

PEOPLE'S WORLD

www.peoplesworld.org

October 17, 2015

Trumka on opposing Pacific Trade Pact: “It’s not just us”

By Mark Gruenberg

Saying that “it’s not just us” in the labor movement who oppose the controversial Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade pact, AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka says a wide-ranging coalition has already formed and is growing, to stop the scheme.

And it’s apparently picking up bipartisan support, too, for often-divergent reasons.

Working through the night on Oct. 4 in Atlanta - and disregarding protests outside their closed doors - trade bargainers for the U.S. and 11 other Pacific Rim nations reached agreement on a formal TPP on Oct. 5.

The pact would not only lower or eliminate tariffs on products coming into the U.S. from the 11 nations - including labor-repressive countries such as Malaysia, Brunei and Vietnam - but also would give corporations virtually free rein to go to secret trade courts to override federal, state and local laws that could endanger present or future profits.

All those provisions have led unions and workers to describe the TPP as yet another, and the worst, in a long line of so-called “free trade” pacts stretching back to NAFTA 20 years ago. Congress must vote up or down within 90 days on implementing legislation for the TPP once President Obama sends it to Capitol Hill, and without



changes or amendments.

While the complete TPP text has yet to be unveiled, “If it’s anything like what we’ve already seen, we’ll be opposing it and we’ll be opposing it vigorously,” Trumka told a small press conference on workers’ rights on Oct. 6, the day after bargainers signed the TPP.

“It’ll make our members a little more skeptical - and a little more determined to stop it,” he added. Other union leaders agreed. Steelworkers

T H I S W E E K :

- **Trumka on opposing TPP Pact: “It’s not just us”**
- **California governor signs bill for terminal patients**
- **Millennials vs. Baby Boomers: The problem generation?**
- **Katy Perry visita Cuba**
- **AFL-CIO asks Angela Merkel to end T-Mobile gag order**

READ MORE NEWS AND OPINION DAILY AT WWW.PEOPLESWORLD.ORG

President Leo Gerard spoke for many:

“From what we know, the draft TPP threatens the future of production and employment. It compromises the so-called 21st century standards that were supposed to form the foundation for this agreement. It will deal a critical blow to workers

The pact would lower or eliminate tariffs on products coming into the U.S. giving corporations free rein to override governmental laws that protect overall profits.

and their standard of living in the United States.”

While the final version “will contain some new bells and whistles, from what we have seen and know, at its core the hastily concluded TPP deal will simply continue today’s outdated, disastrous approach to trade. This TPP deal shouldn’t even be submitted to Congress and, if it is, it should be quickly rejected,” he added.

“You only have to look at the consistently dismal job numbers in manufacturing to understand what every manufacturing worker already knows. We have been on the losing end of trade deals. Once again, it appears that misguided foreign policy and global corporate interests have trumped sound economics and the opportunity to get things right. Our negotiators are trying to beat the clock to close a deal so they can rush it through Congress before next year’s elections.”

President Obama has said that worker rights were written into the TPP’s text - an assertion Gerard brushed aside.

“While supporters tout the deal, those promises” about worker rights “will fall on deaf ears,” Gerard said. U.S. workers “had to fight to get our

trade rules enforced in the face of inadequate enforcement and constant cheating by our trading partners. Even the best rules, which were not included in TPP, if unenforced, are essentially worthless.

The TPP is also picking up bipartisan opposition, but for varying reasons, both in Congress and on the presidential campaign trail.

“It is time for the rest of us to stop letting multi-national corporations rig the system to pad their profits at our expense,” Sen. Sherrod Brown, D-Ohio, said.

Senate Finance Committee Chairman Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, whose panel wrote the “fast track” law that lets Obama send the TPP to Congress, called it “a mediocre deal that fails to set high-standard trade rules.” It “appears to fall woefully short” in key details, he added.



Gruenberg is editor of Press Associates Inc.

