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Charlotte chant: “We are union, the mighty, mighty union!”

By Tim Wheeler

Delegates in Charlotte, N.C., for the Democratic National Convention applauded as union men and women marched through Charlotte in the annual Labor Day parade chanting, “We are the union, the mighty, mighty union.”

Members of United Auto Workers Local 5285 from the Freightliner truck plant in Mt. Holly, N.C. wore tee shirts emblazoned with a photo of President Obama and the message, “He saved our jobs, our industry. Let’s save his job in November.”

Marching with the UAW on a sultry late summer morning were big contingents of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, the United Food and Commercial Workers, International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Locomotive Engineers, Firefighters, the American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees and many other unions representing African American, Latino, and white workers in the Tar Heel State.

“This is a constant reminder that workers make our lives easier every single day,” James Andrew, President of the North Carolina AFL-CIO told the World. “Work connects us all. Either your working for a paycheck, you have worked and are drawing benefits or you are looking for a job.”

President Obama, he added, “saved our jobs. Now let’s save his job. That is our agenda: to reelect the President so that he can continue to create jobs and pull this economy out of the ditch.”

Ricky McDowell, President of UAW Local 5285 was leading the chants of the contingent from the Daimler-owned Freightliner truck plant



in Mt. Holly. “We want to send the message that on this Labor Day labor is alive and well in the State of North Carolina. We are working 100 percent to reelect President Obama.”

The Mt. Holly plant, he added, is 98.5 percent union even though North Carolina is a “Right to work” (for less) union busting state. “It means that 98.5 percent of the workers were asked if they wanted to belong to the union and they said, ‘Yes! I want to belong to the union!’ They have a voice inside the workplace. They also make better than a living wage so they can take care of their fami-

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lies.”

Asked what the economic prospects are in these uncertain economic times he replied, “We’re

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still hiring people. In March of this year, President Obama came to our plant. The atmosphere was overwhelming. The members of our union welcomed him. Daimler, the owners, also welcomed him.”

Will North Carolina be carried once again by Obama? McDowell replied, “I think people really do see who is for the working people. Obama is the only President who relates to working people.”

Susan Higgins, president of the Democratic Women of Mecklenburg County said, “President Obama led when he pushed through the Lily Ledbetter Act to ensure equal pay for women. He has appointed more women to top positions in his administration. He named two women to the U.S. Supreme Court.”

By contrast, the Republicans have launched their “war on women,” she said.

Missouri’s GOP Senate candidate, Todd Akin, talks of “legitimate rape” and would deny abortion rights even for the victims. Joann Durham, standing beside Higgins exclaimed, “It’s ludicrous! There is no such thing as ‘legitimate rape.’”

Now the Republicans disown Akin, demand-

ing that he withdraw as a candidate. “But Akin was saying exactly what the Republicans feel. It came out of Akin’s mouth.”

It fits together with the so-called “Ryan Budget” named for Romney’s running mate, Wisconsin Rep. Paul Ryan. “That budget targets women and children for billions in cuts in education and healthcare.”

Scott Thrower, President of IBEW Local 379, marching with 60 or more union electricians also forecast an Obama win. “Things are picking up. We’ve got about 95 percent of our guys working. We have 500 members in our local. I believe that if Romney is elected, our economy will go back in the opposite direction.”

Obama, he said, ordered the enforcement of the Davis-Bacon Act to insure that workers receive the prevailing wage on any project receiving federal funding. “I heard Romney in a recent speech promise that if he is elected he will rescind Davis-Bacon. I believe with all my heart that President Obama will carry North Carolina.”



Tim Wheeler writes for the People’s World.

Akin, Ryan, rape and Republican hypocrisy

PW Editorial Board

Republican hand wringing over the crude remarks about “legitimate rape” made by GOP Senate candidate Todd Akin is perhaps the starkest of many recent examples of that party’s hypocrisy.

The Romney-Ryan ticket is distancing itself from Rep. Akin because they fear Akin will expose what they and their party are all about.

Fierce opposition to women’s reproductive rights, including the right to decide whether or not to bear a child, has been the agenda of the Republican Party for quite some time.

The GOP platform adopted when George W. Bush was selected included a no-abortion, no-exception, plank that would force rape victims to carry pregnancies to term.

