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Machinists President Buffenbarger Responds to President Obama's First State of Union Address

Machinists Union International President Tom Buffenbarger issued the following statement in response to President Obama's first State of the Union address.

Washington, D.C., January 27, 2010. - *"It is hard to reconcile the images of a year ago – millions of Americans watching as one as President Barack Obama took the oath of office – and the faces of 31 million Americans who have been idled in this Grave Recession. Even the pomp and ceremony of this State of the Union address could not dispel the sense that something has gone terribly awry.*

The clarion calls of hope and change have faded like the last notes of Taps. The enveloping darkness, a darkness of deepening disillusionment and even deeper cynicism, is settling across the land.

When one-fifth of America's workforce is idled to some degree, the full force of government, business, labor and academia must be marshaled to get them back to work. But no such comprehensive strategy was outlined tonight.

Tonight, for all those Americans who are unemployed or underemployed, the darkness grew deeper, the cold grew more penetrating, the hunger grew more acute and the fear – yes, the fear – of what tomorrow would bring grew more intense.

Tomorrow morning, when America's jobless open their morning newspapers, they will know that their national nightmare will last through 2010. The winter, spring and summer of their discontent now will feel interminable. And their growing anger and frustration will find an outlet, most probably in the 2010 midterm elections."

Tom Buffenbarger is International President of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM), representing nearly 700,000 active and retired members in transportation, aerospace, manufacturing, shipbuilding and defense related industries. For more information, visit www.goiam.org.