(Mr. SANFORD addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. FILNER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. ROUKEMA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. ROUKEMA addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. MINGE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MINGE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Indiana (Ms. CARSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. CARSON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. KASICH addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. HARMON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. HARMON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MORAN of Virginia addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. COBURN addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. LAFALCE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. LAFALCE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. EHLERS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. EHLERS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Hawaii (Mrs. MINK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. MINK of Hawaii addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. TALENT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. TALENT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. SKAGGS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SKAGGS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ON THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE LABORERS' REFORM EFFORTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SNOWBARGER). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) is recognized for 10 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, Clarence Darrow said, ''With all their faults, trade unions have done more for humanity than any other organization of men that ever existed. They have done more for decency, for honesty, for education, for the betterment of the race, for the developing of character in men than any other association of men.''

The labor movement has played a vital role in making this country what it is today. Only 65 years ago the basic right to retire was beyond the means of most workers. One worked until one was physically unable to work anymore. Workers even when they were employed could barely support their families on a day-to-day basis. The prospect of being able to save enough money to retire, or buy a home or send a child to college was for most workers nonexistent. The fact that this is no longer the case is in large part a measure of the success of the labor movement.

The successes achieved by the labor movement did not come easily. Most worker rights were bitterly opposed by employers and their political allies. Moreover, labor's opponents have never been satisfied with merely opposing policies pursued on behalf of workers. More typically labor's opponents attack the very fabric of trade unionism. In doing so, they directly attack the well-being of working families.

Today, Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about another attack that has been launched against the labor movement. In the American Spectator, in the Weekly Standard and on the editorial pages of the Wall Street Journal, charge after charge has been leveled against the Laborers' International Union. The reform efforts that the Laborers' have undertaken and the consent decree under which the union is operating have been assaulted.

Mr. Speaker, these articles regularly sling stupefying charges of continued mob control of the union by a recognized crime family without providing a shred of evidence or on-the-record attribution for allegations made. The common feature of these articles is that they make absolutely no mention of the real progress that has been made to ensure that the Laborers' is a democratic union controlled by and operated for the benefit of rank-and-file members.

Today there is an effort under way at the Laborers' Union that represents one of the most innovative, cost-effective programs ever undertaken to rid a union of mob influence. The reform effort is still a work in progress. It is premature to render judgment regarding its ultimate success. However, Mr. Speaker, the progress that has been made is truly impressive. To ignore, misrepresent or dismiss it is not just disingenuous but may deny workers and the government a model for the future that does a better job of promoting and protecting union democracy than other means that we have tried in the past.

Corruption in the Laborers' Union was investigated for decades, with little to show for the effort. Finally, the U.S. Justice Department informed the union that it would take legal action to take control of the union just as it had done with the Teamsters Union.

The union and its leaders facing this critical decision and knowing how serious the problem was could have chosen

to spend years fighting the government's suit or could be part of the solution. The union's executive board chose to be part of that solution. On February 13, 1995 the Laborers' entered into an historic oversight agreement with the Department of Justice to rid the union of mob influence. The union agreed that, with the help of independent investigators and prosecutors, it would clean its own house.

Since that time, a remarkable story has been taking place. The union adopted a new ethics and disciplinary code and it adopted an independent process to enforce that code. The union has hired a team of former top-ranking FBI officials and Justice Department prosecutors to enforce the code and to discipline those who violate it.

So far, Mr. Speaker, the reform effort within the union has, one, removed 189 union officials; has filed charges against 132 union officials and staff; has caused 47 union officials to resign after bringing or threatening to bring charges; has referred 25 criminal matters to Federal or local law enforcement authorities; and has imposed 19 trusteeships over local unions and district councils in which all local officials and officers were removed.

Mr. Speaker, trusteeships have been imposed on the Chicago District Council and on Local 210 in Buffalo, New York, both regarded as longtime bastions of organized crime.

Members of the Mason Tenders District Council of Greater New York recently conducted their first officers' election since the imposition of a trusteeship in 1994. While under trusteeship, the union recovered $12 million of the $15 million in assets lost by wrongdoing by former officers.

In 1996, the union conducted its first direct rank-and-file election for general president and will soon implement the first ever direct membership vote for all union offices.

