

SPEECH

April 1, 2008

Hillary's Remarks at the Pennsylvania A.F.L.- C.I.O.

Thank you very much. Is labor in the house? I am pleased to be in the House of Labor.

I want to thank my friend and your native son, President McEntee, for that introduction and for more than - he hates when I say this - for more than 50 years, 50 years of leadership in AFSCME and the labor movement. When you have Gerry McEntee by your side, there is no battle too tough, there is no challenge too great and I am very grateful for his support and the support of the great union he has.

I want to salute Bill George. His tough and passionate leadership of the Pennsylvania AFL-CIO is legendary. When Bill asks what time is it, we all know the answer: it's union time. Because under his watch, more and more people are joining unions and becoming part of the labor movement right here in Pennsylvania.

I am very cognizant of the fact that Bill and his wonderful family have suffered such a loss in the last month. But I'm sure she's looking down and saying, you're looking good, Bill. And we think you're looking good because you make such a difference to so many people. Isn't it nice to have a president named George you can actually believe in?

I also want to recognize Rick Bloomingdale and Pat Eiding. I know that you've already been great to have Mayor Michael Nutter and Congressman Chris Carney. We've got a couple of international presidents, Michael Goodwin and Warren George. I know that Senator Casey was here earlier and I'm looking forward to inviting him to the White House to talk about what we will do on behalf of Pennsylvania and the American labor movement.

I started my morning at the William J. Donovan Company where I got to visit with sheet metal workers at a company that's been in business for 95 years, understands the importance of having trained workers, starting people off as apprentices moving towards becoming journeymen. Once again, I was reminded that American workers are the hardest working, most productive workers in the world. As I watched these processes take place and ended up at a part of the factory where it hand work that has to be done because of the precession required.

A lot of the work is going to pharmaceutical companies and hospitals that require the highest level of skill. I asked the gentleman working, how long has it taken you to get to the point where you can do this work that is so specific and where the slightest possible imperfection could cause a batch of drugs to be thrown out for example? He said, "About 25 years." Started as an apprentice, apprenticed for 10 years, and now doing work that has no equivalent anywhere in the world. These are jobs that can't be outsourced. These are jobs that go right to the heart of the skill and workmanship of American workers. I also think it says something that it takes a lot of experience before you are really, really good to do the job.

I flew into Philadelphia yesterday, thanks to union members working in the air traffic control tower. I drove here today in a car built by union members from steel made by union members, over roads laid by union members. We passed by schools where children are taught by union members, by hospitals where people are cared for by union members, came to a hotel that is staffed by union members, in a building that was built by union members. Now, I'm standing here with all the union members who are some of the hardest working, most compassionate, most patriotic Americans I know. So when some people, and you hear them, act like unions have no place in America, I wonder what country they are living in. Unions are America, and unions built America, and made America the greatest, richest, best country in the world.

Let's not forget, we know what happens to workers when we don't have unions, don't we. Think about what life would be like here in Pennsylvania before the labor movement. Back in 1903, another courageous union leader and great woman by the name of Mother Jones led a march of children from here in Philadelphia to New York to demand an end to the scourge of child labor. In 1910, a landmark study found more than 500 industrial fatalities in Allegheny County in one year alone. And the Great Steel strike of 1990 included brutal repression of workers in Pittsburgh and

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protesting work weeks of up to 84 hours. Imagine, 84 hours a week in the dangerous conditions of those steel mills. The labor movement changed America for the better. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. summed up labor's significance before an AFL-CIO gathering much like this one. "The labor movement," he said, "was the principal force that transformed misery and despair into hope and progress."

When the wave of union organization crested over the nation, it carried to secure shores not only itself, but the whole society. These words remind us that when Dr. King was taken from us 40 years ago this week, we lost a powerful voice for justice of all kinds, including economic justice. Dr. King knew that unions helped make the American dream a reality for millions of Americans. Labor helped build the middle class. We need unions not just in good times, but in hard times too; especially in hard times. With our economy facing a recession, we need unions standing strong because your negotiations help raise the standard of living for every American worker. When health insurance is out of reach for 47 million Americans, 1.2 million right here in Pennsylvania alone, we need unions standing up for the right, not the privilege, the right to quality affordable health care. When other countries exploit their own workers to get them an unfair advantage, we need unions standing up for workers rights here and around the world.

