

PEOPLE'S WORLD

www.peoplesworld.org

October 27, 2012

Labor going all out as election nears

By Mark Gruenberg and John Wojcik

With the election only 18 days away the nation's unions are in the homestretch with their biggest mobilization ever.

The mobilization includes massive get-out-the-vote drives in key swing states and circulation of videos featuring worker testimony about both Obama and his pro-worker policies and GOP foe Mitt Romney and his job-destroying Bain Capital.

That comes on top of what the AFL-CIO said was a 450,000-person success in new voter registrations, while the Teamsters reported registering 25,000 more in California alone. And 200,000+ unionists have voted early nationwide, AFL-CIO Political Director Michael Podhorzer told an Oct. 19 telephone press conference.

The federation plans to have volunteers knock on 5.5 million doors, make 5.2 million "live phone calls," distribute 2.2 million leaflets at worksites and send 12 million pieces of election-oriented information mail to reach voters - union and non-union - in just the last four days before Election Day on Nov. 6, added Sasha Bruce, national campaign manager for Working America, the AFL-CIO community-based group.

The efforts are important: Opinion polls show incumbent President Obama and challenger Romney are virtually tied in the popular vote, but with Obama leading in some key swing states..

In Electoral College forecasts, Obama seems to have a slight lead.

Citing internal polls, Podherzer said he expected Obama to take Ohio, Iowa, Michigan,



Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

Meanwhile, union presidents urged their members not just to vote for the president and other pro-worker candidates, but also to staff phone banks, distribute literature and talk one-on-one with other voters - union and non-union - about the race.

For example, AFGE President J. David Cox asked each of his union members to participate, for Obama. His request is notable because AFGE, with a high proportion of law-enforcement-oriented personnel and military retirees, is plurality

T H I S W E E K :

- Labor going all out as election nears
- Editorial: Fog of right-wing lies is lifting
- Extremism, regional politics play growing role in Syria
- Immigration raids at Detroit schools
- Obama y Romney en estados indecisos

READ MORE NEWS AND OPINION DAILY AT WWW.PEOPLESWORLD.ORG

Republican.

"Romney really made it very clear that he really believes what he said, that 'I like to be able to

That comes on top of what the AFL-CIO said was a 450,000-person success in new voter registrations.

fire people who provide services for me,” Cox said in a video to members.

Other leaders painted similar pictures of stark choices between the two contenders:

“Our families and livelihood are being questioned” by Romney and the corporate interests backing him and other anti-worker candidates and ballot schemes, Teamsters Local 14 Secretary-Treasurer Larry Griffith of Las Vegas wrote in the Southern California Teamster.

“Do we want more tax breaks for the wealthy?” CWA President Larry Cohen asked in CWA News, referring to Romney’s stand for extending the Bush tax cuts for the rich. “Do we want to gut the safety net for millions? Or do we want an economic recovery in which we participate? And how do we get there?” He told an Oct. 18 conference call of activists: “There’s a connection between bargaining fights and political action.”

“In no way is this about Democrats versus Republicans,” Seafarers President Michael Sacco explained in Seafarers Log. “We’ve always had friends on both sides of the aisle and we always will. But it so happens that this year, we’ve got

a pro-labor incumbent running against someone who is openly anti-union...As we all know, every vote counts.”

“I do not want to wake up on the morning of Nov. 7 with Romney in the White House and Congress in the hands of right wing lawmakers,” Cox told his members.

Cox cited Romney’s infamous statement at a fancy Florida fundraiser about 47% of the country considering themselves “victims” and ready to seek government aid - and vote for Obama. People Romney slammed include seniors receiving Medicare and Social Security and veterans who served the U.S. and now need care for their wounds, said Cox. His union represents hundreds of thousands of federal workers serving those citizens.

“And with Paul Ryan as his running mate, Romney has made it clear he supports cutting 600,000 federal jobs,” as Ryan advocated in the House GOP budget, Cox said. The federal government employs just over 2 million people.



Mark Gruenberg writes for PAI.

Fog of right-wing lies is lifting

PW Editorial

The most extreme voices in the Republican Party - who in fact control the GOP - have been quiet as church mice as Mitt Romney has migrated to more moderate positions on a range of issues in the closing weeks of his campaign for the presidency.

Should anyone be surprised by the deafening, yet noticeable, silence on the right? I don’t believe so. It is very predictable for two reasons.

First, the right wing is ready to do anything - and I mean anything - to win this election. They see it as their political Armageddon, especially given their existential alarm about the changing demographics (majority minority) of the country.

