OMNI LABOR DAY NEWSLETTER #4, SEPTEMBER 1, 2012. Compiled by Dick Bennett for a Culture of Peace and Justice (#1 3-8-07; #2 September 6, 2010; #3 August 30, 2011).

Here is the link to all OMNI newsletters:
http://www.omnicenter.org/newsletter-archive/

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LABOR DAY PICNIC SEPT. 3
In West Fork at the Winkler’s home, 537 Owl Hollow Road, 5:30, potluck. Directions: 2.3 mi. s. Greenland stoplight; after 2nd bridge, turn left on WC174, go .3 mi.

MAYOR JORDAN AT UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP SUNDAY SEPT. 2, 11:00, “All Labor Has Dignity.

“My Labor Day Message to You” (2011)
Richard L. Trumka, AFL-CIO to jbennet
peoplepower@aflcio.org
This Labor Day America Wants to Work

Happy Labor Day, Dick,

This Labor Day, please join me in taking a little time to recognize the value of work and all who do it.

It’s a time to honor the transit workers who get us where we need to
go every day. The teachers who will spend their Labor Day getting classrooms ready for our children. The firefighters and caregivers whose work is so much more than a job. The engineers, construction workers, manufacturing workers, mathematicians and scientists who are building America now and for the future. The nurses, doctors and EMTs who keep us healthy.

It’s also a time to honor the millions of people who want to work but are unable to find jobs—working people didn’t cause the economic crisis, but they certainly have paid a heavy price for it.

Today, jobless people have become all but invisible to politicians and much of the public. As activists, it’s our job to change that.

So this Labor Day season, I hope you will commit to being even more active than you’ve been in the past, and to help lead a massive America Wants to Work campaign to demand that all our elected leaders focus their efforts on putting America back to work.

Sign the America Wants to Work pledge to help lead the movement for good jobs.

Working men and women have been suffering through a dire jobs crisis. But too many politicians have engaged in extreme partisan brinkmanship and opportunistic over-reaching. Their goal: to transfer even more wealth and power from low-income and middle-class Americans to the CEOs who bankroll elections and offshore jobs.

That’s why we’re calling on Congress and the White House for leadership on big, bold and timely ideas to put America back to work and rebuild the U.S. economy.

Some will say America can’t afford to invest big to create jobs. You and I know we can’t afford not to.

Some say there’s nothing we can do to turn the economy around—we just have to wait it out. I say anyone who believes that either lacks imagination and a knowledge of history or is just plain afraid of hard work.

There’s plenty our leaders can do—right now. Yes, it will take courage and that’s something, quite frankly, a lot of politicians seem to lack when we need it most. So you and I will have to be their backbone, their conscience.

Click now to pledge to help lead the America Wants to Work campaign for good jobs.

I’m proposing a six-point agenda to create good jobs that will put
millions of people back to work and restore our communities, our states and the country.

Can you help? America needs you.

Here’s our Six-Point Agenda for Good Jobs:
Rebuild America’s schools, roads, ports, airways and energy systems.
Revive U.S. manufacturing and stop exporting good jobs overseas.
Put people to work in communities doing work that needs to be done by directly creating millions of jobs.
Help state and local governments avoid more layoffs and service cuts by increasing federal Medicaid funding during periods of high unemployment. Ensure that we have our priorities straight so we can fund essential federal government functions—not slash them to the bone.
Help fill the massive shortfall of consumer demand by extending unemployment benefits and keeping homeowners in their homes.
Reform Wall Street so it helps Main Street create jobs by encouraging lending to small businesses, enacting a financial speculation tax and ending Wall Street cheating and fraud.
Please sign the America Wants to Work pledge to be more active than you’ve ever been before to help create jobs. Just click on this link.

Thank you—and happy Labor Day to you and your working family.

