

PEOPLE'S WORLD

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Teachers vow to stand together

By Tim Wheeler

A FL-CIO President Richard Trumka was cheered by 3,000 union teachers and health care workers in Seattle July 10 with his scathing attack on Republican senators for blocking federal funds to extend unemployment compensation to millions of jobless workers.

The \$10 billion House-passed bill would also save the jobs of 300,000 schoolteachers. But it has been blocked repeatedly by 41 senators, a die-hard minority consisting of all the Republicans, and so-called Independent Sen. Joe Lieberman (Conn.) and Democrat Ben Nelson of Nebraska.

Speaking at the American Federation of Teachers 81st convention, Trumka warned the economic recovery is “sputtering to a halt” and the nation may slip back into a double dip recession.

“We need a jobs bill with the scope, and as serious, as the crisis we face,” he said. “We absolutely must provide emergency aid to head off the layoff of 300,000 teachers and other public workers. We have to extend those unemployment benefits to unemployed workers in the worst economic crisis in years.”

Every time the nation begins to dig itself out of the recession with 10.5 million jobless workers, Trumka added, deficit hawks jump up and demand, “What about those deficits?”



He retorted, “We don’t have a short-term deficit problem in this country. We have a short-term jobs crisis that must be addressed immediately.”

He denounced Indiana’s Republican governor, Mitch Daniels, former budget director in the George W. Bush administration, for referring to union teachers as the “new privileged class.” The crowd erupted in boos as Trumka said right-wing demagogues are looking for “scapegoats” and portray public workers as “fat cats.”

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He urged union teachers to “stand together, work together, march together, vote together” to defeat the right-wing attacks on public education and public employees in the November election.

Juan Andrade, president of the Hispanic Leadership Institute, a group that registered 2

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million Latinos to vote in 2008, was also cheered just minutes earlier. “Very simply, Latinos are your brothers and sisters,” he told the AFT delegates. “Latinos are leading the way in civic participation. Voter registration in Latino communities is increasing six times faster than the general population.”

He thanked the AFT for speaking out strongly against Arizona’s immigrant-bashing SB 1070, passing a resolution that the AFT will not sponsor or attend conferences or meetings in the state until the law is repealed.

“We can make a difference,” he concluded. “We can empower our communities as we go into the 2010 midterm elections. We must make clear that unions are not the problem in our schools. On the contrary, unions are an integral part of the solution.”

Cries of “Si se puede!” rang out from the crowd.

AFT President Randi Weingarten introduced Joyce Elliott, an African American woman who

won the Democratic nomination for Congress in Arkansas. “Joyce walks the walk. She talks the talk. She is one of us, a former high school teacher and a member of the AFT,” said Weingarten.

The crowd gave the young Black woman candidate a roaring, standing ovation.

Elliott told the crowd of her struggles as an Arkansas state senator for full funding of public education in the face of the deep economic recession in Arkansas. “My presence in that legislative body absolutely made a difference,” she said. “I refuse to reduce myself to a cesspool of cynicism. They say we must address the deficits. But you cannot cut yourself out of the deficit. The only way to reduce the deficit is to put people back to work.”

“I want your support. I need your support,” she told the delegates. “I want to make a contribution November 2 by being an AFT member who will be going to Congress.”



Tim Wheeler writes for the People’s World.

Jobless pain, GOP shame

By PW Editorial Board

It was six weeks ago when funding for extended jobless benefits expired. By this Friday 2.5 million people will have lost federal aid that would have helped relieve their pain and keep their hope alive.

Now Congress is back after a 10-day Fourth of July vacation and it looks like those 2.5 million people will have to wait at least until next week before there is even a chance of any relief.

The hope is that next week, when a new senator from West Virginia is expected to be seated, he will provide the 60th vote Democrats need under Senate rules to move the measure forward.

Two Republicans, Maine’s Susan Collins and Olympia Snowe, sided with the Democrats last month, while Democrat Ben Nelson of Nebraska voted with the GOP. If the Maine Republicans stay on board the deadlock can be broken.

A majority of the members of the Senate support the extension. Yet a minority can block it.

Speaking for the GOP obstructionists, Orin Hatch of Utah, back in Washington after his va-

cation, sounded like he had come back from a visit to outer space. “I didn’t hear a word back home about this. People in Utah are independent. They’re more concerned about deficit spending and how this country is going bankrupt.”

The reality, of course, is that unemployment insurance extension is one of the best things that can be done right now to help the economy. People will spend it immediately. The extension will amount to a jobs program.

Millions of Americans remain unemployed because the jobs aren’t there - not because they aren’t trying hard enough to find them. There are 4 million jobs available today. There are 18 million officially unemployed. Almost anyone can do that math.

Here on earth we need, more than anything else right now, an extension of unemployment benefits and a massive jobs program to put the many millions out of work back to work. Contact your senators.

Millions of Americans remain unemployed because the jobs aren’t there - not because they aren’t trying hard enough!

Senators confident on votes to lift Cuba travel ban

By Roberta Wood

There are enough votes in the U.S. Senate to lift the travel ban that now bars U.S. citizens from traveling to Cuba, according to a joint statement this month from Republican Mike Enzi, Wyo., and Democrat Byron Dorgan, N.D., who are co-sponsors of the Senate version of the legislation.

“It makes no sense to punish the American people by restricting their right to travel simply because our country is trying to punish the Cuban government,” said Dorgan. “Just as has been our policy with China, Vietnam and other communist countries, we should allow Americans to travel freely to Cuba.”

