

# PEOPLE'S WORLD

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## Vets, military families rally for Obama

By Tim Wheeler

**A** near-capacity crowd of veterans and military families gave Tammy Duckworth a hero's welcome as the Illinois congressional candidate who lost both legs in the Iraq war walked to the speakers platform on her prosthetic legs.

She was the speaker who galvanized a meeting of the Veterans and Military Families Council (VMFC) at the Democratic National Convention here. She recalled that then-Senator Barack Obama, also from Illinois, came to visit her often when she was recovering from her wounds at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C.

Unlike other politicians who made quick "photo-op" visits, Obama stayed long. "The president says that America has a covenant with our veterans," she said. "Never forget the sacrifices of those who have worn the uniform of this great nation."

She blasted the so-called "Ryan Budget" approved by the majority-Republican House "that does not mention veterans even once in that gigantic document." The budget, which slashes veterans and human needs programs by nearly a trillion dollars over the coming decade, was authored by Republican vice presidential nominee, Rep. Paul Ryan, R-Wis.

"Today, you will never know whether you are going to be in that top 1 percent or whether you are going to need a helping hand," Duckworth said to thunderous applause. "President Barack Obama is that helping hand."



Other speakers hailed Obama for pushing through the most generous benefits for veterans since the GI Bill of Rights at the end of World War II including a new GI Bill of Rights. Obama ordered an affirmative action hiring program by the federal government that has resulted in the hiring of thousands of veterans, an effort to curb joblessness that is higher among veterans than the overall national jobless rate.

Obama ended the shameful "don't ask, don't tell" policy of discrimination against gays and les-

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bians in the military.

"When you talk one-on-one to veterans about the accomplishments of this President, he should

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win this election hands down,” said Ron Pierce a U.S. Army veteran who is heading up the Obama reelection outreach to veterans.

The caucus meeting, the largest since the founding of VMFC, had a tone of “victory in the air.” Yet Pierce described the election as an “all hands on deck” effort. Grassroots outreach, he said, has recruited 25,000 veterans in the reelection campaign, he said. And 538 convention delegates describe themselves as military veterans or family members of veterans.

Speakers warned that rightwing extremists have turned even highly decorated war heroes like Vietnam veteran, John Kerry, into virtual traitors with lying “swiftboat” media ads secretly funded by GOP millionaires.

Meanwhile George W. Bush used his family connections to avoid service in Vietnam yet the media whitewashed it.

Speakers referred to former Sen. Max Cleland, a triple amputee Vietnam war vet defeated in his reelection bid with scurrilous-- but successful---TV ads by Georgia Republican Saxby Chambliss.

Christine Pelosi, her voice reduced to a raspy

whisper from speaking too often and too long, delivered a sharp warning in her Power-Point presentation that the Republicans will resort to these dirty tricks in the 2012 elections.

Christine Pelosi is credited with creating the Council after the vicious “swiftboating” of Cleland and Kerry.

She told the crowd that she consulted with Cleland before moving to organize the Council. Cleland told her emphatically that the Council should include “military families” to broaden its appeal.

Pelosi is the daughter of Rep. Nancy Pelosi, and the author of Campaign Boot Camp. She told the crowd to “focus on the persuadables” in the final 64 days of the campaign.

“We have to ‘leave no veteran behind’ at the ballot box,” she said.

She warned against “swiftboat tactics” from the Republicans adding, “Veterans must be on the election protection team....Connect with the people. Mobilize to win!”



**Tim Wheeler writes for the People’s World.**

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## The Romney-Ryan white skin strategy

PW Editorial Board

**A**n integral part of the Romney-Ryan election strategy is to exploit the racial misconceptions of white workers.

Republican strategists, after doing the math, concluded that they have to do better than John McCain did four years ago among white workers if they stand a chance of winning in November.

Interwoven to one degree or another into everything they say and do will be coded and not-so-coded racist messages.

We will hear that the president is not up to the intellectual task of leading the country in these difficult times.

Romney, Ryan and their mouthpieces will also suggest that non-white Americans, thanks to the president, live off unearned handouts, checks signed by Uncle Sam and paid for by hard working “white American” taxpayers.

The right wing and its amplifiers in the media will argue too that President Obama prefers an “entitlement” society over an “opportunity” society.

