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Right-wingers frenzied to save tax cuts for rich

By John Wojcik

Several House and Senate Republicans are complaining that GOP Minority Leader John Boehner fell for a trap laid by President Obama when he said last weekend that, given no other option, he would vote for extending middle class tax cuts even if it meant allowing the Bush tax cuts for the rich to expire.

The tax cuts are due to expire Dec. 31.

As the conservatives took pot shots at Boehner, there were signs that they can count on at least some help from friends on the other side of the aisle.

In a move that certainly was no surprise to the Obama administration, Sen. Joe Lieberman, describing himself as an “independent Democrat,” issued a statement Sept. 13 expressing strong support for extending the Bush tax cuts for the rich.

Democratic Sens. Jim Webb (Va.), Ben Nelson (Neb.), Evan Bayh (Ind.) and Kent Conrad (N.D.) also said they support “tax relief” for families earning over \$250,000.

Despite the internal disagreements in his party, Democratic Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (Nev.) condemned Republicans for supporting “giveaways for millionaires.”

Some Republicans close to the party leadership said if Boehner had not taken the position he took on the weekend, Democrats would have been



able to portray Republicans as holding hostage Obama’s tax cuts for the middle class - something the president has already said they were doing.

Many right-wing Republicans, however, particularly those allied with the tea party, were far less forgiving.

“I think it’s a huge mistake, he’s caving to the Democrats,” said Andrew Roth, vice president of government affairs at the Club for Growth, a group that has poured money into the campaigns

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of candidates like Rand Paul in Kentucky and Joe Miller in Alaska.

The president’s proposal would not actually raise taxes on the rich. It would simply allow a temporary tax reduction given to them by George Bush to expire.

The tax cuts for the rich that Republicans are trying so hard to preserve continue to be unpopular with the general public.

Brian Darling, a lobbyist for the Heritage Foundation, a right-wing think tank, called Boehner's statement "a tragic mistake. If you take that out it seems unlikely or impossible to get the other tax cuts (for the rich) extended."

Top leaders of the Republican Party also displayed their determination yesterday to extend the Bush tax cuts for the rich.

Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell made a speech on the Senate floor during which he introduced a bill that he said "ensures that no one in this country will pay higher taxes next year than they are right now."

McConnell's bill, a wish list for the wealthy, would permanently reduce the estate tax and make permanent Bush tax cuts and tax breaks for the rich, personally, and for big businesses in general. Preliminary estimates are that the McConnell bill would add \$4 trillion to the federal deficit by 2020.

Despite the enormity of the right-wing budget-buster, House Minority Whip Eric Cantor,

R-Va., said he supported it and vowed, in the same statement to do "everything in my power to stop President Obama."

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According to Baseline Scenario's James Kwak, "Public opinion on issues such as inequality has not shifted over the past thirty years; most people think society is too unequal and that taxes should be used to reduce inequality. What has shifted is that Congressmen are now much more receptive to the opinions of the rich, and there is actually a negative correlation between their positions and the preferences of their poor constituents. That shift occurred in the 1970's because businesses and the super rich began a process of political organization in the early 1970's that enabled them to pool their wealth and contacts to achieve dominant political influence."



John Wojcik writes for the People's World.

Significance of Oct. 2

By PW Editorial Board

We now know the U.S. Senate will not pass climate-change legislation this year. Postmortems have pointed to a number of challenges: the lack of leadership from the White House, unified GOP opposition to the Senate cap-and-trade bill, the structure and rules of the Senate, and the complicated nature of cap-and-trade legislation.

"There has been one major omission in much of this analysis: the absence of pressure from Americans ... It is the absence of this public pressure, above all else, that has resulted in the current state of political inaction," wrote global warming activists recently. Other social justice leaders could make the same observation.

Not since the lead-up to the election of President Obama have the enemies of progress felt the weight and pressure of an aroused public.

The coalition that elected Obama doesn't match the challenges the American people face, with none more important than a stagnant, jobless economy. Nor does its energy and organization compare well with the efforts of the right, and

especially its most extreme elements.

Both the protracted economic downturn and the comeback of the extreme right beg for a sustained mobilization of every democratic-minded person in our country. At the core of this mobilization should be the multi-racial working class and its allies.

There seems to be no other way to keep right-wing extremism and its capitalist class supporters at bay - not to mention undertake large-scale political and economic transformations in a progressive and radical direction.

The One Nation rally on October 2 in our nation's capital is an opportunity to reestablish, reenergize and repower the coalition of people's organization that elected the first African American president in our nation's history.

A huge turnout will change the political atmosphere and send a message to friend and foe.

Success will also be gauged by the degree to which it gives a new momentum to the struggle for jobs and to punish the Republican right in the November midterm elections.

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In California elections, 'jobs' is the watchword

By Marilyn Bechtel

With unemployment officially pegged at 12.3 percent in California, it's clear topic number one for Democratic candidates at all levels will be jobs.

That was the theme at union sponsored Labor Day events around the state, as former governor Jerry Brown, now running to get his old job back, and U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer, who is campaigning for a fourth term, joined candidates for Congress, state and local offices at rallies in Los Angeles, Oakland and Sacramento.

In Oakland, California Labor Federation head Art Pulaski drew a stark contrast between Brown and his billionaire Republican opponent, former E-Bay CEO Meg Whitman. "In one corner," he said, "we've got the darling of Wall Street, the billionaire big spender, who made her fame by laying off workers everywhere she went. In the other corner, you've got the penny-pincher, who slept on the floor last time he was governor, the guy who created 1.9 million jobs."

