experts, Donald Trump became the Republican Party presidential standard bearer. Like many Americans, delegates to the GCC/IBT convention in Las Vegas wondered what Trump would mean for the country – and the labor movement.

Our Vegas stories reflect those worries and so does an editorial on Page Six warning that Trump increasingly seems prepared to carry out the wishes of conservative Republican policy makers – many of them anti-union zealots.

But working people always face challenges and know how to pull through – sometimes in surprising fashion. One determined fellow is Philip Taylor.

In a full-page feature, we profile the 90-year-old former Philadelphia lithographer whose “avocation” was photography – work so good that Temple University Libraries recently archived his prints.

For decades, Taylor chronicled street life in Philadelphia. Though there is sadness in his shots of homeless men and tuberculosis victims, Taylor captured moments of grace and triumph, too – a testament to the human spirit.

What's most important for union people to remember, Taylor said, is that there is a world beyond the workplace, and unexpected ability in us all.

COMMENTARY



Americans Must Reject Extremism, and Trump

By Thomas J. Mackell Jr.

With Donald Trump's remarkable capture of the Republican nomination, this presidential election race became among the weirdest in our nation's history.

The Republican Party is facing a crisis. The message of discord and discontent that GOP candidates spewed for months during the primary season reflects turmoil in party ranks – a nasty conflict easily exploited by Trump.

The reality show billionaire has driven a racial and ethnic wedge between Americans and left the GOP to pick up the pieces. As a result, the party could be in chaos for a decade.

On the Democratic side we have seen the surprising success of Bernie Sanders, who also speaks to a sense of national unease but without the crazy policy pronouncements and mood swings of Trump.

The bipartisan message of this campaign is clear: Those hammered by globalization, technological change and deindustrialization are telling the “ruling classes” they are fed up and not taking it anymore.

Not incidentally, the 2016 campaign, one of the most costly thanks to the 2010 Citizens United Supreme Court decision, allows unrestricted money

to pour into the political process – the waterboarding of democracy, you might say.

According to the Washington Post, 680 corporations had made nearly \$68 million in contributions to “super PACs” through the end of January – and that stupendous sum is a mere 12 percent of all the \$549 million raised by such groups. Worse, that figure does not include the untold amounts of “dark money” contributions to groups not disclosed by the donor or the recipient.

More than ever, money is separating Americans.

There are all kinds of injustices that exist due to staggering wealth inequality.

The wealthiest 100 people on the Forbes magazine list have more money than all 45.7 million black Americans. The 20 wealthiest Americans are worth more than the poorer half of the American population, according to the Institute for Policy Studies.

That kind of disparity was certain to have an effect on politics and make a candidate like Trump inevitable. Let's hope voters now begin to look at things more carefully and make wise choices in November.

The late Adlai Stevenson, the Democratic nominee for president in 1952 and 1956, was approached by a supporter who said: “Every thinking American will vote for you” to which Stevenson shouted back: “That's not enough. I need a majority.”

Instead of looking for scapegoats, we should search for solutions to make a better political and social justice system for ordinary Americans.

Voting is essential – and shame on those politicians at the national and state levels who seek to limit, rather than expand, ballot box rights. Their behavior is reprehensible and anti-American.

In this presidential election, regular folks must reject extremism, vote recalcitrant leaders out of office and revitalize democracy with small-donor contributions to worker-friendly candidates. Now is not the time to sit back and observe, but, rather step out and participate. Our country's future depends on it.

Thomas J. Mackell Jr., special advisor to the international president of the International Longshoremen's Association, AFL-CIO, is former chairman of the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond and author of, “When the Good Pensions Go Away: Why America Needs a New Deal for Pension and Health Care Reform.”

HERE'S HOW TO GET STALLED U.S. WAGES MOVING AGAIN

Collective bargaining gives union people an edge but, despite an improved economy, many other American workers still struggle to get ahead.

For millions, wages have stalled – or declined – since the late 1970s. Even college-educated employees complain they are falling behind.

While workers try to get by, companies are prospering. “...the potential has existed for adequate, widespread wage growth over the last three-and-a-half decades—but these economic gains have not trickled down to the vast majority,” said a report by the non-profit Economic Policy Institute.

EPI urges reforms, including: – Raise the minimum wage. Adjusting for inflation, the minimum is 25 percent below what it was in 1968 even though productivity has doubled.

– Strengthen collective bargaining rights. Organizing should be easier, corporations penalized more for break-

ing labor rules and right-to-work laws defeated so that unions can exert greater influence on behalf of working people, EPI says.

– Regularize undocumented workers. Comprehensive immigration reform – with a path toward citizenship – will improve wages, provide workplace protections and benefit the economy, as a whole.

– Provide earned sick leave and paid family leave. Many union contracts have this protection. Non-union workers may not be so lucky. When illness strikes or emergency arises, all Americans should be protected.

– Support strong enforcement of labor standards. Too many employers do not pay overtime, provide a safe work environment, or even meet worker's compensation obligations. Wage theft is another common abuse that costs employees billions each year. “It is vital that workers have effective remedies in state and federal courts for labor standards violations,” EPI says.

District Court Orders News-Press to Comply

By Dawn Hobbs

Nearly 10 years after the Santa Barbara News-Press responded to a successful GCC/IBT union drive by firing organizers and refusing to bargain for a first contract, the National Labor Relations Board continues investigating multi-millionaire owner Wendy McCaw for what government officials say are illegal labor practices.

In the ongoing saga involving the embattled paper, a federal court recently upheld an NLRB decision that the company must turn over subpoenaed documents required for prosecution on several outstanding charges.

This marks the first time a federal court has rejected McCaw's claim that any interference with her newsroom or employee policies amounts to an infringement of First Amendment rights.

"Most recently, the NLRB subpoenaed some documents from the News-Press relevant to some of its still-pending charges," said Ira Gottlieb, GCC/IBT lawyer.

Gottlieb said McCaw sought to block the labor board in familiar fashion.

"The newspaper resisted in federal court – asserting as it had in the past – that the union's alleged attack on its editorial prerogatives was still ongoing, violated their First Amendment rights, and gave management the right to commit unfair labor practices," Gottlieb said.

U.S. District Court judges in Los Angeles rejected the company's argument noting that no court had found the union had an "improper purpose" or interfered with the company's rights, court documents state.

'John Just Wants to Keep Going'

I met John Peralta at the 2008 national premiere of "Citizen McCaw," a documentary about Wendy McCaw, the millionaire owner of the Santa Barbara News-Press, and her tyrannical tactics to keep the GCC/IBT out of the newsroom.

From that point forward, John and Doug Nowakowski, both Teamster international representatives, were an integral part of the struggle for workplace justice led by GCC/IBT organizer Marty Keegan, now retired, and aided by union lawyer Ira Gottlieb.

SANTA BARBARA NEWS-PRESS

John, who died in April at age 61 after a brief battle with cancer, spent hours on end for years holding a "McCaw Obey the Law" banner outside the News-Press office and leafleting local shops and businesses in an effort – often successful – to persuade owners they should yank their ads until unjustly fired editorial staff members were reinstated. (Obituary, Page 13.)

Nothing stopped John.

On one occasion, the boss of a downtown business, called the police on John and Doug. The moment passed without incident but the IBT reps had a great story – which they eagerly told again and again.

Often, I'd offer to arrange dinners, but Doug would shake his head and say, "John just wants to keep going," and they'd be off to another spot with banners and fliers. Marty had no better luck at mealtime. "No, it's not dark yet," John would say. "We have to hit another place."

Perhaps most important, was John's willingness to listen and lend support. He was always there during stressful, exhausting and frustrating times. John even attended a U.S. District Court of Appeals hearing on the News-Press firings in Washington, D.C. – and, with Doug, stood by us when we later learned judges ruled for McCaw.

John drew from his own experiences in the 1995 Detroit newspaper strike – he was a mailer at the Detroit News and Free Press – and provided insight and comfort throughout years of turmoil in Santa Barbara. His commitment was unwavering and inspirational.

As a union professional, John was tops. He mastered every detail of the News-Press situation and had great organizing skills. When McCaw tried to undermine morale, John would boost our spirits. "You just gotta keep standing up to her," he'd always say. "We will be here no matter what you need."

Our heartfelt condolences go out to John's family and a host of friends in union ranks. We will never forget his dedication and always be grateful for his loyalty and courage. John's death is a heartbreaking loss but his indomitable spirit and sense of decency live on. – Dawn Hobbs

Dawn Hobbs, a regular contributor to the Communicator, was among Santa Barbara News-Press reporters fired by owner Wendy McCaw in retaliation for union activity.



PHOTO BY JOHN DALPE

Taking the News-Press fight to Washington, D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals in 2012 were, left-right, union attorney Ira Gottlieb of California, GCC/IBT President George Tedeschi, fired Santa Barbara News-Press reporters Dawn Hobbs, Melinda Burns and Melissa Evans, IBT representatives John Peralta and Doug Nowakowski, and D.C.-based union attorney Peter Leff.

For the first time, a U.S. court rejected the claim of multi-millionaire owner Wendy McCaw that any interference with newsroom or employee policies amounted to an infringement of constitutional rights.

Gottlieb said the News-Press is seeking relief from the Ninth Circuit Court in San Francisco but that the Los Angeles ruling "suggests that the courts will not continue to grant Wendy McCaw a constitutional license to continue to commit unfair labor practices."

These outstanding labor law violations include illegal withdrawal of union recognition, changes in health care costs and cell phone policies, failure to give merit raises, unjust layoffs and bad faith bargaining, according to documents.

The saga began in 2006 when an overwhelming majority of newsroom workers voted to join the GCC/IBT to protect themselves from McCaw's arbitrary attacks through a fair employment contract.

A decade after the successful GCC/IBT union drive, a first-time contract has not been reached.

Following the union election, eight journalists were unjustly fired for organizing activity. An administrative law judge and the NLRB consistently ruled in favor of the reporters until McCaw prevailed at the District of Columbia Circuit Court of Appeals.

In December 2012, a panel of three circuit court justices known for conservative legal views ruled against the reporters in a decision that effectively approved unrestrained labor law violations during an organizing campaign and, consequently, denied reinstatement and back pay to the journalists.