Will the Republican Party be successful? It is still an open question.

We feel, they won’t be successful to the degree that they hope, but only if the labor and people’s movements aggressively reach out to white

workers to show them that they have no skin in the Republicans’ “white skin strategy” game.

After all, if successful, that game, by bringing Romney, Ryan, and the Republicans to power, would set the stage for a class-wide, racist, anti-democratic attack the likes of which the working class and people never seen. It will make Reagan’s firing of the PATCO air traffic controllers seem like child’s play.

Thus, buying into the racist myths and “voting white” comes at a high price for working people - too high. It may seem for some like the right thing to do, but nothing could be further from the truth.

A better future for white workers and their families lies in a common struggle of workers of all races and ethnicities to defeat Romney and his far-right corporate backers in November.

No, it won’t resolve the capitalist economic crisis that is punishing every section of the working class. But it is also true that there is no way out of this terrible economic situation unless the multi-racial working class first stands united at the ballot box against Romney and the Republican right, while keeping its eye on what’s at stake for working America. Indeed, no struggle is more important between now and November 6.

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# Arctic sea ice hits lowest levels ever

By Blake Deppe

According to studies by the National Snow and Ice Data Center and other monitoring organizations, Arctic sea ice has now reached its lowest extent ever recorded, becoming a real harbinger of climate change.

"This is an indication that the Arctic sea ice cover is fundamentally changing," said NSIDC scientist Walt Meier of the phenomenon. "The Arctic used to be dominated by multiyear ice, or ice that stayed around for several years."

This year's record of melting sea ice beat out the previous one recorded several years ago. Satellites showed the ice levels had shrunk by 1.6 million square miles on August 26 - three million square miles more than in 2007.

"The previous record," Serreze continued, "occurred because of near-perfect summer weather for melting ice. But, apart from one big storm in early August, weather patterns this year were unremarkable. The ice is so thin and weak now, it doesn't matter how the winds blow."

Julienne Stroeve, another NSIDC scientist, remarked, "Only 15 years ago, I didn't expect to see such dramatic changes - no one did. The ice-free season is far longer now. Twenty years ago, it [lasted for] about a month; now it's three months. We can expect the Arctic to be ice-free in the summer by the year 2050."

Experts point out that the rapidly vanishing ice will have dire consequences. If the white ice no longer reflects sunlight back into space, the region will be expected to heat up much more than it is currently doing. Ocean temperatures will increase as a result, and that will have unknown - but troubling - effects on weather systems in northern latitudes.

Greenpeace UK director John Sauven explained, "These figures are not the result of some freak of nature.

"These preliminary figures provide irrefutable evidence that greenhouse gas emissions leading to global warming are damaging one of the planet's critical environments - one that helps maintain the stability of the global climate for every citizen of the world."

And the disappearing ice will have a negative



effect on more than simply the weather; if warming trends in global climate continue, scientists say, wildlife like the Emperor penguins could be pushed toward extinction.

That prediction was determined as part of a larger study led by biologist Stephanie Jenouvrier, of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, a nonprofit oceanographic research organization. Using sea ice predictions from climate models and information provided by historical sea ice observations, the researchers studied a population of Emperor penguins on the coast of Terre Adelie in Antarctica.

Carl Christian-Olsen, president of the Inuit Circle Council in Nuuk, Greenland, said that Inuits and their way of life are also at risk. "Every one of the 56,000 Inuits has had to adapt to the retreat of the ice," he explained. "The permafrost is melting and this is jeopardizing roads and buildings. The coastline is changing, there's more erosion and storms, and there are fewer mammals, like polar bears. It will have unpredictable effects on social change."

A Greenpeace spokesperson concluded, "The disappearing Arctic serves as a stark warning to us all. Data shows us that the frozen north is teetering on the brink. The level of ice has remained far below average and is getting thinner, leaving it more vulnerable to future melting. The consequences of further rapid ice loss at the top of the world are of profound importance to the whole planet. This is not a warning we can afford to ignore."

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## Community: save City College

By Marilyn Bechtel

**A** broad coalition of San Francisco residents and leaders is launching a campaign to assure the future of the 90,000-student City College, beleaguered by years of budget cuts and in recent months, threatened with losing its accreditation.

