

# THE COMMUNICATOR



Volume 4 Number 2 | Printing Packaging & Production Workers Union of North America | Apr.-May-June 2026

**Star Trib  
Outsources  
Its Print  
Operation**



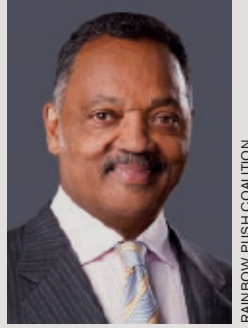
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**Aggressive  
ICE Tactics  
Denounced by  
Union Members**



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**Jesse Jackson Was  
Strong Advocate  
Of Unions and  
Workers' Rights**



RAINBOW PUSH COALITION

PAGE 13

## Labor Forms 'Line of Defense' Against Threats to Democracy



DAVID & LUCILLE PACKARD FOUNDATION VIA GOOGLE IMAGES

By Fred Bruning  
*The Communicator*

Faced with unprecedented challenges to union rights and the nation's cherished democratic institutions, organized labor is responding on a number of fronts to what leaders say are the Trump administration's frequent provocations and regressive, anti-worker policies.

Union officials are lining up to denounce harsh tactics by the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), express outrage at mass firings of federal workers, support nationwide "No Kings" protests against authoritarian rule, condemn attacks on government agencies like the NLRB and warn of economic chaos related to the tariff policies of President Donald Trump.

Also drawing criticism from labor leaders and workers' rights advocates is the worrisome influence on Trump of wealthy entrepreneurs – many hostile to unions and organizing efforts.

"Trump's actions...reveal a clear and consistent effort to make life less affordable for working people in order to serve the interests of his billionaire and corporate backers," said Celine McNicholas, director of policy/general counsel at the nonprofit Economic Policy Institute.

*continues on* PAGE 8

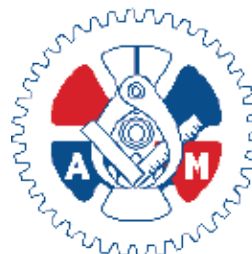
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### James Santangelo Tapped As Secretary-Treasurer; PPPWU-IAM Merger Possibility Advances

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LOCAL 1-L PHOTO

**Benevolent Trust Fund:** This issue of The Communicator contains the Summary Annual Report for the Benevolent Trust Fund, including important information about your rights under the plan and under ERISA which should be read and retained for future reference. PAGE 16

ISRAEL CASTRO PPPWU PRESIDENT

## Eventful Times for Our Success-Bound And Resilient Union

WE ARE A UNION ON THE MOVE – IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE.

PPPWU organizers are aggressively working to increase our numbers. We have a new secretary-treasurer in Jim Santangelo of Local 1-L, New York, a talented and dedicated union professional and welcome addition to the leadership team. We are streamlining procedures and looking with confidence toward the future.



And, of major importance, we are heading toward a partnership with one of the nation's most powerful and well-respected unions, the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers recently rebranded as IAM Union.

Founded in 1888, the Machinists remain a model labor organization – honest, fearless, and always putting members first. Its leaders are smart, straight-forward and highly motivated. IAM's record in the fight for racial equality and human rights is widely admired.

The IAM – membership, 600,000 – speaks out relentlessly for working people at a time when self-dealing billionaires and high-tech titans gain more influence in the White House and on Capitol Hill.

“We believe it is a natural right of working people to enjoy to the full extent the wealth created by their labor,” the IAM says in a mission statement. Principles of “solidarity and justice” will show the way forward, the IAM said.

As noted in a Communicator story beginning on Page 5, important decisions must be made before any alliance with IAM Union is complete.

In May, we will hold a special convention in Baltimore to vote on whether to take the next step toward a merger.

If convention delegates approve the proposition, the question goes to the rank-and-file for their approval. Every member will have a voice in the process.

From my point of view, this is a rare opportunity.

Like most labor organizations, the PPPWU has been losing members through attrition and technological advances that have revolutionized our primary sectors – printing, packaging and production.

That's the reality – but we never have been defeated by change.

We are going to meet the moment, adjust and prosper.

For more than 100 years, our union has overcome every challenge. We'll do nothing less in the 21st Century – count on it.

Joining forces with IAM Union is the next step.

In our meetings with President Brian Bryant and other top IAM officials at their large, modern Maryland headquarters, PPPWU representatives have been greeted with enthusiasm and treated with respect.

Talks were productive. Our concerns were taken seriously, and we have an agreement that addresses those concerns.

We will preserve our autonomy – giving us the opportunity to make the best decisions for the PPPWU – while joining ranks with one of North America's most respected unions.

The Machinists are not exactly strangers, as you know. Their members already work side-by-side with our own people at many plants around the country. Now we have a chance to be colleagues in the same union – brothers and sisters of the IAM.

Eventful times are ahead.

As I visit shops and district councils, I tell officers and members how proud I am to represent the PPPWU. I tell them we are a resilient labor organization certain to succeed. I remind them of our noble history, great contracts and loyal membership.

Now we go forward. A bright future awaits.

## OUTLOOK

HAROLD MEYERSON

## Labor Law Reform Must be Top Priority

WHILE PRESIDENT TRUMP WAGES WAR ON UNIONS – IN only one example, he canceled bargaining rights for a million federal workers – the number and share of union members grew in 2025 for the first time in many years.

Gains weren't huge but any increase following decades of decline was news in itself.

Union membership grew by 463,000 in 2025, which boosted the overall share of union members in the American workforce from 9.9 percent to 10 percent, while the unionized share of private-sector workers stayed steady at 5.9 percent.

Most of the growth came among public-sector workers whose unionized ranks increased in the local, state, and even a federal workforce targeted for layoffs by Trump.

This is just the way things work.

Almost any governmental entity is more open to its workers unionizing than almost any private employer. Elected officials are answerable to voters – including union members – while corporate executives are answerable only to major investors and the gods of Wall Street.

Why are Americans now more willing to join unions?

The most recent Gallup survey found a near-record 68 percent of Americans have a favorable view of unions.

That number rests on several sturdy pillars: the crisis of affordability, the growing distrust of corporations, and the sense that Trump is in bed with mega-rich CEOs, all of whom, very much including Trump himself, portend nothing good for American workers.



THE AMERICAN PROSPECT

It's no accident that the age group that gives unions their highest approval rating is those under 35, which is also the age group that gives Trump his lowest approval rating.

But the obstacle to even greater growth is an outdated labor law which effectively gives employers a free ride to illegally bust unions, most particularly by illegally firing workers involved in an organizing campaign.

Our labor law now permits Amazon to refuse to negotiate with thousands of warehouse workers and drivers, just as

Starbucks likewise stonewalls thousands of baristas who've voted decisively to unionize their workplaces.

Only the decrepit condition of a law intended to enable organizing explains how the gap between 68 percent support for unions and a bare 10 percent actual unionization grew so astonishingly wide.

Any American concerned about the declining share of the national income going to workers, and the rising share going to wealthy investors since roughly 1980 must make the reform of labor law a paramount priority.

Harold Meyerson is editor at large at The American Prospect magazine. This piece first appeared on the American Prospect website, prospect.org, and is reprinted with permission of the author.



## THE COMMUNICATOR

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## In Challenging Times, the Soul of Unionism Prevails

THE GOVERNMENT'S WINTER SURGE IN Minneapolis aimed at rounding up undocumented immigrants drew thousands of protesters outraged by the strong-arm tactics of ICE and other federal officers. One was PPPWU member Mike Wirig of Local 11-M.



Wirig learned two other 11-M members – American citizens of Hispanic heritage – had frightening encounters with federal agents and wanted to show solidarity.

“We need to be looking out for one another,” said Wirig, who traveled two hours to join a huge crowd demanding ICE leave town. (Page 9)

In that short sentence, Wirig described the soul of unionism – and spirit of the PPPWU.

Our Page 1 Top Story explores how organized labor is confronting the anti-democratic, anti-union policies of the Trump administration with defiance and determination.

From firing federal workers and ending bargaining rights to undercutting the National Labor Relations Board and allowing billionaires enormous influence, Trump is proving to be an historic anti-worker president.

Labor is fighting back – filing lawsuits, supporting pro-worker political candidates, attending the hundreds of “No Kings” rallies around the country, and, without question, standing up for decency and human rights when it comes to immigration.

“As it becomes increasingly clear what a second Trump presidency means, America’s labor movement has positioned itself as democracy’s strongest, most important and best organized line of defense against a sweeping authoritarian agenda,” said a statement by a global alliance of public sector workers.

At the PPPWU, the sentiment expressed by Mike Wirig – standing strong with one another – also is evident.

Our international union also has been energized by the new leadership of President Israel Castro and Secretary-Treasurer James Santangelo. Castro and Santangelo are committed to an agenda of aggressive organizing, fiscal responsibility and member service – and a secure future for the PPPWU. (Page 5)

A smart way to achieve that bright future is partnership with a larger labor organization – one with a record of integrity and success.



And that’s where we are headed – toward a merger – and with a partner that meets every requirement.

PPPWU leaders have been in talks with counterparts at the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, now known simply as IAM Union, and optimistic about the a partnership.

The highly respected IAM Union, nearly 140 years old and with 600,000 members, offers a host of services and assures the PPPWU will maintain its autonomy.

IAM leaders are fully supportive – PPPWU and IAM members already work together in many shops – and ready to welcome us aboard, President Castro reports in his “Straight Talk” column. Joining with the IAM, he said,

represents a “rare opportunity.” (Page 2)

Before a new alliance is finalized, delegates to a special PPPWU convention in May must approve a merger resolution. If they do, the question goes to a vote of all members.

Leaders say an IAM partnership assures a productive future and trustworthy partner – one that gives the PPPWU a fresh start after the Teamsters abruptly scuttled the 2005 GCC/IBT merger agreement.

Time to leave the past behind, say PPPWU officials, seize the moment and start a new chapter in the union’s 100-year history.

Our outlook is filled with optimism but there is no question that organized labor faces challenges under the best of circumstances.

That was brought home recently when the Minnesota Star Tribune closed its downtown printing plant and outsourced work to a Gannett facility nearly 250 miles away in Des Moines, Iowa.

The disruption and dislocation that followed – sadly familiar as the newspaper business continues to shrink – was captured beautifully by Jeanne Marshall, wife of press operator Bob Marshall, in a touching Guest Spot essay. (Page 7)

As President Castro says, however, our union – all unions – cannot surrender or accept defeat. “We are going to meet the moment, adjust and prosper,” he says. That’s the spirit of the PPPWU – meeting the challenge, moving ahead, united in strength and solidarity.

*Correction: The January-February-March Managing Editor’s Note incorrectly stated the title of Deborah Morris in a reference to the September meeting of the Solidarity Conference in Atlanta. Morris, a Newsday reporter and member of Local 406-C, was installed as recording secretary of the Solidarity Conference, not Specialty Conference.* ■

### COMMENTARY JIM HIGHTOWER

## For Tech Lords Not Even Sky is the Limit

In my childhood years, I got to experience something I’ve cherished ever since: Starry nights.

I was lucky to spend time during the summers on my Aunt Eula’s and Uncle Ernest’s tenant farm in Northeast Texas. With no TV or electronics, we made our own entertainment in the evenings, including “turning on” nature’s Big Show.

This meant rolling an old bed outdoors as darkness fell, so we could lay back, look up, and marvel at the endless expanse of constellations, comets, the Milky Way, planets, and other wonders of the cosmos.

Today, though, 80 percent of Americans never see the starry night, for the artificial glare of city lights blots out nature’s spectacular display.

But wait – billionaires to the rescue!

Musk, Bezos, Zuckerberg, and other high-tech demigods who’re spending trillions to foist a brave new world of artificial intelligence on us, claim that their scheme will actually relight the night sky!

For real? Of course not.

It turns out that they can’t get enough cheap land and energy on Earth to supply the phantasmagoric sprawl of data centers their AI hustle will demand.

So, they’re going to put massive clusters of these systems into orbit, tethered to miles of solar mirrors stretching across our sky. While that means nature’s



stars-and-stuff will be even more obscured, they say that instead of watching the cosmos, we Earthlings can enjoy the artificial twinkle of their corporate data centers.

Lest you think that, surely they wouldn’t do this, note



that those arrogant billionaire Lords of the Night are already investing humongous sums of money in space data centers.

As the CEO of one called “Starcloud” bluntly says: “It’s not a debate. It’s going to happen.” ■

*Populist author, public speaker, and radio commentator Jim Hightower chronicles the ongoing fight by America’s ordinary people against rule by plutocratic elites. Subscription rates for Hightower Lowdown commentary available at <https://jimhightower.substack.com/>*

# Anti-Worker White House Can't Stop Union Growth

Despite a hostile White House and GOP-controlled Congress, the U.S. labor movement continues to post gains and draw wide public support.

