

DO WE STILL NEED UNIONS?

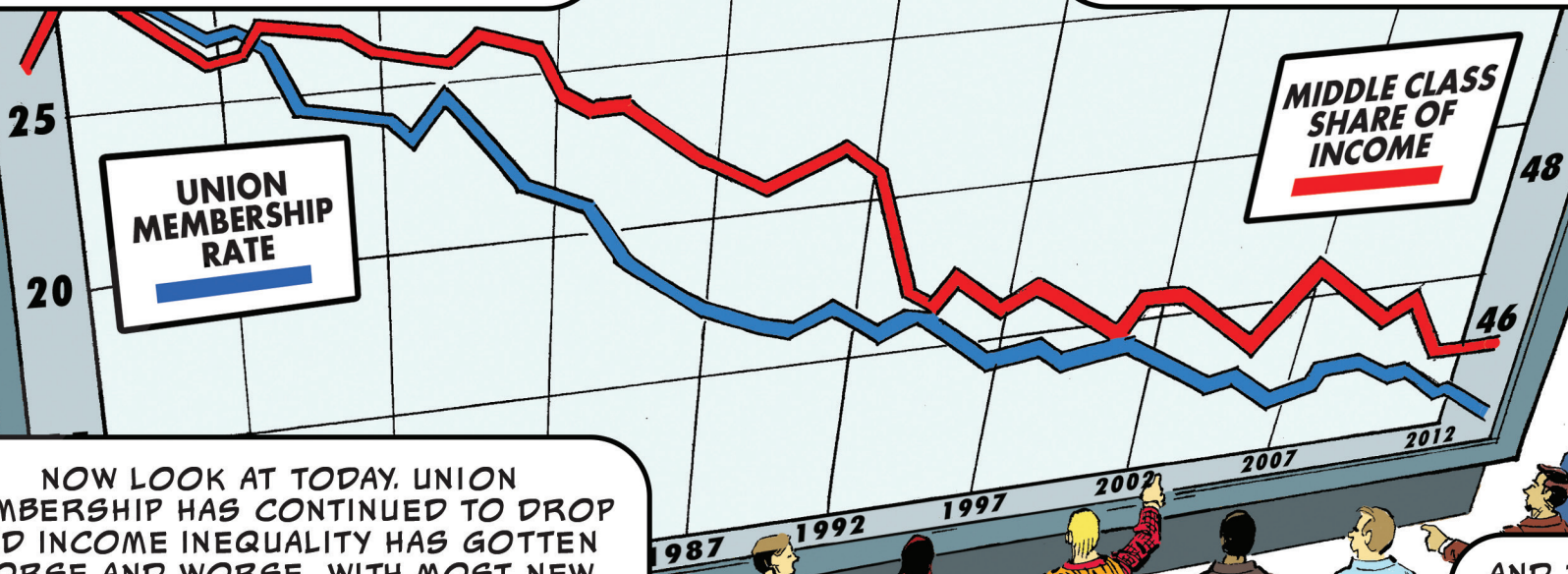
I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT UNIONS LATELY. PEOPLE SAY WE DON'T NEED THEM ANYMORE, AND I'M NOT SURE IF I AGREE. I KNOW THAT UNIONS WERE REALLY IMPORTANT--BACK IN THE DAYS OF CHILD LABOR AND HORRIFIC SWEATSHOPS. BUT IT'S DIFFERENT TODAY...

YEAH, BUT THINK ABOUT IT. BACK IN THE 30S, 40S AND 50S, MANY MORE WORKERS BELONGED TO UNIONS. WAGES AND BENEFITS WERE BETTER, AND NEW LAWS WERE PASSED TO PROTECT OUR SAFETY AND RIGHTS AT WORK.

BUT ABOUT 40 YEARS AGO, SOME CORPORATIONS LAUNCHED AN ALL-OUT ATTACK ON UNIONS TO MAKE THEM WEAKER. UNION DENSITY BEGAN TO DECLINE, AND SO DID WAGES AND BENEFITS.

YEAH, BUT ONLY FOR UNION MEMBERS, RIGHT?

NO, FOR EVERYBODY. GOOD UNION CONTRACTS LIFT UP THE WHOLE WORKFORCE, BECAUSE NON-UNION EMPLOYERS HAVE TO MATCH THE UNION WAGES AND BENEFITS IF THEY WANT TO GET THE MOST TALENTED WORKERS.



NOW LOOK AT TODAY. UNION MEMBERSHIP HAS CONTINUED TO DROP AND INCOME INEQUALITY HAS GOTTEN WORSE AND WORSE, WITH MOST NEW WEALTH GOING TO THE RICHEST 1%.

AND THAT'S NO COINCIDENCE.

I, FOR ONE, AM GRATEFUL FOR OUR UNION. DO YOU THINK WE'D BE GETTING RAISES EVERY YEAR IF WE DIDN'T HAVE UNION REPRESENTATION?

THAT'S RIGHT. STATES THAT HAVE AGGRESSIVELY WEAKENED UNIONS USING SO-CALLED "RIGHT TO WORK" LAWS HAVE FEWER UNION MEMBERS, LOWER WAGES, WORSE BENEFITS, AND MORE WORKPLACE FATALITIES.

WORKING PEOPLE ARE LOSING GROUND IN TODAY'S ECONOMY BECAUSE CORPORATE SPECIAL INTERESTS ARE SYSTEMATICALLY DISMANTLING OUR MIDDLE CLASS.

WHEN YOU GUYS PUT IT THAT WAY, I CAN SEE WHY UNIONS ARE STILL IMPORTANT. HECK, MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER!

THE ONLY THING THAT STANDS IN THEIR WAY IS WORKERS STANDING TOGETHER IN UNIONS.