When Sarah Palin was the party’s vice presidential candidate in 2008 she campaigned openly in favor of the position enunciated by Akin.

In 2010 GOP candidates for the U.S. Senate and House embraced the Akin position.

Now we see Romney, Karl Rove, Mitch McConnell and a slew of other Republican leaders calling upon Akin to pull out.

Is there any demand for Rep. Paul Ryan to step down as the candidate for vice president? As co-sponsor with Akin of every single one of Akin’s radical anti-women’s-rights bills, Ryan and Akin

are birds of a feather.

Paul Ryan also has the distinction of cosponsoring with Akin HR 3. That bill attempts to redefine rape, distinguishing between “forcible” and supposed other kinds of rape!

In 2011 a “personhood” amendment that redefined an egg at the moment of conception as a “person” was too radically right to pass even in Mississippi. Yet a only a year later Romney, Newt Gingrich and Rick Santorum - the major GOP presidential candidates - supported it.

Ryan co-sponsored with Akin a national version of that personhood amendment in the U.S. Congress.

Romney passed up the Virginia Gov. Bob McDonnell as a choice for his vice presidential nominee because McDonnell, due to his backing for forced invasive procedures for women who seek abortions, had become known as Gov. Ultrasound.

Yet Romney picked Paul Ryan, who had introduced a federal version of the same ultrasound bill into the U.S. Congress.

The GOP’s concern is that when the voters hear what Akin said they may realize that Akin’s positions, which are repulsive to the majority of Americans, are the positions of the Republican Party itself.

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New Jersey Governor targets workers and unions in RNC talk

By John Wojcik

New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, in his keynote address at the Republican National Convention Aug. 28, offered no solutions to the economic crisis and instead bashed both workers and their unions.

Teachers and public sector workers were singled out for special attacks.

Speaking of the Democrats, Christie said: "They believe in pitting unions against teachers, educators against parents, and lobbyists against children. They believe in teachers' unions. We believe in teachers."

"Christie evidently believes teachers should be seen and not heard - they may be important, but not their views on what they need to help kids," said Randi Weingarten, president of the American Federation of Teachers, after the speech.

"Anti-union statements like Christie's will only work to energize working families and union members to get out and vote this November for candidates who support improving the economy for all, not just the 1 percent." Said Richard Trumka, president of the AFL-CIO.

After the Christie speech Elizabeth Warren, the Democratic candidate for U.S. Senate in Massachusetts, defended the role of unions.

Noting Christie had spoken about the Greatest Generation, Warren said, "Let's talk about what really made the Greatest Generation so great."

By way of background, Warren said that, coming out of the Great Depression, America was at a crossroads, with the future of both democracy and the economy at stake.

"We made a decision together as a country," she said, "to invest in ourselves, our kids, and in our future and for nearly half a century, that's just what we did. And it worked. For nearly 50 years, as our country got richer, our families got richer - and as our families got richer, our country got richer.

"And then about 30 years ago, our country moved in a different direction," Warren said. "New leadership attacked wages. They attacked



pensions. They attacked health care. They attacked unions. And now we find ourselves in a very different world from the one our parents and grandparents built.

"We now live in a world in which the rich skim more off the top in taxes and special deals, and they leave less and less for our schools, for roads and bridges, for medical and scientific research - less to build a future."

Although viewers were hard pressed to see anyone resembling racial minorities in the vast audience the GOP put the former Democratic Congressman Arthur Davis, an African American now backing Romney, and the tea bagger Senate nominee from Texas, Ted Cruz, on the speakers stand.

A feature of the "Diversity Hour" speeches was the theme that Obama is letting welfare recipients collect checks without having to work, in clear violation, the Republicans said, of the welfare reform law signed by Bill Clinton, who was described as a "forward-looking, better Democrat."

Several of the speakers made the claim about Obama and the welfare work requirement despite it having been rejected now by scores of fact checkers. But in combination with oft-repeated stories of how hard their immigrant ancestors had worked with out ever asking for government "handouts," the clear aim was to ignite as much anti-black resentment as possible.