Richard L. Trumka
President, AFL-CIO

OMNI OPEN MIC 2011: LABOR SONGS
Greetings!
It is time to start the new season for our OMNI Open Mic for Peace.
This Sunday, the 4th, 7:00 PM at the Omni Center.
Since labor Day is the very next day, our theme will be songs of labor.
Not mandatory though—anything goes as always, but if you have an offering that pertains to labor it would be most appreciated.
Come and stand up for the workers of the world!
Hope to see you there!
Sincerely,
Kelly and Donna
Omni Center for Peace, Justice. and Ecology

Top Ten Labor Day Songs (message@thenation.com)
Peter Rothberg, In honor of Labor Day 2011, here’s a stab at the impossible task of naming the best songs ever written about working
people.

**ADG ANTI-UNION EDITORIAL 2011 EXAMINED AT ARK TIMES**

Labor Day? Oh, why not just call it Ayn Rand Day and be done with it?
Dissecting a newspaper editorial . . .

http://www.arktimes.com/blogs/StreetJazz/

**MIDDLE CLASS AND LABOR UNIONS**

Monday, 05 September 2011 “The American Middle Class Was Built By Unions And It Will Decline Without Them” Zaid Jilani, News Analysis, NationofChange: “Labor Day was first celebrated in the late 1880′s as labor activists from the American Federation of Labor (which later formed part of the basis for the AFL-CIO) and other unions rallied around a day to celebrate organized labor and to take a day off. In 1887 Oregon started a formal ‘Labor Day’ and by 1897 President Glover Cleveland made it a federal holiday, reacting to pressure from unions following the contentious Pullman Strike. On this day that is set aside to celebrate the American laborer, Americans should recall the many benefits that organized labor have provided our country.” READ | DISCUSS | SHARE  
http://www.nationofchange.org/american-middle-class-was-built-unions-and-it-will-decline-without-them-1315240845

**Robert Reich**

Chancellor's Professor of Public Policy, University of California at Berkeley; Author, 'Beyond Outrage' Labor Day 2012 and the Election of 2012: It's Inequality, Stupid

Posted: 08/31/2012

The most troubling economic trend facing America this Labor Day weekend is the increasing concentration of income, wealth, and political power at the very top -- among a handful of
extraordinarily wealthy people -- and the steady decline of the great American middle class.

Inequality in America is at record levels. The 400 richest Americans now have more wealth than the bottom 150 million of us put together.

Republicans claim the rich are job creators. Nothing could be further from the truth. In order to create jobs, businesses need customers. But the rich spend only a small fraction of what they earn. They park most of it wherever around the world they can get the highest return.

The real job creators are the vast middle class, whose spending drives the economy and creates jobs. But as the middle class's share of total income continues to drop, it cannot spend as much as before. Nor can most Americans borrow as they did before the crash of 2008 -- borrowing that temporarily masked their declining purchasing power.

As a result, businesses are reluctant to hire. This is the main reason why the recovery has been so anemic.

As wealth and income rise to the top, moreover, so does political power. The rich are able to entrench themselves by lowering their taxes, gaining special tax breaks (such as the "carried interest" loophole allowing private equity and hedge fund managers to treat their incomes as capital gains), and ensuring a steady flow of corporate welfare to their businesses (special breaks for oil and gas, big agriculture, big insurance, Big Pharma, and, of course, Wall Street).

All of this squeezes public budgets, corrupts government, and undermines our democracy. The issue isn't the size of our government; it's who our government is for. It has become less responsive to the needs of most citizens and more to the demands of a comparative few.

The Republican response -- as we saw dramatically articulated this past week in Tampa -- is to further reduce taxes on the rich, defund programs for the poor, fight unions, allow the median wage to continue to fall, and oppose any limits on campaign contributions or spending.

It does not take a great deal of brainpower to understand this strategy will lead to an even more lopsided economy, more entrenched wealth, and more corrupt democracy.

The question of the moment is whether next week President Obama will make a bold and powerful rejoinder. If he and the Democratic Party stand for anything, it must be to reverse this disastrous trend.

ROBERT B. REICH, Chancellor's Professor of Public Policy at the University of California at Berkeley, was Secretary of Labor in the Clinton administration. Time Magazine named him one of the ten most effective cabinet secretaries of the last century. He has written thirteen books, including the best sellers "Aftershock" and "The Work of Nations." His latest is an e-book, "Beyond Outrage." He is also a founding editor of the American Prospect magazine and chairman of Common Cause.