The number of union members increased by 463,000 in two years, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the Gallup polling organization says public approval for organized labor has been in the 67-71 percent range since 2020.

Labor's impressive showing "occurred despite the nation's broken system of labor law and the most anti-union president in history," said an analysis by the Economic Policy Institute. "It is a testament to working people's resolve and the fact that unions are increasingly viewed favorably and recognized as critical instruments for building a just economy."

Union leaders hailed the encouraging results and steadfastness of the labor movement.

"We may not have the support of self-interested, anti-worker politicians in Washington but the American people are on our side and that matters most," said PPPWU President Israel Castro. "Our job now is to build on this momentum, gain strength, and go forward."

Liz Shuler, president of the AFL-CIO, also cheered labor's success in overcoming the odds.

"Billionaire bosses and union-busting politicians have tried to throw the kitchen sink at working people and their unions—slashing our jobs and rigging the rules to scare us out of organizing – but they are failing," Shuler said.

AFSCME President Lee Saunders said union strength is essential in an economy that allows wealthy corporate



**U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS**

leaders to enjoy enormous gains while working class people struggle to make ends meet.

"As corporations and billionaires continue to raise costs on everything from groceries to health care, workers understand that joining a union gives them the strength in numbers they need to fight for what they've earned, protect their freedoms and build a better future for their families," Saunders said. "Together, we're building an economy that puts working families first."

In a breakdown of the latest BLS statistics, EPI found:

- Unionization rose in both the private and public sectors.
- Private-sector union coverage increased by 227,000 in 2025. The unionization rate moved from 6.7 percent to 6.8.
- The unionization rate of federal workers went from 29.9 percent to 31.1 percent – largest single-year increase since 2011.

That gain – of 40,000 unionized federal workers – occurred even though the Trump administration slashed thousands of federal jobs.

Union coverage among workers under age 45 increased



CITY OF INDIANAPOLIS - MAYOR'S OFFICE VIA GOOGLE IMAGES

by 428,000, compared with an increase of 35,000 among workers age 45 and over.

Unionization among minority Americans increased more than among white workers.

Black workers continued to have the highest unionization rate of all major racial and ethnic groups.

Despite upbeat news, the labor movement could make even greater strides if workers seeking union representation were not hampered by "weak and outdated labor laws," EPI said.

Castro agreed.

Pushing for legislative reform while pursuing an aggressive organizing agenda should be top priorities, said the PPPWU leader.

"We must be politically active throughout the year and relentless in our efforts to increase membership – that's essential," he said. "Whatever the obstacles, whatever the opposition, we will prevail and overcome." ■

## Star Trib Plant Closing: 'This One Hurt'

By Dawn Hobbs  
Special to the Communicator

Jim Longerbone began working in the circulation department of the Minneapolis Star Tribune in high school. At 22, Longerbone landed a job in the pressroom and worked his way up to press operator.

"That place was my life," said Longerbone, 55, president of Local 11-M, St. Paul. "Those were my brothers and sisters there. They were family."

That long-time bond recently was severed when the paper – now the Minnesota Star Tribune – closed its Heritage Center print facility in Minneapolis and outsourced the work to a Gannett shop in Des Moines, Iowa.

The last paper was printed at Heritage in the city's North Loop on Dec. 27.

It was a sad day that left many in tears – and made grim comment on an industry undergoing drastic cost-cutting measures that threaten newspapers and their union workers.

"This one hurt," said Longerbone, who became president of Local 1-M – now Local 11-M – in 2014. "This was a very tough one for all of us."

Among those laid off was Robert Marshall, 56, a Star Tribune press operator since the mid-1990s.

"The brotherhood and the bond I made meant everything to me," said Marshall. "I've known these guys for 30 years. There were all the softball games, weddings, births, deaths. We were one big family."

His wife, Jeanne, said the pressroom often dictated life beyond the job – holiday and birthday celebrations skipped to make sure the paper was printed on time.

"We literally had our wedding and then our wedding reception around the shifts," she said.

Once, her husband rode a bike through a blizzard to reach the pressroom, said Jeanne Marshall who captured the Heritage closing in a heartfelt essay. (Guest Spot, Page 7)

Things are different now. "Last two blizzards they couldn't even get the paper here from Iowa," Marshall said. "Cost-cutting or technology does not replace dedication," she said.

More than half the 40 PPPWU press operators and paper handlers working at the Star Tribune had more than 25 years of service. Most others had been on the job for at least a decade.

For all, the sense of loss was profound.

"When the presses came to a halt that night it was really eerie," Bob Marshall said. "And it was so sad knowing that I'll never step back in that building or see most of those guys ever again."



Bob Marshall



JANE HELMKE | MINNESOTA PUBLIC RADIO NEWS

Reflecting wide economic dislocation throughout the newspaper industry, the Minnesota Star Tribune closed its Heritage printing plant in Minneapolis and outsourced work to a Gannett facility in Des Moines, Iowa, putting PPPWU press operators and paper handlers out of work. Some wept after the last run. 'We were one big family,' said veteran press operator Bob Marshall.

The plant closure came two years earlier than anticipated.

It was widely expected that the paper would go digital in two years. But last September management announced the print operation would be outsourced in three months.

"We were completely taken aback," Longerbone said.

Costs were rising and circulation numbers in steep decline.

"They printed 70,000 papers there last night," the 11-M leader said. "When I started, we ran 750,000 on a Sunday."

Papers across the country have been contending with the same dilemma – tight economics, sagging home delivery and an audience increasingly drawn to online news sources.

"Unfortunately, this will not be the last story like this," Longerbone said. "That's the sad part." ■

# PPPWU: Optimistic – and on the Move

By Fred Bruning  
The Communicator

**W**ith a sense of purpose and certainty, the PPPWU has entered a new era of aggressive, forward-looking leadership as it moves closer to alliance with the powerful, 600,000-strong International Association of Machinists, recently rebranded as IAM Union.

Israel Castro, formerly organizing director and District Council 3 principal officer, was sworn in as president during a video conference general board meeting in January and James Santangelo, secretary-treasurer at Local 1-L, New York, was inducted as PPPWU secretary-treasurer, the union's second highest position.

Both expressed optimism and vowed to vigorously serve the membership and assure union autonomy at a time of change and consolidation.

"We are excited, committed to success, and on the move," Castro said.

He noted the union's long history – it has been representing workers for more than a century under various names – and said the future holds "great promise" as the printing, packaging and production fields expand in a high-tech economy.

"This union has a record of accomplishment matched by few and we are going to build on that impressive background," Castro said.

Santangelo, a certified public accountant and graduate of St. John's University in New York, echoed Castro's optimism and vowed to "safeguard the assets" of the PPPWU and continue its ethic of fiscal responsibility "so that the union can be stable and consistent for the membership over the long term."

Castro and Santangelo said they would be guided by the highest principles of organized labor — steady leadership, accountability and, above all, service to the membership.

"Our job is to protect the rights and well-being of our members," said Castro. "We face challenges, no question, but are ready to meet our responsibilities."

Like many labor organizations, the PPPWU has suffered a steep loss of membership over the past 20 years resulting from technological advances and digital printing. Halting that decline is imperative, Castro said. "We must organize relentlessly and build our base. No union can survive by standing still."

More recently, leaders also have confronted an attempt by the Teamsters to raid PPPWU locals after the IBT abruptly scuttled the 2005 GCC/IBT merger agreement. "The Teamsters continue in this outrageous attack on another union," Castro said. "They haven't succeeded and won't. Our members and



In a show of solidarity, PPPWU District Council 2 leaders, left-right, Kevin Huff, Mike Worley, Fred Chavez and Clyde Willis met at the Burd & Fletcher plant in Independence, Missouri, with IAM Union colleagues, Landon Miner, business representative for IAM Local 778, Jeffrey Sutherland, a Burd & Fletcher electrician, and shop maintenance employee Lance Carpenter. A PPPWU-IAM merger now under discussion would bring together unions whose members have allied skills, a common base of interest and allegiance to the highest principles of organized labor.

local officers have remained strong and united."

For some time, PPPWU officials say, it has become clear that the union – now with fewer than 20,000 members – would have to join ranks with a larger organization.

After months of study and consultation, PPPWU

leaders – former president Steve Nobles, who retired last year, and most recently newly inducted President Castro – determined that a partnership with the IAM Union best matched the union's needs.

*Continues on page 8*

## SANTANGELO, OF LOCAL 1-L, BECOMES PPPWU SECRETARY-TREASURER

By Zachary Dowdy  
Special to the Communicator

One of the most critical decisions PPPWU President Israel Castro had to make when he took office in January was to select a secretary-treasurer who would serve as trusty steward of the union's finances.

A referral from a veteran PPPWU leader prompted Castro to consider James Santangelo — a certified public accountant with decades of service and keeper of the books for Local 1-L in New York.

Santangelo hadn't expressed interest in the union's second highest post but Castro thought it worth traveling to New York for a conversation and quickly reached a decision.

"Jim Santangelo was the most qualified candidate to help us right now," Castro said.

Chief among the issues facing the international is a proposed merger with IAM Union – formerly the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers – and Castro said it is important that the PPPWU preserve its strong financial record as talks of an alliance proceed.

After accepting the position and being approved by the general board, Santangelo said he was grateful and ready to get to work.

"It is an honor to serve this great union as secretary-treasurer to safeguard the



As secretary-treasurer, James Santangelo will move into the second highest PPPWU post. Santangelo, a certified public accountant, vows diligent stewardship of union finances. "He's a very natural fit," said President Israel Castro.

LOCAL 1-L PHOTO

assets that have been accumulated through all of the hard work from our members," he said in an interview with the PPPWU website, pppwu.org. "It is a position of trust that requires accountability and responsibility to continue the legacy of our union."

Castro said Santangelo has already proven his competence.

"It's been a very good beginning of a partnership," he said. "He's a very natural fit!"

In a statement to their members, Local 1-L's officers congratulated their colleague.

"James has faithfully served our local as secretary-treasurer for many years, demonstrating unwavering dedication, integrity, and leadership," they wrote. "We are excited to share that he has now been appointed secretary-treasurer of the International PPPWU."

Officers said Santangelo's promotion was a personal "milestone" and "great step forward for Local 1-L."

Mike LaSpina, president of Local 406-C, Long Island, hailed the choice of Santangelo for high union office.

"If anybody could learn the job fast, it would be him," LaSpina said. "I wish him the best. With Israel and Jim, I believe we have two great people in leadership positions at the international PPPWU."

# New Season Begins With Signs of Hope

Spring is the season of hope so – despite the nation’s many worries – let’s be upbeat.

From a PPPWU standpoint, there is plenty to cheer.

We continue to beat back Teamster attempts to raid the PPPWU – an outrageous breach of labor union ethics.

Our members are holding strong, saying “no” to the IBT’s exaggerated sales pitch and making clear the future is with the PPPWU not a Teamster organization that promises much and delivers little.

After abruptly ending a 2005 merger agreement forming the GCC/IBT, Teamster leaders thought we would fold.

No way.

We closed ranks, showed our solidarity and demonstrated grit and determination.

Under the new PPPWU leadership team of President Israel Castro and Secretary-Treasurer James Santangelo, the union is gaining momentum and making plans for a productive and progressive future.

In a major development, we are moving toward an alliance with a top-flight labor organization, the 600,000- member International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, rebranded lately as IAM Union.

It is difficult to imagine a better partner. IAM and its predecessor unions – the first formed in 1888 – have an admirable record of accomplishment, progressive policy positions and support for worker rights and social equality.

Next month, we will meet for a special convention to consider aligning with IAM Union. If delegates vote in favor, the question goes to the rank-and-file for ratification.

As President Castro said in his “Straight Talk” column on Page 2, the prospect of joining forces with a group as powerful and highly regarded as IAM Union presents a positive and “rare opportunity.”

For the PPPWU, this is an exciting – and historic – moment.

Beyond our own backyard, organized labor continues on the upswing.

Public opinion polls consistently show a strong majority of Americans support unions and the collective bargaining process.

There’s been a hike in the number of union members – an increase of 463,000 in two years – and especially hopeful is that young people see the value of union representation. Around the country, “Generation Z” workers at places like Amazon, Chipotle, Trader Joe’s, Starbucks, REI, and Apple are organizing.

“It’s time to unionize,” said one young labor activist.

Otherwise, unions are showing resilience in the face of endless assaults by Republicans and a deeply anti-worker White House.

