

Push is on to protect voting rights by ending filibuster



By Mark Gruenberg

Even as progressives and Texans fighting for voting rights praised Democratic President Joe Biden's speech on voting rights, they're demanding those rights be protected and enhanced by killing the Senate filibuster, thus letting key pro-voting rights measures go through.

But Biden hasn't gone there yet, though the progressives—so far—didn't say so.

In his ringing speech in Philadelphia on June 13, Biden compared new GOP voter suppression laws, state by state, to repression of Blacks by the Ku Klux Klan and Southern Jim Crow laws.

"We're facing the most-significant test of our democracy since the Civil War," Biden said. "That's not hyperbole. Since the Civil War—the Confederates back then never breached the Capitol as insurrectionists did on Jan. 6. I'm not saying this to alarm you. I'm saying you should be alarmed."

Those insurrectionists were motivated by constant lies and "Stop the steal" demands from Biden's GOP predecessor, Donald Trump. His same Big Lie about the 2020 election's outcome motivated the tide of voter repression laws in deep-red, often-gerrymandered states—with Texas now in the lead.

The only way outnumbered Texas state House Democrats could stop the GOP anti-voting rights steamroller was for enough of them to flee the state capital building in Austin to deny the GOP majority

the quorum it needed to jam through its anti-Black, anti-brown anti-voting bill. So 51 did, flying to D.C.

And on landing, they lobbied Senate Democrats, including Vice President Kamala Harris and pro-filibuster holdout Joe Manchin, D-W. Va., to halt the GOP assault on voting rights by abolishing the tactic. Senate Republicans are using the filibuster to kill S1/HR1, the For The People comprehensive electoral reform bill, and S5, the John Lewis Voting Rights Act—and just about everything else.

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Biden was a Delaware senator for more than 30 years. The most he'll do is to lobby his ex-colleagues to restore the famous—or infamous—"talking filibuster," where a solon who actually wants to stop legislation has to stand on the floor for hour after hour after hour and talk and talk and talk. Voting

As they praise Biden for his speech on voting rights, Texas Dems and progressives say the Dems must end the filibuster to pass voting rights bills.

starts when the talker stops. But Biden didn't even offer that solution in his Philadelphia address.

Progressives cited the Texas lawmakers' decision as yet another reason to kill the filibuster and preserve democracy by passing the For The People Act. It would override the repressive GOP laws, including the pending one in Texas.

They also want senators to OK the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, to restore tough federal Voting Rights Act enforcement powers against governments—including Texas—with a history of racist voter restrictions. The Lewis Act would reverse a party-line 5-4 Supreme Court ruling which gutted the VRA's key safeguards.

The AFL-CIO had no immediate comment on Biden's speech, but officially demanded on March 11 the abolition of the filibuster calling it a Jim Crow racist relic, a "creature of white supremacy" and "a tool used by those seeking to preserve the social, economic and political status quo."

"A single senator can still block legislation with a

filibuster that cannot be ended without 60 votes," AFL-CIO General Counsel Craig Becker, a former NLRB member, added in a blog he posted on the American Constitution Society's website.

"The For The People Act and the Protecting The Right To Organize (PRO) Act both passed the House but confront the need for a super-majority in the Senate. One bill protects political, the other workplace democracy," he continued.

Texas Democrats are joining Our Revolution's fight to demand "Sens. Manchin and Kyrsten Sinema, D-Ariz., "stop defending the filibuster so we can pass vital voting rights legislation. The consequences of failure are dire and could mean the end of American democracy," that group, formed by Bernie Sanders presidential campaign supporters, added.

"In order to defend against the GOP's transparent attacks on our democracy, we need to fight on the federal and state levels—and right now, Texas Democrats need our help," Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., said in a fundraising letter.

Tell the White House: "Hands off Cuba!"

By Communist Party USA

The Communist Party USA (CPUSA) calls on its members and friends to demand the Biden Administration not interfere in the internal affairs of Cuba and live up to its pledge to "reset" relations that must include an end to the blockade.