A separate bad faith bargaining case won by the union had to be reconsidered after recess court appointments made by President Barack Obama were nullified by the U.S. Supreme Court. That case is pending in the D.C. Circuit, which is expected to rule on the matter later this year.

McCaw has gone through at least 10 different law firms in her illegal attempt to keep her workers from reaching a fair employment contract.

The case involving the eight fired journalists is long over, but GCC/IBT officials have vowed to continue to hold McCaw responsible for her illegal actions and fight for a fair contract for the workers who remain at the paper.

"We stand behind the courageous News-Press workers punished by a high-handed management for exercising their right to organize," said GCC/IBT President George Tedeschi. "Their fight is our fight and we're not backing off."

INVESTORS LOSE, HEDGE EXECS GAIN

Hedge funds scored a so-so performance in 2015 but managers made out like bandits.

The New York Times reported that the top 25 hedge fund execs earned a stupendous \$12.94 billion last year with the 10 highest paid big shots copping \$10.07 billion of the booty.

Citing figures from Institutional Investor's Alpha magazine, the Times said that fund superstars earn even more than highly compensated bank managers – 50 times more.

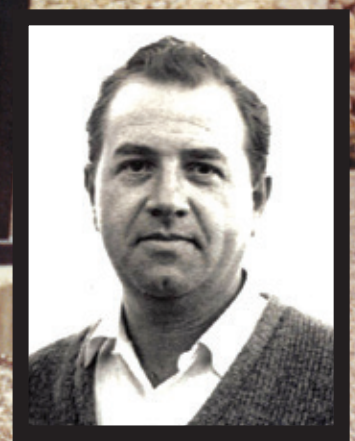
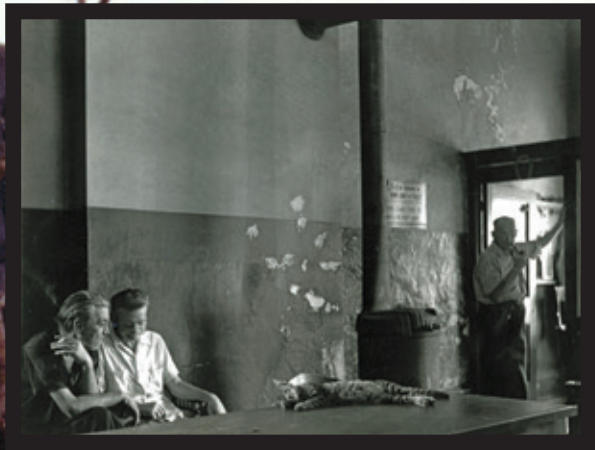
While hedge fund czars were hauling in the big bucks, fund performance was woeful. Some investors lost billions, the Times said, quoting one manager as lamenting that 2015 amounted to a "hedge fund killing field."

Not for Kenneth Griffin, 47, CEO of the global investment firm Citadel. Griffin earned \$1.7 billion in 2015 – top of the hedge fund heap. Accordingly, Griffin put on a spectacular show of spending power.

The Times said he paid \$500 million for a couple of pieces of artwork and reportedly forked over another \$200 million for several floors of a condo on Central Park.

Griffin also contributed to the failed GOP presidential bid of anti-worker Wisconsin governor Scott Walker. Maybe the Citadel superstar should have hedged his bet.

Photographs that Mirror the 'Human Condition'



Philip Taylor's 'artistic eye' is evident in photos archived by Temple University Libraries. Clockwise, from top left: Quaker Friends homeless shelter, tuberculosis study, Philadelphia, 1953; Construction of Walt Whitman Bridge between Philadelphia and New Jersey, 1955; Homeless man on steam grate, Philadelphia, 1955; Self-portrait, late 1980s (not archived); Jogger beneath street lamp, Philadelphia, printed circa 2011. Background photograph: Sleeping couple, Billy Rose Art Garden, The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, printed 1973.

BY FRED BRUNING
GRAPHIC COMMUNICATOR

Philip Taylor was a photographer – in a print shop and on the streets of Philadelphia. At Mid City Press, he operated a lithographic camera. During off-hours, Taylor recorded life in his hometown with a Rolleiflex and sharp sense of human drama.

His gutsy, black-and-white photos were impressive – so good that Temple University recently archived 1,000 and organized an exhibition of Taylor's work that will run through August 12.

"We were very impressed by his artistic eye," said Margery Sly, director of special collections at Temple University Libraries. "He looks at the world in really interesting ways and had an ability to capture things visually that is amazing."

Taylor, 90, a former member of Local 14-L of the Amalgamated Lithographers of America, retired 28 years ago but continued taking photos in Philadelphia and on trips abroad. The camera gave him a means of expression that print shop work, alone, could not.

That is something to remember, Taylor says – life is not over at the end of a shift.

"I thought it had merit that an ordinary working guy, a trade union guy – and I'm proud of that – on his own volition could get recognition," Taylor said. "A working person could elevate himself to a world of art and academics. People in our industry are able to do things outside their craft and reach levels of attainment that are very high."

Taylor's range of subjects was wide. He photographed homeless men, tuberculosis patients, workers building the Walt Whitman Bridge between Philadelphia and New Jersey – an example of what he calls the "manifestation of human intellect and work." Overseas, Taylor captured scenes of Israel, the Canary Islands and Cuba before and after Fidel Castro.

"Anything that connects with the human condition, a strong sense of alienation," Taylor said of his images. "When I could feel it, I knew it."

Never paid for this photographic work, Taylor says he had little interest in a professional career.

Work as a lithographer was stable and rewarding. Trading reliable employment for the uncertainties of a free-lance schedule seemed risky, Taylor said. At one point, Taylor recalled, he had an interview at Life magazine. An editor was impressed and told him to return in six months. Taylor never went back. "I had a steady job and I was intimidated."

Taylor calls his photographic career an "avocation" – one perhaps launched by sad and unexpected circumstances.

At 17, Taylor quit high school after his father died suddenly. To help support the family, Taylor worked in the mail room at the Navy Department in

Philadelphia. Next door was a photography office. Older employees showed him around. He was hooked.

After serving stateside with the Army from 1944-46, Taylor returned home. An uncle worked in a lithographic print shop and Taylor thought a print industry job would suit him, too.

In 1946, he joined Local 14-L – which eventually became part of the GCIU's 14-M – and, after working at a few small shops, came aboard at Mid City, a major Philadelphia print firm.

Taylor worked the night shift as a master lithographic cameraman. "He was intelligent, friendly and a very strong union guy," said Andy Douglas, former president of Local 14-M.

During the day, Taylor wandered the city with his Rollei 3.5 camera or processed photographic prints in his basement dark room.

That wasn't all. Taylor was an inventor and teacher, too. He holds patents for devices related to lithography and another for an intravenous feeding system. For several years, he taught at what is now the GCC/IBT-affiliated Andrew J. Gress Graphic Arts Institute.

But through photography, Taylor found himself.

"Little by little, the sense of social and esthetic aspects of taking photographs began to emerge like a butterfly coming out of a cocoon," Taylor recalls. "We don't realize the kind of inner things we have until that comes out."

Taylor still lives in Philadelphia. Contending with a number of health issues, he began worrying that his photographic work would be lost.

"I live alone," said Taylor, who never married. "I have no family. What would I do with it? It would go into a dumpster."

Two friends, Gus Rosanio and Joe Van Blunk, who had collaborated on a documentary film and had an interest in vintage photography, promised Taylor his work would not be lost. Dumpster? No way.

"He's a fabulous photographer," Rosanio said. "Masterful."

Rosanio and Van Blunk arranged for 100 Taylor photos to be set up in a conference room at the Bauman Rare Books office in Philadelphia and invited experts to take a look. Margery Sly of Temple was one. The photos, she assured, would be preserved.

"Phil is unique," Sly said. "The quality of his work is such that it is worthy of being added to our photo collection."

For Taylor, the photographs serve as testament to the potential of every working person and proof that the world is wider than the shop floor. Pursue your passion, he urges. Surprise yourself. "One can have another life."

The Election of 2016 Is One for the Books

Donald Trump is the Republican Party nominee for President of the United States.

Even though the deal went down weeks ago, those words still are apt to make most Americans rub their eyes.

That Donald Trump? Lincoln's Republican Party? These United States?

Yes, yes, and – incredibly – yes.

How a reality show billionaire with an endless supply of insults but little grasp of issues managed to become the GOP standard bearer is a subject sure to launch a thousand book projects over the next few years.

For now, it's time for union people, and all Americans, to face facts. The fall election will be perhaps the most important of a lifetime and not just because of the Trump candidacy, astounding as it is.

Yes, it is true that Trump is unpredictable and unreliable and given to excess. His talent for self-promotion has snookered millions of voters who consider the Fifth Avenue tycoon an ally because he is willing to belittle everyone – from political opponents to the Pope.

For Trump, consistency has no more value than civility. He flip flops shamelessly – including on his promise to self-finance a presidential run – and veers so wildly from position to position that it is impossible to know exactly what he believes.

But looming behind Trump is a Republican Party in a state of serious dishevelment, and, therefore, dangerous.

The GOP has turned itself inside out to appease Trump's constituency of angry voters who believe Trump will "make America great again."

Watching Republican elites stammer their way through interviews in an effort to justify support for Trump is enough to make anyone squirm. And that's the point: If the GOP can support a candidate like Trump, the party is capable of just about anything.

That should make union people worry.

Though he is full of bombast and self-appreciation, Trump is an empty suit. He has amply proven that his grasp of policy – domestic, foreign, economic – is slender as the strands of his famous blond pompadour. Even the famously uninformed George W. Bush looks like a whiz-kid next to the 2016 Republican hopeful.

If the clueless Trump somehow won the White House, he would be susceptible to the most powerful conservative voices around him and we can be sure right-wing Republicans would rush to serve as his ventriloquist.