Federal workers laid off by the tens of thousands by President Donald Trump and his job-slashing sidekick Elon Musk are suing in an effort to retrieve their careers.

Union leaders are speaking emphatically about regressive Trump appointments to the National Labor Relations Board and agencies like the Federal Labor Relations Authority as our Page 10 story indicates.

Around the country, the AFL-CIO and other labor groups have organized demonstrations with a theme of “Workers Over Billionaires” and joined with civil rights groups to denounce the hardline tactics of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents who too often hassle law-abiding immigrants and solid American citizens – not the “worst of the worst,” as Trump promised.

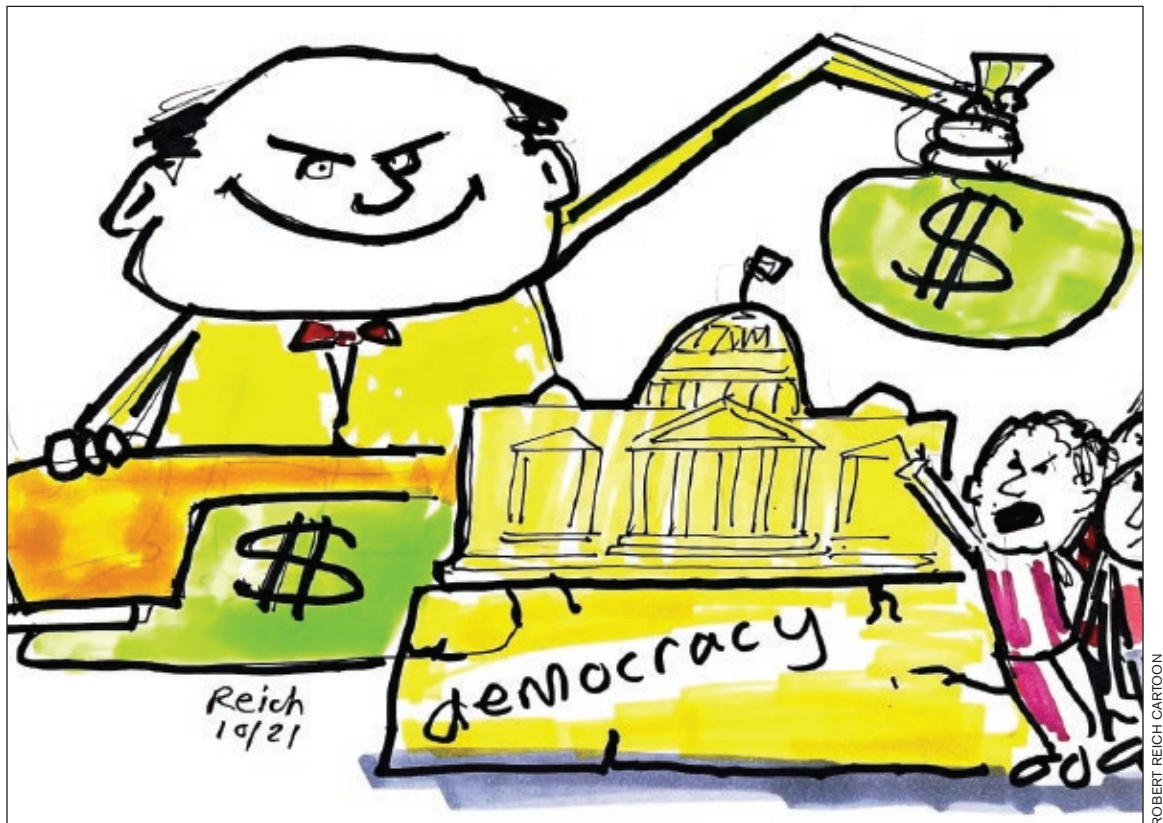
Yes, our country – like the labor movement – has plenty to handle these days.

But it’s spring.

Union members – and all Americans – are showing optimism and strength.

Labor is proving it will fight back when provoked. Voters are growing weary of White House disorder and divisiveness.

Mid-term elections are six months away. Polling suggests Trump’s GOP enablers on Capitol Hill could be in serious trouble. Millions of Americans look ready to reject the craziness and chaos – ready to tell the President and his obedient Republican allies in Congress that enough, finally, is enough.



## Point of View

BY ROBERT B. REICH

# We Have to do More than Weep

By Robert B. Reich

A few days ago, I was approached on the street by someone I didn’t know. “Are you Robert Reich?” she asked.

“Yes,” I replied.

“I just want you to know ...” she began and then burst into tears. I felt awful but couldn’t think what to say. Then, in a flash, she was gone.

I don’t know what she wanted me to know, but I do know that lots of people are weeping these days.

They’re weeping for family members who have been arrested and abducted by ICE. For children arrested and imprisoned, even if their own families haven’t been affected. For people murdered by ICE or Border Patrol.

Grieving the children now dying around the world because they no longer have medicines that America used to provide through USAID.

Crying for our planet being destroyed because Trump won’t adhere to the Paris Agreement and promotes oil and coal and kills subsidies for solar and wind.

In tears over the common decency that’s being demolished, as Trump reposts a video of the Obamas as apes, calls Somali-Americans “garbage,” and demands his name on an airport or train station in return for approving a vital transit project in New York.

Lamenting an America being sacked with impunity by billionaires like Jeff Bezos — handing Melania Trump \$28 million while slashing The Washington Post’s newsroom and laying off thousands of Amazon workers, at the same time raking in billions of dollars more.

Or Elon Musk — planning AI data centers in space and promising to flood American politics with more of his money.

And the shameless, wealthy, powerful men who abused young girls in Jeffrey Epstein’s island retreat and New York townhouse.



UC BERKELEY, VIA GOOGLE IMAGES

But let’s not just weep.

As bleak as this era is, I hope you can also see in it an opportunity to begin the rebuilding of America.

To commit ourselves to stopping the self-dealing, crony capitalism, and legalized bribery that have led us to where we are.

To get big money out of our politics. Prevent the oligarchy from monopolizing our economy, owning our media, and taking over America. And never again allow a loathsome wannabe king to tyrannize America and the world.

In other words, my friends, now is the time to rededicate ourselves to the values enshrined in the Constitution and Bill of Rights, the Gettysburg Address, and FDR’s first and second inaugural addresses.

A time to educate the next generation so they don’t make the same mistakes. To teach our children and our grandchildren what happened and why and instill in them a passion for democracy and the rule of law.

To read them the poems of Walt Whitman and Langston Hughes, Emma Lazarus’s “New Colossus” — which adorns the Statue of Liberty — and Martin Luther King Jr.’s “I Have a Dream” speech at the Washington Monument.

To celebrate the courage of generations of American soldiers, the selflessness of our teachers and social workers, and the kindness of people like poet Renee Good and VA nurse Alex Pretti killed by government agents in Minneapolis.

Yes, weep for what we have lost. But don’t just weep. Turn these losses into a new beginning — based on what’s good in America and what has gone wrong.

*Robert B. Reich served as secretary of labor in the Clinton administration and is Emeritus Carmel P. Friesen Professor of Public Policy at the University of California at Berkeley. He has written numerous books including the latest, “Coming Up Short: A Memoir of My America.” This piece appeared originally as a Substack newsletter (robertreich@substack.com).*

# Best of Times? Really?



President Trump loves to blame his predecessor, Joe Biden, for handing over a lousy economy in 2024 – another fantasy to make himself look better.

In fact, Biden handed over a strong economy – by many measures, the best in the world – that Trump has undercut for no good reason.

In 2024 – Biden’s last year in office – the U.S. economy added 1.5 million new jobs.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics said only 200,000 new jobs were added in the first year of Trump’s second term – lowest in two decades.

Biden’s economy was helped by the country coming out of the covid pandemic but also by smart policy initiatives.

Under Biden, Congress passed the CHIPS and Science Act and an infrastructure bill that created manufacturing jobs all over the country. As might have been expected, Republicans quickly claimed credit for the new bridges and roads most GOP legislators voted against.

No one was happy about the inflation rate under Biden – tied mostly to covid disruptions – but by the time Trump took office, inflation had been tamed and consumer confidence was on the rise.

Now, thanks to Trump’s tariffs and ineptitude, shoppers have soured on the economy.

Over the year, consumer sentiment dropped 33 percent to one of the lowest levels ever recorded.

Trump insists “affordability” is just a Democratic talking point but shoppers know high grocery, rent and restaurant prices are no hoax.

On the campaign trail, Trump vowed prices would drop on the first day of his presidency. He’s failed to deliver – but, absurdly, keeps telling the American people things have never been better.

Tariffs are a large part of the problem – and finally a slow-moving Supreme Court has declared the levies illegal.

Trump lashed out at the high court and continues to say foreign exporters pay the tariffs.

That’s not true. Tariffs are just another tax on consumers – an estimated \$1,000 to \$1,700 a year per family.

Now Trump faces a dilemma of his own making. He once said military personnel would receive \$1,776 bonus payments from tariff revenue and \$200 billion would go back to hard-pressed shoppers. Forget about it. Never going to happen.

At the same time, corporations are filing lawsuits in hopes of clawing back almost \$175 billion they paid in tariff fees – a penalty companies ultimately passed on to consumers.

Despite it all, the President insists America is prospering as never before and that we are in a Golden Age.

As Trump’s sinking approval numbers show, the American people know better.

*Jerry Morgan is a former Newsday business writer and member of Local 406-C.*

# Guest Spot

BY JEANNE MARSHALL

# Haunting Sound of Silence



When the last edition of the Minneapolis Star Tribune published in Minnesota rolled off the presses at the paper’s downtown Heritage Center printing plant, I was there to witness history.

Star Trib owners had outsourced the print operation to a Gannett facility in Des Moines. Beginning in late December, the paper would be produced in Iowa and trucked back to Minneapolis.

An era that spanned more than 150 years came to an end not just for a newspaper but the pressmen who devoted their lives to bringing news into Minnesota homes.

Through blizzards, sub-zero temperatures, severe thunderstorms, the covid pandemic, and even the unrest following the death of George Floyd, these dedicated employees showed up.

They worked nights, weekends, and early mornings. They missed holidays, birthdays, weddings, and children’s events to ensure the paper was printed and delivered.

My husband, Bob Marshall, worked at Heritage for 30 years. He grew from a young man into a seasoned journeyman and made lasting friendships.

With his colleagues, Bob celebrated marriages and births and grieved when loved ones and co-workers died. They endured layoffs, bankruptcy, press alterations and changing times together.

On that solemn night in late December, retirees returned to the Heritage pressroom for a final time. They stood alongside active pressmen and gazed at the massive machines they once ran. When the final paper rolled off the press, there was no applause. No

announcement.

After 158 years, the massive room fell silent.

That silence was haunting.

I struggled with the realization that something so vital, so loud, so constant, was suddenly gone. Perhaps it was knowing that the men who made it happen were stepping into an uncertain future.

Next morning, the Star Tribune had a story – in its digital edition – about the closing but made no mention of press operators on the last run.

So to the pressmen of the Minnesota Star Tribune: Thank you for your sacrifice, your loyalty, your craft, and your brotherhood.

Thank you for delivering the news to Minnesota for 158 years without missing an edition.

The end of printing in Minneapolis may have been inevitable in the cost-cutting digital age.

But the closing of Heritage does not represent merely a technological shift.

It was the end of a chapter written by people – men at the bottom of the news chain, who worked behind the scenes, without glory or headlines, yet never failed to show up.

Technology does not replace dedication.

