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Glenn Beck calls unemployed “un-American”

By Pepe Lozano

According to Glenn Beck the nations 1.4 million Americans who have been out of work more than 99 weeks are “a bunch of un-American losers.”

Beck went on tirade this week against people who can't find work and feed their families.

“I'd bet you'd be ashamed to call them Americans,” said Beck on his conservative talk show.

“Go out and get a job. You may not love the job. Work at McDonalds. Work two jobs... two years is plenty of time to have lived off your neighbor's wallet,” he said.

Beck went on say jobless workers are “anti-capitalist and socialist.”

Critics note Beck's anti-worker rhetoric is simply ignorant and unequivocally misguided.

Beck is planning an August 28th “Restoring Honor” rally, with Sarah Palin among the scheduled speakers that will take place on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C., 47 years to the day after Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his “I Have a Dream” speech there.

Beck claims he was unaware of the King anniversary.

In November he announced plans to reveal a “100 year plan for America” at the Lincoln Memorial. More recently he said the August 28th event is to restore the country's “values” and pay tribute



to military families.

The controversial talk show host said it was “divine providence” that the rally happens to be scheduled on the anniversary of King's famous speech.

However civil rights groups and social justice activists are denouncing Beck's event and question his motives for choosing the date. The date of King's speech is historically symbolic of the nation's civil rights movement, they add. And Beck's

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comments in the past are consistently disingenuous and racially insensitive, activists note.

In 2009 Beck said President Obama harbors “a deep-seated hatred for white people or white culture.”

Prior to Beck's announcement of his rally,

NAACP President Benjamin Jealous said his group along with 200 others is planning a major jobs rally at the nations capital on Oct. 2.

civil rights groups had been planning marches and demonstrations the same day.

Marc Morial, president of the National Urban League recently said August 28th is a special day for all America. "It is a day that means something in American history because it was the demonstration in the United States in support of civil rights," Morial said to the Washington Post.

Beck's plans are "an effort to embarrass and poke a finger in the eye of the civil rights community because Glenn Beck and his public utterances don't necessarily demonstrate a consistency with the vision of King," he added.

Rev. Al Sharpton is one of the civil rights leaders helping to organize a march to commemorate King's legacy. Sharpton said Beck's counter rally contradicts what King truly stood for.

Sharpton said the planning of his "Reclaim the Dream Rally" began in April and will consist of a march and rally at the King memorial on the Mall. The event is being supported by the NAACP, the Urban League and Martin Luther King III.

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan is among some of the participants scheduled to be present. "For Glenn Beck and Sarah Palin to have a march, they have the right to do so," said Sharpton.

Meanwhile NAACP President Benjamin Jealous said his group along with 200 others is planning a major jobs rally at the nations capital on Oct. 2 "to pull America back together and put America back to work." Jealous notes, "On that day we will reflect Dr. King's true legacy and his determination to eliminate poverty, racism and hatred in all forms," he said. Some organizations are staging "counter-events" against Beck's rally on the Mall Aug. 28th including a grass-roots network of artists, community organizers and social activists calling themselves "Celebrate the Dream." As a memorial to King an original 77 feet wide and 37 feet tall sculpture is expected to be unveiled, artists say.



Pepe Lozano writes for the People's World.

90 years of women's suffrage

By PW Editorial Board

As always, the fight for women's rights is the fight for all rights.

Exactly 90 years ago women finally won the right to vote.

Of course, as is the case with all rights, suffrage wasn't won by waiting for those in power to grant it. Without the decades of struggle that women and their male allies waged, the right would not have been won. The first women's suffrage convention, a regional affair of 240 women and men in Seneca Falls, New York, took place more than 70 years prior.

Even after the success of Seneca Falls, the future of the fight was far from certain.

Quite obviously, we've made progress; women occupy positions near the top of the political ladder: While we still have yet to see a female president, we did see, for the first time in 2008, a woman leading the ticket of a major political party, and both the Secretary of State and Speaker of the House of Congress are women. Women, because they fought and continue to fight, have made huge strides forward in the workplace. They have many times led union struggles and won big

victories.

But there is still more to be done; the struggle is far from over. Women still earn less than 80 cents for each dollar men make on average, and also face hurdles men don't even need to consider.

Women are still bravely leading the fight forward and they have an ally in the White House, President Barack Obama, who signed the Lily Ledbetter Fair Pay Act almost immediately upon entering office.

As always, the fight for women's rights is the fight for all rights, something recognized long ago. Sojourner Truth connected the fight against slavery to the fight for women's equality, and the convention resolved that "the trampled women of the plantation" deserved the same rights that the women of the convention were demanding

We celebrate all the achievements women have made, and look forward to celebrating future victories.

Record jobless numbers trigger new alarm

By John Wojcik

Despite economic forecasts to the contrary jobless claims rose last week by 12,000 to 500,000, the third straight weekly increase and the first time in nine months that they hit the half-million mark.

Economists say the figures, released Thursday, indicate the pace of firing and layoffs is increasing and show that either the economic “recovery” has stalled or that the Great Recession could be headed for a “double dip.”

This week’s news was particularly gruesome, not only because of rising unemployment but also because jobless numbers never fell low enough for a period of job creation to begin. The economy must add 125,000 jobs each month just to keep up with population growth.

Saddled with Republicans and Blue Dog Democrats in the Senate who repeatedly stall meaningful jobs legislation, President Obama used the release of the figures to press for passage of a \$30 billion small business lending bill.