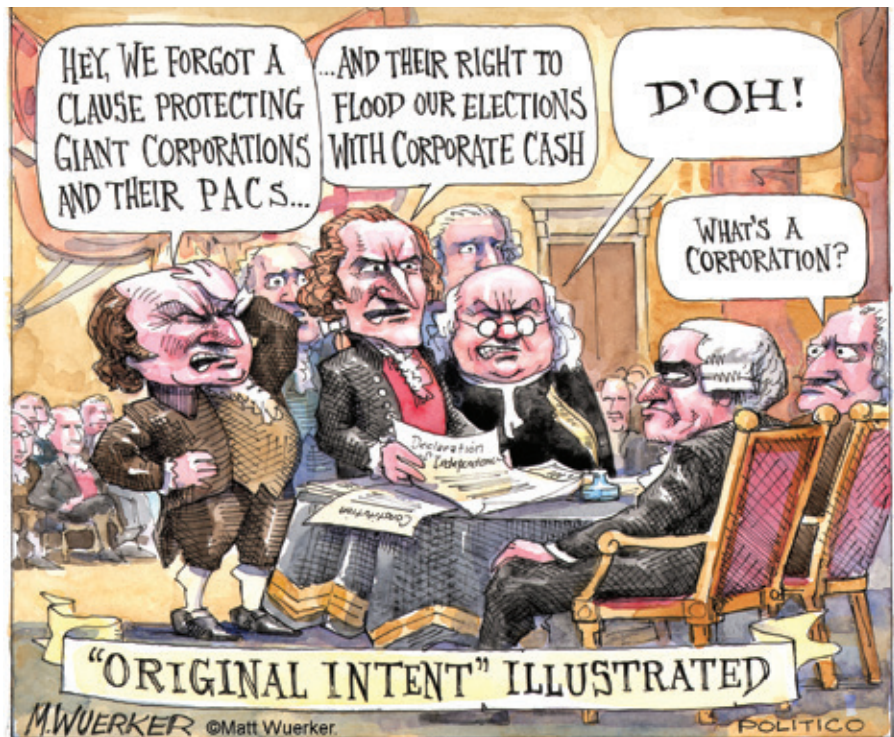
With a malleable front man in the Oval Office, the GOP will be able to advance its most extreme agenda. There may be minor concessions to Trump's populist constituency but anyone who thinks the Republican Party is suddenly going to become the champion of ordinary Americans is sadly mistaken.

Shaken by the Trump ascendancy, establishment Republicans will regroup. They will pay lip service to the concerns of the middle class and downplay ties to wealth and privilege. There will be lots of talk about the GOP being a "big tent" party in which all are welcome.

Don't be fooled. Even with a remarkable character like Donald Trump out front, it would be the same Republican Party calling the shots. Open season on organized labor would continue. Trump easily could be persuaded to advance the establishment's unsavory agenda: a national right-to-work law, attacks on collective bargaining and rollback of National Labor Relations Board authority.

Scary? You bet.

So let's leave no doubt where we stand from now until November. We don't need Donald Trump – or his Republican enablers – to make America great. The working people of America will do that on their own.



Point of View

BY HAROLD MEYERSON

Whatever Happened to the CEOs Who Cared About Creating Jobs?

How do CEOs earn their pay?

Even as CEO paychecks have ballooned to roughly 300 times that of their median employee (up from just 20 times 50

years ago), their achievements have become harder and harder to discern.

Time was when CEOs put their companies' capital into projects and employed vast numbers of workers at middle-class wages. Yet as their incomes soared, CEOs stopped doing that.

Increasingly, however, what CEOs do is funnel money to shareholders.

University of Massachusetts economist William Lazonick has documented that 91 percent of the net earnings of the corporations on the Fortune 500 list from 2003 through 2012 was sent to shareholders in the form of dividends or share buybacks.

In a paper for the Roosevelt Institute, economist J.W. Mason showed that the amount that the U.S. corporate sector showered on shareholders over the past decade was equal to all corporate borrowing.

In the 1960s and 1970s, about 40 cents of every dollar that a corporation either borrowed or realized in net earnings went into investment in its facilities, research, or new hires. Since the 1980s, however, just 10 cents on the dollar has gone to investment.

Indeed, when corporations take on debt, they do so increasingly to pay off shareholders. "The businesses that have been borrowing the most since the end of the recession have not been those with the highest levels of investment, but rather those with the highest dividend payments and share repurchases," Mason writes. "Finance is no longer an instrument for getting money into productive businesses, but instead for getting money out of them."

In rewarding shareholders, of course, CEOs are compelled to reward themselves. Since



the 1990s, the pay and bonuses that the overwhelming majority of CEOs receive either comes in the form of shares or is linked to the share price, or both. It's a tough job, but

somebody's got to do it.

Corporations no longer devote as large a share of their resources to investment. They often prefer to subcontract or offshore work rather than pay employees decent wages and offer them benefits. Outside the tech sector, they have failed to improve the quality of most people's lives for the past half-century.

And by depressing workers' incomes, they also depress consumption, creating a vicious circle in which the diminished buying power of the American public justifies diminished investment in expanding product lines or developing new products.

There are ways out of this vicious cycle, but they're not to be found within the confines of the existing corporate world. The investment gap needs to be filled by public investment. Rebuilding the nation's increasingly shabby infrastructure is a good place to start.

The other way would be to change the governance of corporations so that major shareholders don't hold a monopoly of power. In Germany, for instance, corporations are required to put worker representatives on their boards – a model that's enabled Germany to thrive in the global economy.

Absent reforms of this sort, modern American CEOs will continue rewarding themselves largely by suppressing the kinds of activities that would benefit a far greater number – employees included. Nice work, if you can get it.

Harold Meyerson is executive editor of The American Prospect magazine where this column first appeared in longer form. It is reprinted with permission of the author.

Big, Dangerous Stuff



It is kind of impossible to know what Donald Trump would do to the economy if he becomes president. That's because, judging from what he has said during his campaign, he doesn't know what he is going to do.

Let's start with the big, dangerous stuff.

Not knowing anything about government finance, Trump said he would negotiate the rates on bonds the Treasury sold after the bonds have been sold.

You can't do that, and even to try likely would sink our economy which depends on selling Treasury bonds around the world and always paying the interest rate set.

He sort of backed off after an outcry from those who live in the real world, but his election would create an aura of doubt and likely raise the interest rates we would pay in the future.

Economists say Trump's threat to hike tariffs on goods from China, Mexico and other countries would boost prices on imports and weaken the market for U.S. products abroad.

Experts also say his plan to deport 11 million undocumented immigrants would cause huge economic dislocation – even if it were possible. Those workers buy goods and pay taxes. Without their contributions, local, state and federal budgets would take a hit – and, by the way, the cost of the services low-wage immigrants provide would spike.

On a related subject, Trump's view on the minimum wage is contradictory, at best. One day

he says wages are too high. Another, Trump agrees no one can live on \$7.25 an hour – the federal minimum. At the same time, he insists each state should set its own minimum, ignoring – or, more likely, not knowing – that five states, all in the South, have no minimum wage law, at all.

Trump is erratic on taxes, too. First, he talked about raising taxes on the rich, then backed off when Republican policy makers said, "whoa." Before long, he was promising a middle-class tax cut and, the next minute, a reduced rate for everyone. Details are always missing – and no wonder. Not much of Trump's tax policy makes sense.

In the end, an economy under a Trump presidency likely would have little to do with his ideas.

Trump would just be a front man for the austere economic agenda of the GOP and House Speaker Paul Ryan – the same disproven trickle-down nonsense that means cuts in social services, big breaks for the wealthiest Americans, weaker Wall Street regulations and little spending on needed public works projects.

The most dangerous thing about Trump may not be his own cockeyed economic notions, but those of the powerful Republicans who really would be running the show if he wins in November.

Guest Spot

BY DOUGLAS NOWAKOWSKI

Carrying On a Noble Mission

Teamster officers and members who, like I, were fortunate enough to know and work with IBT international representative John Peralta lost a great friend and ally when he died unexpectedly in April. Now we must honor him in the way he would most want – by re-dedicating ourselves to the union cause.

We must pass along to the next generation of officers and members John's knowledge, dedication, love and perseverance. He was an unyielding advocate for democratic union principles and showed a remarkable level of commitment and resolve. Our goal should be the same.

John's every action was dedicated to protecting workers, whether or not they were in a union. He looked for the "Made in the USA" label on purchases and told anyone within earshot why it was essential Americans buy products made at home.

At the negotiating table, John was skilled, patient, resolute – and respectful of all parties.

He came to contract talks prepared and informed. His experiences during the bitter Detroit newspaper strike of 1995, the difficult campaign to organize editorial workers at Santa Barbara News-Press and challenging circumstances at the Columbus (Ohio) Dispatch – to name a few – made him an insightful and tireless advocate for union people.

Circumstances in Santa Barbara were particularly demanding.

John was pivotal in organizing consumer and advertiser boycotts after wealthy owner Wendy McCaw fired pro-union newsroom workers. At

one point, he suggested adding miniature Christmas lights to a 7-by-16-foot banner demanding "McCaw, Obey the Law."

He often skipped lunch or dinner in solidarity with workers who had lost their jobs – and because he believed union reps had an obligation to always press on. When one goal was met, John immediately began thinking of the next. His message to the rest of us was clear: Keep going. His leadership was inspiring – and instructive.

John's death was heartbreaking for his family and those of us in union ranks who loved and respected him. He was a proud Teamster every day – and remained so until his final breath. In the last days of life, John continued working on union matters. We have a solemn duty to carry on his noble work – the task of protecting working men and women, keeping our beloved union strong and never giving up.

John was resourceful, steadfast and 100 percent committed to the union. We must be nothing less.

Douglas Nowakowski is an international representative for the Newspaper, Magazine and Electronic Media Workers Conference of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters and a longtime colleague of John Peralta.