*Jeanne Marshall is the owner-operator of Allure and Grace Aesthetics in Ham Lake, Minnesota, and wife of Bob Marshall, a 30-year Star Tribune veteran who lost his job when the paper outsourced its local print operation.*

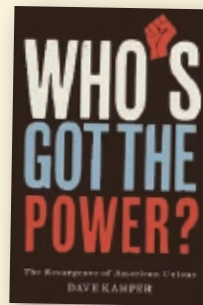
# All the Best

## Print

### Who’s Got the Power?: The Resurgence of American Unions

Dave Kamper

First the bad news: Unions have lost thousands of members in the last half-century and, as a result, the political clout that helped make life better for working-class Americans. In the 1980s, union membership was 20 percent. Latest government figures put the tally at just half that number. So what makes labor historian and former organizer Dave Kamper see a labor movement “resurgence?” Kamper argues that since the pandemic unions have been on a roll. Young people are launching union drives, workers have grown more militant and willing to strike, public opinion is swinging toward labor, large unions like the UAW are showing renewed strength. With inspiring stories – the resilience of Frito-Lay workers in Kansas and Amazon employees in New York, among them – Kamper makes his case for a union revival. “...don’t ever count the working class out,” he says. Power still belongs to the people. *The New Press, \$25.99*



## Music

### Who Believes in Angels?

Elton John/Brandi Carlile

This is a sweet piece of work by two of the pop world’s most resilient and respected stars – the ageless Elton John and steadfast singer-songwriter Brandi Carlile. Voices blending easily, John and Carlile find an emotional sweet spot on tunes that address loss and loneliness but belt it out blissfully on tunes like, “Little Richard’s Bible,” a honky-tonk tribute to the great rock ‘n’ roll icon and Adventist evangelist, Richard Penniman. “Long Tall Sally, my oh my,” John and Carlile sing, recalling Little Richard’s raucous 1956 hit. Top to bottom, “Who Believes in Angels” deserves no less an appraisal: My, oh, my. *Interscope Records, prices vary*



## Video/Streaming

### Stripped for Parts: American Journalism on the Brink

Rick Goldsmith, director

A century ago, there were 2,000 daily newspapers in the United States. Now there are fewer than 1,000. What happened? There are many answers – the collapse of classified advertising, mounting production and editorial expenses, the advent of the internet, reading habits of the American public – but playing a significant, and villainous role are hedge fund investors like Alden Global Capital who buy newspapers to close them and turn a quick profit. Based on the work of investigative reporter Julie Reynolds and brought to the screen by two-time, Academy-Award nominated director Rick Goldsmith, “Stripped for Parts” shows how the bottomless greed of Alden and other “vulture capitalists” has trumped public interest – and how union members and editorial employees are fighting back. Viewing is free online for Public Broadcasting System (PBS) members and others for a small fee. <https://www.pbs.org/show/stripped-for-parts-american-journalism-on-the-brink/>



## Internet

### MLK50.com



The decline of American newspapers is alarming but scrappy, independent online publications like MLK50 continue plugging the information drain. A Memphis-based news operation drawing inspiration from the courage and conviction of Martin Luther King, MLK50 tackles stories at the “intersection of poverty, power and policy.” Recent articles include an examination of imperiled funding for homeless veterans, predatory practices by a major hospital system and recollection of a black union organizer harassed by authorities in the days of Jim Crow. “It’s easy enough to denounce racial injustice and socioeconomic inequality,” MLK50 says. “The real challenge is committing to the work it takes to eliminate them.” At MLK50 that noble work is underway.

# Defending Democracy

continued from PAGE 1

With its tradition of independence, autonomy and respect for individual liberties, the labor movement finds itself at odds with an autocratic President inclined to ignore court orders, denounce critics as disloyal and engage in divisive language that threatens national unity, labor leaders say.

Remaining on the sidelines is not an option, officials insist.

“As it becomes increasingly clear what a second Trump presidency means, America’s labor movement has positioned itself as democracy’s strongest, most important and best organized line of defense against a sweeping authoritarian agenda,” said a statement from Public Services International, a global alliance of public sector workers.

PSI condemned Trump moves to imposed massive cutbacks on the federal work force, privatize elements of social safety net programs and even sell the U.S. Postal Service to outside operators.

“These moves represent more than policy changes – they constitute a wholesale transfer of public goods into private hands, deliberately eroding worker protection while restructuring government to serve elite interests,” PSI said.

Particularly troubling to labor leaders have been than the aggressive tactics of ICE and other government agents who have terrorized immigrant communities, frightened U.S. citizens and, earlier in the year, shot to death Minneapolis residents Renee Good and Alex Pretti.

“What is unfolding in Minnesota, and across our country, is a serious test of our democracy and our collective commitment to the Constitution,” said Brian Bryant, president of the machinists’ IAM Union. “When government authority is used to intimidate communities, suppress dissent, or detain people without due process, the labor movement has a responsibility to speak with clarity and purpose.”

Good, a poet, and Pretti, an intensive care unit nurse at the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Minneapolis and member of the American Federation of Government Workers (AFGE), were protesting widespread neighborhood sweeps by government agents seeking undocumented immigrants.

After Pretti’s death, AFGE National President Everett Kelley slammed the Trump administration’s “reckless” immigration policies and “inflammatory rhetoric.” The fatal incident “did not happen in a vacuum,” Kelley said.



TEXAS AFT PHOTO

Members of the Houston Federation of Teachers defended democracy at a ‘No Kings’ rally. Organized labor leaders say Trump administration policies are a threat to the rights of workers and cherished American principles.



NEW YORK CITY CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL, AFL-CIO, VIA GOOGLE IMAGES

So outraged was the Minnesota AFL-CIO that officials demanded immediate withdrawal of ICE agents, impeachment of Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem – Trump subsequently fired Noem – and resignation of Stephen Miller, the hardline White House advisor setting administration immigration policies.

The AFL-CIO said an investigation was needed into the deaths of Good and Pretti and “new and higher protocols and oversight” guaranteeing “the safety and humanity of all Minnesotans and people across this nation.”

Though Trump and Department of Homeland Security officials promised to detain only immigrants who had committed violent crimes, numerous studies by news agencies and academic researchers confirm the vast majority of persons arrested have no criminal records.

Controversial ICE tactics touched the lives of two PPPWU members in Minnesota, both American citizens.

Continues on page 9

# ‘Common Interests’

continued from PAGE 5

Officials noted that IAM members often work alongside PPPWU workers particularly in the specialty and corrugated box sectors and have common interests – what one PPPWU official called a “symbiotic relationship” that foretold growth and progress for both unions.

That spirit of mutual interest and common purpose was evident recently when a PPPWU contingent visited IAM members at Burd & Fletcher packaging, Independence, Missouri, and Local 503-M President Mike Stafford and secretary Tom Trapp joined 250 IAM members on a picket line outside Garlock Sealing Technologies east of Rochester.

“We wanted to show our support,” Stafford said. Talks with the IAM – some at its large Upper Marlboro, Maryland, headquarters – have proceeded well, leaders say, and PPPWU general board members have voted to move toward a merger.

PPPWU autonomy – an essential condition – was addressed during IAM negotiations and presented no difficulty, union leaders say, with IAM representatives guaranteeing independence and self-determination for the PPPWU in its internal affairs.

At an Atlanta meeting of the new PPPWU Solidarity Conference in September, IAM President Brian Bryant addressed the autonomy issue and promised the PPPWU would not surrender its identity. “No one wants to be swallowed and gobbled up,” Bryant told delegates.

The next step in establishing an alliance with IAM Union will come at a special convention scheduled for



DISTRICT COUNCIL 1 PHOTO

PPPWU President Israel Castro, left, DC-1 Secretary-Treasurer Marty Hallberg, back, and DC-1 business agent Jeff Vogel, front row, second right, met with workers at The Marek Group in Waukesha, Wisconsin. Castro says union solidarity begins at the grassroots level. ‘Our job is to build momentum, gain strength, go forward,’ he said.

May 18-20 in Baltimore. If delegates approve a merger, the proposal will go to the PPPWU membership for a vote.

“This is an exciting prospect,” said Castro. “The IAM Union is a first-rate labor organization with international influence. Its leaders are smart, straight-forward and highly motivated. We have common interests and share a strong commitment to our memberships. In the IAM, we have found a partner that will bring strength, success and solidarity for years to come.”

A brief review of IAM Union history appears on Page 10.

Raúl de la Cruz, 63, a press operator at the Minneapolis Star Tribune until the paper outsourced its print operation in December, was pulled over in January by government agents for no apparent reason and allowed to proceed only after he showed a U.S. passport. “It was scary,” de la Cruz said.

Another union member, press operator Richard Rodriguez, whose Star Tribune job also was outsourced, said ICE agents arrested his wife’s cousin near the Rodriguez home early this year. The cousin, who has applied for asylum in the United States, now faces deportation in a New Mexico detention center. “You have no control to protect your family,” Rodriguez, 65, told *The Communicator*.

PPPWU officials denounced the incidents and aggressive ICE approach.

“This is an outrageous example of government overreach,” said President Israel Castro. “Law-abiding American citizens and their families are being harassed, sometimes on the basis of race, alone. This should never happen in the United States. As labor leaders, we must demand that government respect the rights of all people.”

Jim Longerbone, president of Local 11-M, St. Paul, and business agent for District Council 1, said it is important that accounts like those of de la Cruz and Rodriguez circulate widely in labor ranks. Members need to know “what is happening to some of our union brothers,” Longerbone said.

Also alarmed by government actions was Mike Wirig, a Local 11-M lead shop steward in Mankato, Minnesota, who traveled two hours to attend a massive anti-ICE demonstration in Minneapolis. “It was important to be there,” said Wirig. “It’s horrendous what ICE is doing.”

With Trump showing no signs of relenting on a range of controversial policies and compliant Republican majorities in the House and Senate allowing the White House to operate with little restraint, union officials say they must not only protect members but stand as a moral force at a time when democracy is under pressure.

“That reality means we cannot rely on old strategies alone,” said the pro-labor website UnionBase in a statement titled, “Labor Will Not Stay Silent.” UnionBase called for new tactics and a more modern approach to organizing that “gives workers cover, resources, and power in a rapidly shifting political and economic landscape.”

Labor’s role in creating – and protecting – a just society was outlined by experts at the Harvard University law school.

“As a result, this is a moment in which labor can and must be a transformational actor in the fight for the future of democracy, which cannot exist without economic justice,” said an analysis by the law school’s Center for Labor & a Just Economy. “Labor is uniquely situated to play such a role through its ability to mobilize across social, racial, and economic groups...and confront entrenched power.”

Castro said organized labor must take up the challenge.

“Unions are essential to protecting workers and their families, yes, but we are a necessary force in safeguarding democracy, too,” Castro said. “We are confronting a challenge rare in our country’s history. Rules are being broken every day. We are called upon to speak out for decency, fairness and what is right. We must stand up for the labor movement – and for America.”

## Stopped by ICE because ‘My Skin is Brown’

By Dawn Hobbs  
Special to *The Communicator*

Raúl de la Cruz was obeying all traffic laws. Blinkers and brake lights worked. And safety inspection and registration were up to date on his grey Kia Sorento. But ICE agents pulled him over, anyway. Twice. Within a two-mile stretch of downtown Minneapolis. Different officers each time.

“My skin is brown – that is why,” said de la Cruz, a PPPWU press operator who was trying to pick up his last paycheck from the Minnesota Star Tribune, which had recently closed its downtown Heritage Center print facility.

The encounters came at a time when more than 3,000 Immigration and Customs Enforcement operatives and other government agents were conducting “Operation Metro Surge” in Minneapolis, a controversial operation aimed at detaining undocumented immigrants with aggressive tactics that included forced entry, smashed car windows and alleged incidents of using children to “bait” adults sought by authorities.

Critics say an effort that was supposed to target violent undocumented criminals quickly turned into a haphazard – and often brutal, race-conscious – campaign aimed broadly at ordinary working people and their families.

As the government crackdown continued, Renee Good, a 37-year-old U.S. citizen and mother of three, was fatally shot by an ICE officer. Fewer than three weeks later, two Customs and Border Protection officers shot and killed Alex Pretti, 37, an American citizen and intensive care nurse at a Veterans Affairs hospital.

What often appeared to be the government’s unrestrained action alarmed Minnesota’s large immigrant community.

De la Cruz, a member of Local 11-M, Saint Paul, said he was terrified when stopped by officers and reluctant to get out of his vehicle.

“I put my passport to the window,” de la Cruz said. “It was scary. You never know when these people will start shooting.”

ICE agents took photos and released him. A short time later, other officers pulled de la Cruz over as he reached downtown Minneapolis.

“It’s very bad here,” de la Cruz said. “My neighbors are too scared to even go shopping. I go for them with a list. It’s really sad. I’ve been a citizen here 36 years.”

Days after de la Cruz was stopped by ICE agents,



Thousands of Minneapolis citizens – including many union members – protested the strong-arm tactics of government agents during ‘Operation Metro Surge’ immigration enforcement campaign. Critics said federal officers arrested thousands with no criminal records and terrified U.S. citizens caught up in the sweep. ‘It’s not the America we were raised in,’ said Jim Longerbone, president of Local 11-M, St. Paul.



Mike Wirig, a member of Local 11-M, St. Paul, drove two hours to a Minneapolis demonstration after learning two union members of Hispanic background had frightening encounters with federal agents. ‘It was important to be there,’ Wirig said.

the family of Richard Rodriguez, another Local 11-M press operator who was laid off at the Star Tribune in late December, had a chilling brush with federal agents.

One afternoon, Rodriguez said, his 17-year-old daughter saw ICE agents surround an SUV carrying her mother, a cousin and friend.

“They have mom!” the girl screamed, Rodriguez said. “ICE! ICE

has Mom!”