If it means suppressing the vote of people of color, young people and seniors, they will show no hesitation to strangle the laws on voting rights.

And if it means that their candidate has to temporarily shed his “severe conservative” positions because they aren’t resonating with voters across the country, in the battleground states, and among women, these folks will be the last to object. Right-wing extremists never allow truth to get in the way of their cause.

The other reason that the extremists on the right are not going apoplectic about Romney’s po-

litical makeover is that if there is a Romney victory it doesn’t matter too much which Mitt shows up at the White House. Why? Because the center of political and legislative initiative, as they see it, will reside not with Romney, but rather with a right-wing controlled Congress.

Romney would be little more than a puppet. He wouldn’t call the shots; he wouldn’t set the agenda. That would be done on Capitol Hill, particularly in the House of Representatives where tea party Republicans currently reign supreme.

And as we know, the right wing has an agenda to undo all the economic and social legislation enacted ever since the New Deal.

Indeed, they are salivating at the thought of overturning the great legislative achievements of the 20th century - achievements that have brought a measure of security and happiness to millions of Americans.

But what stands in their way at the present moment is millions of Americans who are seeing through the fog of lies and deceptions issuing from the propaganda machine of the right wing.

Polls in the battleground states reveal in the end truth will win out. And people-to-people action will help make it so.

If it means suppressing the vote of people of color, young people and seniors, they will show no hesitation.

Extremism, regional politics play growing role in Syria war

By Susan Webb

The war in Syria has taken a turn for the worse with two recent developments: Turkey's military involvement, and the growing role of extremist groups.

On Oct. 3 and several days following, Turkey fired artillery "deep inside Syria." Turkey said it was in response to mortars fired from Syria, including one that killed two women and three children and wounded several others. Some of the Syrian mortars may have crossed the border accidentally, but Reuters said others appeared to be aimed at Syrian rebel encampments on the Turkish side.

Turkey's parliament then passed a bill authorizing the government to send troops into Syria or use warplanes to strike Syrian targets.

Tensions along the Syria-Turkey border have been high for months. "Syrian rebel groups have been using Turkish territory as a base for their operations against the troops of Syrian President Bashar Assad," the Associated Press reports.

In June, Syria shot down a Turkish warplane that it said had crossed into Syrian airspace. Turkey claimed the plane was in international airspace. However, use of planes to test another government's air defenses is not an unknown tactic. At the time, the New York Times reported, "some American and allied officials privately raised questions about whether the Turkish warplane ... had been on a spy mission."

Last week, Turkey forced down and detained a Syrian plane, claiming it was carrying military equipment.

The latest incidents raised concern at the White House that the Syria crisis could become a regional conflict with unknown repercussions. Defense Secretary Leon Panetta told reporters, "The fact that there are now exchanges fired between these two countries raises additional concerns that this conflict could broaden."

Some see Turkey as aiming to assert its military power in the region, perhaps as a co-equal or rival to Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

Those two countries have been supplying money and probably also weapons to Syrian opposition forces for months now, with U.S. support. It has never been clear exactly what groups are re-



ceiving this aid.

But news reports increasingly point to "hard-line" extremist Islamists as the beneficiaries.

For this reason, the Obama administration has expressed concerns about supplying advanced weaponry.

Syria is a largely secular country. Many if not all of the extremist forces fighting there are reported to be coming from other countries.

Robin Wright, writing in the New York Times, wonders why "Washington still embraces authoritarian Gulf monarchies like Saudi Arabia."

The role of Arabian Peninsula oil as a U.S. "national security" interest dates back to the 1940s, after oil was discovered in Saudi Arabia. Aware of the growing importance of oil to the U.S. economy, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt in 1943 declared that "the defense of Saudi Arabia is vital to the defense of the United States." Efforts by President Obama to promote a "green" economy freed from oil-dependence have been blocked by Republicans. Our continued reliance on oil and the reactionary oil monarchies is playing out now in the Syria crisis.

The Syria death toll has reached 30,000, with some half million refugees, according to United Nations figures.

UN special envoy Lakhdar Brahimi is pressing for a three-day ceasefire for the Muslim holiday of Id-al-Adha, starting Oct. 25. The prospects for this to happen do not seem bright.

Tensions along the Syria-Turkey border have been high for months.

Immigration raids at Detroit schools

By John Rummel

It has happened again in Southwest Detroit, home to Michigan's largest Latino community. One year after Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents were roundly condemned for conducting an immigration raid at the Hope of Detroit Academy, parents were again followed from home while taking their children to school.

