

PEOPLE'S WORLD

www.peoplesworld.org June 4, 2010

Child care on the chopping block

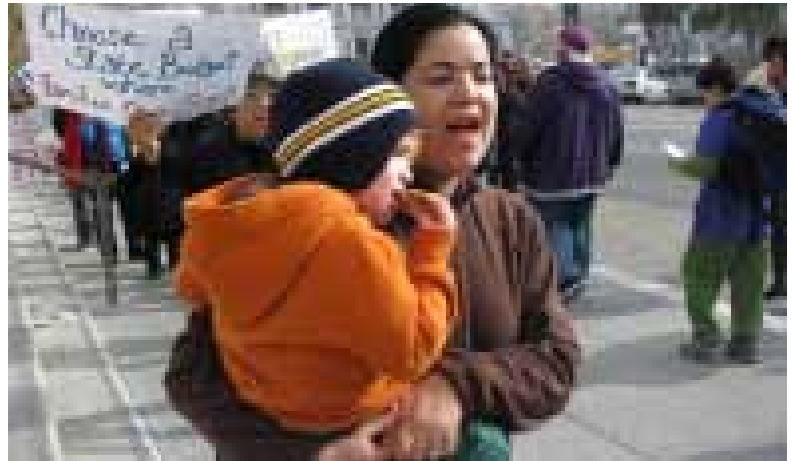
By Marilyn Bechtel

Among the devastating cuts Republican Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger proposed in his latest California budget message is an end to state-funded child care assistance. If that measure were to survive the coming budget negotiations, it would save the state general fund nearly \$1.2 billion in the coming fiscal year - and wreak havoc on the families of at least 142,000 children across the state.

The governor's proposal, and other human services cuts including completely eliminating the CalWORKS state welfare-to-work program, drew immediate fire from legislative Democrats as well as families receiving help. The current proposals come on top of years of cuts to California's human needs programs.

The state's non-partisan legislative analyst, Mac Taylor, called welfare and child care "core pieces of the state's safety net," and urged the legislature to reject the proposals.

Angelina Padilla, a single mother of four, receives help with child care for her two youngest through the Oakland-based non-profit agency BANANAS. Padilla, who works for a pharmacy, said in a telephone interview that if she had to pay the full cost, "I would not be able to work, basically. There would be no point. It's like a Catch-22," she said. "If I stayed home I'd have to go on welfare.



But if that's going to be cut, I and my children will be nowhere."

Padilla said for a time last year she had to pick up her now-7-year-old son from school and take him to work with her because she couldn't find care for his age group in her area.

"It catches up to people," she said. "You get to a point where you think, oh, my goodness, what do I do now? There've been times I've just cried if they've made cuts. It seems like there's no hope

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sometimes."

Mary Ignatius, statewide organizer for Parent Voices, a parent-led organization fighting to make quality child care affordable and accessible to all families, said the threatened cutoff of aid "puts that family's stability in total flux" as they

Low-income Californians are far from alone in fearing child care cuts.

try to figure out how to pay enormously higher costs or to find alternative care through family and friends.

While child care cuts hit low-income women of color hardest, Ignatius said, the impact is felt across all communities, and by caregivers, vendors and suppliers as well. Observers have also noted that cutting child care and other programs could cost more in federal matching funds than the cuts would save.

Low-income Californians are far from alone in fearing child care cuts. The New York Times reported earlier this week that at least nine other states have slashed their child care aid. Some have made programs less accessible or have lowered the amounts they pay, while others are putting applicants on waiting lists or lowering eligibility thresholds.

Democrats in California's legislature are fighting back. The Assembly Democrats' program includes maintaining child care programs "to ensure working parents can stay employed and over

50,000 small business child care providers can say in business." In the state Senate, Democrats propose to raise nearly \$5 billion in new revenue as they try to protect social programs from further cuts.