We urgently ask our members and friends to contact the State Department, White House, Senators, and Congress and tell them "Hands off Cuba!"

The majority of our country who desire peace and an end to the strangulation of the Cuban people and economy must make their voices heard.

We stand firmly in solidarity with the Communist Party (PCC) and the people of Cuba against U.S. imperialist interference.

For more than half of a century, the country of Cuba has been the target of U.S. ruling class resentment and ire. Despite never having threatened or attacked the U.S., Cuba has met with resistance at every turn for over 60 years.

Despite all the immense difficulties, Cuba has maintained its efforts to build socialism, led by its Communist Party and working class. They have created a medical system that is the envy of the world, provided free education for all its citizens,

and ended homelessness. Cuba is an example to the world of what the working class can achieve.

It is for these reasons, chief among them medical solidarity, that they have been nominated to receive the Nobel Peace Prize.

Yet U.S. imperialism never relents and now is trying to plant an anti-communist movement in the middle of Cuban society. In addition, members of Congress like Rep. Anthony Sabatini are openly calling for the toppling of the Cuban government and the execution of government members.

Despite the best efforts of the forces of reaction, the Cuban people stand strong. We see the videos of Cuban people flooding the streets in support of the government and the revolution.

The best solidarity we can build is to end the blockade, a position now supported by tens of millions in this country as represented by resolutions passed by city councils, trade unions, school boards, churches, and others.

One specific way to support is to assist the Syringes4Cuba campaign.

The time to act is now! Every effort to build broad public support helps wherever you are, be it the city, rural communities, or suburbs.

**Take action now:
Demand an end to
the U.S. blockade
of Cuba!**

Home care workers hit the streets to demand living wages, respect



By PAI

Organized by the Service Employees, notably their Local 32BJ, thousands of home care workers and their allies took to the streets from coast to coast on July 13 to demand living wages and respect on the job.

At least 28 rallies and events were scheduled, including a bus caravan from West Virginia to D.C. to pressure Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W. Va., the conservative Democrat in the 50-50 Senate, for support.

Events featured a six-hour rally in downtown Washington's near-100 degree heat, and rallies in Chicago, Los Angeles, Hartford, Conn., Anchorage, Alaska, Denver, Oakland, Calif., St. Paul, St. Louis, and seven in Washington state, including Seattle.

Whether lawmakers were listening is up for grabs. Just six days before the marches, on July 7, bipartisan Senate negotiators and Democratic President Joe Biden gathered on the White House lawn to again trumpet their agreement on the slimmed down version, worth \$1.2 trillion over eight years, of Biden's American Jobs Plan.

And they flourished a jointly written endorsement from the Laborers, the AFL-CIO, its Transportation Trades Department, and North America's Building Trades Unions, as well as corporate interests, including the Chamber of Commerce and the notoriously anti-worker National Retail Federation.

"Enacting significant infrastructure legislation, including investments in our roads, airports, transit, rail, water and energy infrastructure, access to

broadband, and more, is critical to our nation and will create middle-class family sustaining jobs.

"Don't let partisan differences get in the way of action. Pass significant, meaningful infrastructure legislation now," they urged.

The jobs plan hit the Senate floor as early as July 16, once solons returned July 13 from their Independence Day recess. But it needs at least 10 Republican votes, plus all 48 Democrats and both independents to avoid a Senate GOP filibuster and pass.

Notably missing from either that jobs plan press conference or subsequent statements: Any mention of the other section of Biden's, and labor's, agenda: The American Families Plan, including higher pay for home health care workers.

But after a one-on-one meeting with Biden on July 12, Senate Budget Committee Chairman Bernie Sanders, Ind-Vt—a longtime and fervent supporter of all workers' causes—said he's moving ahead with a separate budget "reconciliation" bill that presumably includes the hikes for the home care workers. This bill just need a simple majority, letting Biden's Vice President, Kamala Harris, break any 50-50 tie.