Besides the support of the Chamber of Commerce and other business groups, Whitman has already spent over \$100 million of her own money on her campaign.

Brown highlighted his plan to create half a million jobs in the state through renewable energy projects, comparing it to Whitman's scheme to give corporations and the wealthy \$17 billion in tax breaks.

Boxer contrasted Congressional Democrats' success in restoring 160,000 teachers' jobs nationwide with the layoff of 30,000 workers by her opponent, Carly Fiorina, before Fiorina herself was fired as CEO of Hewlett-Packard. Pointing out that Fiorina left H-P with \$100 million in severance, Boxer added, "No wonder she didn't think it was important for families to get unemployment



compensation!"

A moving tribute to area workers suffering plant closings, lockouts, illegal firings, slashing of hours, abysmal working conditions and prolonged contract battles brought the devastating effects of corporate policies up close and personal.

When the auto giant closed the New United Motor Manufacturing Inc. plant earlier this year, "Toyota just ripped the hearts out of our members," United Auto Workers Local 2244 president Sergio Santos told the crowd. "Not only were their jobs taken, their homes are in foreclosure, their families are being destroyed and eventually their health will be affected," he said. With one in five California workers jobless, underemployed, or too discouraged to look for work, Santos said, "we need labor friendly candidates who are going to get behind working families to create good-paying middle class jobs."

Also among those addressing the crowd of nearly 1,000 were U.S. Rep. Jerry McNerney, D-Calif., state Assemblyman Sandre Swanson, D-Alameda, and AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Liz Shuler.

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Jobs emergency rallies take to streets

By Jim Lane

Across the nation on September 15, Jobs with Justice sponsored 106 actions. In Dallas, the event took place on the City Hall Plaza. Christopher Head and Ernestor Pena, top officers of the Steelworkers local named North Texas Association of Public Employees, said that the city's planned layoffs must be stopped and City Manager Mary Suhm must be fired. James Fortenberry of United Labor Union Local 100 said that the sanitation workers subcontracting for the city must earn more than the minimum wage. Dallas is the only major city with this disgraceful pay level for those who handle trash, Fortenberry said.

John Fullinwider spoke for the Fair Budget Campaign. He said that the minority members of the City Council had just handed Mayor Leppert his first defeat when they voted a tax increase rather than allow city services for ordinary working people to be cancelled.

Clara Faulkner, from the NAACP in nearby Tarrant County, spoke of her pride in the organization that began the October 2 "One Nation" march on Washington. She urged the 50 participants to emphasize October 2 in their plans.

The speaker who brought it all together was Kelli Obazee of the Dallas Peace Center. She pointed out that the October 2 events are the best opportunity of our lifetime for bringing the groups together.

The center's giant banner, "Jobs not War," and Obazee's strong anti-war statement were well accepted,...

2 de Octubre y su significado

Por Sam Webb

Ahora sabemos que el Senado norteamericano no aprobará la legislación de cambio climático este año. En forma póstuma se han señalado varios desafíos: falta de liderazgo de la Casa Blanca, oposición unificada del Partido Republicano a la propuesta legislativa de cambio climático estableciendo los límites máximos en las emisiones, la estructura y las reglas del Senado, y la complicada naturaleza del proyecto legislativo de cambio climático de los límites máximos en las emisiones.

"Se ha señalado una omisión importante en gran parte de este análisis: la ausencia de presión de los estadounidenses en todo el país exigiendo se tome una acción enérgica respecto del cambio climático", de líderes de movimiento cambio climático.

Otros líderes de la justicia social pudieron hacer la misma observación.

Con antelación a la elección del Presidente Obama los enemigos del progreso sintieron el peso y la presión de un público excitado.

La coalición que eligió a Obama no se ha ocultado, pero su nivel de actividad no coincide con los desafíos que el pueblo americano enfrenta, ninguno más importante que una economía estancada y un alto nivel de desempleo. Tampoco su energía y organización se comparan favorablemente con los esfuerzos de la derecha política, especialmente sus elementos más extremistas – los comentaristas

derechistas.

Tanto la recesión económica prolongada como el posible regreso de la extrema derecha política al poder, es un llamado a una movilización poderosa de cada persona de ideas progresistas en nuestro país. En el centro de esta movilización debe estar la clase trabajadora multirracial y sus aliados.

No hay otra forma de mantener a estos extremistas derechistas inmovilizados junto a sus socios capitalistas, sin mencionar que lo que se debe hacer es emprender transformaciones económicas o políticas progresistas de carácter radical.

Todo esto me lleva al tema de la Manifestación por Una Nación que se llevará a cabo Octubre 2 en la capital de nuestra nación. Esta es una oportunidad para restablecer, revitalizar y restaurar la organización de la coalición de la gente que eligió el primer presidente afroamericano en la historia de nuestro país.

Oportunidades como esta existen muy pocas. Pero cuando aparecen deben ser aprovechadas. No quedará piedra sin mover para traer la gente y sus organizaciones a la manifestación en Washington. El éxito de este evento sera medido por el tamaño de la manifestación. Una gran participación cambiará la atmosfera política y enviará un mensaje a partidarios y enemigos.

El éxito también será medido por el grado en que se impulsa la lucha por el empleo y un castigo a la derecha republicana en Noviembre.

NATIONAL CONTACT

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