Rodriguez said his 18-year-old granddaughter started to run toward the vehicle but he restrained her.

“She was in tears and trembling so hard I couldn’t even console her,” Rodriguez said. “But I know when you approach these people, they say you are intervening and that’s when it turns violent.”

The episode came to a troubling end, Rodriguez said.

“ICE pulled the driver out and banged his head and there was blood all over,” Rodriguez said. “He had his passport. They pulled my wife out, but she had her passport, too.”

But the cousin, a native of El Salvador, only had papers indicating he had applied for asylum. He was removed by ICE and awaits deportation in a New Mexico holding facility.

Rodriguez said his wife and family were traumatized by the experience.

“It still affects the kids,” he said. “And it’s just horrible when you, as a man, have no control to protect your own family. People are being pulled out of the grocery stores and out of their Walmart jobs. And they’re citizens. It’s terror.”

Distressed by accounts of the harsh treatment suffered by de la Cruz and the Rodriguez family, Mike Wirig, a Local 11-M lead shop steward at Amcor packaging, Mankato, Minn., drove two hours to attend a massive Jan. 23 “ICE Out of Minnesota” demonstration in Minneapolis.

“It was important to be there,” said Wirig. “It’s horrendous what ICE is doing.”

Showing solidarity with fellow union members was especially important, Wirig said. “We need to be looking out for one another.”

Jim Longerbone, president of Local 11-M, said there is wide agreement that undocumented immigrants convicted of violent crimes must be deported. However, he said, racial profiling and harassment of law-abiding individuals and U.S. citizens cannot be tolerated.

“No one is against getting hard core criminals off the streets, but pulling people over for the color of their skin is just so wrong,” he said. “It’s not the America we were raised in. We need to protect each other.”

# Under Trump, Economy Stuck in Chaos

By George M. Kraw

The American economy is on a wild ride under President Donald J. Trump.

That's not good news for any working American. And it's especially menacing for retirees who depend on a stable economy for pension plan solvency.

The latest chaos came in the form of a Supreme Court decision that knocked over Trump's tariff strategy – a foolish, and clearly illegal, scheme designed to mostly benefit his family and friends.

The court's ruling blocked the President's use of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act to impose broad tariffs at his discretion. Trump had been using tariffs and related threats to structure new, often erratic trade deals.

Other more whimsical uses of tariffs have included punishing Switzerland after its President spoke "aggressively" to Trump, and trying to get former President of Brazil Jair Bolsonaro released early from the prison where the Trump pal is serving time for a coup attempt. Trump also threatened tariffs against the European Union for opposing his claim for Greenland.

The Supreme Court decision may require that the federal government refund billions of dollars in tariffs already collected and effectively finishes off Trump's promise to send families a \$2000 tariff dividend check from the federal government at the end of the year.

All this comes as the Trump Administration is hustling to get a new Federal Reserve chair, Kevin Warsh, confirmed by a slow moving, closely divided Senate.

The Warsh nomination came after a long tease reminiscent of Trump's television series, "The Apprentice," with various candidates having ups and downs along the way before Trump finally told Warsh, "You're hired."

Meanwhile, Trump's Department of Justice is criminally investigating current Federal Reserve chair Jerome Powell for alleged financial irregularities relating to construction work at the Fed's Washington headquarters.

The investigation is a transparent effort to force the independent-minded Powell to resign before his term is up in May. It has led some Senators, including North Carolina Republican senator Thom Tillis, to say they will not vote for a successor to Powell unless the investigation is dropped.

How do these issues complicate the overall economy? Let me count the ways.

**Asset Volatility:** The Supreme Court ruling creates immediate uncertainty and volatility for businesses. The administration has pivoted to alternative authority to impose replacement tariffs. But any new tariffs will have specific amounts and timing limitations and will also see



George M. Kraw



new legal challenges. Pension plans rely heavily on equity market performance to maintain funding levels. This heightened volatility will lead to fluctuations in the funding of the plans.

**Refunds and Corporate Earnings:** The court opened the door for up to \$200 billion in tariff refunds to importers. The process is expected to be a mess and could take years. It is unlikely to provide immediate relief to consumers, but it guarantees continued economic chaos and uncertainty.

**Ongoing Fights Over Federal Reserve Independence:** The President has made it clear that he wants the Federal Reserve – and Warsh, if confirmed – to keep rates low no matter what the underlying economic situation. Since the President is likely to continue to interfere with Fed decision making to keep rates down, Fed independence, and the confidence it creates for the American economy, will remain at risk.

Time and again, America has shown resilience in the face of economic challenges. That resilience will be tested again by the reckless policies of the Trump Administration. ■

*George M. Kraw is a benefits lawyer in Silicon Valley and was a labor representative to the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation Advisory Committee from 2002-2005.*

## IAM: DECENCY AND DUTY

The powerful International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers – now the IAM Union – is a 138-year labor organization with 600,000 members, reputation for strength and success, and unflinching commitment to social justice.

As the PPPWU moves toward affiliation with the IAM, President Israel Castro said the larger union is an ideal partner with significant "national influence" and leaders who are "smart, straight-forward and highly motivated."

That sense of decency and duty was clear in comments by IAM Union President Brian Bryant following the decision to rebrand the organization. A new name would not alter the IAM's mission, Bryant said in the quarterly union magazine, IAM Journal.

"No matter your job, your background, or industry, this is your union," Bryant said. "We fight for justice, equality and a better tomorrow."

Here is a brief rundown on IAM Union provided by the AFL-CIO:

- In 1888, 19 machinists secretly met in Atlanta to form a union.
- The next year, 34 locals were represented at the first Machinists convention, with union activist Tom Talbot being elected Grand Master Machinist.
- With the granting of the first Canadian local, the union officially became the International Association of Machinists.
- In 1892, IAM negotiated its first collective bargaining agreement with a railroad company.
- In 1895, IAM joined the American Federation of Labor.
- Top issues in the early decades were wages, length of the workweek and number of hours worked per day.
- IAM had significant success on all fronts and, by 1905, there were more than 750 locals and membership was approaching 300,000.
- Current Number of Members: 600,000.
- Industries Represented: Aerospace, airlines, transportation, railroad, federal government, automotive, defense, woodworking, health care and other industries.



## Labor Fights FLRA Pick

The PPPWU has joined an effort by 21 labor organizations to block Senate confirmation of North Carolina lawyer Charlton Allen as general counsel of the Federal Labor Relations Authority, claiming the Trump nominee is unqualified and "nothing more than a political gadfly."

In a letter to the Senate Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee, unions affiliated with Federal Workers Alliance (FWA), said Allen has no background in labor relations and is "unsuitable" for the top legal post of a government agency responsible for settling workplace disputes involving federal employees.

Union officials noted that Allen, of Iredell County, North Carolina, ran an unsuccessful 2012 campaign for the state house of representatives and said in a candidate questionnaire that he opposed collective bargaining rights for public employees.

Participating FWA unions – the group represents more than 40 independent labor organizations protecting a half-million federal and postal workers – said that Allen indicated he is against employer-provided sick leave and views minimum wage laws "an unfair intrusion into the labor market."

Leaders said Allen's remarks on podcasts and opinion columns were troubling – largely for what was omitted.

Allen commented on a range of topics, they said, but said nothing about labor relations "which reveals his lack of expertise or even interest in this field." Union officials said "each of his publications and podcasts should certainly be reviewed" before consider Allen's nomination.

As general counsel of the Federal Labor Relations board, Allen would run the agency's prosecutorial arm and pursue unfair labor complaints – particularly worrisome, the FWA said.

Union officials said nearly 300 unfair labor complaints are pending and that Allen, who has been burnishing his conservative credentials since undergraduate days at the University of North Carolina, likely would "decline to prosecute" the cases.

Writing to Sen. Rand Paul (R-Kentucky), chairman of the homeland security committee, and ranking member Sen. Gary Peters (D-Michigan), participating FWA unions urged a thorough examination of Allen's publications and public comments, including opinions expressed in a conservative journal, the Carolina Review, he founded during college years.

PPPWU President Israel Castro said Allen's long anti-labor history called into question White House motivation for advancing him as FLRA general counsel.

"It's a mark of the Trump administration's hostility toward labor that Charlton Allen ever was nominated for this job," said Castro. "The Senate must make sure he never gets it."

According to Bloomberg News, a confirmation hearing on Allen has been held up since late last year because of what Senate officials said was a paperwork delay. ■



DISTRICT COUNCIL 3 PHOTO

District Council 3 and Local 135-C officials negotiated a contract agreement at TC Transcontinental, Battle Creek, Michigan, that includes a dues check-off provision and union security clause. Leading negotiations was Linde Shaw, DC-3 secretary-treasurer, left, who was assisted by, left-right, Local 135-C stewards Zach Larner and Dave Halder, Local 135-C President Jason Miller and Dean Richardson, president of DC-3.

## DC-3 'KNOCKS IT OUT OF PARK' WITH TRANSCONTINENTAL CONTRACT

District Council 3 officials scored a major victory with TC Transcontinental packaging, Battle Creek, Michigan, by securing agreement on a union security clause and dues check-off – impressive negotiating, officials say, in a previously right-to-work state.

"They knocked it out of the park with this one," said PPPWU President Israel Castro.

Linde Shaw, DC-3 secretary-treasurer, said the security clause concession came after hard bargaining.

Labor leaders consider a union security clause vital because it requires "mandatory union membership as a condition of employment," Shaw said. The issue was a "very big point of contention in negotiations," she added.

Dues check-off, a separate matter, obligates the employer to collect dues on behalf of the union. Adding check-off to the contract was "another victory" in a former right-to-work state, Shaw said.

Michigan's right-to-work law was enacted in 2012 and until repeal in 2024 prohibited labor organizations from requiring non-union workers – often known as "free riders" – to pay dues even while enjoying union benefits.

"Every employee paying their fair share strengthens the union and allows us to have the resources to fight greedy employers who would have our members work for peanuts," said PPPWU President Israel Castro.

The 80 Transcontinental workers, members of Local 135-C, applauded all gains in the new contract, leaders said.

Highlights included an extra vacation week; better terms on disability coverage; increased safety equipment reimbursement; improved attendance policy; and starting pay of 80 percent of the top rate, Shaw said.

Serving on the negotiations team led by Shaw were Local 135-C shop stewards Zach Larner and Dave Halder, Local 135-C president Jason Miller and DC-3 president Dean Richardson.

"This negotiations team had a lot of input and there is no way I could have done this without them," Shaw said. "The knowledge they had to help me with the issues in there was fantastic."

## LOCAL 503-M OFFICERS WALK IAM PICKET LINE TO SHOW SOLIDARITY

In a show of solidarity, PPPWU Local 503-M leaders walked the picket line with striking IAM Union workers at Garlock Sealing Technologies, located about 30 minutes east of Rochester, New York.



"We were there to support the 250-plus striking workers at Garlock, who are members of IAM Local 588," said Mike Stafford, president Local 503-M, Rochester. "The workers were demanding better wages and retirement, affordable health care and safety standards."

Skilled IAM members at the Palmyra, New York, plant make a variety of sealing products, such as gaskets, industrial hoses and oil seals for the nuclear, mining, marine chemical, and food and beverage industries.

"Whenever there's another local on strike, we always try to help out, and it doesn't matter which union they're in," said 503-M secretary-treasurer Tom Trapp who also joined IAM strikers. "But this was a little more special because we're in merger talks with IAM, so it was kind of important we were there. It's a way to show solidarity during merger talks."

## WAYNE SCHARLACH HONORED BY 458-M FOR 75 YEARS OF SERVICE

Wayne Scharlach – a 75-year member of PPPWU Local 458-M, Chicago – says the smartest decision he made as a young man was to join a union.

You have to get involved – get in the middle of everything, keep your ears and eyes open, said Scharlach, who turns 95 on May 19. "That's how you make a difference."

Scharlach, who still attends union meetings, was initiated into Local 458-M in 1950. He worked at Alden Press in Elk Grove Village, Illinois, until retirement in 1991. For years, he organized an annual bowling tournament attended by union keglers from around the country.

To honor Scharlach for his loyalty and years of service, PPPWU leaders and members recently packed a union hall in Carol Stream, Illinois, presented the honored guest a certificate of appreciation and hailed him in heartfelt speeches.

"Wayne was and still is a great union supporter," said Kurt Reissenweber, president of District Council 4 and vice-president of 458-M. "We've always made sure he had a front row seat so he could address all of the membership with his ideas."

PPPWU President Israel Castro also praised Scharlach's years of union service.

"It is truly amazing to hear stories about members like Brother Scharlach," Castro said. "Our union and the contracts our members enjoy were all built on the work and sacrifices of the previous generations of members and union leaders like Wayne Scharlach."