All the Best

Video

Spotlight

Tom McCarthy, director

Newspaper industry workers in GCC/IBT ranks – and, for that matter, all who celebrate the First Amendment and good, old fashioned shoe leather journalism – are sure to cheer this movie. "Spotlight" is a carefully plotted newsroom procedural that chronicles – with admirable care and accuracy – the Boston Globe's Pulitzer Prize-winning investigation into widespread cases of child abuse involving Roman Catholic priests. Undaunted by pressure from church officials, Globe reporters dig into files, track down victims and reveal what turned out to be a major scandal. Their stories nailed perpetrators, earned justice for victims and demonstrated again the extraordinary public service provided by newspapers – and why we must keep the print product alive. *Universal, \$13.85, Amazon.com*



Music

New York is My Home

Dion

In the 1950's, Dion DiMucci and the Belmonts, street corner kids straight outta' the Bronx, sang "Teenager in Love," a sweet, upbeat doo-wop number that did well on the charts and seemed to symbolize the placid period before the stormy 60s shook the nation. Guess what? DiMucci is still around – and singing. His 38th album – yes, 38th – is called "New York is My Home" and it's a beaut. DiMucci teams up with fellow Gothamite Paul Simon on the title song and for a few minutes it seems like the old times never ended. "New York is calling me...just like a rooftop song up from the cobblestone..." DiMucci sings. Who says you can't go home again? *Instant Records, \$9.79, Amazon.com*

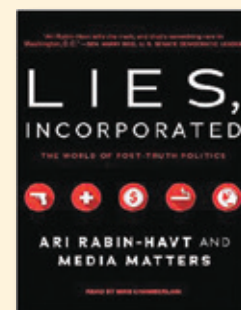


Print

Lies, Incorporated: The World of Post-Truth Politics

Ari Rabin-Havt with Media Matters for America

In a joint effort, Ari Rabin-Havt, a radio host on the Sirius satellite network, and the watchdog group Media Matters for America, confirm in this book what many suspected: Right-wing interests peddle phony claims and provocative analysis that undermine honest debate. Information on provocative subjects like climate change, immigration reform, affordable health care, gun control laws, abortion rights, social security and gay marriage have been bent out of shape by masters of manipulation. Rabin-Havt's message: Check your sources. Do your homework. Demand the truth. *Anchor, \$10.06, Amazon.com*



Internet

talkingpointsmemo.com

In this unusual political season, staying informed is Job No. 1. Talking Points Memo counters the right-wing disinformation machine with stories that seek to set the record straight. News junkies will find the site a worthy supplement to mainline media and those who sometimes feel sanity is slipping away amid reality show antics and blowhard baloney may feel redeemed. It's going to be a wild ride until Election Day. Strap in, remain calm, be aware.



In GCC/IBT, 'We Have Each Other's Back'

By Zachary Dowdy
Special to the Communicator

Labor unions are one of the few sources of stability in a society where citizens experience anxiety from a toxic mix of economic and political insecurity – and even the threat of terrorism, said GCC/IBT leaders at the union's third convention in Las Vegas.

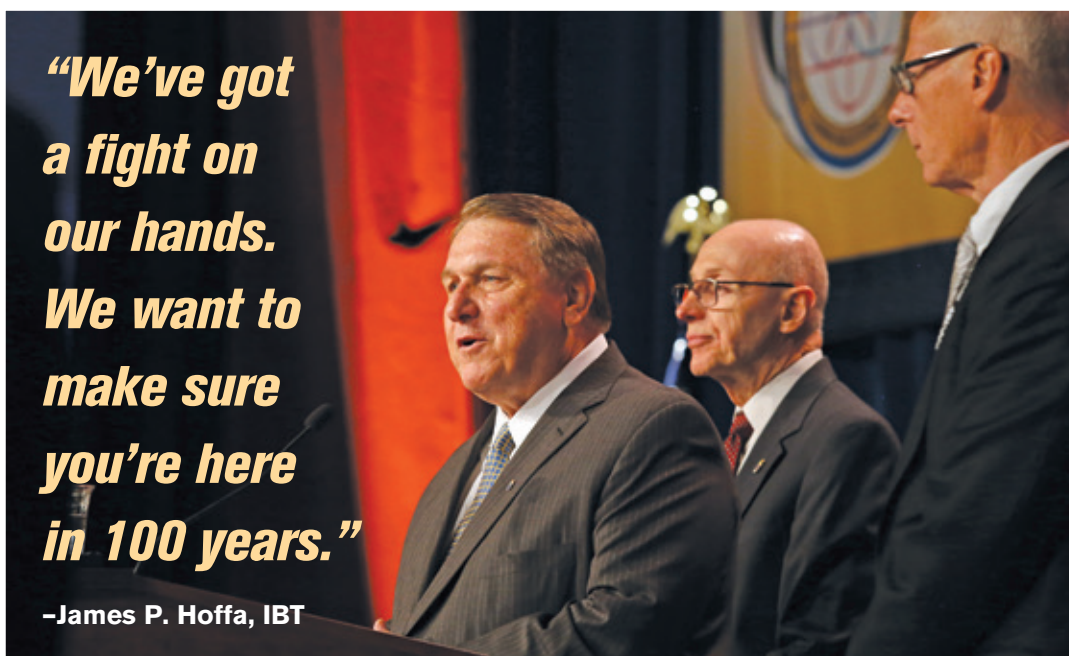
The sense of community provided by organized labor can help members contend with problems that may extend beyond the workplace. "It's not just wages and benefits," said Steve Sullivan, president of 650-member Local 3-N, Boston. "We can help our members through all kinds of problems."

Sullivan said many members turn to brother and sister union members for advice and support in difficult times – evidence that a spirit of common purpose and solidarity is essential to the union movement.

It was a theme evident at the GCC/IBT convention where delegates and guests spent significant time trading stories about union activities and personal concerns. "We are here for one another," said GCC/IBT president George Tedeschi. "That is a central idea of unionism and a reason why our movement is so strong. People know they are not alone – that we have each other's back."



Gathering for the union's third convention were 117 delegates from 61 locals and 90 guests. They met at the Flamingo Las Vegas hotel in uncertain times but with a sense of common purpose and mutual support.



"We've got a fight on our hands. We want to make sure you're here in 100 years."

—James P. Hoffa, IBT

IBT General President James Hoffa, left, joined GCC/IBT president George Tedeschi, center, and GCC/IBT secretary-treasurer/vice president Robert Lacey and vowed to prevail against 'anti-union forces' aiming to destroy the labor movement.

In an interview following a morning convention session, Ralph Meers, president of Atlanta's 600-member Local 527-S, said horrific incidents like the December, 2015 terrorist attack in San Bernardino, California, and June 12 shootings at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, prompt fear among all Americans, union people included. Gun violence, job losses, political strife and rising costs of living all weigh on workers and their families, Meers said.

"Our members are victims of fear," he said, referring to the spike in gun sales that follow high-profile incidents. "But we have to let them vent. Anyone can obviously see it's a dangerous world out there but we have to teach patience. Patience is a hard thing to learn."

Meers said the fellowship at the core of the labor movement can help get members through crises they might not be able to handle alone. "There is so much stress on people," he said.

At the convention, Ron Violand, vice president and secretary-treasurer of Local 8-N, Newark, said elected officials often failed to advance policies intended to benefit struggling families or protect the middle class. Working people are under constant pressure, he said.

In an interview following the three-day meeting at the Flamingo Las Vegas hotel, Violand recalled his own childhood. He said his father, George, a newspaper pressman in Paterson, New Jersey, and charter member of the International Printing Pressmen and Assistants' Union, raised four children on a single salary and managed to send all to college without taking loans.

Those times are all but gone, Violand said.

"Kids are going to college with all kinds of debt, no matter how hard you're working" he said. That kind of economic pressure, Violand said, makes people "nervous" and insecure.

Sullivan said the mission of unions is to provide relief from economic forces by negotiating decent contracts and also to provide comfort on a personal level when members are in distress.

"Unions are so inclusive," he said. "You sign up and our members are across the board every religion, sexual orientation and age. Unions have always been on the front line for social justice."

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

FOR UNION PEOPLE, TIME FLIES BUT NOT LOYALTY

Honoring convention delegates and guests with at least 50 years of union service, President George Tedeschi hailed their dedication and presented pins – the first time such an honor has been bestowed by the GCC/IBT at a convention.

"It's been a pleasure to know these brothers," said Tedeschi. "I am very proud of you for what you have done to help make our union what it is today."

RECIPIENTS WERE:

John Agenbroad, 508-M, Cincinnati; **Joseph Belleville**, 1-L, New York; **George Huber**, 432-M, San Diego, a 60-year member; **Joseph Inemer**, 16-N, Philadelphia; **Ron Johnson**, Local 503-M, Rochester, New York; **Ralph Meers**, 527-S, Atlanta; **James Miller**, 235-M, Kansas City; **Richard Montesano**, 432-M, San Diego; **Stan Mucha**, 458-M, Chicago; **Frank Rak**, 3-N, Boston.

Honorees said the union had been a profound influence in their lives. "Everything I gained – the opportunity to grow – I owe to the union," said Miller. Inemer said, "I wouldn't be here without my membership." The swift passing of the years also was noted. "I don't know where the time went," said Rak.

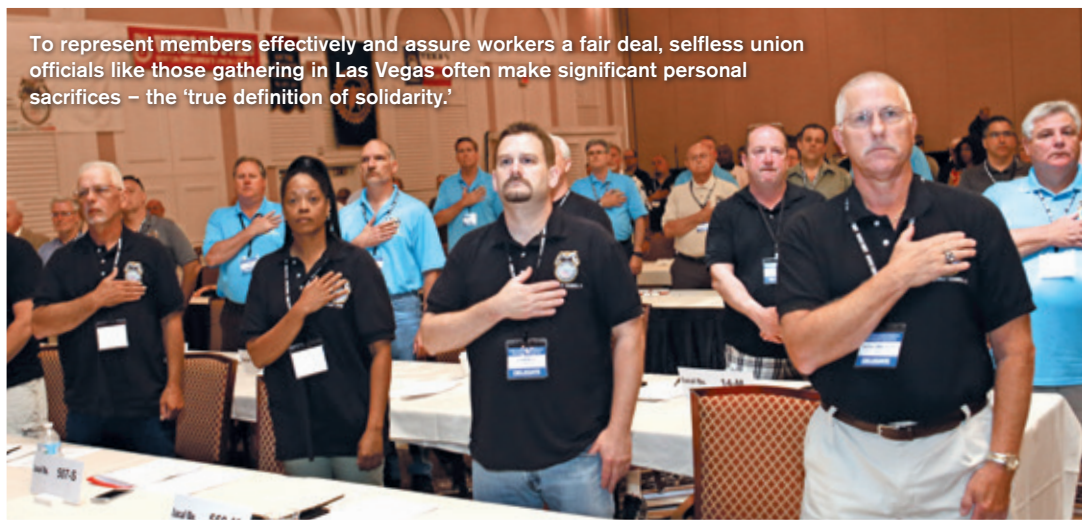
Meers was recognized a second time. Eddie Williams, vice president/secretary-treasurer of 527-S, presented a plaque honoring Meers for serving 52 years as local president.

