

LETTERS TO OUTLOOK

Picketing tactic deplored

I have always been a supporter of unions and organized labor. The American union movement is responsible in great part for the formation of the American middle class and the system of work rules and job safety legislation that we all enjoy, whether we're part of a union or not.

The 40-hour workweek, overtime pay, and workmen's compensation are some of the many benefits we enjoy as a direct result of union organizing in the early part of the 20th century. Union organizers literally risked and often gave their lives in the struggle for these rights.

My longtime friend and colleague Chet Karnas, the owner of Lone Sun Builders, has recently been the target of a picketing campaign by Carpenters Union 1319. This out-of-state union is not attempting to organize his work force, but instead is using defamation and slander, along with picketing, in an apparent attempt to put

him out of business.

Carpenters Union 1319 has not returned my phone calls so I can't tell what their motives are. If they think the tactics they are using against Lone Sun will frighten other companies into bargaining with them, they are probably wrong. Their tactics dishonor the long, proud history of American unions.

Chet Karnas runs a good business, and he is an honorable and honest businessman. If Carpenters Union 1319 wants to organize Lone Sun Builders they should give the employees information about the benefits of unionization and let the employees choose if the union will be better for them. They have not even tried to do this. I challenge the real representatives of Carpenters Union 1319 to speak to the employees of Lone Sun Builders, to the press and to the public about their motives and their tactics.

The founders of the American union movement would have scorned hiding behind underpaid temporary

labor to slander a company in a public place. These tactics are counterproductive, destructive to our community and a stain on the union movement.

Rick Thaler
President
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Millwork

Stick with democracy

Winthrop Quigley made several good points about the frustrations (and benefits of working through the process) of "getting things done" in America's political system ("Democracy's Glacial Pace," Dec. 14). His central point, that Obama should not use the EPA to push draconian restrictions on carbon dioxide emissions that he cannot achieve through the democratic process, is spot-on.

The good news for Quigley and our political leaders is that a road map exists for addressing issues as diverse as the environment and abortion: the U.S. Constitution. The Founding Fathers wrote this document with the idea that while the

states should be constrained by the federal government in military and trade, the states are the "laboratories of democracy" where a majority of both social and environmental policies should be made.

Unlike the federal government, the 50 states are not a monopoly. They have to compete with each other to formulate the best policies to attract citizens and businesses. Washington policymakers simply don't face these pressures.

As much as I may oppose climate change legislation now moving through Congress and think that any such policies should be handled by the states, a move by President Obama to use an unelected bureaucracy to achieve his favored policy ends will result in nationwide outrage and even blatant disobedience. For all our sakes, I hope Obama sticks with democracy, regardless of its flaws.

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Business

Outlook

MONEY RATES + PAGE 14



MONDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2009

A FAMILIAR N.M. EXPERIENCE

Real ID problem reminds us how often N.M. has been treated like a foreign country.

PAGE 3