Mr. Speaker, the union is embarking upon hiring hall reforms and is educating its Members so that they are able to freely and fully participate in the union affairs and governance. The union has also implemented a toll-free 800 telephone number directly to the internal, independent Inspector General's office so that members may more easily raise complaints or express their concerns.

No one has been immune from the reform process. Charges have even been brought against the union's general president. An independent inquiry is now being made to determine whether to remove that individual from office or not.

Mr. Speaker, all of this is being accomplished by the union itself. It is all being paid for with union money and not government funds. The reform process is promoting private initiative and accountability. The union is under the democratic control of its members, not the mob and not the government.

In 3½ years, the Laborers' internal reform effort has done more to clean up the union than decades of efforts by law enforcement agencies. And the reform effort has accomplished this in a manner that has made the union a more effective advocate on behalf of its members rather than a weaker one.

The reform efforts are not yet complete, but much has been accomplished. Nevertheless the accomplishments of the Laborers' internal reform effort are truly significant. They deserve the attention of the public, and they deserve fair and accurate reporting by the media.

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD a document entitled ''Report to Members of Congress, Laborers' International Union of North America's Ethics and Disciplinary Program: 41 Months of Progress.''

REPORT TO MEMBERS OF CONGRESS—LIUNA'S ETHICS AND DISCIPLINARY PROGRAM: 41 MONTHS OF PROGRESS

A BOLD EXPERIMENT

One of the most under reported stories in today's labor movement concerns a union, with a proud past that was sadly tarnished by corruption, that has taken matters into its own hands, ridding itself of wrongdoers and eradicating criminal influences.

Uner an historic Oversight Agreement signed on February 13, 1995, the Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA) continues to work with the U.S. Department of Justice to initiate widespread internal reforms. Over the past three years, our union has implemented model ethics, disciplinary and democracy programs that stand second to none in safeguarding the rights of every union member. We have succeeded in moving our union into a new era.

The Laborers' International also successfully conducted the first rank-and-file election for General President in December 1996, under the supervision of an Independent Election Officer. In our next election, we will implement direct membership votes for all union officers.

LIUNA's reform programs have been cited as a model for future reform efforts, and in a March 24, 1998 letter to the National Legal and Policy Center, the Department of Justice stated that it believed that our internal reform process has ''resulted in considerable success.''

This is not to imply that the Justice Department believes our programs are perfect, nor do we. But as we learn, we continue to progress. Indeed, our success thus far—and the fact that work remains to be done—is why we and the Justice Department extended our unique Oversight Agreement for another year. Under this agreement, the Justice Department retains the unilateral power to take control of our union if it feels we are making insufficient progress in rooting out corruption and safeguarding our members' rights. We view the extension of the Oversight Agreement as a clear vote of confidence in our reform efforts.

THE POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE

The innovative nature of the Laborers' self-reform movement—and the facts about its genesis and achievements—should merit both bipartisan and nonpartisan support. Unfortunately, this has not been the case.

Over the course of the Agreement, our reform programs and our union have been the subject of relentless attacks by anti-labor opponents and right-wing extremists. Those who have the most to fear and the most to lose from reform have tried to sabotage this process and undo LIUNA's progress. And some in Congress and in the media have given these people an uncritical hearing and platform.

Media outlets, such as The Wall Street Journal and The American Spectator, continue to publish articles, editorials and guest columns that repeat—like a broken record—misconceptions, falsehoods and unsupported allegations about our union, our officers and our reform efforts. They do not, however, have the journalistic integrity to publish the evidence of our progress or to take an unbiased look at how our union is changing for the better.

A NEW APPROACH

LIUNA's Cooperative Agreement is a model for the kind of reform the Justice Department and FBI have been working toward in private industry—requiring private organizations to assume principal responsibility for policing themselves. Among its many benefits, the Agreement has: Saved taxpayer dollars by having LIUNA—not the government—responsible for cleaning its own house; promoted private initiative and accountability, rather than relying on the government to fix what is, in essence, an internal matter; and kept LIUNA under the democratic control of its members, averting a government takeover of a private organization.