The inscription praised Meers for "making the world a fairer place for all" and working tirelessly to gain "economic justice for workers everywhere."



Ralph Meers has served 52 years as president of Local 527-S, Atlanta: 'A fairer world for all.'

To represent members effectively and assure workers a fair deal, selfless union officials like those gathering in Las Vegas often make significant personal sacrifices – the ‘true definition of solidarity.’



IBT PHOTO BY FRED NYE



Legal Opinion: Leaders Deserve Thanks

Lawyer-client relations are usually all business. But in Las Vegas, GCC/IBT general counsel Peter Leff departed from tradition to salute the union and its leaders.

Leff read from remarks he made earlier in the year when swearing in President George Tedeschi, Secretary-Treasurer/Vice President Robert Lacey and general board members.

“In the face of unprecedented industry consolidations, technological changes and anti-union employers that seek to squeeze more and more profit out of workers, every day you continue to fight for our members to have a voice in their workplaces and not be solely at the mercy of the bosses and the financiers,” said Leff, who has served in his post for more than 10 years.

He continued: “I want to say thank you for all of the sacrifices that you have made for this union and its members...That is the true definition of solidarity. You embody the meaning of the union.”

Noting the long history of the union and its forbearers, Leff said in an interview that he wanted to spotlight the selflessness of union leaders whose devotion sometimes is taken for granted.

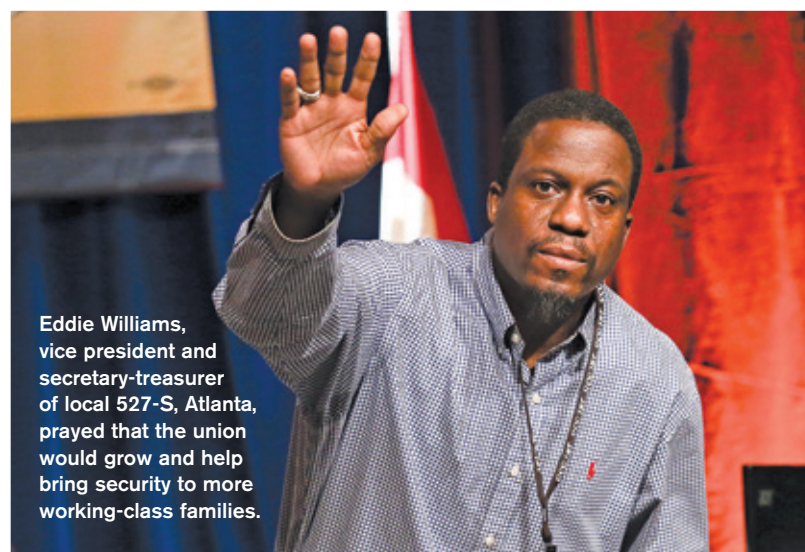
“In an increasingly hostile and difficult environment, I wanted to honor their commitment and the commitment of those who came before.”

OTHER CONVENTION NEWS:

– **Robert Lacey, GCC/IBT secretary-treasurer/vice president, told delegates that cost-cutting measures at the union had reduced annual expenses by \$3 million in five years. “We are operating in the black and have been operating in the black for some time,” Lacey said. Though the Washington, D.C. office is operating with a smaller staff, Lacey said, “there have been no diminished services to members.”**

– **Christy Bailey, IBT director of political and legislative action, said the Teamsters had developed a mobile phone app intended to build political awareness – especially important in this Presidential election year. The BTTP app – Building Teamster Political Power – is available in connection with the IBT’s political action training program, Bailey said. She encouraged GCC/IBT units to consider taking part. Bailey can be reached at 202-624-6993 or cbailey@teamster.org**

– **Tom Jolley, former organizer who attended the Las Vegas meeting as a guest, delivered an invocation on the second day. In his prayer, Jolley said “nations are not ruled by kings and queens” but by citizens. “Give us the courage to carry that banner,” he said. On Day One, Ralph Meers, president of Local 527-S, Atlanta, offered a meditation. “There is so much uncertainty in the world,” Meers said. “Help us pass on to the future what has been passed on to us.” Meers’ longtime colleague, Eddie Williams, 527-S vice president/ secretary-treasurer, led delegates in prayer on the last convention day. “Father, help us grow this union,” Williams implored. “There are a lot of people we could look out for.”**



Eddie Williams, vice president and secretary-treasurer of local 527-S, Atlanta, prayed that the union would grow and help bring security to more working-class families.

IBT PHOTO BY FRED NYE

CHEERS AND TEARS AFTER PERFORMANCE BY SOULFUL SINGER

She wasn’t headlining at any Vegas nightspot, but Amy Edwards earned rave reviews in the Sunset Ballroom of the Flamingo hotel.

Edwards, who hails from Southport, North Carolina and is the niece of GCC/IBT president George Tedeschi, sang the U.S. and Canadian national anthems, “God Bless America,” “America the Beautiful,” and “Amazing Grace” before sessions of the union’s third convention.

On the last day, she joined Tom Donnelly, a retired member of Local 100-M, Toronto, whose stirring renditions of “O, Canada,” are famous in GCC/IBT ranks. “And they did that without rehearsing,” said Tedeschi.

Each performance by Edwards earned a standing ovation.

“Can’t get enough,” said Tedeschi after a final, rousing solo.



Amy Edwards brought GCC/IBT delegates to their feet with stirring renditions of patriotic anthems and later earned rave reviews at the nearby Teamsters convention. “Wonderful to be part of it,” she said.

IBT PHOTO BY FRED NYE

So impressive was Edwards’ vocalizing that IBT officials asked for an encore.

After her GCC/IBT debut, Edwards headed for the 29th Teamster International Convention at the nearby Paris Las Vegas convention center where a much larger audience awaited.

Edwards, 39, holds a music education degree from East Carolina University and now serves as youth director and worship leader at Southport Trinity United Methodist Church.

Her reception at the GCC/IBT meeting was deeply appreciated, she said. “Wonderful – a different experience to be out of North Carolina and be part of it.”

At the IBT convention, Edwards again sang, “Amazing Grace,” this time as part of a tribute to Teamster members killed and wounded in the San Bernardino, California, terrorist attack of December, 2015.

“There were tears in the eyes of people around the room,” said one delegate. Then the crowd was on its feet, applauding – a long and thunderous thank-you to a soulful performer and special guest.

'Teamster Strong' in Vegas

Who wants to be a Teamster?

"Everybody wants to be a Teamster," declared IBT General President James P. Hoffa before a cheering crowd at the union's 29th international convention in Las Vegas. "We're proud of the progress we've made, but our journey is never done, so let's pledge together to fight the good fight for workers."

Hoffa noted that the IBT had brought aboard 300,000 workers in the last decade. Still, he said, the job was far from done. "We have to make new pledges, new promises," Hoffa said.

Under the banner of "Teamster Strong," more than 1,600 delegates and 4,000 retirees and guests from across the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico gathered at the Paris Las Vegas hotel to celebrate the union's continued success and pledge an unrelenting campaign for equity and workplace rights.

In emphatic terms, IBT General Secretary-Treasurer Ken Hall told the huge audience that the enemies of labor – and their right-to-work agenda – must be defeated at the polls in November.

"Right to work is a euphemism to hide anti-worker attacks. It doesn't create jobs, and it sure doesn't create good jobs," Hall said. "We have to keep fighting and telling the truth about so-called right to work.... This upcoming election is the absolute referendum for us. Come November, we will remember."

Among other key topics covered was opposition to the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade deal.

Kevin Moore, an international IBT trustee, said Teamsters won't sit back and allow Congress to approve the TPP. "Teamsters are for fair trade, not free trade," Moore said.



At the Teamster international meeting following the GCC/IBT's third convention, delegates celebrated the union's continued success and pledged an unrelenting campaign for workplace rights.

Trade that helps working men and women. When the U.S. negotiates trade, it must put workers first."

Also emphasized at the convention was the importance of organizing and protecting public employees. There was a tribute to members of IBT Local 1932 killed and wounded in the San Bernardino, California, terrorist attack of December, 2015. The local represents San Bernardino County workers.

At the memorial, Amy Edwards, youth director and worship leader at the Southport, North Carolina, Trinity United Methodist Church and niece of GCC/IBT president George Tedeschi, sang "Amazing Grace," as she had at the GCC/IBT convention a few days before. Edwards' moving rendition drew a standing ovation.

The international convention, held every five years, is the supreme policymaking body of the IBT with the power and authority to modify the constitution, establish programs, address fiscal issues and set priorities.

The IBT communications department contributed to this story.

Who's Been Doing The 'Dirty Work?'

It's called the "persuader rule" – a new Department of Labor regulation demanding that employers reveal when they use outside agents to undercut organizing campaigns.

"Workers should know who is behind an anti-union message," said Labor Secretary Thomas Perez. "It's a matter of fairness."

That's not how business sees it.

The National Retail Federation griped that the Labor Department rule would have a "chilling effect" on free speech, according to The Hill, an online publication, and anti-labor law firms promised a legal challenge. At the same time, Congressional Republicans are trying to kill the regulation.



But union leaders said Perez made the right move.

The new rule closes a loophole in the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act of 1959 that allowed companies to hire specialists – attorneys and others – to undermine unionization efforts.

"For years, big business has taken advantage of the nation's broken system," said IBT General President James Hoffa. "They've paid millions to consultants and law firms to do the dirty work of misdirecting and intimidating employees. In exchange, these same companies publicly could wash their hands of the whole thing."

GCC/IBT President George Tedeschi said the "persuader rule" will help keep management honest.

"Companies fight union drives with high-paid proxies and nobody knows about it," Tedeschi said. "Now we'll have full disclosure. It's the right thing, and about time."



Trump International Hotel workers in Las Vegas are asking the big boss to live up to his published, pro-union pronouncements of the past. So far, no luck.