Scharlach said one of his most memorable moments was organizing a 1968 "wildcat strike" when Alden Press was putting pressure on employees.

"I said, 'You can't do that' and led everyone out the door."

Scharlach expected the worst but the story had a happy ending.

"The next morning, the owner came walking right toward me, and he shook my hand and hugged me, and he said, 'You did the right thing, Wayne.'"

Scharlach's sense of duty has never faltered, colleagues said.

"It is great to see that you can retire from working but never retire from our union," Castro said.



LOCAL 458-M PHOTO

Wayne Scharlach, center, a member of Local 458-M, Chicago, was honored for 75 years of union service by Kurt Reissenweber, president of District Council 4, left, and Mike Consolino, DC-4 secretary-treasurer, at an event in Carol Stream, Illinois. "You have to get involved," said Scharlach, who turns 95 in May. "And that's what I did."

## 150 LONG-TIME MEMBERS OF DISTRICT COUNCIL 2 EARN SERVICE JACKETS

In recognition of loyalty to the union, District Council 2 again presented service jackets to members with 30-50 years of affiliation with the PPPWU and its predecessor unions.

This year, more than 150 members were honored, said Sheila Castro, DC-2 office manager.

"Jackets were given to members in front of co-workers to celebrate their years of service," Castro said.

DC-2 Secretary-Treasurer Daniel Cabada said it was important to celebrate the devotion of veteran members.

"We do this to honor our members' loyalty to DC-2, solidarity and the belief in the strength of collective bargaining," Cabada said. "And it was nice to hear how meaningful the jackets were to those who have given decades of service."



Local Stops wants to hear from you. If your PPPWU local has been involved in organizing efforts, community outreach or volunteer work, e-mail a brief summary to reporter Dawn Hobbs at dawnhobbs@cox.net or call 805-284-5351.

# La nueva dirección del PPPWU sopesa una alianza con la IAM

Fred Bruning  
*The Communicator*

Con un sentido de propósito y certeza, el PPPWU ha iniciado una nueva época de liderazgo agresivo con miras al futuro a medida que se arrima a la alianza con la poderosa Asociación Internacional de Mecánicos de Precisión, de 600,000 miembros, recientemente rebautizada como el sindicato IAM.

Israel Castro, anteriormente director de organización y funcionario principal del Consejo de Distrito 3, juró el cargo de presidente durante una reunión del consejo general por videoconferencia celebrada en enero; y James Santangelo, secretario-tesorero del Local 1-L de Nueva York, fue investido secretario-tesorero del PPPWU, el segundo cargo más alto del sindicato.

Ambos se mostraron optimistas y prometieron servir enérgicamente a los afiliados y garantizar la autonomía del sindicato en un momento de cambio y consolidación.

«Estamos entusiasmados, entregados al éxito y en marcha», afirmó Castro.

Destacó la larga historia del sindicato —lleva más de un siglo representando a los trabajadores bajo distintos nombres— y afirmó que el futuro es «muy prometedor» a medida que se expanden los sectores de la impresión, el embalaje y la producción en una economía de alta tecnología.

«Este sindicato tiene un historial de logros como pocos y vamos a aprovechar esa impresionante experiencia», dijo Castro.

Santangelo, contable público titulado y licenciado en la St. John's University de Nueva York, se hizo eco del optimismo de Castro y prometió «salvaguardar los activos» del PPPWU y mantener su ética de responsabilidad fiscal «para que el sindicato pueda ser estable y coherente para los afiliados a largo plazo».

Castro y Santangelo dijeron que se guiarían por los principios más elevados del sindicalismo: liderazgo serio, responsabilidad y, sobre todo, servicio a los afiliados.

«Nuestro trabajo es proteger los derechos y el bienestar de nuestros miembros», dijo Castro. «Nos enfrentamos a retos, sin duda, pero estamos preparados para asumir nuestras responsabilidades.»

Como muchas organizaciones sindicales, el PPPWU ha sufrido una fuerte pérdida de afiliados en los últimos 20 años como consecuencia de los avances tecnológicos y la impresión digital. Detener ese declive es imperativo, dijo Castro. «Debemos organizarnos sin descanso e incrementar nuestra base. Ningún sindicato puede sobrevivir quedándose quieto.»

Más recientemente, los dirigentes también han enfrentado un intento por parte de los Teamsters de engatusar a los miembros de los locales del PPPWU después de que la IBT echó por tierra abruptamente el acuerdo de fusión GCC/IBT de 2005. «Los Teamsters continúan en este indignante ataque contra otro sindicato», dijo Castro. «No lo han logrado y no lo lograrán. Nuestros líderes

y miembros se han mantenido fuertes y unidos».

Desde hace bastante tiempo, según los dirigentes del PPPWU, estaba claro que el sindicato —que ahora cuenta con menos de 20,000 afiliados— tendría que unirse a una organización más grande.

Tras meses de estudio y consultas, los dirigentes del PPPWU —el ex presidente Steve Nobles, que se jubiló el año pasado, y el recién incorporado presidente Castro— determinaron que una asociación con el sindicato IAM era lo que mejor se ajustaba a las necesidades del sindicato.

Los funcionarios señalaron que los miembros de la IAM suelen trabajar junto a los trabajadores del PPPWU, sobre todo en los sectores de especialidades y cajas de cartón ondulado, y tienen intereses comunes, lo que un funcionario de PPPWU calificó como «relación simbiótica» que auguraba crecimiento y progreso para ambos sindicatos.

Ese espíritu de interés mutuo y propósito común se puso de manifiesto recientemente cuando una representación del PPPWU visitó a los miembros de la IAM en el embalaje Burd & Fletcher, ubicado en Independence, Misuri; y el presidente del Local 503-M, Mike Stafford, y el secretario Tom Trapp se unieron a 250 miembros del IAM en un piquete frente a Garlock Sealing Technologies, al este de Rochester.

«Queríamos mostrar nuestro apoyo», dijo Stafford.

Las conversaciones con la IAM — algunas de ellas en su gran sede de

Upper Marlboro, Maryland— han avanzado bien, dicen los dirigentes, y los miembros de la junta general del PPPWU han votado a favor de avanzar hacia una fusión.

La autonomía del PPPWU —una condición esencial— se abordó durante las negociaciones de la IAM y no presentó ninguna dificultad, afirman los dirigentes sindicales, ya que los representantes de la IAM garantizaron la independencia y la autodeterminación del PPPWU en sus asuntos internos.

En una reunión del nuevo Congreso de Solidaridad del PPPWU celebrada en septiembre en Atlanta, el presidente del IAM, Brian Bryant, abordó la cuestión de la autonomía y prometió que el PPPWU no renunciaría a su identidad. «Nadie quiere ser tragado y engullido», dijo Bryant a los delegados.

El siguiente paso para establecer una alianza con el sindicato IAM se dará en un congreso especial previsto para los días 18 a 20 de mayo en Baltimore. Si los delegados aprueban la fusión, la propuesta se someterá a votación por parte de los afiliados del PPPWU.

«Es una posibilidad apasionante», afirmó Castro. «El sindicato IAM es una organización laboral de primera con influencia internacional. Sus líderes son inteligentes, directos y están muy motivados. Tenemos intereses comunes y compartimos un firme compromiso con sendos cuerpos de afiliados. En la IAM hemos encontrado un socio que nos aportará fuerza, éxito y solidaridad en los años venideros.»

## TRUMP BACKING DOL SECRETARY CHAVEZ-DEREMER DESPITE CONTROVERSY

**L**abor Secretary Lori Chavez-DeRemer, under investigation following accounts of an extra-marital affair with a staff member and misuse of government travel funds, continues in favor with the White House which claims she is doing a “great job” for American workers, according to published reports.

The New York Post said a complaint filed with the DOL inspector general says that Chavez-Deremer, 57, has been seen drinking on the job during work hours and that she ordered subordinates to “make up” official travel to suit her personal purposes.

Since the allegations were reported in the Post, New York Times and elsewhere, Chavez-DeRemer's chief of staff Jihun Han and deputy chief of staff Rebecca Wright have been placed on investigative leave.

An unnamed security staff member with whom the DOL chief is accused of having an affair also has been sidelined, according to an account by the news site Bloomberg Law.

Chavez-DeRemer denies what her attorney, Nick Oberheiden, called politically biased “ghost allegations,” the Politico news organization reported.

Oberheiden said the secretary “remains calm and confident and does what she always does: working for the American people with a deep commitment to President Trump and his administration.”

Chavez-DeRemer has proven an outspoken and enthusiastic ally of Trump.

At a cabinet meeting, the Labor Secretary thanked Trump for his aggressive deportation policies and urged an immigration “crackdown” in Portland, the largest city in her home state of Oregon.

The comments prompted Sen. Ron Wyden (D-Oregon) to question DeRemer's sense of loyalty. “It's bad enough to flatter the boss as a requirement for employment,” Wyden said. “But it's even worse to sell out your fellow Oregonians along the way.”

Chavez-DeRemer, seated across from Trump at the cabinet session, asked the



Labor Secretary  
Lori Chavez-DeRemer



President to visit the Department of Labor and see his “big, beautiful face” on an enormous banner hanging from the DOL building, according to Oregon Public Broadcasting.

The labor secretary hailed the President's job-creating record – dismal, in the view of many analysts – and said he was “the transformational president of the American worker.”

In a statement, the Democratic National Committee called the Labor Department a “clown show” under Chavez-DeRemer and said she had become distracted by personal matters “instead of focusing on improving the lives of American workers.”

Despite questions about her conduct, Chavez-DeRemer draws high praise from the White House where a representative dismissed accusations against her.

“Secretary Chavez-DeRemer is doing a great job standing up for American workers and she continues to have President Trump's full support,” a spokesperson said in a statement to Politico.

Chavez-DeRemer is married to an anesthesiologist. The couple lives in Happy Valley, Oregon.

# In Memoriam

Listed here are members for whom death benefits were paid, according to the Graphic Communications Benevolent Trust Fund. Locals wishing to list members who died but did not participate in the death benefits program should contact The Communicator.

| Local   | Date of Death                  | Local | Date of Death                     |
|---|--------------------------------|-------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Death Benefit Claims Paid September 2023</b> |                                |       |                                   |
| 555M  | Henri Paul Pellerin 08-08-23   | 14M   | James Garofolo 06-26-23           |
| 555M  | Herbert Schutte 08-08-23       | 14M   | Jack Henry Luckhardt, S 01-14-23  |
| 555M  | Glenn A Scragg 10-05-22        | 16N   | George Noble 07-10-23             |
| 568M  | Milton M C Meadows 07-26-23    | 17M   | Larry E Haynes 07-23-23           |
| 572T  | Atanacio R Mesa 06-18-23       | 17M   | Orville Waggoner Jr 06-29-23      |
| 577M  | Edmund C Nowak, Jr 07-27-23    | 25M   | Charles L Ard 01-15-21            |
| 577M  | Ronald P Soens 08-12-23        | 25M   | Richard E Eminger 08-08-23        |
| 577M  | Helena Wojcik 06-30-23         | 25M   | Herbert J Gast, Jr 08-23-23       |
| 612M  | Anthony J Yapaola 07-29-23     | 25M   | Lawrence M.C. Gomulinski 08-26-23 |
| 625S  | Boniface S Gamino 02-13-23     | 25M   | Christy L Kostoff 09-05-23        |
| 853T  | Harold Curtis Jr 04-18-23      | 25M   | Jenny L Polk 09-03-23             |
| 999ML   | Douglas R Beale 08-06-23       | 25M   | Joann K Vance 08-22-23            |
| 999ML   | Robert G Dutilly 07-08-23      | 77P   | Judd P Vollmer 08-31-23           |
| 6505M   | Robert T Bills 11-20-22        | 77P   | David P Zolkowski 05-19-23        |
| 6505M   | Wade B Blevins 10-07-22        | 117T  | Russell B Solberg 07-30-23        |
| 6505M   | Harold E Vitrey                | 119B  | Joseph Orlando Sr 06-24-22        |
| <b>Death Benefit Claims Paid October 2023</b>   |                                |       |                                   |
| 1B  | Jolene S Deaver 08-26-23       | 235M  | Steven D Joslyn 09-05-23          |
| 1B  | Kermit M Johnson 08-04-23      | 235M  | Larry L Martin 07-02-23           |
| 1B  | Joan R Kobilka 09-05-23        | 235M  | Joseph J Nally 08-18-23           |
| 1B  | Marcella J Le Vesueur 12-04-22 | 235M  | Brett D Thornton 07-07-23         |
| 1L  | Michael H Dalleo 08-10-23      | 458M  | Richard A Boll 09-09-23           |
| 1L  | William V Lawler 08-27-23      | 458M  | Edward W Borske 08-19-23          |
| 1L  | Thomas E Mellis 03-25-23       | 458M  | Henry M Callahan 07-12-23         |
| 1L  | Glenn A Snyder 08-09-23        | 458M  | William R Gockman 08-12-23        |
| 1L  | Robert Tortorello 07-28-23     | 458M  | Emine Hamidof 06-21-23            |
| 1M  | Daniel S Auge 07-13-23         | 458M  | Theodore M Labuda 08-24-23        |
| 1M  | Clifford R Tchida 08-02-23     | 458M  | John M Mcnamara 08-20-23          |
| 2N  | George P Gregory 08-24-23      | 458M  | Edward Nelson 08-23-23            |
| 3N  | Joseph E Gaudet 06-22-23       | 458M  | Martin P O'Brien 08-16-23         |
| 3N  | Richard O Schofill 09-19-20    | 458M  | Edward Palenik 08-17-23           |
| 4C  | James W Jenkins, Sr 01-17-23   | 458M  | George C Stryker 05-15-23         |
|   |                                | 458M  | Robert W Wallner 08-11-23         |
|   |                                | 503M  | Joseph F Rivizzigno, Jr 09-05-23  |
|   |                                | 514M  | Erma L Richmond 08-15-23          |
|   |                                | 568M  | Arthur J Powell 07-04-23          |
|   |                                | 577M  | John D Arena 07-28-23             |