LIUNA's General Executive Board (GEB) is firmly committed to the success of the Ethics and Disciplinary Program. Our experience has only added to our commitment for this unique experiment in self-policing, and it has deepened our resolve to permanently change this union for the better. LIUNA is unequivocally committed to advancing internal reforms and to making this the most democratic union for our members.

Another priority continues to be implementation of hiring hall reforms. LIUNA's General Executive Board adopted a new set of job referral rules and hiring hall practices to protect all LIUNA members' rights and eliminate any possibility of violations. In 1996, we also established a Job Referral Committee which works with the independent GEB Attorney on an ongoing basis to deal with complex local issues and to improve policies governing these matters. LIUNA officials and members are receiving the necessary education and instruction to put these reforms in place.

A third priority is educating members on our election reform rules so that all members can be confident of their right to participate fully in fair and open elections, and in union affairs and governance.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE REFORM PROCESS

The Laborers' Ethics and Disciplinary Code and internal reform program work because they are now an established part of our union's Constitution and because they are enforced by a team of fully independent officers. These officers do no answer to the General President, General Executive Board or the General Counsel of the Laborers' Union; they answer only to our members and the U.S. Department of Justice.

When the Inspector General's investigators discover conduct that might constitute grounds for discipline, they bring the matter to the attention of the GEB Attorney, and he commences prosecution, if warranted. Such cases have succeeded in eliminating some of the most significant sources of corruption within the union.

Officials at all levels of LIUNA have resigned their positions when confronted with disciplinary charges or the prospect of being required to give sworn testimony in connection with investigations. The resignations eliminate sources of corruption swiftly and effectively, and allow the Inspector General and GEB Attorney to focus efforts on other high priorities. The ease of these victories in no way detracts from their value.

The following actions, compiled by the Inspector General's Office as of August 1998, are testament to the ongoing success of LIUNA's innovative reform process:

Removed 189 individuals for criminal or ethical violations, or ties to criminal elements, through convictions, terminations or suspensions.

Filed charges and complaints against 132 individuals for alleged wrongdoing. Some focus on individual members or officers. Others are aimed at broader patterns of misconduct committed by LIUNA District Councils or Local Unions.

Prompted the resignations of 47 individuals who were targets of investigations.

Suspended eight individuals pending resolution of criminal charges.

Referred 25 criminal matters to federal or local law enforcement authorities.

In addition to these activities, we should note that the Laborers' have succeeded in using trusteeships and suspensions to rid our most problem district councils and local unions of all vestiges of corruption.

For example, the Mason Tenders District Council of Greater New York this year concluded its first officers' election since a trusteeship was imposed in 1994. The trusteeship has recovered $12 million of the $15 million in assets lost by the membership because of malfeasance.

The Mason Tenders Investigations Officer, Michael Chertoff, who also served as Majority Counsel to the Senate Whitewater Committee, has expressed his confidence in our aggressive efforts to prevent organized crime from ever regaining influence there.

Our Independent Officers have also imposed trusteeships over Local 210 in Buffalo and the Chicago District Council, which had historically been controlled by organized crime. Law enforcement authorities pursued both locals for many years with minimal success, but our internal reform process got results expeditiously and fairly.

In all, 19 trusteeships have been imposed, 17 in the U.S. and two in Canada, where all officers were removed and 10 supervisions have been established where the majority of officers were removed.

LIUNA'S ANTI-CORRUPTION TEAM

Our Inspector General, W. Douglas Gow, is the former Associate Deputy Director for Investigations at the FBI. He is charged with investigating and resolving disciplinary matters arising under LIUNA's Constitution or Ethical Practices Code, and supervising the union's compliance program that is designed to prevent and detect wrongdoing. He has assembled a first-class team of high-ranking, former FBI agents and law enforcement officers. This team is charged with pursuing every credible lead of possible wrongdoing.

We have taken extra steps to make it easier for union members to raise their complaints, questions or concerns through a toll-free 800 telephone number that goes directly into the Inspector General's Office. All calls are treated in the strictest of confidence.

Our General Executive Board Attorney, Robert Luskin, is the former Special Counsel for the Justice Department's Organized Crime and Racketeering Section. He serves, in effect, as the union's chief disciplinary official.