Trump Dumps on Hotel Workers

In his book, "The America We Deserve," Donald Trump hails organized labor and says "unions still have a place in American society."

But something changed since the billionaire real estate mogul – now the GOP presidential nominee – publicized his pro-union view in 2000. Just ask his employees at Trump International Hotel in Las Vegas.

They voted to organize late last year but Trump executives "have fought unionization every step of the way," according to the online publication Labor News Up to the Minute.

Trump management filed 15 objections with the National Labor Relations Board – all subsequently withdrawn by management or dismissed by the NLRB which certified the Culinary Workers Union and Bartenders Union as bargaining agents, the story said.

Despite NLRB action, Trump refused to negotiate and filed for another review.

What gives?

The guy who said in his book "unions are about the only political force reminding us to remember the American working family" now is trying to crush labor at his big Vegas property.

With an eye on the Oval Office, Trump may want to avoid "looking weak in a presidential campaign," said University of Nevada, Las Vegas political scientist David Damore, according to the Labor News article.

Whatever the reason for Trump's turnaround, GCC/IBT president George Tedeschi said it meant trouble. "Union members should remember this at election time as his true anti-worker feelings come out."

MARCUS HEDGER WINS REINSTATEMENT

A six-year legal battle involving a nationally publicized GCC/IBT case recently ended when a federal court ruled that Fort Dearborn Co. illegally fired press operator Marcus Hedger in retaliation for union activities and ordered reinstatement and back pay.

A unanimous decision by the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals stated that Hedger, a member of GCC/IBT Local 458-M, Chicago, was terminated for engaging in protected activities in his role as chief steward and chief negotiator.

Hedger — who lost his home to foreclosure following the illegal firing in August 2010 and was forced to take a job at one-third his normal pay — said the victory was not just for him, but every union member.

“Some employers are like schoolyard bullies,” Hedger said. “We showed them that this was our schoolyard, too, and that if they want to exist that they are going to have to share it with us.”

The Hedger case drew wide attention. The AFL-CIO produced a YouTube video, “It’s Un-American: The Marcus Hedger Story.” The Graphic Communicator and Huffington Post covered the story and Hedger testified before a U.S. Senate committee.

Hedger’s troubles began during bitter bargaining sessions in 2010 when Fort Dearborn’s vice president, William Johnstone, told Hedger he would “watch, catch and fire” him if he could.

Shortly after, Hedger brought a friend into the Niles, Illinois, label-making plant during his late-night shift for a brief visit. Co-workers testified this was not uncommon, but the company said the visit was not permitted and suspended Hedger and then later fired him.

“Hedger’s union activity was a motivating factor in his suspension and termination,” the court’s ruling stated, upholding the NLRB decision. “There is ample evidence that Johnstone issued the ‘watch, catch, and fire’ threat to Hedger, and the board was entitled to draw an inference of anti-union motivation from that.”

GCC/IBT attorney Tom Allison said he is working with the NLRB to calculate back pay: “We look forward to Marcus Hedger returning to his job and getting made whole for the years of loss that he suffered. This is a great victory for everyone here.”

Local leaders say the case proves the value of courage and perseverance. “It’s unfortunate Brother Hedger had to go through this experience, but we are very proud of his strong union stance on behalf of not only himself, but any other members in the future who are wrongly terminated,” said Paul Mancillas, president Local 458-M.

Hedger said he could not have endured the ordeal had it not been for the union’s support. “All I want to do is be able to do my job with dignity and respect and be able to work in harmony with my co-workers,” Hedger said. “I hope the company doesn’t stand in the way of that.”



Hedger: Time to show employers who act like bullies ‘this is our schoolyard, too.’

PHOTO BY DAVID ISHAC



EASTERN CONFERENCE RETURNS IN 2017

The North American Eastern Conference, cancelled this year in order to give priority to the June GCC/IBT international convention in Las Vegas, will be held again next year with a top-notch lineup of speakers and workshops.

“We talked it over and decided it would be better to have the local delegates attend the convention but that we’d pick it up again next year,” said Harry Selnow, Eastern Conference vice president and president of GCC/IBT Local 612-M, Caldwell, New Jersey.

Next year’s conference will offer information about grievance, arbitration and federal mediation, dental and pension plans and contract updates. Typically, about 100 people attend the conference, held in Atlantic City late April or early May.

“We are looking forward to making it educational and interesting for the locals,” Selnow said. “It’s a great place to learn things and get to meet other people.”



D.C. LOCAL TO PRINT HARRIET TUBMAN CURRENCY

GCC/IBT members at the U.S. Department of the Treasury’s Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP) in Washington, D.C., will help break the “paper ceiling” when they begin producing new currency with an image of abolitionist Harriet Tubman on the \$20 bill.

The replacement of Andrew Jackson, a slaveholder, with Tubman, a former slave who led hundreds of others to freedom, will be the most sweeping change made to U.S. currency in a century.

Government officials also plan to add women and civil rights leaders to the \$5 and \$10 bills, including Sojourner Truth, Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Martin Luther King Jr.

“I think it’s a very positive and inevitable change that was a long time coming,” said Howard Brown, president of GCC/IBT Local 1C, Washington, D.C. He said Local 1-C workers “are looking forward to producing that currency.”

The final redesigns should be complete by 2020, the centennial of the 19th Amendment establishing women’s suffrage, but will not go into wide circulation until later in the decade.

A 1913 obituary in the New York Times announcing the death of Tubman stated that she was “known as the ‘Moses of her people,’ who before the Civil War took 300 slaves to Canada through what became known as the ‘underground railroad.’”

The GCC/IBT represents hundreds of workers at the BEP plant in Washington, D.C. and a satellite installation in Fort Worth, Texas.

Note: Local Stops wants to hear from you. If your GCC/IBT local has been involved in organizing efforts, community outreach or volunteer work, e-mail a brief summary to dawnhobbs@cox.net.

SOLIDARITY ASSURES VICTORY IN IOWA UNION DRIVE

Workers at the Bemis Company in Centerville, Iowa, recently voted to join the GCC/IBT and became the newest members of Local 727-S in Des Moines.

The four-month campaign at the flexible packing manufacturer, where there are 213 employees, began when workers contacted the union with complaints about workplace conditions, GCC/IBT officials said.

“The workers were tired of the constant abuse and mistreatment by local management and decided enough was enough and that they needed a union,” said Andre Johnson, president of GCC/IBT Local 727-S, Des Moines, Iowa, who worked on the campaign with member Mark Cooper and GCC/IBT organizers Rick Street and Rickey Putman.

Putman noted he was impressed with the tenacity of the employees from the first time they met.

“They worked hard educating their coworkers and combating a brutal company campaign against them,” Putman said. “We can now all be proud that they are officially our brothers and sisters in the GCC.”

The organizing drive demonstrated what solidarity can accomplish, Johnson said. “This is a true testament of what people can do when they come together with the goal of fighting for their rights in the workplace,” he said. “An employee without the support of a union is simply at the mercy of the employer.”



Les travailleurs « luttent pour leur survie » se sont fait dire les délégués du congrès

Par Fred Bruning
Graphic Communicator

Réunis à l'occasion du troisième congrès de la CCG-FIT à Las Vegas, les représentants syndicaux, délégués de tout le pays et principaux dirigeants des Teamsters se sont engagés à protéger la base syndicale contre l'injustice au travail et à bâtir un mouvement syndical plus fort en dépit de la conjoncture économique, de l'incertitude politique et des féroces manœuvres antisindicales menées par les gros intérêts financiers.

« Quand les gens saisissent l'occasion, ça se voit », a déclaré George Tedeschi, président de la CCG-FIT. Les participants au congrès qui s'est tenu du 23 au 25 juin ont décrété qu'il était essentiel de montrer de la force et de la solidarité face à la montée en puissance de Donald Trump comme candidat républicain potentiel à la présidence, aux bouleversements financiers mondiaux et à l'obstruction de Washington.

L'échec pourrait être fatal.

« Nous avons un combat à livrer, a dit James P. Hoffa, président général de la FIT aux délégués de la CCG-FIT. Nous voulons faire en sorte que vous soyez ici dans 100 ans. »

Ken Hall, secrétaire-trésorier général de la FIT, a aussi lancé un avertissement.

Les frères Koch, des milliardaires, et l'American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), un groupe d'affaires fantôme, sont

de ceux qui poursuivent un but unique – « éliminer la classe moyenne » – en concentrant la richesse chez quelques-uns et en minant le mouvement syndical, a indiqué K. Hall. « Les cinglés de l'aile droite... tout ce qu'ils veulent c'est détruire le travail syndiqué. »

Robert Lacey, secrétaire-trésorier et vice-président de la CCG-FIT a abondé en son sens. « Nous vivons des temps difficiles, pleins de défis. Les forces politiques antisindicales ont ouvertement déclaré la guerre aux syndicats. »

Des événements ont continué à se produire ailleurs dans le monde pendant que les conférenciers livraient leur message.

« Britain Stuns the World With Vote to Leave E.U. titrait le New York Times sur son site Web, en évoquant la décision historique des électeurs britanniques de quitter l'Union européenne dans le cadre d'un mouvement désormais connu sous le nom de Brexit. »

Donald Trump n'a pas tardé à évoquer le vote en faveur du « départ » – encouragé en grande partie par le sentiment anti-immigrant qui balaie l'Europe. « Je pense que c'est une excellente chose », a affirmé le magnat de l'immobilier alors qu'il était en Écosse pour faire la promotion d'un de ses terrains de golf. Selon la BBC, il aurait déclaré qu'« il y a des gens en colère dans le monde entier. »

Outre sa position dure sur l'immigration et ses idées controversées sur un certain nombre d'enjeux intérieurs des États-Unis, le promoteur immobilier de Manhattan serait

une menace pour les travailleurs, a fait savoir Christie Bailey, directrice des actions politiques et législatives des Teamsters aux délégués de la CCG-FIT.

Selon C. Bailey, Trump soutient la loi sur le droit au travail – « le droit de travailler pour moins » selon ses propres termes – et il a dit en entrevue que le candidat républicain « soutiendrait un programme antisindical » s'il était élu. G. Tedeschi a prévenu par la suite que « si Trump devient président pour une raison parfaitement aberrante » et le parti républicain conserve le contrôle du Congrès, « c'est le pays tout entier qui pourrait être assujéti au droit de travailler ».

