



Unions Built the Working Class - Let's Support Them and Their Fight

By Sen. Adam Hollier

In May 2013, I stood with fast food workers as they went on strike in Detroit to fight for a \$15 minimum wage and union representation.

Six years later, more people have begun to galvanize around a \$15 minimum wage as well, but we sometimes forget the people pushing, organizing and sustaining that early movement were unions and workers who know the value of union representation.

Earlier this month — thanks to the work of SEIU Local 1 — janitors and security officers in downtown Detroit were able to successfully negotiate a \$15 minimum wage.

Among them was Dolores, a 12-year veteran security officers born and raised in Detroit who is raising her 4-year-old granddaughter and living in subsidized housing. She has worked more than one job all her adult life and is still working part-time hours between two companies. She's one of the SecurAmerica officers who went on strike, and, after months of being ignored by management, their action earned them a \$15-an-hour minimum wage on July 5.

This week, U.S. Sen. Kamala Harris was in town and listened as Mattie Hunter, another security officers, told her story, demanding a voice in her workplace. Thanks to SEIU Local 1 a US Senator, and presidential candidate acknowledged her leadership, echoed her words and showed her respect and dignity. Sen Harris was clear and on target saying "Unions built the middle class, and we must hold corporations like Bedrock accountable to give every worker a voice and fair treatment."

The fact of the matter is this: Every worker in Detroit and across Michigan deserves to have a workplace that is safe. Unions have led to safer work sites. Every worker deserves fair and true living wages. Unions fight for fair wages for a day's work. And, for generations, thousands upon thousands of workers in this state — union and non-union — enjoyed employer-paid benefits, better-paying jobs, weekends and more because leaders and unions supported the rise of a middle class.

Unfortunately, that has already started to erode under a Republican-led legislature and the previous administration.

The GOP has spent the last eight years gutting citizen-led referendums intended to support all Michigan workers and making back-door deals to bust up workers' rights with the so-called "right to work" law.

When the debate about this nation's and state's future comes to Michigan next week, let's let everyone know: It's not too late to get back to the playbook that built the middle class, and that time is now. BB Workers should be allowed to organize, and everyone deserves a fair, livable wage for a day's work. A \$15 minimum wage is one important part of the equation.

We can do better when we work in solidarity.

Sen. Adam Hollier (D-Detroit) represents citizens of the 2nd District in Wayne County that includes the cities of Detroit, Grosse Pointe, Grosse Pointe Farms, Grosse Pointe Park, Grosse Pointe Woods, Hamtramck, Harper Woods and Highland Park, and the Village of Grosse Pointe Shores.



Raman Singh



Rev. Stancy Adams



Robert Bruttell

And then they came for me...

Posters expressing anti-Semitism found recently in Royal Oak and Birmingham reflect the growing expression of religious and cultural hatred in our society. The posters are attributed to the Atomwaffen Division, labeled as a terrorist hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center, one of 148 hate groups in the United States, many of which are linked to white nationalist ideology.

It is especially disheartening that the president of the United States has chosen to be a cheerleader for racism, anti-Semitism and Nativism. Democracy and pluralism are not just quaint American notions but rather they are the core of what America is and what makes it great. To entertain and encourage divisiveness, racism and Nativism risk breaking the bonds of affection that sustain America as a nation, internally strong and worthy of respect internationally.

We who commit to improving the social fabric through healthy interfaith engagement and education fear that the growing expression of religious hate and racism is a grave threat to the survival of American culture. It is built on embracing the cultural and religious differences that have enhanced this nation since its inception and promise to continue to do so, if not stifled by this dangerous trend in our society.

The InterFaith Leadership Council of Metropolitan Detroit has demonstrated that educating young people through our Religious Diversity Journeys and adults through Exploring Religious Landscapes leads to understanding, acceptance, and engagement with religions that otherwise may seem. But these are people willing to consider different beliefs and customs. What do we

do with the brash ignorance of those who want to rid American society of its religious and social diversity, and revert back to the hatred of the antisemitic and racist past?

We who may be from other countries, or people of color, or religions unfamiliar to Americans fear the underlying passion of the crowd's chant "Send her back." When will they call for us? When will they post threats to everyone other than their definition of religion?

We, of good faith and humane intent, should reflect on the poetic interpretation of the German Lutheran Pastor, Martin Neimoller, featured in the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Rev. Neimoller criticized German society for not resisting the rise of Nazi power in German. It is as relevant today as then:

"First they came for the socialists, and I did not speak out --

Because I was not a socialist.

Then they came for the trade unionists, and I did not speak out --

Because I was not a trade unionist.

Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out --

Because I was not a Jew.

Then they came for me -- and there was no one left to speak for me."

