International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers
District Lodge 66
1307 Market Street
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Union Herald Article from the desk of:

Martin Gaul, DBR

Welcome all to the month of March. These have been very busy days at District Lodge with a number of trips required and continuing over the next couple of weeks.

I had the opportunity to travel for the Trane Company negotiations at their location in Clarksville, Tennessee as a member of the Coordinated Bargaining Committee along with Local Lodge 21 President Brad King and Chairman Rich Hauser. Being that this was my first chance to experience Trane negotiations I found it to be very beneficial. I also came away with a valuable lesson...when in Tennessee be very careful when offered a glass of spring water. After much hard work the Clarksville bargaining team was able to secure an agreement with the Company that was accepted by the membership. The members of the CBC will be attending Trane negotiations in Fort Smith, Arkansas in March. I am unable to attend this session, so I wish them safe travels and a successful trip.

I also had the chance to travel to Alsip, Illinois for a labor/management meeting for Crown, Cork and Seal. As many of you are aware, Crown in La Crosse was my employer prior to coming to the District so I had some experience in this setting. This meeting also proved beneficial as I had not served an active role on the Crown bargaining committee for a good many years. Many of the players remain the same, though much "matured" from when last we met. I am certain they said the same of me. Local Lodge 1115 President and Crown Chairman Ernie Domnie and Committeeman Mark Bryant participated in these meetings with Crown and did an outstanding job representing the La Crosse facility.

My travels will be continuing in March as I will be attending training at the Winpisinger Center in Placid Harbor, Maryland along with the Machinists Non-

Partisan Political League National Planning Committee Meetings in San Antonio Texas, also being attended by District Secretary-Treasurer Dennis Gerke who was given the honor of being nominated.

During the last week of February, the Wisconsin State Council of Machinists Spring Conference was held in Madison, Wisconsin. These sessions were well attended by delegates from all of District 66's Wisconsin Local Lodges. I was unable to attend these meetings. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the delegates who did attend, with special thanks to District President Dean Rink and District Secretary-Treasurer Dennis Gerke for taking the lead for our MNPL fund raising efforts at this conference. Thanks also to the members of all of our Local Lodges for sending your delegates to these important and informative meetings.

On a final note to our members of Local Lodge 2191, your Bargaining Committee and I continue to work with the Chart management team to implement your new Collective Bargaining Agreement. As all are aware we have some issues concerning the language of the new contract. The members of LL2191 can be proud of what you have done when asked to step up to insure Chart Energy and Chemicals commitment to growth in La Crosse. I continue to hold out hope that we will reach an understanding with the company on these issues to insure the success of our new partnership and in the spirit of cooperation we have done so much to demonstrate.

The following was reprinted with the permission of Robert Reich, from his blog at www.robertreich.org.

Americans aren't living beyond their means

It's just a myth propagated by groups like Fix the Debt to keep the country's wealth in the hands of the few

Brace yourself. In coming weeks you'll hear there's no serious alternative to cutting Social Security and Medicare, raising taxes on the middle class, and decimating what's left of the federal government's discretionary spending on everything from education and job training to highways and basic research.

"We" must make these sacrifices, it will be said, in order to deal with our mushrooming budget deficit and cumulative debt.

But most of the people who are making this argument are very wealthy or are sponsored by the very wealthy: Wall Street moguls like Pete Peterson and his "Fix the Debt" brigade, the Business Roundtable, well-appointed think tanks and policy centers along the Potomac, members of the Simpson-Bowles commission. These regressive sentiments are packaged in a mythology that Americans have been living beyond our means: We've been unwilling to pay for what we want government to do for us, and we are now reaching the day of reckoning. The truth is most Americans have not been living beyond their means. The problem is their means haven't been keeping up with the growth of the economy — which is why most of us need better education, infrastructure, and healthcare, and stronger safety nets. The real median wage is only slightly higher now than it was 30 years ago, even though the economy is twice as large. The only people whose means have soared are at the very top, because they've received almost all the gains from growth. Over the last three decades, the top 1 percent's share of the nation's income has doubled; the top one-tenth of 1 percent's share, tripled. The richest one-tenth of 1 percent is now earning as much as the bottom 120 million Americans put together. Wealth has become even more concentrated than income (income is a stream of money, wealth is the pool into which it flows). The richest 1 percent now own more than 35 percent of all of the nation's household wealth, and 38 percent of the nation's financial assets – including stocks and pension funds.Think about this: The richest 400 Americans have more wealth than the bottom 150 million of us put together. The six Wal-Mart heirs have more wealth than the bottom 33 million American families combined.

So why are we even contemplating cutting programs the middle class and poor depend on, and raising their taxes?

We should tax the vast accumulations of wealth now in the hands of a relative few.

To the extent they have any wealth at all, most Americans have it in their homes – whose prices have stopped falling in most of the country but are still down almost 30 percent from their 2006 peak.

Yet homes are subject to the only major tax on wealth — property taxes.

Yale professor Bruce Ackerman and Anne Alstott have proposed a 2 percent surtax on the wealth of the richest one-half of 1 percent of Americans owning more than $7.2 million of assets.

They figure it would generate $70 billion a year, or $750 billion over the decade. That's more than the fiscal cliff deal raises from high-income Americans.

Together, the two sets of taxes on the wealthy — tax increases contained in the fiscal cliff agreement, and a wealth tax such as Ackerman and Alstott have proposed — would just about equal the spending cuts the White House has already agreed to, totaling $1.5 trillion (or $1.7 trillion including interest savings). That seems about right.

Robert Reich, one of the nation's leading experts on work and the economy, is Chancellor's Professor of Public Policy at the Goldman School of Public Policy at

the University of California at Berkeley. He has served in three national administrations, most recently as secretary of labor under President Bill Clinton. Time Magazine has named him one of the ten most effective cabinet secretaries of the last century. He has written 13 books, including his latest best-seller, “Aftershock: The Next Economy and America’s Future;” “The Work of Nations,” which has been translated into 22 languages; and his newest, an e-book, “Beyond Outrage.” His syndicated columns, television appearances, and public radio commentaries reach millions of people each week. He is also a founding editor of the American Prospect magazine, and Chairman of the citizen’s group Common Cause. His widely-read blog can be found at www.robertreich.org.

I have included the following information from iMAIL, which is available to all at www.goiam.org

Union Difference

Some of the most important benefits that workers get from Union membership are impossible to put a price tag on: representatives in the workplace of our own choosing, an active, collective voice to bargain over working conditions, and due process on the job. As union members, we know that collective bargaining is the best way to promote basic, democratic principles of fairness and dignity at work. But being in a union confers significant economic benefits as well. Unions have historically been the most effective institutions in our society at making sure the economic gains that workers help to create are shared widely rather than being channelled solely to the executive suite. The data below illustrates “The Union Difference” and shows why more and more people are joining unions today.

Union Difference 2012

Union Status	Median Wkly. Earnings	Any Retirement Benefits	Defined Benefit Pension	Medical Benefits
Union	$943	88%	78%	77%
Non-Union	$742	49%	19%	50%

Number of Union Members in the United States: ***14.4 million***