Le président Tedeschi a prévenu les délégués de ne pas se laisser distraire par les enjeux controversés que les républicains brandissent souvent pour diviser le pays, et il a remis en question la sincérité et les compétences de Trump.

« Il promet beaucoup de choses mais ne dit pas comment il va s'y prendre, sauf qu'il va recruter les meilleurs. Et qui sont au juste les 'meilleurs'? Trump ne le dit pas et ne le sait probablement pas. Je ne crois pas que Donald Trump soit la solution. »

Selon Christy Bailey, si Trump est battu en novembre, les démocrates ont une chance de reprendre le contrôle du Sénat américain – et peut-être même de la Chambre des représentants. « Trump met en jeu plus de courses à la Chambre. Nous devons regagner des sièges. »

L'action politique est essentielle, mais les

syndiqués doivent poursuivre leurs efforts pour renforcer le mouvement syndical de l'intérieur, ont affirmé les conférenciers.

Étant donné le déclin des membres partout au pays, il est plus important que jamais de rebâtir les rangs, ont affirmé Rickey Putman et Rick Street, des organisateurs de la CCG-FIT.

Dans une longue présentation soulignant l'urgence de bâtir la base de membres, R. Putman et R. Street ont invité tous les membres du syndicat à se considérer comme des organisateurs – un genre de « garde nationale », selon les termes de R. Putman, dont la mission consiste à préserver la CCG-FIT et le mouvement syndical. « Si nous ne le faisons pas, il ne reste qu'à éteindre la lumière. »

R. Street a lancé un signal d'alarme similaire. « Mes sœurs et mes frères, a-t-il dit aux 117 délégués des 61 sections locales et aux 90 invités participant au congrès, nous luttons pour notre survie. »

R. Putman a circulé avec un micro sans fil parmi les délégués assis et leur a demandé de parler des succès - petits et grands - de leurs efforts de recrutement.

Mike LaSpina, président de la section locale 406-C de Long Island, a raconté que son unité a récemment recruté un groupe de travailleurs d'amNew York, un quotidien gratuit publié par Newsday.

« Ils n'étaient que 12, mais il suffit de 12 pour commencer une révolution. »

omme l'a dit R. Street, le message était clair : « Recrutez! Recrutez! Recrutez! »

Mensaje a los delegados: El sindicalismo lucha hoy por su vida.

Por Fred Bruning
Graphic Communicator

Dirigentes sindicales, delegados de todo el país e importantes líderes de los Teamsters, reunidos durante la tercera convención de GCC/IBT en Las Vegas, prometieron proteger a los sindicalizados contra la injusticia en el lugar de trabajo y fortalecer el movimiento sindical en el entorno de nerviosismo por la economía, incertidumbre política y feroz manipulación por parte de intereses bien financiados.

« Cuando la gente sabe responder a las circunstancias, eso se nota », dijo George Tedeschi, presidente de GCC/IBT. Contra el telón de fondo del ascenso de Donald Trump como presunto candidato presidencial republicano, grandes trastornos en la economía global y parálisis en Washington, los asistentes a la convención manifestaron en la reunión del 23 al 25 de junio que lo esencial era demostrar fuerza y solidaridad.

El fracaso podría ser una sentencia de muerte.

« Estamos en plena batalla », dijo James P. Hoffa, presidente general de IBT, a los delegados de GCC/IBT. « Queremos garantizar que seguirán ustedes aquí dentro de 100 años. »

Ken Hall, secretario general y tesorero de IBT, lanzó también una advertencia.

Los multimillonarios hermanos Koch y un tenebroso grupo de hombres de negocios que se hace llamar el *American Legislative Exchange Council* (ALEC) se encuentran entre los más dedicados a un solo fin, « la desaparición de la clase media », mediante la consolidación de la riqueza en unos pocos y la debilitación del sindicalismo, dijo Hall. « Fanáticos de la dere-

cha ... que lo único que quieren es destruir el movimiento laboral. »

Robert Lacey, secretario-tesorero y vicepresidente de GCC/IBT, le dio la razón. « Vivimos en tiempos difíciles y llenos de retos », dijo. « Las fuerzas políticas antisindicalistas nos han declarado abiertamente la guerra. »

En los mismos momentos en que los líderes lanzaban este mensaje, otros acontecimientos continuaban desarrollándose en el mundo exterior.

« Gran Bretaña deja atónito al mundo con el voto a favor de salir de la Unión Europea », decía un titular en la web del New York Times, que seguía relatando cómo los votantes británicos habían tomado la drástica decisión de abandonar la Unión, en un movimiento que vino a llamarse el « Brexit ».

El voto a favor de la salida, alentado en gran medida por la hostilidad hacia la inmigración que se extiende por toda Europa, recibió pronto la aprobación de Donald Trump. « Creo que es una gran cosa », dijo el magnate del mundo inmobiliario, que se encontraba en Escocia para promover uno de sus campos de golf. « La gente está furiosa en todo el mundo », dijo Trump según la cadena de radio británica BBC.

Aparte de su dura postura contra la inmigración y sus controvertidas opiniones sobre un buen número de asuntos internos de los EE.UU., el promotor inmobiliario neoyorquino sería una grave amenaza para el sindicalismo, les dijo Christy Bailey, directora de acción política y legislativa de los Teamsters, a los delegados de GCC/IBT.

Bailey dijo que Trump apoya la legislación del « derecho al trabajo » (el término que utilizó fue « derecho a trabajar por menos ») y

añadió en una entrevista que el candidato preferido del partido republicano « apoyaría un programa antisindicalista » si era elegido. Tedeschi advirtió más tarde que si « por alguna locura tuviéramos un Presidente Trump » y el partido republicano mantuviera el control del Congreso, el « derecho al trabajo » podría imponerse en todo el país. »

El presidente Tedeschi aconsejó a los delegados que no se dejaran distraer por las cuestiones conflictivas que con frecuencia ponen de por medio los republicanos para dividir el país, y cuestionó la sinceridad y los antecedentes de Trump.

« Promete mucho pero no nos dice cómo lo va a conseguir, excepto que contratará a los mejores expertos », dijo Tedeschi, añadiendo: « ¿Pero y quiénes son esos grandes expertos? Trump no lo dice y probablemente no lo sabe. No creo que sea él la solución. »

Si Trump no obtiene buenos resultados en noviembre, dijo Christy Bailey, los demócratas tienen la posibilidad de recuperar el control del Senado de los EE.UU., y quizá incluso de la Cámara de Representantes. « Trump nos está complicando la carrera de las candidaturas escaño por escaño en la Cámara », dijo. « Tenemos que recuperar mayor número de escaños. »

La actividad política es esencial, pero los sindicalistas tienen que continuar trabajando para fortalecer el movimiento laboral desde dentro, manifestaron los oradores.

Puesto que, en todo el país, los sindicatos tienen cada vez menos afiliados, es más importante que nunca que aumentemos el número de trabajadores sindicalizados, dijeron Rickey Putman y Rick Street, organizadores de GCC/IBT.

In a lengthy presentation emphasizing the urgency of building the membership base, Putman and Street encouraged individual union members to view themselves as organizers – a kind of « National Guard », Putman said, with a mission to preserve the GCC/IBT and the union movement. « If we don't do this, your option is to just turn off the lights, » he warned.

Durante una prolongada presentación en la que recalcaron la urgencia de atraer nuevos miembros, Putman y Street animaron a cada afiliado a considerarse a sí mismo como un organizador, miembro de una especie de « Defensores Nacionales », dijo Putman, cuya misión es preservar la GCC/IBT y el movimiento sindical. « Si no lo conseguimos, la alternativa es apagar las luces y se acabó », advirtió.

Street hizo sonar una alarma similar. « Hermanos y hermanas », dijo a los 117 delegados de 61 locales y a los 90 invitados que asistieron a la convención, « estamos luchando para sobrevivir ».

Micrófono inalámbrico en mano, Putman circuló entre las filas de asistentes de los delegados y pidió que relataran ejemplos de esfuerzos de organización exitosos, grandes o pequeños.

Mike LaSpina, presidente de la Local 406-C, Long Island, dijo que su unidad había reclutado recientemente un contingente de trabajadores de amNew York, un diario gratuito publicado por Newsday.

« Eran solo 12 personas, pero 12 personas pueden empezar una revolución », dijo LaSpina.

La lección estaba clara, dijo Street: « ¡Organizar! ¡Organizar! ¡Organizar! »

Unions Still Aiding Flint Water Victims

By Dawn Hobbs

Recent criminal indictments in the Flint water crisis – prompted, in part, by pressure from labor unions – were a step in the right direction but labor leaders vowed to continue the effort until all officials involved in the scandal are held accountable, including Michigan’s Republican governor.

Though Flint’s 100,000 residents – most, poor and black – had been drinking, cooking and bathing in the tainted water for 18 months, Governor Rick Snyder didn’t respond until last fall when tests revealed high levels of lead in children. Doctors and community activists had warned earlier that behavioral problems, nervous system ailments and thwarted intellectual development can result but officials consistently downplayed the dangers.

Additionally, 12 people have died from an outbreak of Legionnaires’ disease, which experts say is linked to the contaminated water. More than 100 others have been diagnosed with the deadly disease.

“It was not only the persistent pressure from labor unions and the Democratic Party that caused the increased scrutiny which led to the indictments, but also the continuous publicizing of the situation that finally swayed the Republican leadership to get serious,” said Steve Nobles, secretary-treasurer of GCC/IBT District Council 3 and president of Local 2/289-M, Detroit, which represents about 75 workers in Flint.

Flint’s problems began two years ago when, in a cost-cutting move, officials ordered city water drawn from the Flint River instead of Lake Huron. Tainted by dangerously high levels of lead from the city’s aging service lines, contaminated water leached into the public supply.



Teamster General President James Hoffa said ‘no one in this country’ should have to face a crisis of the sort endured by residents of Flint, Michigan, and GCC/IBT District Council 3 joined IBT Joint Council 43 to assist neighbors still struggling with the effects of tainted city water.