Raman Singh, President InterFaith Leadership Council of Metropolitan Detroit

Rev. Stancy Adams, Chairperson InterFaith Leadership Council of Metropolitan Detroit

Robert Bruttell, Past Chairperson InterFaith Leadership Council of Metropolitan Detroit

What Do Blacks Want...I Mean Really?!

By NAACP reports

A reporter asked me the other day in preparing for the Democratic Candidates Forum, what do black people want? It is not the first time I've been asked such a transparent question. Black and brown people are Americans, even though many don't want to recognize that fact. We didn't fall out of the sky like manna from heaven. Black folks, originally brought here on slave ships, have fought for and earned every right and privilege America has to offer. We are not some American aberration, nor are we a figment of American imagination. Quite frankly, we want the same damn thing that every other American wants.

First, we want to win!

We want a President with an administration that respects us, not just in word but in policy.

We want a President that does not lie or divide the people against each other.

We want a President that works to make us better people, not bitter people.

We want a President that will advocate not only for the middle and upper class, but who will also remember the plight of the poor and those left behind.

We want a President whose cabinet will have folks that not only look like us but who are advocates for our community.

We want to keep and expand our health care. Don't end it, fix it!

We want excellent schools that educate our children with good teachers and adequate funding, right in our own neighborhoods.

We want police officers that respect the rights of black people and won't kill us when stopped on the street, walking in a park, or shopping in a store.

We want access to finances and to capital to buy homes and to fund our businesses.

We want neighborhoods that are safe, beautiful, and secure.

We want our retirement programs and social security to be preserved when we get ready to use it. It is our earned money. It is not a special federal grant.

We want to be able to send our children to college that is affordable and won't suffocate them with endless debt after graduation.

We want jobs and opportunity for those inside the neighborhood and those returning citizens coming back to the neighborhood.

We want an environment in which our children will be able to get clean water, breath fresh air, and enjoy the beauty of nature for future generations.

We want America to treat people seeking asylum in this nation humanely, with dignity, and proper care, not in cages but in communities. We want fair and open elections without voter suppression or intimidation.

We want a nation that is respected around the world, not one that is rejected because of its behavior in the world.

Finally, we know that we deserve reparations after 400 years of disparaging treatment, racism, income inequality, unequal opportunity and blatant discrimination. This is not new. Other groups have received such compensation to repair past injuries — Japanese Americans, Native Americans, Jewish Americans, and others. Most of us are not limiting our vote to this one issue. For many, that is not a deal breaker. For some it could be a deal maker whether it comes in effective policy or a paycheck that we never received. The bottom line is we want a future that is economically sound, politically empowering, justice oriented, and people prioritized.

These things are not hard. It is not about your personality. It is about your policy. One can have all the personality in the world but if you ain't got no policy, can't implement no policy, can't unite folks around your policy, in the words of the King of Soul James Brown, "You're just talking loud but saying nothing!"

Letters to the Editor

By Victor L. Marsh, Sr.

Dear Editors:

I have mellowed since my retirement-less grumpy, less stressed and pretty much laid back these days. As Detroit prepares to host the 20+ crowded field of Democratic presidential candidates; this grandfather gives pause to lessons learned over the past 40 years as an Activist/Political Operative.

One thing is for certain---at the RNC right now there is a team of communication experts, radio, TV and image analysts breaking down every negative fact (or fiction) Democratic candidates will hurl at each other now until their convention next Summer 2020. If Democrats, do not get behind a Biden-Harris ticket, featuring Obama Veep and former U. S. Senator Joe Biden and Obamaesque U. S. Senator Kamala Harris; we will have hell to pay next November and beyond.

The Biden-Harris ticket unites old school versus new school, it also reminds us that Democrats are more diverse than the GOP will ever be at least for another generation, anyway. Biden-Harris unites this country--East Coast and West Coast, young and old, rich and poor, and a dynamic that will

be hard to beat in most American cities on Election Day.

Democrats must be smart and strategic. They must also realize that #45 will make mince-meat out of Sanders, Warren and everyone else outside of Biden-Harris in any debate/town hall format. The problem with Senator Warren and Senator Sanders, most Democratic insiders know that these folks will return to the Senate and not help the ticket win next November once they lose, just ask Hillary.

About the Author: Victor L. Marsh, Sr., 62, is the father of a 3-time Emmy-winning Producer & Writer, John, and former U. S. Diplomat, Victor, II, and the grandfather of Josephine Eleanor of Silicon Valley. He is one of few individuals in Detroit political history who has worked for a Wayne County Chairman, Five Detroit Mayors, Three Detroit City Council Presidents and a Detroit Board of Education President and has never lost a political campaign where he was the Campaign Manager of record. Marsh also spent 22 years as a drive-time radio talk show host for Golden Mic award-winning The Queen's "Back-to-Back" Show heard daily back-in-the on WQBH. Marsh & his wife, Cheryl, reside in Detroit's Rosedale Park. You may reach him via Linked-In.

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