"What we need in California is a real discussion of revenue," Ignatius said. She pointed to a series of tax breaks for the state's largest corporations, agreed by legislative leaders and the governor in closed-door meetings during last year's budget negotiations. "Those tax breaks would pay for the entire CalWORKS and child care programs in California," she said.

But, she added, though Democrats control the legislature, they lack the two-thirds majority California requires to pass a budget or to raise taxes. "So that's part of our long-term discussion also, what it's going to take to make changes to that."



Marilyn Bechtel writes for the People's World.

A united fight

By PW Editorial Board

In an opinion piece, AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Arlene Holt Baker called for a "Main Street and MLK Boulevard" stimulus.

By adding MLK Boulevard, Holt Baker elegantly projected a unified, multi-racial approach to job creation and economic crisis.

Special measures to address years of discrimination strengthen the fight for economic relief and justice for all. Everyone – white, black, brown, Asian, American Indian – has a stake in the fight. Unemployment rates for people of color remain higher than white counterparts. Yet, powerful forces seek to pit groups of working people against each other, using racism in the first place. A multi-racial, united movement is the only way to win gains for all struggling people.

Holt Baker writes, "It's not just people of color who are paying the price. All communities, including whites, African Americans, Latinos, and others in Rust Belt states, the northeast corridor, and 'new economy' Sun Belt states are losing jobs, homes, and businesses. It's a nightmarish destruction of wealth."

Holt Baker points out the demise of manufac-

turing affects African Americans disproportionately. "Places that were hit the hardest by these job losses--Chicago's South Side, Detroit, Cleveland, St. Louis, Toledo, Atlanta--all have large black populations. Local tax bases are shrinking, eroding education and destroying public jobs, public services, and public safety."

Plus, African Americans and Latinos were "targeted for subprime lending," and "disproportionately slammed by foreclosures and bankruptcies. Communities suffering these economic blows are less able to support minority-owned small businesses--the auto dealership, the barbershop, and more."

Holt Baker places a five point program to alleviate the crisis, which includes retooling deindustrialized communities for green jobs, rescuing states/municipalities with budget short falls and maintaining the lifeline of unemployment insurance, health care and food assistance.

This is the challenge of our times! To create a movement that can compel the rebuilding of the economy for the interest of Main Street, MLK Boulevard, Cesar Chavez Avenue, etc. Each one of us has to get involved and help build it.

A multi-racial, united movement is the only way to win gains for all struggling people.

Arizona marches against hate

By Joe Bernick

It may have been Arizona's biggest demonstration ever. The May 29 protest against SB1070 drew tens of thousands.

Organizers estimated the crowd at 150,000. Marchers filled all five lanes and the sidewalks of Washington Avenue as marchers arrived for a rally at the state Capitol, and an hour and a half later they were still arriving. Tens of thousands more avoided the five-mile walk in the Arizona heat and joined in at the Capitol. Many thousands "without papers" were part of the protest, carrying signs which read, "Undocumented - unafraid."

Protesters were male and female, young and old, black, brown and white. They were festive and spirited, but determined to fight back against Governor Jan Brewer and the ultra-right gang that runs the state legislature.

Thousands came from California, Texas, and every state in the union.

At the rally, one speaker after another denounced SB1070 and called on the Obama administration to intervene to protect human rights.

The program opened with a Native American ceremony with speakers pointing out that immigrants targeted by SB1070 are mostly indigenous people from Mexico and Central America and that it will subject all Mexican American and Native people to intimidation and racial profiling.

"Today we are demanding that Congress pass comprehensive immigration reform, not next week, not next month - do it now!" thundered AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka.

Labor leaders have written President Obama and Homeland Security Secretary Napolitano calling on the federal government to not collaborate with Arizona in implementing this law, he said, adding that the answer is a jobs bill that will put all Americans back to work at decent wages.



SEIU International Executive Vice President Elisio Medina denounced Arizona's right-wing politicians, including Senators Kyl, and McCain for backing the racist law, calling on them to, "Come back from the dark side" and noting that history will reward courage and not political expediency.