On Tuesday it happened twice.

Hector Orozco was snatched by ICE agents while dropping off his middle school son at the Cesar Chavez Academy. And another father was seized by ICE agents as he was taking his kids to the Manuel Reyes Vistas Nuevas, a Head Start center,

At an Alliance for Immigration Reform rally outside the Cesar Chavez Academy, Principal Juan Martinez called ICE's actions "wrong and irresponsible." He said his school takes great pride in educating and teaching right from wrong. But meanwhile, he said, it is ICE that has made another "wrong decision," breaking their promise to end raids at schools, churches and other sensitive areas.

At Manuel Reyes Vistas Nuevas, the Head Start center, Jorge (he did not want to use his last name) saw "lights" in his rear-view mirror as he was nearing the center. After he pulled his car over, his son pleaded with the ICE agents to allow his father to take him to school.

Jorge was released after questioning. He told the rally he has been "devastated" over the prospect of being separated from his family. At the rally next to him was his four-year-old daughter who suffers from leukemia. His children depend on him, he said.

"We are raising a generation of broken families," said Lydia Reyes, executive director of the Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation. "That's why we need immediate comprehensive immigration reform."

Obama y Romney retoman actos proselitistas en estados indecisos

By Prensa Latina

El mandatario estadounidense, Barack Obama, y su rival republicano, Mitt Romney, retomaron hoy sus actos electorales en los territorios considerados indecisos y también clave para sus aspiraciones de ganar la presidencia el 6 de noviembre.

Ambos contrincantes cerraron anoche los debates públicos con resultados favorables para el dignatario, quien busca permanecer en la Casa Blanca durante los próximos cuatro años.

Obama y su compañero de fórmula, Joseph Biden, reanudaron sus actividades en Florida como parte de una gira que los llevará esta semana a seis de los nueve estados del país divididos políticamente.

El presidente aprovechó la primera parada en el territorio sureño para criticar a Romney, defender la ley de salud aprobada en 2010 y repasar algunos beneficios de esa iniciativa como la extensión de la cobertura sanitaria a más de 30 millones de personas que no la tienen.

"La principal responsabilidad que tengo como presidente es asegurar que los estadounidenses estén asegurados", dijo en referencia al polémico acápite de la normativa que obliga a los ciudadanos a comprar el seguro a partir de 2014, bajo la amenaza de resultar multados.

El periplo de Obama incluye también mítines en Colorado, Illinois, Nevada, Virginia y Ohio, esta última comarca es la más visitada por el jefe de Estado porque aporta 18 votos electorales y en los 70 años anteriores casi todos los presidentes ganaron allí antes de llegar a la Oficina Oval.

Mientras, el candidato republicano y Paul Ryan, aspirante a la vicepresidencia por el partido rojo,

programaron para hoy eventos proselitistas en Nevada y Colorado, las dos principales demarcaciones del oeste para las presidenciales.

Varias encuestas muestran un empate entre Obama y Romney en intenciones de votos a solo dos semanas de los comicios, en los cuales también se renovarán escaños del Senado y de la Cámara de Representantes.

En otras noticias, el candidato republicano Mitt Romney fracasó en su intento de presentarse en el debate televisivo con el presidente Barack Obama como un hombre competente en política exterior, señaló hoy el diario The Washington Post.

En el encuentro cara a cara entre ambos contrincantes, celebrado anoche en Boca Ratón, Florida, Romney trató en vano de resaltar su imagen como la persona ideal para relevar a Obama como comandante en jefe de las fuerzas armadas estadounidenses, añade el rotativo.

Pero el exgobernador de Massachusetts pareció ceder en muchas posiciones ante el mandatario, y en algunos asuntos enunció criterios menos agresivos que los del jefe de la Casa Blanca.

Según el Post, su estrategia fue clara desde la primera pregunta, cuando dejó pasar la oportunidad de criticar a Obama por su respuesta en el caso del ataque al consulado de Estados Unidos en Bengasi, Libia, donde murió el embajador norteamericano Christopher Stevens y otros tres funcionarios.

Un sondeo después del debate mostró que el 53 por ciento de los electores consideran que el jefe de la Casa Blanca tuvo una mejor actuación y el 23 por ciento señalan a Romney como ganador, mientras el resto aseguran que hubo un empate.

NATIONAL CONTACT

Editorial: (773) 446-9920 Business: (212) 924-2523
Email: contact@peoplesworld.org