The expression of optimism from the two senators followed the passage in the House Agriculture Committee of HR 4645. The bill deals not only with travel restrictions, but barriers to trade as well.

It appears it is the impact on trade that is creating the strongest pressure on representatives from agricultural states to remove barriers to trade with Cuba.

Before the 50-year-old embargo, that country was the seventh biggest customer for U.S. exports.

Wyoming’s entire congressional delegation has signed on in support of the proposed legislation. With a population of only about half a million, Wyoming is a small state, but with two senators and a member of Congress, it wields disproportionate voting power.

“This bill is a common-sense step that rights agriculture policies which in the past have made it difficult for farmers and producers to sell their products in Cuba,” said Wyoming Rep. Cynthia



Lummis, a Republican. “Wyoming’s farmers and ranchers cannot afford to lose any opportunities during these challenging economic times,” she added.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce has made this legislation a high priority, warning congressional reps that it will monitor their votes for its “scoring” of their support for business.

Food exports to Cuba are not banned, but restrictions under the 2000 Trade Sanctions Reform Act make trade convoluted and costly.

John J. Wilson, representing Dairy Farmers of America, testified before the House Agricultural Committee in favor of expanding agricultural trade to Cuba. “Cuba is a market where we should be a natural preferred seller due to our strong proximity advantages,” he stated, “but regulatory hurdles imposed by our own government have thwarted our ability to best supply this market.”

Wilson cited a 2009 study that found doing away with all financing and travel restrictions on U.S. agricultural exports to Cuba would have boosted 2008 dairy sales to that country from \$13 million to between \$39 and \$87 million.

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Machinists fight for jobs for all

By Joelle Fishman

Brothers and sisters, are you ready to fight?" "Yes!" was the resounding shout in unison by hundreds of Machinists union members and their families gathered for a jobs rally here in Meridian, Conn., and picnic, wearing red T-shirts bearing the slogan "Fighting for my job and yours."

The event here, just 48 hours after an appeals court victory which stopped Pratt & Whitney from moving jobs out of Connecticut in the middle of the union contract, was also attended by state and national union and political leaders.

Exactly one year ago, 1,000 workers at Pratt & Whitney's Cheshire plant and its air foil division in East Hartford received the shocking announcement that their jobs were slated to be moved to Singapore, Japan and Georgia.

"We could have just given up," said Wayne McCarthy, IAM Local Lodge 1746-A president. "But we rallied together and we persevered."

"We will accept nothing less than justice for those who toil in our country," reiterated IAM President Thomas Buffenbarger, who flew in from Washington for the rally.

Connecting the contract fight with the coming November elections, Buffenbarger said, "We call each other brothers and sisters. When we go to the polling place in the fall it's not about 'me,' it's about 'we.' That's what makes us effective so we can take on one of the most profitable corporations and win."

Saludo a España

Por Jesus Alvarado

Finalmente estamos a la puerta del Campeonato Mundial de Futbol Africa 2010. España le ha tocado ese gran honor.

Al mismo tiempo rendimos nuestro tributo de homenaje al empeño, dedicación y garra que las Selecciones Nacionales de Futbol de los Países Latinoamericanos le pusieron en esta Copa Mundial para calificar en grupo a los octavos de final: Uruguay, México, Argentina, Paraguay, Brasil y Chile.

Partiendo del encuentro final: España contra Holanda, algunos pueden concluir que la Copa va a quedar en Europa. Geográficamente ese comentario esta correcto. Culturalmente y por nexos de sangre, Latinoamérica se solidariza con España, de manera que un triunfo de España nos va a llenar de orgullo, como si fuera uno de nuestros equipos latinos el que alcanza la corona. Aprovechamos esta oportunidad para enviar al pueblo español nuestro saludo fraterno y nuestros deseos que en el próximo compromiso se vea coronado con el triunfo. También para expresarles que los latinoamericanos nos sentimos orgullosos de ser condescendientes de la raza española, de haber heredado su cultura y participar de sus valores.

Cuando aún faltan cuatro días para que se acabe el prodigio de la Copa Mundial, el New York Times

trae la noticia de que los Estados Unidos han desplegado el submarino USS Ohio equipado con misiles Tomahawk en la Bahía Subic en Filipinas, como advertencia a la marina de guerra de China. A este respecto, evocando la historia, vayan unas pocas palabras de comprensión y simpatía para España. En 1898 España fue víctima del atraco yanqui, que disfrazado de declaración de guerra se apodero de Cuba, Puerto Rico, Filipinas y Guam. Así mismo nuestra simpatía para España por el robo del peñón de Gibraltar por el imperialismo británico, a pesar de que la ONU incluyo ese territorio entre los que debían descolonizarse.

Para terminar no pueden faltar unas palabras de reproche por la mancha histórica que represento el brutal trato a los pueblos indígenas que los colonizadores españoles infligieron en nuestra América Hispana. Y por último, el pueblo democrático del mundo todavía espera justicia por las atrocidades que se cometieron en la guerra civil y que las nuevas generaciones recuerden que el régimen político que implanto Franco fue el resultado de la fuerza militar otorgada por la Alemania de Hitler y la Italia de Mussolini, con la complicidad de los Estados Unidos, Inglaterra y Francia en 1936. Pueblo Español te saludamos. Y nuestra simpatía para ti en esta Copa Mundial África 2010.

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