Crowding the steps of City Hall Sept. 4 for a Rally to Save City College, including passing a special parcel tax, were students, faculty and workers at the school, along with parents, trustees, city supervisors, K-12 school board members, union leaders and concerned San Franciscans.

Board of Trustees President John Rizzo said repeated cuts in state funding have resulted in "fewer teachers, fewer workers, fewer classes, students taking longer to get through the college when they can't get the classes they need."

He called the recent elimination of 700 classes, on top of hundreds of classes lost in recent years, "not sustainable." While the ballot measure, Prop. A for a temporary \$79 parcel tax, "doesn't restore all the funding, it will go a good way toward that," he said.

Rizzo also urged support for a state ballot measure to temporarily raise sales taxes and taxes on personal incomes over \$250,000.

San Francisco Supervisor Eric Mar pledged to help build a coalition to fight for "a strong, high quality, accessible, affordable system for everyone for the future." Mar emphasized the college's importance in allowing immigrant communities "to have an equal chance for jobs and high-quality livelihoods to make sure their families are supported in the city."

"When I graduated from high school, I didn't know what career path to follow," said Tiffany Monica Louie, who is in her third year at the school. "I took ethnic studies," she said, "and found my passion - giving back to my community, to people of color."

## Semana decisiva para campaña electoral en EE.UU.

By Prensa Latina

**L**a semana que culmina hoy resultó decisiva para la contienda electoral en Estados Unidos, de cara a los comicios generales del 6 de noviembre, por la realización de la 46 Convención Nacional Demócrata, en Charlotte, Carolina del Norte.

El evento tuvo lugar en medio de un amplio despliegue mediático y a un costo de más de 50 millones de dólares.

Bajo la sombra de una economía con serias dificultades, más de 12 millones de desempleados y una deuda pública que supera los 16 billones de dólares, los asistentes a la convención nominaron oficialmente al presidente Barack Obama como candidato a la reelección en las justas de noviembre.

Los demócratas aprovecharon la ventaja de que su reunión se realizó después de la que celebraron a finales de agosto los republicanos en Tampa, Florida.

Eso les permitió contrarrestar los mensajes del partido rojo y dirigir los suyos propios hacia los sectores del electorado indeciso o desencantado.

Los seis mil delegados aprobaron la plataforma de esa agrupación política, que se manifestó a favor del aborto, por una reforma migratoria integral y las bodas entre personas del mismo sexo. Reflejó además la convicción partidista de que Obama debe permanecer otros cuatro años al frente del gobierno.

El programa político se propone "sacar de las sombras a los inmigrantes indocumentados".

Respecto a política exterior y para cortejar el voto de los sectores poderosos de Florida, el texto respaldó la política injerencista que Estados Unidos mantiene contra Cuba y un in-

cremento de los fondos dedicados a la subversión en la isla caribeña.

El desfile de oradores en la noche inaugural estuvo dirigido a dar una imagen de diversidad y esperanza ante las frustraciones de amplios sectores de la población estadounidense, particularmente las mujeres, latinos y negros.

Con la primera dama Michelle Obama, los organizadores intentaron dar un toque personal y sentimental al evento al referirse a Obama como esposo y padre de familia, y a la vez cortejar el voto femenino.

Julián Castro, alcalde de la ciudad de San Antonio (Texas), se convirtió en el primer orador hispano en Estados Unidos que ofrece un discurso de relevancia en una Convención Nacional Demócrata. Su presencia tuvo como fin llamar la conciencia de los latinos para que apoyen el actual mandatario.

La estrella de la segunda noche fue el expresidente William Clinton, quien cautivó a los presentes con un discurso edulcorado que enumeró los avances del país bajo el mandato de Obama y exhortó a los estadounidenses a reelegirlo.

En su discurso, Obama reconoció sus propias fallas como gobernante, en particular la lentitud del avance para superar los persistentes problemas económicos de Estados Unidos, pero aseguró que serán resueltos si lo reeligen.

Eludió el tema de la reforma migratoria que prometió en 2008 y solo hizo una breve alusión a su orden ejecutiva emitida en junio pasado, que suspende de forma temporal las deportaciones de jóvenes indocumentados que llegaron al país cuando eran niños, y estudian o son miembros de las fuerzas armadas.

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