"What I have been working on with many of my colleagues is a major, major piece of legislation"—the reconciliation bill—"that finally addresses the needs of working families of this country," Sanders said in a televised interview the weekend before his meeting with Biden. "And I hope we can get something passed within this next month" before lawmakers take another recess.

They demand living wages and respect on the job.

South Africa: Communists in the struggle against privatization of the national airline

By Emile Schepers

Initially, say the communists, financially troubled South African Airways (SAA) was slated to be eliminated completely as a neoliberal austerity measure. But over several years, the South African Communist Party (SACP), in coordination with the unions representing airline employees, have struggled to preserve the carrier. The fight against complete liquidation of SAA was eventually won, but the SACP found it had to keep on fighting to prevent the privatization of the service. There was victory on that front too, but the push for neoliberal privatization schemes did not cease. The government is floating a proposal to create a public-private partnership to run SAA, but with the public segment being much smaller.

In the words of the SACP: "The neoliberal agenda was and is still supported by right wing parliamentary parties and other opportunists elsewhere. Our efforts, working together with the SAA workers and the trade unions that were involved in defending the SAA secured continued state participation in SAA, albeit not 100%." New government proposals, rather vague, stipulate "strategic equity partners," with the private sector having a 51% stake in SAA. The SACP promises to keep up the fight for the public sector and its employees, not just in SAA but in the whole economy.

Para los Latinos, las llamas arden con más intensidad

BY Javier Sierra

Las advertencias de la Pachamama, la Madre Tierra, de que estamos abusando del único planeta habitable que conocemos crecen en intensidad.

El Noroeste de Estados Unidos y el Suroeste de Canadá han sufrido las peores olas de calor de su historia, con pasmosos récords de temperatura. Quillayute, WA, por ejemplo, alcanzó los 110 grados, 45 más que su temperatura media y 11 más que su anterior récord. Unas 600 personas han perecido debido a esta tragedia. La ciencia nos asegura que sin la crisis climática este calor extremo hubiera sido "virtualmente imposible". Al mismo tiempo, la sequía se extiende por el 93% del Oeste de Estados Unidos, algo sin precedentes.

Las condiciones para una nueva temporada récord de olas de calor e incendios forestales se acumulan, y nosotros los latinos tenemos que tomar especiales precauciones para confrontar las próximas semanas y meses. Estudios han indicado que nosotros tenemos el triple de probabilidades de morir de calor que el resto de la población. Millones de latinos trabajan en la agricultura y la construcción, actividades a la intemperie que nos hacen mucho más vulnerables a las olas de calor y sus consecuencias a la salud. Además, la inequidad y el abuso económico, carecer de seguro médico y la falta de estatus migratorio legal acentúan esta vulnerabilidad.

Mientras tanto, los verdaderos causantes de la emergencia en la que vive la humanidad, continúan sus engaños y sus esfuerzos por entorpecer la acción climática que todos necesitamos urgentemente. Dos activistas de

Greenpeace, haciéndose pasar por reclutadores corporativos, entrevistaron a ejecutivos de Exxon, quienes revelaron cómo el gigante petrolero embauca al resto del mundo. Keith McCoy, un cabildero de Exxon, calificó en cámara los planes del Presidente Biden de reducir las emisiones climáticas de "locura" y confesó que Exxon ha atacado la ciencia climática agresivamente por medio de "grupos solapados". Asimismo, admitió que las declaraciones de la corporación en apoyo de un impuesto a las emisiones de carbono son una engañifa que nunca va a ocurrir.

Durante décadas, Exxon y el resto de los peores contaminadores climáticos del mundo han conocido los efectos catastróficos de sus productos e invertido cientos de millones de dólares en enturbiar y negar la ciencia climática.

¡Ya basta! Comunidades como la nuestra exigimos que el Congreso apruebe un gran plan audaz de infraestructura que ataque la crisis climática como se merece e invierta en la economía de energía limpia para reducir la contaminación climática y abrir camino a la revolución energética que proteja a nuestras familias y su futuro.

Porque para nosotros, las llamas arden con más intensidad.

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