No one knows better than our unions what it means to fight for the underdog. Every day, you are standing up for workers who need someone to stand up with them. And I'm in this race for the very same reason - to fight for everyone who needs a champion in their corner.

For me, this campaign is not about me - this campaign is about all of us. This campaign is meant to repudiate the political philosophies and the governing of the last 7 years. Because our current President and Vice President have a very different view of America. They honestly believe that somehow it works best for America when we keep giving more to those who already have more than enough, and that we take away from those who are struggling just to get to the level of subsistence and possibility. That's why they gave big tax breaks to oil companies making record profits, while you pay through the roof at the pump.

I met with a group of truck drivers in Harrisburg yesterday. They are pretty fed up with high fuel prices and they were making their opinions known. Who is listening? I'm listening, but it doesn't seem like the White House is listening. The president is too busy holding hands with the Saudis to care about American truck drivers who can't afford to fill up their tank any longer. I meet workers all over Pennsylvania and elsewhere who lost their pensions; they have seen companies go into bankruptcy and discharge their obligations. We have a vice president, who, when he was CEO of Halliburton which now gets all these no bid contracts, don't they, from the government? Workers lost \$25 billion in pensions. But Dick Cheney got to strap on a golden parachute worth \$20 million. You get tax breaks to people who don't need them while our children get stuck with the bill.

Now, I never thought I'd say this but ever since my husband got out of full time public service, he's actually made money, much to both of our amazement. But I have to confess, as recipients of all of George Bush's tax breaks, I can tell you I didn't need them, I didn't want them, I didn't ask for them. And when I am president, we're going to take those back from people making over \$250,000 a year in America. And has there ever been in recent history a more anti-union, anti-labor president and White House? They are not just looking for the union label; they are looking to squash the union bug. They want to eliminate unions and union workers - it's ideological, it's personal.

After seven disastrous years of George Bush and Dick Cheney, the stakes in this election couldn't be higher. And the need to change course couldn't be more urgent. But I am here to tell you, Senator John McCain, a friend of mine, someone whose service to our country I admire, is only offering more of the same.

John McCain admits he doesn't understand the economy - and unfortunately he's proving that day after day on the campaign trail. He looked at the housing crisis, and he blamed consumers. His plan for the economy is to extend George Bush's tax cuts for billionaires and give a \$100 billion additional corporate tax cut. The Bush/McCain philosophy could not be clearer - it's the "ownership society", which really means "you're on your own." If you're not a crony, if you're not wealthy, if you're not well-connected, you fend for yourself; the others are taken care of it.

But don't take just my word for it. Even a Republican Senator Mel Martinez from Florida after listening to Senator McCain's economic plan gave it an "incomplete," and he said: "where I think he fell short" is the fact that we need to do some things that can help families, that can help people." Well, duh. Yeah, we do.

We need to do something that can help the American people for a change - put the middle class back into the driver's seat. Give our families the opportunities they deserve.

You know, sometimes when that phone rings at 3am in the White House it's an economic crisis. It seems like John McCain would just let it ring and ring and ring.

Well that's not good enough for the families that I have met across Pennsylvania. I was with a group of families in Harrisburg yesterday at a diner, sitting around talking. What were they concerned about? The high price of gas; losing their homes to foreclosure, being able to afford to send or keep

a child in college; wondering where that next job is going to come from.

These are the stories and concerns that are on the minds of the people here in Pennsylvania. I think we've had enough of a president who didn't know enough about economics, and didn't do enough for the American middle class. We're ready for a president who will meet the challenges of our time.

Now I know taking on Senator McCain in November won't be easy. Republicans aren't going to give up without a fight. And no matter how beautiful your rhetoric, the Republicans are not going to turn off their attack machine - it doesn't have an off switch.

But one thing you know about me is that when I say I'll fight for you, I'll fight for you. I know how to fight for you and that's exactly what I will do throughout this campaign. Look, I know there will be hurdles and setbacks between now and November. But I also know that I'm ready. I know what it's like to stumble. I know what it means to get knocked down. But I've never stayed down. I never will. And neither will you and neither will America. We are on the comeback trail as a country.

This is one of the most important elections we've ever had. There is so much at stake. You heard as President George talked about what a difference it made to go from a Republican governor and Republican senators and Republican members of Congress. But we've got to finish the job and it's so important that the people of Pennsylvania have their voices heard and their votes counted. Senator Obama says he's getting tired of the campaign. His supporters say they want it to end.

