



Congressman pays tribute to O'Connor

Oregon Congressman David Wu made a surprise visit to the offices of the Northwest Oregon Labor Council Aug. 11 to present a plaque to Executive Secretary-Treasurer Judy O'Connor that contained a statement he read into the Congressional Record July 21 honoring her service to the Oregon labor community. O'Connor is retiring at the end of August after 11 years at the helm of the state's largest central labor council. She is a 27-year member of Office and Professional Employees Local 11. Wu's tribute described O'Connor as a "tireless activist for union causes. She volunteered for political campaigns, coordinated the council's Speakers in the Schools program, and appeared before the Oregon Legislature to testify for improved job safety. During her tenure she has led over 100 constituent unions in promoting workers' rights through times of economic growth and decline."

Republican Party leader Steele steals Steelworkers identity on Facebook

Labor is accustomed to phony claims from phony marketers asserting their union ties without justification.

But Rich Kline, president of the AFL-CIO's Union Label and Service Trades Department, finds it somewhat astounding that Republican National Committee Chairman Michael Steele has usurped the United Steelworkers' identity and set up an RNC fundraising page on Facebook claiming to be, get this, the United STEELE Workers Union. He even has a hardhat donning an American flag sticker prominent on the page.

"Here's the head of the famously anti-union Republican Party posing as the Steelworkers Union," Kline says. "Is this a case of mistaken identity? A case of identity theft? Wishful thinking? A psychological aberration?"

Kline says that if Michael Steele wants to be a union wannabe, let him speak up for the Employee Free Choice Act. Let him lend his weight and his prodigious verbal talents to the campaign for universal health care. Let him call for the dismissal of former President Bush's holdovers in the Labor Department who still want to undermine worker safety and health provisions and want to discredit labor organizations.

Steele's so-called workers' union has these aims:

- To help Steele "get the GOP moving for the 2010-2012 elections and beyond."

- To be a grassroots force ready "to answer the call from Mr. Steele."

- To organize.
- To campaign.
- To "fight to win our country back."

What?! They will fight to win their country back. "Aren't they the people who ran the country into the ground?" Klines asked. "Didn't they and their

cronies engineer the disassembly of the social safety net, economic stability, international reputation and financial integrity of the United States?"

Kline and the AFL-CIO maintain that Steele and his crowd shouldn't be entrusted with the management of a sandbox. And they shouldn't be allowed to commandeer the name of a proud labor organization.

JC Penney 'American Made' T-shirts actually made in Mexico

Most union members would assume that a T-shirt lettered "AMERICAN MADE" across its chest would be made in America. But that's not the case with JC Penney's T-shirts so decorated. It's made in Mexico, reports Rich Kline, president of the AFL-CIO's Union Label and Service Trades Department.

When a 78-year-old retired clothing manufacturer discovered this, he was incensed. It seems that Joe Allen's company was driven out of business by unfair foreign competition.

Allen brought the matter to the attention of the Alliance for American Manufacturing, which contacted JC Penney.

Penney's spokesperson replied to the AAM that "American Made" refers to the wearer of the garment, not the shirt.

JC Penney told Business Week the shirt will remain on store shelves throughout the summer. Penney's says the T-shirt is "intended to evoke our American lifestyle and pride in being American." Huh?!

If you want to share your views on this with JC Penney, please call Kelly Sanchez at 972-431-3961 or email her at ksanch18@jcpenny.com. If you prefer, contact Myron Ullman, JCPenney CEO, at 972-431-8200.

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