California governor signs doctor-assisted death bill for terminal patients

By Marilyn Bechtel

After two decades of struggle by its advocates, and months of dramatic debate in the current legislative session, California Governor Jerry Brown signed into law the End of Life Options Act. California will now join Oregon, Washington, Vermont, and Montana in allowing physicians to prescribe lethal medications to terminally ill patients.

The bill, authored by Assemblywoman Susan Talamantes Eggman, D-Stockton, requires that competent adults opting to receive the drugs must be capable of making medical decisions, must voluntarily ask for and self-administer the drug. They must be diagnosed as terminal by two independent doctors, and must make two oral requests at least 15 days apart. They must also make a written request that has been witnessed, and sign a paper 48 hours before taking the drugs. Hospitals and physicians may refuse to offer the medications.

Despite opposition by the Catholic Church and other religious groups, disability rights organizations, Latino organizations, right-to-life

and some medical groups, a Field Poll released showed 65% of registered voters surveyed backed the measure, including 55% of Catholics and 58% of Protestants, 55% of Republicans, and 56% of Latinos. Democrats and nonpartisan voters each backed the bill by 70%.

While the American Medical Association continues to oppose physician-aided death, the California Medical Association earlier this year shifted to a neutral stance.

The measure had a rugged path in the legislature, stalling in committee during the regular session before being revived in a special session on health care. It is to take effect late next year.

“In addition,” he said, “I have discussed this matter with a Catholic bishop, two of my own doctors and former classmates and friends who take varied, contradictory and nuanced positions.”

In the end, Brown said it would be a comfort to be able to consider the options in the bill, and he “wouldn’t deny that right to others.”

A Field Poll released showed 65% of registered voters supports the bill.

Millennials vs. Baby Boomers: Which is the true problem generation?

By Chauncey K. Robinson

There are memes about it. There are Vine videos discussing it. There are constant debates on Twitter and other forms of social media as well on it. The “It” being the so called ongoing feud between Baby Boomers, (those born between 1946-1964), and the Millennials (those born between 1981-2000).

With unemployment a serious issue, student debt a continuing problem, and the fact that Millennials will be the first generation to be less well off than their parents were before them, these bleak circumstances has incensed a debate of just who is responsible.

It would seem that the main concern is who is doing better financially. Who has a brighter future and/or present, and lastly, who is the generation fitting the bill for it.

If you ask some Baby Boomers it would seem that they feel they worked and earned their retirement, and that Millennials are simply too entitled to truly put in the work. If you ask some Millennials they'd answer that Baby Boomers are the real entitled ones, and that even with a college education, many of them - Millennials - will be spending the remainder of their lives in debt.

In all reality, Baby Boomers and Millennials will be working side by side with each other for some



time to come. This means that working class members of both generations face the same economic hardships and challenges.

That Fight for 15 isn't just for the recent college grad. That attack on health care isn't just aimed at those that might be older in age and thus fighting more ailments than their younger counterparts. Millennials and Baby Boomers have a lot of common struggles, and there is a need to face it together.

When these generations argue over which one of them is the real 'culprit' they miss out on the actual culprit in the situation.

In reality, we live under a system that works hard to pit workers against each other on a daily basis, based off of a number of factors, in order to continue to exploit them as much as possible.

Two of the main ways it seeks to divide is through race and gender, but another is age. We may never truly see eye to eye on the importance of Facebook or the Kardashians.

But it can be agreed upon that both generations believe in the right to livable wages, and a chance for life that isn't steeped in debt and poverty. The only way to get that is through solidarity.

In reality, the system works hard to pit workers against each other and exploit them as much as possible.

