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3 Indicted Leaders of Carpenters' Union Are Fired

By [WILLIAM K. RASHBAUM](#)

The [United Brotherhood of Carpenters](#), the labor organization that represents the nation's carpenters, placed its New York chapter under emergency trusteeship Wednesday and ousted the chapter head and two other leaders who are targets of [racketeering charges unsealed last week](#) by federal authorities.

The firings and emergency supervision were in stark contrast to the action taken nearly a decade ago by the parent union when the head of the chapter, the New York City District Council of Carpenters and Joiners, Michael J. Forde, was last indicted, on bribery charges. At that time, the president of the parent union, Douglas J. McCarron, kept Mr. Forde in his union post.

Mr. Forde was tried twice on those earlier charges, in 2004 and 2008; the first case ended in a conviction that was later overturned and the second ended in acquittal. Mr. McCarron let him stay in office during both trials.

The actions by the parent union, which is based in Washington, and the district council's future were the focus of a meeting of the district council's delegates on Wednesday afternoon.

Fired along with Mr. Forde, 54, who had led the district council since 2000, were John Greaney, 49, a business manager and the president of Local 608, and Brian Hayes, 38, a business agent and officer of Local 608.

Mr. McCarron, in a statement released by the parent union, called the charges in the 29-count federal racketeering and bribery indictment "profoundly disturbing." They include accusations that Mr. Forde and other union officials let members work "off the books" in exchange for bribes from half a dozen contractors. The statement did not say who would replace the fired officials, and the precise parameters, impact and duration of the trusteeship remained unclear.

But Mr. McCarron said the parent union's eastern district vice president, Frank Spencer, would supervise the district council and, along with other international officials and staff, would conduct an internal investigation.

Mr. McCarron will appoint officials from outside the New York City area to hold hearings on the district council at which members can air their grievances. A lawyer for the district council, Gary P. Rothman, said he was not authorized to discuss the matter.

On Tuesday, it appeared that Mr. Forde might still seek to maintain his position in the union. People briefed on the matter said he would go on disability to seek court-ordered drug treatment and [step down from his position](#) as trustee with the union's benefit funds.

He tested positive for cocaine and [marijuana](#) use after his arrest, Lisa Zornberg, the assistant United States attorney who is prosecuting the case, said at his arraignment last week.

Mr. Forde's lawyer, Andrew M. Lankler, declined to comment on the firings, as did Mr. Greaney's lawyer, Marc Weinstein.

James R. Froccaro, who represents Mr. Hayes, said he believed his client would be exonerated at trial, adding of the parent union, "Apparently they don't believe in the presumption of innocence."

Also on Wednesday, the 10th and last defendant, a contractor, Finbar O'Neill, surrendered at [Newark Liberty International Airport](#) after returning from Ireland. He was expected to be arraigned later in the afternoon.

Colin Moynihan contributed reporting.

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