There were numerous calls to repeal the racist SB1070 as well as the recently passed law to outlaw ethnic studies in state schools. Speakers and signs called for defeating Governor Brewer and the racist legislators in November when Brewer and the entire legislature will be up for reelection.

The human rights organizations, which organized the rally, are now planning the next steps in the campaign against SB1070: massive voter registration and turn out the vote campaigns, coupled with keeping up the almost daily street protests and grass roots organizing.

Later the same day a rally in support of SB1070 attracted a much smaller crowd of supporters. TV coverage of that rally showed an older and almost entirely white gathering. As usual, most of the corporate media gave that relatively tiny gathering equal coverage.

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Judge blocks furloughs for CUNY faculty

Special to the World

Union leaders say the injunction issued t May 28, by U.S. District Judge Lawrence Kahn is a victory for both the Professional Staff Congress and the City University of New York students.

Judge Kahn issued a preliminary injunction against New York Governor Paterson's plan to furlough state workers, including CUNY faculty and staff.

"We are gratified that justice has been done. Today's ruling is a victory for CUNY faculty and staff - and above all, for CUNY students," said Dr. Barbara Bowen, president of the PSC/ CUNY.

"New York's furlough scheme had nothing to do with closing the budget deficit: it would have produced about \$240 million, while the deficit is \$9 billion. The only real way to solve the budget crisis is to enact progressive tax reform, something the governor and the legislature have so far refused to do. I hope this decision sends them back to the bargaining table and convinces them of the need for closing tax loopholes and restoring a fair tax system," said Bowen.

The PSC is supporting a bonus recapture tax, reducing the rebate on the stock transfer tax to 80%.

The PSC argued that Paterson's furlough plan would have caused irreparable harm to tens of thousands of New Yorkers.. Judge Kahn agreed with the PSC's position on every point. The preliminary injunction prohibits the state from imposing furloughs while the union lawsuit against the governor's plan moves forward.

Cuba por total eliminación de armas nucleares en el 2025

Por Naciones Unidas

Cuba abogó hoy en Naciones Unidas por un Plan de Acción con un calendario concreto para la reducción gradual de las armas nucleares, hasta su total eliminación a más tardar en el año 2025.

La propuesta fue hecha por el representante permanente de Cuba ante la ONU, Pedro Núñez Mosquera, al hablar en la Conferencia de Examen del Tratado de No Proliferación de Armas Nucleares (TNP).

El diplomático aseguró que para su país el desarme nuclear es un tema de la más alta prioridad, y lamentó el lento avance hacia ese objetivo y la falta de progreso entre los estados poseedores de esos artefactos para la eliminación total de sus arsenales.

Cuba reitera que la mejor manera de combatir el terrorismo nuclear es mediante la eliminación de todos los arsenales de esas armas, sin más dilaciones o pretextos que resultan inaceptables, apuntó Núñez Mosquera ante el plenario de la ONU.

Por otro lado, reclamó el establecimiento de una Zona Libre de Ar-

mas Nucleares en el Medio Oriente y explicó que, para lograr esa meta, Israel debe incorporarse al TNP, someter sus instalaciones nucleares a salvaguardas amplias del OIEA y realizar sus actividades nucleares conexas de conformidad con el régimen de no proliferación.

En ese sentido, los cinco países con derecho a veto en el Consejo de Seguridad de la ONU apoyaron la propuesta para crear una zona libre de armas atómicas en Oriente Medio, reportó ANSA.

China, Rusia, Francia, Estados Unidos y Gran Bretaña manifestaron en una nota que están dispuestos a dar cumplimiento a la resolución del TNP de 1995 sobre Oriente Medio, que prevé la zona "libre de armas nucleares" y de "destrucción masiva".

El apoyo de los países con poder de veto se produjo cuando el representante permanente de Egipto en Naciones Unidas, Maged Abdelaziz, reclamaba "negociaciones sinceras" para establecer un área desnuclearizada.