

LETTERS to the EDITOR

The Inadequacies of Junior Hoffa's 'Good Old Boys'

Misogyny and homophobia has raised its ugly head within the struggle to gain control of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. Jeffrey Goldberg writes about the campaign of James "Junior" Hoffa for General President of the IBT (New York Magazine, July 31), and focuses on the "Good Old Boys" from the "Senior" Hoffa's gangster-era who are still hanging around the Teamsters.

Bill Hogan, head of Chicago Teamsters, was quoted calling Diana Kilmury, International Vice President of IBT, a "fucking cunt" while he attended a Teamsters Women's Caucus recently. Diana has been a real force in changing the direction of the Teamsters to be more inclusive and democratic.

Another advisor for Hoffa, Larry Brennan—head of the Michigan Teamsters—attended the same women's conference and stated, "You got a lot of your bull dykes here, you know."

One of Hoffa's advisors (T.C. Stone, the head of Teamsters in Texas) went on about taking "...these welfare mothers and sterilize them."

The process of democratizing the union has led to a Human Rights Conference September 15-17 in Washington where lesbian and gay union members will be presenting a panel and a workshop on our specific issues as union members.

Pride at Work-NY, the local chapter of the National Lesbian/Gay/Bi/Transgendered Labor Organization, has played a role in building for membership involvement in the Human Rights Conference. We found the support of Ron Carey, General President IBT, and Diana Kilmury, and other officials like Carl Haynes, president of Local 237.

"Junior" Hoffa is so desperate that his supporters are attacking union members' genitalia to try and discredit them. They are falling all over themselves trying to cover up their own inadequacies (be they of a sexual nature or in

Who Suffers When Government Shuts Down?

There has been a great deal of speculation about the impact of the shut-down of the federal government on October 1 if the President and Congress can't agree on a budget.

I was dumbfounded by one television reporter's remarks that conservatives were mounting a campaign to convince the American people that the effects of a federal government shut down would be minimal for most people.

Shutting down the federal government pulls the \$75.3 billion paid in yearly wages to 2,000,000 plus federal employees and \$105 billion paid yearly to government contractors out of the economy.

This will send shock waves throughout the economy when utility bills, car payments, credit card bills, and mortgages go unpaid, when contractors, subcontractors, and suppliers start laying off their own private-sector employees because there is no work, when state and local governments start laying off their employees because the block grants which funded their wages expire, when students don't get their loan money for tuition and our universities begin layoffs, when all the mom and pop lunchettes, newspaper stands, dry cleaners, grocery stores etc. that relied on the business of those employees start their own layoffs.

their ability to build a viable union/labor movement).

We Teamsters know what we need and how we can achieve those goals. Through an inclusive policy. Only by membership involvement and the democratic process that unions are based on will we be able to control our lives at the workplace.

**Larry Kelly, Shop Steward
Teamsters Local 237
Brooklyn, New York**



The people whose livelihoods these conservatives would so casually sacrifice to make political points aren't strangers; they are our neighbors. Each of us will suffer.

Perhaps it is time for us to tell Congress we want a new story line: one in which regular, everyday people do not have to suffer economically for the political goals of the wealthy elite in Congress.

**Ralph C. de Juliis
Paterson, New Jersey**

Why Did Hubbell/Raco Back Off Closing?

While the article on the defeat of a threatened plant closure in South Bend was inspiring ["Coalition Halts Plant Closing"—July], it left me with the feeling that something was missing. On rereading it, I could identify the problem: the seeming lack of credible means of preventing the closing, had the company really been intent on it.