

Opinion

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LETTERS

Why do our citizens loathe democracy?

It has never ceased to amaze me how the general public can be convinced that unions are bad for our economy and our nation. In a democratic country, one that has a reputation and history that inspires people around the world, its own citizens speak with derision about workers, who are also citizens that have the ability to elect representatives to advocate for them with their employers.

For those who don't belong to a union, understand that a union is a reflection of our democratic government. For example, I, as a union member, can run for office and can vote for representatives of my colleagues to bargain collectively and fight for basic human rights, like healthcare, job security, and wages. If my union officers do not act for the general good of its membership, they can be voted out of office, like our government's representatives, senators, and president.

The democratically elected union officials bargain collectively with the employer for a fair contract. Without a union, an employer can divide and conquer. Given that the goal of a corporation is to make a profit, greed encourages the employer to cut costs and maximize gains. Just like our government was set up to work for the public good, providing security, welfare, and a rule of law, unions work to provide contract law under which to work, job security and benefits.

Our current economic situation of declining wages, lack of healthcare, and diminishing retirement benefits corresponds to the decline in union membership throughout this country. I only hope that eventually the general public, our democracy, wakes up to this fact.

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