

ROOFERtoROOFER

by International President Kinsey M. Robinson

If Congress Won't Create Change, We Will!

As the year 2011 comes to an end, the country and its citizens are still mired in the "Great Recession." We have experienced over three years of unprecedented stagnant growth. During this period, construction industry workers have suffered through exceedingly high unemployment—the highest unemployment levels recorded in decades. Although our country's citizens, especially working men and women, are doing all they can to share the burden in getting the economy back on track, it appears those in Congress are not doing their share.

Just a few weeks ago the Super Committee comprised of United States Senators and Congressmen and charged with developing a roadmap for dealing with current and future deficit spending, threw in the towel. Quit in Failure! They gave up on the American people in a time of crisis.

Those who helped make the current economic mess are incapable or unwilling to find avenues to fix the problem. Rather than pull together in consensus decision-making, our politicians are content to let the nation sputter, while many of America's workers continue to sit idle. My guess is that the voters have had enough of impasse, partisan disputes and gridlock and that those voters will respond by casting their ballots for change in upcoming elections.

One thing I know for sure, and that is Roofers and Waterproofers are not willing to wait until government gets off its posterior. We cannot by ourselves change conditions on the world stage, but we can and will act to make progressive change in our industry. **Because of our collected efforts and union ideals, we have a unity of purpose.** With or without government, we and our signatory contractors will work together to embrace new ideas for preparedness and workplace efficiency.

We will increase training opportunities and aggressively market ourselves to owners as the best-trained, most conscientious and most productive workforce in the roofing industry. When the overall economy recovers and construction activity picks up, our mem-

bers and partner contractors will be ready to meet the challenges and demands of the market. With or without government, we will find a way to provide jobs that pay decent wages so that our hardworking members can pay their mortgages, put food on their tables and send their kids to school. So they can enjoy the safety net of traditional healthcare, and so that at the end of their careers they will be rewarded with the best pension in the industry!

Union Roofers and Waterproofers are positive thinkers. As the holiday season nears, we are reminded of all the positive things we have been able to achieve because of the strong and unyielding union belief and the exceptional work ethic of each member of our union.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank the membership and local leaders for their dedication to our great organization and express my gratitude for your support. The officers and staff of the International Union extend to you and your families our best wishes at this special time of year. May the love of family and friends bring you warmth, peace and happiness this holiday season.