| Local  | Date of Death                    | Local  | Date of Death                  | Local | Date of Death                    |                          |
|--|----------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|-------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 577M   | Ivan N Driscoll 07-08-23         | 235M   | James S Scott 08-25-23         | 2N    | Roger Carbo 09-25-23             |                          |
| 577M   | Harold P Radish 08-21-23         | 285M   | Frank J Steckline, Jr 08-04-23 | 2N    | Dennis J Milcznski 10-30-23      |                          |
| 577M   | Frank R Vollmann 09-07-23        | 355T   | James H Moore, Sr 09-29-23     | 2N    | Richard Simon 12-19-22           |                          |
| 853T   | Edward S Sanchez 07-15-23        | 458M   | Thomas E Balk 09-24-23         | 3N    | Mildred H Wheatley 10-19-23      |                          |
| 999ML  | Rodney A Miller 07-27-22         | 458M   | Michael C Cox 10-11-23         | 3N    | Stephan J Wysocki 10-16-23       |                          |
| 6505M  | William E Jarrett 08-30-23       | 458M   | Lester Davidson 09-17-23       | 14M   | Thomas M Barlas 08-22-23         |                          |
| <b>Death Benefit Claims Paid November 2023</b> |                                  |  |                                |       |                                  |                          |
| 1B   | Catherine M Henry 09-22-23       | 458M   | Ronald Hogstrom 08-06-23       | 14M   | Raymond W Mccoy 12-22-12         |                          |
| 1L   | Julia E Dodge 10-14-23           | 458M   | Rocco J Liotti 10-08-23        | 16N   | Steven J Campbell 09-19-23       |                          |
| 1L   | George Keurian Jr 08-28-23       | 458M   | Michael Maratto 10-05-23       | 17M   | Norma L Aschenberg 11-04-23      |                          |
| 1M   | Lucas D Caruso 08-14-23          | 458M   | Clyde A Novak 09-08-23         | 17M   | Richard A Bardister 09-22-23     |                          |
| 1M   | Marie L Lind 08-30-23            | 458M   | Martin T Quinn 09-07-23        | 25M   | Sharon A Buchanan 04-24-23       |                          |
| 2N   | Emil Marc 03-23-23               | 458M   | Joseph A Romagnano 09-23-23    | 25M   | Nicholas P Prusovic 10-02-23     |                          |
| 2N   | Joseph A Pechillo 09-24-23       | 458M   | John Urshan 08-27-23           | 25M   | David S Sironen 10-06-23         |                          |
| 2N   | Elmo M Serafini, Jr 09-20-23     | 503M   | Rudolph Vargas 09-27-23        | 25M   | Gerald F Wurmlinger 09-16-23     |                          |
| 2N   | Richard B Stone 06-19-23         | 503M   | Sigmund J Kociszewski 05-18-23 | 119B  | Louis A Pulido 10-24-23          |                          |
| 3N   | Harold Dyer Jr 11-28-22          | 503M   | Giovanni Scalzo 06-30-23       | 197M  | Arley R Adams 06-01-23           |                          |
| 3N   | Lucy A Fournier 09-06-23         | 518M   | Saulvesis Bergis 07-10-23      | 235M  | Robert L Lane 10-19-23           |                          |
| 4B   | Martha V Jones 08-08-23          | 518M   | Joseph C Hanssen 09-14-23      | 458M  | Ephraim W Alexander 07-10-23     |                          |
| 14M  | Adam M Hasiuk 09-11-23           | 518M   | Frederick W Schultz 07-23-23   | 458M  | Richard L Bator 10-27-21         |                          |
| 14M  | William L Seebacher 08-24-23     | 527S   | William T Harris, Jr 09-11-23  | 458M  | Vito Di Giulio 09-30-23          |                          |
| 14M  | Joseph J Wilson 08-19-23         | 527S   | Joseph D Montcalm 05-11-23     | 458M  | John A Faragoi 10-04-23          |                          |
| 14M  | Howard H Wurtenberg, Jr 09-21-23 | 555M   | Gerald Lafleur 10-04-23        | 458M  | Richard E Hanson 10-02-19        |                          |
| 16N  | William P Flanagan 06-27-23      | 555M   | Jacques Pare 09-11-23          | 458M  | Robert A Kuszynski 05-31-23      |                          |
| 16N  | Robert T Geisler, Jr 02-21-23    | 568M   | Arthur J Powell 07-04-23       | 458M  | Walter W Lichtfuss 10-20-23      |                          |
| 17M  | Phyllis Everling 08-30-23        | 568M   | Paul E Stupasky 07-13-23       | 458M  | George R Stalling 08-31-23       |                          |
| 17M  | Jeffrey J Spangler 07-26-23      | 572T   | Marion A Scott 09-02-23        | 458M  | Leroy S Wiczorek 08-30-23        |                          |
| 24M  | Steven W Wuebbles 08-26-23       | 747M   | Willard E Toliver 06-18-23     | 503M  | Kenneth L Ford 09-10-23          |                          |
| 25M  | Thomas F Badya 10-16-23          | 853T   | Stanton Huey 08-08-23          | 503M  | Joseph A Tupper 03-24-17         |                          |
| 25M  | Robert J Bell 09-17-23           | 853T   | James T Parquer 08-15-23       | 518M  | Jerald E Toomey 08-10-23         |                          |
| 25M  | John C Bowman 09-05-23           | 999ML  | Elizabeth J Clutts 09-28-23    | 527M  | Viola D Harrison 04-05-23        |                          |
| 25M  | Orlo R Cully Jr 08-06-23         | 999ML  | Shirley D Glodo 10-01-23       | 527M  | Karen G Hayes 05-29-23           |                          |
| 25M  | Helen C Duffee 04-14-23          | 999ML  | Richard A Nachtwey 10-09-23    | 555M  | Klaas Gerardus Akkerman 12-19-22 |                          |
| 25M  | John P Hartman, Sr 09-29-23      | 999ML  | Elaine M Schulte 09-30-23      | 555M  | Jacques Aube 11-07-23            |                          |
| 72C  | Louise M Divver 09-08-23         | 999ML  | Delbert A Tichenor 06-21-23    | 555M  | Raymond Audy 10-15-23            |                          |
| 77P  | Stanley A Dontje 09-26-23        | 6505M  | James L Asher 09-02-23         | 568M  | Shawn P Ford 10-27-23            |                          |
| 100M   | Franklin O Branton 08-08-23      | 6505M  | Max E Eppard 08-11-23          | 577M  | David W Malingowski 10-29-23     |                          |
| 117T   | Robberd Hamaker 09-01-23         | 6505M  | Christian D Kerlick 09-16-23   | 577M  | James T Ulrich 08-13-23          |                          |
| 119B   | Joseph F Alessi, Jr 09-28-23     | 6505M  | Keith P Sherfy 09-10-23        | 853T  | Anthony J Koci 01-06-23          |                          |
| 135C   | William J Mcmillan 10-10-23      | <b>Death Benefit Claims Paid December 2023</b> |                                |       | 853T                             | Richard A Sarao 10-31-23 |
| 226M   | Joseph Mcruiz Jr 09-08-23        | 1L   | Edith Faatz 10-16-23           | 999ML | Helen P Lamagdeleine 04-02-23    |                          |
| 235M   | Michael J Burasco 08-17-23       | 1L   | William J Parotte 10-10-23     | 999ML | Alvin H Lock 10-20-23            |                          |
| 235M   | Danny R French 09-24-23          | 1M   | Gary F Carrizales 09-14-23     | 999ML | Kenneth L Mccree 10-29-23        |                          |

## The Rev. Jesse Jackson: 'His Voice Provided Hope'

In 1989, the International Association of Machinists struck Eastern Airlines in a historic dispute over pay and benefits.

IAM workers quickly were joined by pilots and flight attendants – and by the Rev. Jesse Jackson.

On picket lines in Atlanta and South Carolina, Jackson, a strong labor advocate who knew unions were essential to fighting economic inequality, carried an IAM “on-strike” poster and walked arm-in-arm with union leaders and members.

He denounced management “schemes,” according to the online news agency, GoUpstate, and warned that Eastern would use “bankruptcy laws to bust unions.”

When Jackson died in February at age 84, union leaders around the country recalled his steadfast support of American workers, high sense of purpose and willingness to show up when it mattered most.

“His presence offered courage, his voice provided hope, and his moral clarity affirmed that the fight for economic justice is inseparable from the fight for human dignity,” the machinists union – now IAM Union – said in a statement recalling Jackson’s steadfastness during the Eastern Airlines strike. “That moment remains one of the most powerful demonstrations of his unwavering commitment to workers’ rights.”

At the PPPWU, President Israel Castro called Jackson “an American hero” who “battled tirelessly” for equal justice and knew that unity among workers could be a powerful force.

“Rev. Jackson believed that more draws us together than keeps us apart,” Castro said. “He had faith that we could overcome differences and achieve great things with a sense of common purpose.”

George Tedeschi, PPPWU president emeritus and former leader of Local 406-C, Long Island, recalled meeting Jackson briefly at a hotel on a trip to California in the late 1980s.



The Rev. Jesse Jackson

“He was cordial, open and told me he wished the best for me and my union and its members,” Tedeschi said. “I followed his career after that and respected him as a great American leader who cared deeply about working people.”

Becky Pringle, president of the National Education Association, also hailed Jackson’s commitment to working-class Americans and said he was a “pillar of justice for labor, education, and communities” around the nation.

“May we carry forward the hope you kept alive and remember – always – that justice is a collective responsibility.”

Jackson twice sought the Democratic nomination for president – in 1984 and 1988 – and “widened the circle of who gets to be seen, who gets to be heard and who gets



Long an advocate for workers’ rights, the Rev. Jesse Jackson joined members of the International Association of Machinists on picket lines during an historic 1989 strike against Eastern Airlines. ‘His presence offered courage, his voice provided hope, and his moral clarity affirmed that the fight for economic justice is inseparable from the fight for human dignity,’ the Machinists, now IAM Union, said when Jackson died in February at the age of 84.

to dream big enough to claim the highest offices in the land,” said SEIU President April Verrett.

Throughout his career as faith leader, social activist and political aspirant, Jackson recognized the importance of organized labor.

“He understood there is no civil rights movement without workers’ rights, and no economic justice without strong unions,” Verrett said.

In a 1988 speech published by the New York Times, Jackson said workers must be mindful of attempts by corporate interests to turn employees against one another and undercut solidarity.

That strategy must not be allowed to succeed, he said. “Together we can win,” Jackson said. “Workers united will never be defeated.”

## IAM Leader Upset Winner in Texas

**T**aylor Rehmet is an Air Force veteran, skilled machinist, community organizer, president of an IAM local in Fort Worth, Texas and leader of the IAM's statewide council.

To his impressive resume, Rehmet added an entry earlier this year that drew nationwide attention and sparked widespread political commentary.



Running as a Democrat in a solid red district, he beat a well-funded GOP Texas State Senate candidate endorsed by President Donald Trump and backed by the national Republican Party – a “major upset in Trump country,” said CNN.