Two officials with the state Department of Environmental Quality and a Flint city water official face felony charges, including misconduct, neglect of duty and conspiracy to tamper with evidence. They’ve also been charged with violating Michigan’s Safe Drinking Water Act.

“The criminal indictments are warranted to ensure this never happens again,” Nobles said. “But it cannot stop with low-level officials — it must continue right up the ladder to the governor.”

In the meantime, GCC/IBT District Council 3 continues to work with Teamsters Joint Council 43 to assist Flint residents.

“We have shifted our emphasis from sending bottled water to raising the money needed to help residents buy water filters and get the needed infrastructure in place to move forward,” Nobles said.

The situation in Flint was condemned by President Barack Obama who declared a state of emergency and visited the city

to check on remedial action. Earlier this year, IBT General President James Hoffa said “no one in this country” should have to deal with the sort of crisis confronting Flint residents and warned that “communities nationwide could face a similar public health emergency if elected officials don’t act to beef up U.S. water infrastructure.”

An Associated Press analysis of EPA data found that nearly 1,400 water systems serving 3.6 million Americans exceeded the federal lead standard at least once between the start of 2013 and last September.

GCC/IBT President George Tedeschi called the Flint situation a “national disgrace” and urged voters to hold elected officials accountable.

“This November, we must elect leaders at every level who are determined to protect our people, not put them at risk,” Tedeschi said.

Howie Maresca ‘Just Kept Going’

By Fred Bruning

Graphic Communicator

Howie Maresca, a member of Local 2-N, just retired from the plate room of the New York Times.

That was news.

Maresca, 88, was featured by the paper in “Times Insider,” a premium digital service that takes subscribers behind the scenes of the nation’s most prominent daily.

In a lengthy word-and-photo presentation, Times Insider recalled Maresca’s lengthy career as an electroplater – a job nearly eliminated by technological advances.

“The Man Who Outlived the Electroplate Industry – and Just Kept Going,” read the headline.

Maresca, who lives with his wife, Marie, 83, in the Long Island suburb of Valley Stream, began his career apprenticing at the Flower Electroplating Co. in Manhattan after three years in the U.S. Marine Corps.

He became a skilled practitioner of what was then one of the print industry’s most demanding tasks. “In the heyday of my career I was an electrotype finisher,” Maresca recalled in an interview with the Communicator. Now, he said, “the whole industry is gone.”

Maresca picked up extra shifts at newspapers and eventually went to work for the New York Daily News. He retired from the News at age 62 but two years later was working again – at the Times. “They needed an assistant foreman and asked me to come back,” Maresca said.

As a member first of the stereotypers union and later the GCIU – now the GCC/IBT – Maresca says he was always sure of a job.

“The union was the savior of my life,” he said. Added Marie Maresca: “He’s a union man through and through.” Local 2-N president John Heffernan recalled that Maresca at one point stepped down as foreman so that a fellow union member could fill the slot. “Such a great union man – and self-sacrificing,” said Heffernan.

At the Times 515,000-square-foot plant in College Point, Queens, Maresca worked the 8 p.m.-4 a.m. shift four nights a week.



Now that he’s finally retired as a New York Times electroplater, Howie Maresca will make traveling a top priority. With his wife, Marie, Maresca already has visited 65 countries – this 2014 photo was taken in the Bahamas – and the couple says there are many miles yet to go.

The New York Times

He inspected plates and made certain they were in proper order – cyan on the bottom, then magenta, yellow, and black on top. Much of the work required computer skills – and Maresca adapted nicely. “I’m getting better at it,” he said in the Times Insider story.

But after nearly 70 years in the business, enough finally was enough.

Maresca says this retirement is his last. He has plenty of little jobs to do around the house. He hopes to get to nearby Belmont Park to watch the horses run. And traveling is high on the agenda.

Maresca and his wife have been all over the world – he counts visits to 65 countries, including China (twice), New Zealand and Thailand – and already are planning a Caribbean cruise, or tour of California, next winter. Closer to home is the Marescas’ son, Bill, and his family in New Jersey.

Though he is happy to be off the production floor, Maresca said he cherishes his newspaper years. He recalled the excitement of the job and “starter time rush” when presses were about to roll. “It’s marvelous,” he said.

\$400? Can’t Afford It!

While CEO pay continues to rocket – Expedia’s Dara Khosrowshahi earned \$94.6 million last year and Robert Iger of Disney scored \$43.5 million, for example – ordinary Americans remain stuck on the economic launch pad.



Neal Gabler

A recent Atlantic magazine story by writer and professor Neal Gabler cited this astounding nugget from a Federal Reserve Board survey: If faced with a \$400 emergency, 47 percent of those responding said they would have to borrow the money,

sell something to raise the dough or simply not be able to pay the bill.

As Gabler comments: “Four hundred dollars! Who knew?”

Gabler promptly answers his own question: He knew.

Despite his professional standing and decent employment, Gabler said various financial decisions put him, and his family, in the \$400 risk group. “I know what it’s like to have to borrow money from my daughters because my wife and I ran out of heating oil,” he admits.

Union people are protected by contracts that protect middle class status. Not everyone is as fortunate.

As Gabler noted, the American Dream of upward mobility is out of reach for millions and, not surprisingly, people are angry – clear, he says, in this year’s raucous, blame-filled brawl of a presidential campaign. Not much is likely to change anytime soon, Gabler says. “... hope doesn’t come easily anymore.”



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Leaders Urge Political Action

Continued from page 1

ment, Hall said. "Right-wing nut cases...all they want to do is destroy organized labor."

Robert Lacey, GCC/IBT secretary-treasurer/vice president, agreed. "We live in challenging, difficult times," he said. "Anti-union political forces have openly declared war on labor unions."

As speakers delivered their message, outside events continued to unfold.

"Britain Stuns the World With Vote to Leave E.U.," said a headline on the New York Times website, followed by an account of the dramatic decision by British voters to quit the European Union in a move that became known as "Brexit."

The "leave" vote – fostered in large part by anti-immigrant sentiment sweeping Europe – soon was hailed by Donald Trump. "I think it's a great thing," said the real estate mogul while in Scotland promoting one of his golf courses.

He said anti E.U. voters had "taken back their country" and that a nationalistic mood was spreading overseas and in the United States. "People are angry all over the world," Trump said, according to the BBC.

Aside from Trump's harsh stand on immigration and controversial views on a number of U.S. domestic issues, the Manhattan real estate developer would pose a threat to labor, GCC/IBT delegates were told by Christie Bailey, director of political and legislative action for the Teamsters.

Bailey said Trump supports right-to-work legislation – her term was "right-to-work-for-less" – and added in an interview that the GOP frontrunner "would support an anti-union agenda," if elected. Tedeschi also warned later that if "for some crazy reason we have a President Trump" and the GOP maintains Congressional control "this whole country could be right-to-work."

Although Bailey said every election is important, this year's presidential race – with Trump in the mix – is particularly momentous.

Bailey echoed a theme often sounded by Tedeschi and Lacey: Union people must become involved and "understand the importance of politics." And they must vote. "No one



Teamster General President James Hoffa rallied GCC/IBT convention delegates in Las Vegas with good wishes and a promise of continued friendship and cooperation.

does a better job of turning out the vote than the Teamsters," Bailey said.

Moving to a microphone in the Sunset Ballroom of the Flamingo Las Vegas hotel, Ron Violand, vice president and secretary-treasurer of Local 8-N, Newark, said union voters must support candidates who "reach out and help people" and put public service before self-interest.

In an impromptu plea for compassion in public life, Violand said he was weary of elected officials who promised never to raise taxes but rarely spoke of aiding the most vulnerable in society or protecting the middle class. "The economic and political are connected," Violand said – a reality well known in the labor movement, he said, but too often forgotten by politicians.

Along the same lines, President Tedeschi warned delegates not to be distracted by wedge issues often employed by Republicans to divide the country and questioned the candor and qualifications of Donald Trump.

"He promises a lot but doesn't tell you how he'll do it except that he'll hire the best people," Tedeschi said. "Well, who are the 'best people?' Trump doesn't say, and likely doesn't know. I don't think Donald Trump is the answer."

Frank Rak, former recording secretary of the North American Newspaper Conference and a retired member of Local 3-N, Boston, also slammed the Trump candidacy.

"Donald Trump is a total fraud," said Rak, who has a keen

interest in politics. "He's been bankrupt several times and has a record of not paying his contractors. He is notoriously anti-union and would be an utter disaster for the American labor movement."

If Trump does poorly in November, said Christy Bailey, Democrats have a chance to regain control of the U.S. Senate – and perhaps even the House of Representatives. "Trump puts more House races in play," she said. "We have to take back seats."

While political action is essential, union people must continue efforts to strengthen the labor movement from within, speakers said.

With union membership declining throughout the country, rebuilding the rank-and-file has never been more important, said GCC/IBT organizers Rickey Putman and Rick Street.

In a presentation emphasizing the urgency of building the membership base, Putman and Street encouraged individual union members to view themselves as organizers – a kind of "National Guard," Putman said, with a mission to preserve the GCC/IBT and the union movement. "If we don't do this, your option is to just turn off the lights," he warned.

Street sounded a similar alarm. "Brothers and sisters," he told the 117 delegates from 61 locals and 90 guests attending the convention, "we are in a fight for our survival."

The two organizers cited a recent successful union drive at Bemis Co. Inc. in Centerville, Iowa, that added approximately 200 members to the rolls of Local 727-S, Des Moines.

With the assistance of 727-S president Andre Johnson, organizers countered company scare tactics with house-to-house canvassing, video commentary from workers and YouTube postings underscoring the advantages of unionization – including the impact of a decent contract on union households.

"It's not just representing the members but members of the family," Putman said. "That's who you're helping."

Using a cordless microphone, Putman circulated through rows of seated delegates and asked for stories of successful organizing efforts, large or small.

Mike LaSpina, president of Local 406-C, Long Island, said his unit recently brought aboard a contingent of workers at amNew York, a free daily paper published by Newsday.

"It was only 12 people, but 12 people can start a revolution," LaSpina said.

The lesson was clear, said Street: "Organize! Organize! Organize!"

Funny Business



"The problems really started when we went from here an oink, there an oink, to everywhere an oink oink."