All internal hearings are held before the Independent Hearing Officer, Peter F. Vaira, a former director of the President's Commission on Organized Crime and a former U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania. W. Neil Eggleston, a former Chief Appellate Attorney for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York, serves as the Independent Appeals Officer.

A FINAL NOTE

As we stated earlier, our reform process is not perfect, but it has made more progress in the last 41 months in ferreting out corruption and identifying wrongdoings than any other union. We are proud of what we have accomplished, and we will continue to work hard to make our union the strongest, cleanest and most democratic for our members.

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GREEDY PLAYERS, GREEDY OWNERS, AND PUTTING AMERICA FIRST

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, we are all reading the reports about economic troubles all over the world. We are also being told that these problems are already starting to affect the economy here in this country. Yet at the same time a small group of people who are averaging over $2½ million a year are getting ready to go on strike. I am talking of course about the NBA.

Today professional sports has become filled with greedy players and greedy owners, and nowhere is this more obvious than in pro basketball. Last year one of my sons told me that one little-known player had signed a 6-year, $123 million contract, 20½ million dollars a year. I told my son that the sports world has simply gone berserk.

I hope the NBA players and owners cannot work out their differences. I hope the whole season is lost. If they do play, I wish people would just refuse to watch and instead go to college or high school games.

I remember a couple of years ago hearing about a major league baseball player signing for 3 years for $6 million a year. The average person in this country today makes less than $25,000 a year. If a person worked for 40 years at 25,000 a year, he would make $1 million for his whole career. If he was way above average, making 50,000 a year, he would make $2 million over a 40 year career. A person would have to average $150,000 a year for 40 years to make $6 million.

These pro sports salaries are simply out of whack. I do not support giving government more money because so much of it is wasted, and turning money over to government is the least efficient way to spend money and the least efficient way to create jobs that you could find. But with these ridiculous salaries as high as they are now and especially if they continue to escalate, then we should lower the taxes on middle-income people and make it up by raising the taxes on these athletes and movie stars who are making millions of dollars a year.

Mr. Speaker, if we are about to hit some hard economic times, then we need to try even harder to see that we use our money and spend our money in the wisest ways possible. We need to give people more incentives to save and more incentives to invest especially in companies that create manufacturing and industrial jobs, good paying jobs. We need to stop giving tax breaks and spending huge sums of public money for pro sports companies so they can raise the salaries of athletes who are already being paid obscene amounts already.

While I am discussing inefficient, unfair ways of spending public money, I should mention that unfortunately we are about to give many billions more to the International Monetary Fund in this end-of-the-year omnibus appropriations bill. We will be doing this against the advice of people like George Schultz, the former Treasury Secretary; Jack Kemp, a former leader in this body; James K, Glassman, the Washington Post financial columnist and many others. Mr. Glassman wrote this past Tuesday that:

> The IMF bears responsibility for Asia's troubles. With the U.S. Treasury in 1995, it delivered unprecedented sums to bail out banks and investors who made reckless loans to Mexico. That rescue then encouraged investors to make riskier extensions of credit to Asia, Russia and Latin America. That led to over capacity and to the current crisis.

In other words, we are taking billions from lower and middle income Americans to send to foreign countries to bail out rich investors, banks and multinational companies for bad investments overseas and in some cases to help keep factories going in other nations which are taking jobs from American workers. Our Founding Fathers never would have believed this. We are told we have to do this because if we do not, other countries will not be able to buy as many American products, and some American workers will lose their jobs. What we would really be doing though is sending billions of American tax dollars to other countries so that we can get a portion of it back.

Already our balance of payments deficit, our trade deficit is at record levels. We will lose about 3 million jobs to other countries because of a trade imbalance this year alone. If we kept all of these billions here instead of giving it to the IMF, some multi-national companies and international bankers and investors might be hurt. But this money would not disappear if we simply kept it here. More of it would then go to the benefit of American workers and small American businesses that do not do much or any business overseas.

Mr. Speaker, as I have said on this floor before, we need to start putting our own workers and our own businesses first once again. We need to start putting America first once again, even if it is not politically correct or fashionable with liberal elitists to do so.

SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT PURSUANT TO THE CUBAN DEMOCRACY ACT OF 1992—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS) laid before the House the following message from the President of