“The jobless report compels us to act,” the president said late Thursday. Another Labor Department report, issued one day before the jobless claims figures were released, said small businesses are bearing the brunt of the recession. The report noted that companies with fewer than 50 employees accounted for 61.8 percent of all job losses in the fourth quarter of 2009.

“And yet the obstruction continues,” Obama declared outside the White House on Thursday. “It’s obstruction that stands in the way of small business owners getting the loans and the tax cuts they need to prosper. It’s obstruction that defies common sense.”

Although no one in government has been pushing for a massive, government-run public works program along the lines the labor movement has been proposing, the White House has argued that jobless rates will go down if Congress passes bills like the state aid bill the president



signed into law last week.

Christine Romer, chair of the Council of Economic Advisers, said the jobless report “emphasizes just how important the additional job measures before Congress are.

Progressives say stubborn GOP opposition to creation of a \$30 billion fund to encourage banks to lend to small businesses, which, when combined with bank leverage, could result in \$300 billion in actual loans, is best explained by Big Oil’s opposition to the bill.

The bill, they say, should make honest deficit hawks happy because it pays for itself. The Democratic backed bill would do this by repealing a section of the tax code which allows five big oil companies to deduct 60 percent of their income from oil and gas production from their tax liability. The repeal would only apply to the five largest corporations with more than \$1 billion in before-tax income.

As one of five oil companies with a combined pre-tax income of \$25 billion, BP is one of the companies lobbying against Obama’s small business aid bill.

The economy must add 125,000 jobs each month just to keep up with population growth.

Disabled student sues Special Olympics

By Marco Elizondo

Jenny Youngwith, who is 17 years old and attends Community High School in West Chicago, just wants to play basketball. She has been doing this safely for years, but a decision made by “someone” is keeping the special needs student from hitting the court.

The group Equip for Equality, which is an advocacy organization, filed a federal lawsuit on Youngwith’s behalf. The lawsuit claims the high school and the Special Olympics are preventing Youngwith, who has cerebral palsy from playing basketball with other disabled students.

Youngwith uses a service dog named Simba to carry a four-pound oxygen tank she needs. The girl’s mother, Janice, says Special Olympics states that it’s “not appropriate” for her to be on the basketball court with her dog Simba or with the oxygen tank.

But Youngwith and her dog aren’t new to the sport. They’ve been playing basketball in gym class at her high school for two years.

To add fuel to the fire, her family says they’re not getting a good answer as to why she can’t play.

“We asked them why and they just say, ‘Because’,” explained the 17-year-old senior’s father, Dick Youngwith to NBC.com

“We’re essentially asking that Jenny be allowed to participate using Simba, her service animal, and her oxygen tank and be able to fully participate in basketball games and track and field events,” said Jenny’s attorney Alan Goldstein.

Youngwith managed to win a gold medal in a state championship softball throw.

Trabajadores no sindicalizados van a la huelga

Por John Wojcik

En una acción sin precedente en su industria, los trabajadores en un hotel no sindicalizado salieron a una huelga de un día el 9 de agosto para protestar contra años de serles negado el derecho de tomar breves descansos durante el día laboral.

Los trabajadores en el Embassy Suites Hotel en Irvine, California, salieron a una huelga de un día solamente una semana después de haber metido quejas con el estado de California argumentando que se les han negado de manera sistemática los descansos de 10 minutos a los cuales tienen derecho por ley estatal.

Dicen los trabajadores que un 50 por ciento de los 60 empleados no gerentes del hotel firmaron la queja. Es una acción que muestra su militancia y valentía, dicen dirigentes del sindicato que representa a trabajadores hoteleros. Un grupo de empleados del hotel han montado una campaña para sindicalizar el sitio bajo auspicios de esa unión laboral, Unite Here, Local 11.

Los trabajadores formaban una línea de piquete frente al hotel, exigiendo \$180.000 en salarios atrasados. Regresaron al trabajo después de un día, pero han mantenido una línea de piquete a diario frente al hotel desde entonces.

“Esta compañía nos ha robado nuestro tiempo para sacar mayores

ganancias,” declaró Joseph Murphy, empleado del hotel. “Fuimos a la huelga para mostrarlos que sabemos cuáles son nuestros derechos, y estamos hartos. Exigimos un cambio”.

Rachelle Smith, que ha trabajado en la mesa de recepción del hotel durante más de dos años, dice que a veces tiene que esperar hasta para usar el baño porque no nadie que pueda tomar su lugar ni por unos minutos. “He tenido que ir más allá de mis cinco horas para tomar mi lonche porque estaba tan ocupada y no había gente suficiente,” dice.

Leigh Shelton, vocero del Local 11 de Unite Here, dijo que las quejas fueron hechas y firmadas por más de 30 trabajadores y que en su mayoría se trataban de quejas sobre descansos de 10 minutos perdidos. Dijo ella que hay 60 trabajadores no gerentes en el hotel y algunas de las violaciones relacionados con descansos negados son de hace hasta 10 años atrás.

“La huelga de 24 horas fue un paso gigantesco para estos trabajadores no sindicalizados que jamás habían hecho nada semejante antes de ahora,” dijo Shelton.

Una empleada de limpieza que dice que tiene 22 años trabajando allí dice que gana apenas \$10.85 la hora, y paga \$184 por mes para beneficios de cuidado de salud, beneficios que solo cubren a ella misma.