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Ryan's Pell Grant cuts are unjust

By Mike Lado

Paul Ryan and those Republican budget cutters are at it again. This time they're going right for the jugular of the higher education financial aid system: Pell Grants. Ryan's budget would cut \$170 billion from the already underfunded and high-demand program.

Pell Grants are a vital aid source for low-income college students, helping them pay college tuition. The Education Trust and others in higher education estimate that over 1 million students would lose out on a Pell Grant over 10 years if this becomes a reality. In a time where tuition and books costs are strangling many low-income and working class students, why are we cutting when we should be funding this vital program? Oh I forgot, education is a privilege according to the 1%.

Wrong. Education is a human right. It is the basis on which knowledge, and with that empowerment, is founded. Everyone should have that chance to have some of that knowledge and empowerment, regardless of income.

I see it every day at my school. Even at a public community college like mine where tuition is deeply discounted for all county residents, students are still struggling to pay the bill. Even after all the state and federal grants, and the high-interest private loans, they're still weighed down with test, activity, and textbook fees on top of tuition.

And now Republicans want to cut Pell Grants? Throw away the chance for 1 million students to better themselves? I don't think so. Pell Grants are a critical program which must be funded at all costs.

If we cut Pell Grants and fail to reform higher education we are looking at education becoming a private sector business with no public support. Millions of students, many of them low-income, minority, and working class, would be left without a means of empowerment.

Más de seis mil delegados en la Convención Nacional Demócrata

By Prensa Latina

Más de seis mil delegados asistirán desde hoy hasta el jueves a la Convención Nacional del Partido Demócrata de Estados Unidos, en Charlotte, Carolina del Norte, estado clave para las elecciones del 6 de noviembre.

Los asistentes adoptarán la plataforma del Partido, que está a favor del aborto, los derechos de los inmigrantes y las bodas entre personas de un mismo sexo. El alcalde de Newark, estado de Nueva Jersey, presentará este documento programático, informó el diario USA Today.

La intervención de la primera dama estadounidense Michelle Obama esta noche será uno de los eventos más destacados en los tres días de la reunión, que tiene lugar en un estado en el que el mandatario triunfó por escaso margen en 2008.

El alcalde de San Antonio, Texas, Julián Castro, el primer latino que pronunciará el discurso principal en una convención demócrata, es un factor vital para que el partido azul corteje a los votantes latinos, aquejados por una alta tasa de desempleo y la ausencia de una reforma migratoria.

Otro hispano con un papel significativo en la convención es Antonio Villaraigosa, alcalde de Los Ángeles, defensor de la aprobación de una legislación integral que favorezca a los inmigrantes ilegales, acota el rotativo.

Los directivos de la campaña demócrata organizaron alrededor de cuatro mil fiestas en todo el país, para seguir los trabajos de la Convención y en particular el discurso final del presidente Barack Obama, quien aceptará oficialmente su nominación como candidato de su partido a los

comicios de noviembre.

Desde hace semanas las encuestas muestran un empate técnico entre Obama y el candidato republicano Mitt Romney, por lo que los hispanos, los negros y las mujeres pueden inclinar la balanza en uno u otro sentido.

Los demócratas presentarán varios videos durante el evento, entre ellos los discursos de los expresidentes James Carter y William Clinton, así como un documental sobre el senador Edward Kennedy, fallecido en 2009 y mentor político de Obama.

Plataforma del Partido Demócrata pide reforma migratoria integral

La Plataforma del Partido Demócrata pide una reforma migratoria integral y la aprobación de un proyecto de ley que suspenda las deportaciones de inmigrantes traídos sin autorización a Estados Unidos durante su niñez.

El texto, en forma de proyecto todavía, señala que ese país necesita de forma urgente una medida que saque a los indocumentados de las sombras y les exija ajustarse a derecho, aprender inglés y pagar impuestos para obtener la ciudadanía, informó el diario The Washington Post.

El borrador, que será aprobado hoy en la Convención Nacional Demócrata (CND), enumera algunas medidas migratorias implementadas por el gobierno del presidente Barack Obama, como un programa para suspender durante 24 meses las deportaciones de algunos inmigrantes no autorizados menores de 30 años.

El programa de los demócratas serviría como base para un segundo mandato del actual jefe de la Casa Blanca, si resulta electo en los comicios del 6 de noviembre.