With an emphasis on action and economic justice, Rehmet, 33, defeated Leigh Wambsgans, a conservative Christian activist

who spent more than a reported \$2.5 million on the race – compared to Rehmet's \$380,000 – and was heavily favored to carry a district Trump won by 17 points in 2024.

Rehmet, who routed his opponent in last January's special election, 57-43 percent, quickly was cast as the kind of Democratic outsider who could help the party regain its working-class appeal and put Republicans on the defensive in November midterms.

“Texas delivers stark warning to Republicans in critical election year,” said a BBC headline while the New York Times declared, “After His Democratic Victory in Texas, a New Working-Class Star Rises.”

Rehmet, president of Machinists Local 776-B, Fort Worth, will fill a Senate seat left vacant when four-term District 9 incumbent Kelly Hancock resigned to become acting Texas controller. In November, Rehmet and Wambsgans are expected to meet again as each seeks a full, four-year term.

Meanwhile, Rehmet told the Times he had no intention of exploiting issues that divide Americans but would focus on the everyday needs of his constituents.

“I'm not interested in the cultural war issues,” he said. “I'm working on, how do we get these people paid correctly?” Rehmet told CNN's Erin Burnett he won the election by “listening to voters, not just talking at them.”

In a statement, IAM Union President Brian Bryant said Rehmet's priorities reflected the ideals of organized labor. “Taylor's victory is a win for working people,” Bryant said.

At the PPPWU, where plans are underway to affiliate with the IAM, President Israel Castro said Rehmet's win demonstrated the union's civic involvement and dedication to working class concerns.

“Great win, great union, and another reason why we are happy to be joining forces with the IAM,” Castro said.

## Prices Up, Help from an Old Favorite

**D**onald Trump insists prices are down and “affordability” is a phony issue.

The President's rosy view is contradicted by an inflation rate nearly the same as when Trump took office, steep grocery prices and, perhaps most convincingly, booming sales of a familiar budget-stretching favorite, Hamburger Helper.

“As groceries get more expensive and Americans remain unsure about their economic future, shoppers are gravitating toward a tried-and-true budget meal,” said a Fox News report last year.

Introduced in 1971, Hamburger Helper, now a product of Eagle Foods, helps extend ground beef with pasta or rice and often comes to the rescue during tough economic times.

With ground beef prices at near record highs, Hamburger Helper is enjoying a “blockbuster resurgence,” according to Eagle Foods.

Eating is more expensive – and so is the cost of clothing. Experts say apparel prices could increase more than 20 percent over the next several months.

As a result, said the New York Times, Goodwill secondhand clothing stores are “thriving” in what the paper described as an “uncertain economy.”

Items on clothing racks are not affected by Trump's controversial worldwide tariff program because Goodwill's stock comes largely from donations. Shoppers benefit from a wide selection of bargain-rate apparel at nonprofit Goodwill stores.

“I'm looking for a very good price at this time,” one customer told the Times. “It's hard times. This brings down the pain of spending for clothes.”



## Federal Workers ‘Not Going’ Away

**M**ore than 300,000 federal workers lost – or left – their jobs last year following a purge led by automobile entrepreneur Elon Musk and high Trump Administration officials but the nation's largest civil service union has a message for the White House.

“We're not going anywhere,” said a statement from the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE).

The union said it continues to win court cases challenging radical administration attempts to shrink the federal government while demanding Congress pass pro-worker legislation initiatives “targeting federal programs and workers' labor rights.”

Battling President Donald Trump's extreme agenda is an AFGE priority, the union said.

“Through community rallies and political protests, interviews with local and national media outlets, and direct appeals to members of Congress, AFGE members kept the pressure on our elected leaders to fight the administration's attacks on our government and our democratic principles,” the union said.

Dedication assures results, AFGE said. “Union activism makes a difference.”

## Guild: Bezos Risking Post's Future

**T**he Washington Post survives after a devastating cost-cutting move earlier this year by its owner, Amazon billionaire Jeff Bezos, but NewsGuild officials wonder what comes next – and how much punishment the legendary 148-year-old paper can endure.

“A newsroom cannot be hollowed out without consequences for its credibility, its reach and its future,” said The Post Guild in a statement after Bezos – whose wealth is estimated at nearly \$250 billion – axed 300 editorial workers in a single day upending careers and leaving the paper's future in question.



Guild officials said that 400 jobs had been cut in three years and questioned the company's commitment to sustaining the Post and what, for decades, has been its ambitious and fearless editorial agenda.

“Continuing to eliminate workers only stands to weaken the newspaper, drive away readers and undercut The Post's mission: to hold power to account without fear or favor and provide critical information for communities across the region, country and world,” the Guild said.

Bezos, who is among many corporate billionaires seeking favor with the anti-worker, anti-press Trump Administration, said his support of the Post would never falter when he purchased the publication in 2013.

But his stewardship of the legendary paper, founded in 1877, is questioned by journalists, press analysts and First Amendment advocates.

Marty Baron, the Post's widely respected former executive editor, said the huge staff reductions imposed by Bezos led to one of “the darkest days in the history of one of the world's greatest news organizations” and warned the Post could slip into a “death spiral.”

Cutbacks will allow the Post to endure and prosper, Executive Editor Matt Murray told CNN, and his boss, Bezos, has the best interests of the paper in mind. “Jeff is nothing but supportive of getting the house in order and being positioned for growth,” Murray said.

# HOME FINANCING



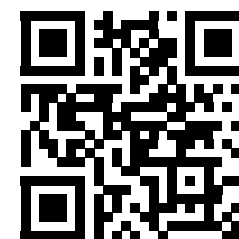
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## SUMMARY ANNUAL REPORT FOR GRAPHIC COMMUNICATIONS BENEVOLENT TRUST FUND

This is a summary of the annual report for the Graphic Communications Benevolent Trust Fund, (Employer Identification No. 52-1632857, Plan No. 502) for the period July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025. The annual report has been filed with the Employee Benefits Security Administration, as required under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA).

The value of plan assets, after subtracting liabilities of the plan, was \$66,095,054 as of June 30, 2025 compared to \$61,232,563 as of July 1, 2024. During the plan year the plan experienced an increase in its assets of \$4,862,491. This increase includes unrealized appreciation or depreciation in the value of plan assets; that is, the difference between the value of the plan's assets at the end of the year and the value of the assets at the beginning of the year, or the cost of assets acquired during the year. During the plan year, the plan had total income of \$7,206,251. This income included employee contributions of \$138,879, realized losses of \$53,654 from the sale of assets and earnings from investments of \$7,115,509. Plan expenses were \$2,343,760. These expenses included \$465,874 in administrative expenses and \$1,877,886 in benefits paid to participants and beneficiaries.

### Your Rights to Additional Information

You have the right to receive a copy of the full annual report, or any part thereof, on request. The items listed below are included in that report:

1. An accountant's report; and
2. Assets held for investment.
3. Information regarding any common or collective trust, pooled separate accounts, master trusts or 103-12 investment entities in which the plan participates.

To obtain a copy of the full annual report, or any part thereof, write or call the office of the Plan Administrator.

Graphic Communications Benevolent Trust Fund  
Attn: Plan Administrator  
12301 Old Columbia Pike, Suite 310  
Silver Spring, MD 20904  
52-1632857 (Employer Identification Number)  
(240) 223-0310

You also have the right to receive from the Plan Administrator, on request and at no charge, a statement of the assets and liabilities of the plan and accompanying notes, or a statement of income and expenses of the plan and accompanying notes, or both. If you request a copy of the full annual report from the plan administrator, these two statements and accompanying notes will be included as part of that report. These portions of the report are furnished without charge.

You also have the legally protected right to examine the annual report at the main office of the plan:

Graphic Communications Benevolent Trust Fund  
12301 Old Columbia Pike, Suite 310  
Silver Spring, MD 20904  
and at the U.S. Department of Labor in Washington, D.C., or to obtain a copy from the U.S. Department of Labor upon payment of copying costs. Requests to the Department should be addressed to: U.S. Department of Labor, Employee Benefits Security Administration, Public Disclosure Room, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Suite N-1513, Washington, D.C. 20210.

### PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT STATEMENT

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13) (PRA), no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number. The Department notes that a federal agency cannot conduct or sponsor a collection of information unless it is approved by OMB under the PRA, and displays a currently valid OMB control number, and the public is not required to respond to the collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. See 44 U.S.C. 3507. Also, notwithstanding any other provisions of law, no person shall be subject to penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if the collection of information does not display a currently valid OMB control number. See 44 U.S.C. 3512.

The public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average less than one minute per notice (approximately 3 hours and 11 minutes per plan). Interested parties are encouraged to send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of the Chief Information Officer, Attention: Departmental Clearance Officer, 200 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Room N1301, Washington, DC 20210 or email DOL\_PRA\_PUBLIC@dol.gov and reference the OMB control number 1210-0040.

OMB control number 1210-0040 (expires 03/31/2026)

## An Open NLRB Seat Hinders Union Election Process

Public approval of unions is high. Workers are motivated. Organizing is on the upswing. American labor is having a moment.

But there's a problem, experts say.

While the number of members inched up last year, White House policies are proving an obstacle to the orderly scheduling of union elections, analysts say.

Research by the non-profit Center for American Progress (CAP) shows that the number of private sector union elections monitored by the National Labor Relations Board "fell dramatically" last year after President Donald Trump fired board member Gwynne Wilcox, a Democrat, and left the five-member agency without a quorum.

"As a result, appeals in cases involving alleged illegal firings and other unfair labor practices were left in limbo, weakening enforcement of workers' rights during active organizing drives," CAP said.

Aurelia Glass, a CAP policy analyst, said allowing the NLRB board to languish had caused serious disruption and put workers at a disadvantage.

"The Trump administration has made it harder for workers to exercise their organizing rights," said Glass. "The administration's actions didn't stop workers from wanting unions, but they did make it more difficult for workers to win them."

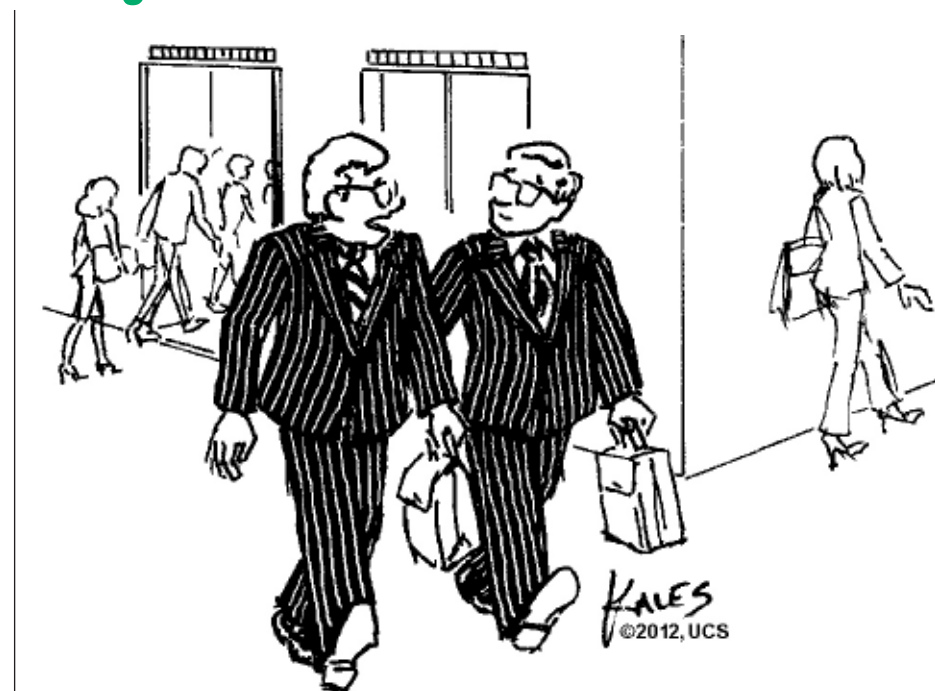
Union elections "increased significantly" by the end of President Joe Biden's administration but faltered when Trump took over, CAP said. There were just under 1,500 union elections in 2025, CAP noted – a 30 percent drop from the previous year when 2,124 elections were held.

In addition, research by Glass showed nearly 60,000 fewer workers voted in union elections last year, a 42 percent drop, and union organizing victories were fewer.

While he advertised himself as a "champion of the people" on the campaign trail, Trump's administration "spent 2025 attacking the agency that oversees most private sector union organizing elections," Glass said.

Interest in unions remains strong despite the challenges, Glass said, but whether pro-labor "momentum" can be sustained in the face of "hostility from the administration remains to be seen."

## Funny Business



"No problem is too daunting not to be blamed on the workers."