LOCAL NEWS

LOCAL CONTACT

contact@peoplesworld.org

AFL-CIO asks Angela Merkel to end T-Mobile gag order

Special to Peoplesworld.org

Today, in a letter sent to German Chancellor Angela Merkel, the National Women's Law Center (NLWC), the AFL-CIO, and seven other leading women's organizations asked the German government, a major shareholder of Deutsche Telekom, to press T-Mobile to abandon an employee gag order policy that violates U.S. law and restricts workers' ability to address sexual harassment and other discrimination.

In a 2015 judicial decision, T-Mobile call centers in Maine and South Carolina required employees who filed complaints of sexual harassment or discrimination to human resources to sign a non-disclosure agreement that prohibited them from discussing their experiences with anyone other than T-Mobile during the company's investigation. The following is a statement by Emily Martin, Vice President and General Counsel at the National Women's Law Center:

"U.S. workers have a basic right to speak out and challenge sexual harassment and discrimination in the workplace without fear of facing retaliation or losing their jobs. By threatening employees who talk publicly about sexual harassment or other workplace abuses, T-Mobile's gag order policy violates this right. Indeed, T-Mobile's policy threatens workers to remain silent or risk their job. We hope that the German government, as a major shareholder of T-Mobile's parent company, will urge T-Mobile to quickly reform its practices to respect workers' voices and obey the law."

Katy Perry visita Cuba

Granma.cu

La cantante y compositora Katy Perry, uno de los fenómenos más recientes de la nueva ola del pop estadounidense, llegó a La Habana este fin de semana y visitó en la noche del sábado las instalaciones de la Fábrica de Arte de Cubano(F.A.C).

La cantante, uno de los ídolos juveniles del pop, realizó una parada en sus compromisos internacionales para descubrir La Habana como antes hicieron Beyonce y Rihanna, cuyas fotos de su estadía en Cuba, tomadas por la célebre Annie Leibovitz, salieron a la luz la pasada semana en la afamada revista VanityFair.

En la noche de este sábado la cantante asistió a una fiesta en un restaurante capitalino donde actuó el músico cubano Isaac Delgado, Los muñequitos de Matanzas y el grupo Angelo and Mitchell, integrado por el dj Yuni y Mitchell Delgado e Isaac delgado J.R, ambos hijos del autor del músico conocido como el Chévere de la salsa, reveló a Granma el guitarrista Nelson Díaz, productor y hermano de Isaac Delgado.

De esta forma, Perry concretó su interés en presenciar en La Habana una actuación del popular salsero, la cual expresó antes de viajar a Cuba mediante un contacto telefónico con el autor de Qué pasa, loco, agregó Díaz.

La cantante, que se encuentra inmersa en su gira internacional The Prismatic World Tour, tenía previsto hacer espacio en su viaje privado para visitar una de las escuelas de enseñanza artística en La Habana, según conoció Granma.

Nacida en Santa Bárbara en 1984 y embajadora de Buena Voluntad de la UNICEF, ha publicado discos como Katy Hudson, One of the Boys, Teenage Dream y Prism en los que aparecen los hits California Girls y Roar.

La obra de Katy Perry, sobre todo sus más recientes fonogramas, descansan sobre el pop y la música dance y ha sido reconocida en el mundo del espectáculo con 6 premios de la Billboard Music Awards y varias distinciones de la cadena internacional MTV, entre otros galardones.

Además de su carrera musical, la cantante ha impulsado diversas campañas sociales como Chime For Change orientada a promover mejores oportunidades para las mujeres y ha sido protagonista en acciones en contra de la discriminación sexual.

En 2012 se manifestó a favor de la reelección del presidente estadounidense Barack Obama y ofreció con ese propósito varios conciertos en ciudades de Estados Unidos.

En días recientes mostró su apoyo a la candidata demócrata Hillary Clinton, quien aspira a convertirse en la primera mujer en obtener la presidencia de Estados Unidos en las elecciones del 2016.

Katy Perry parece que estará en La Habana por pocas horas dado que en su página web oficial tiene programado este lunes en la noche un concierto en Puerto Rico.

NATIONAL CONTACT

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