Could you imagine if Rocky Balboa had gotten half way up those Art Museum stairs and said, "Well, I guess that's about far enough?"

That's not the way it works. Let me tell you something, when it comes to finishing the fight, Rocky and I have a lot in common. I never quit. I never give up. And I know that we are going to make it together - not just up those stairs, but we are going to climb that mountain to a better day for America.

We have so much work to do and we won't get there if we quit or we walk away. We'll get there by staying and fighting and standing up for what we believe in.

But I don't need to tell any of you this. No one knows better than organized labor how important it is to have a fighter on your side. When you send someone to the bargaining table, you need the strongest, toughest, most determined person you've got. Not someone who is just going to talk about problems. But someone who will roll up her sleeves and get the job done for you.

A President who gets up everyday and asks, "What am I going to do for the American people today? What am I going to do to make sure you've got good jobs that can't be outsourced? What am I going to do to make sure we have trade agreements that are pro-American and pro-worker and make sure that we can compete with anybody, anywhere, anytime?" If you give me the chance, that's the kind of president I will be.

That's what I'll do because that's what I've always done.

Alongside labor, I fought for and passed an extension of unemployment insurance in the wake of September 11. I went to the floor of the Senate everyday and stood up to the Republicans and said we are going to extend and expand unemployment insurance until we finally got it done.

Alongside labor, I'm fighting on behalf of the brave and patriotic workers who came to Ground Zero after September 11. Across the entire New York area, ironworkers, operating engineers, laborers, everybody dropped what they were doing and came rushing to see how they could help; so many of them got sick. They had to quit working. The man who could carry hundreds of pounds, run marathons could barely walk up stairs or breathe.

Alongside labor, I've fought for the collective bargaining rights of federal employees, The Department of Health and Human Services, The Department of Homeland Security, The Department of Defense, TSA screeners, and public servants like our firefighters and police officers.

Alongside labor, I've supported the Helmets to Hardhats program, to help veterans get those good jobs that they deserve to have after their service. I'm working with my good friend, Congressman Murtha to expand this program and I am so proud to have Jack Murtha's endorsement. There isn't anyone I would rather have in a foxhole for a tough campaign and a tough election than Jack Murtha.

And I've fought alongside labor in my home state of New York - home to one out of every seven union members in America. I've urged CEOs to return to the bargaining table, encouraged employer neutrality in organizing campaigns. I've urged construction companies to hire local union workers, and I've joined workers on the picket line.

I'll keep standing with you, fighting for you, and speaking out every single day as President of the United States. Because I don't think the work ends with the election - the work begins with the election. We have to get into that White House. We're going to have to clean house once we get there.

I'll start by ending this Administration's practice of harassing and bureaucratizing our labor

organizations, making it impossible for you to do the work that you are entitled to do.

And how's this for a radical idea: We're actually going to appoint people to the Department of Labor, the NLRB, and throughout the government who are actually pro-labor for a change.

Next, we're going to stop outsourcing our government to private companies that are too often less qualified - and less accountable and actually cost more. Why on earth would we pay a private contractor more to do what a government employee was doing better for less?

And let me just say this, I am deeply concerned about acceleration of the outsourcing of production for essential defense material. I was in Indiana the last couple of days of last week - everywhere I went talking to good hardworking Hoosiers, I heard about how company after company that used to do defense work had either lost the work or the company was gone. One specific example just stuck in my mind. All of you have seen those pictures of the precision guided missiles, right? Going down chimneys, hitting targets thousands of miles away. Well, the targeting is dependent upon these magnets and the magnets used to be made in Indiana, the company called Magnequest. The company was bought out, jobs were eliminated, production was moved to China. Not only did we lose jobs, we lost essential, valuable information because you're not going to tell me that the Chinese military doesn't have exactly what it takes to make those magnets.

Now we are going to outsource our refueling tankers. Here's what I would do as president; I would strengthen our national defense that support both our men and women in uniform and American workers, and prevent the exporting of essential knowledge that keeps us safe and enables us to have the greatest military in the world.

Most important of all we'll protect the right to organize for a new generation. This is a basic right and you know it's under attack.

That's why I'm proud to be an original co-sponsor of the Employee Free Choice Act. I am proud to stand up for it, speak out for it and fight for it in the Senate. We're going to take our case to the American people. And when I'm President, I would sign it into law, and you're all invited to the signing ceremony on the South Lawn of the White House.

So if anyone asks you if labor will have a seat at the table in my White House. I hope you know my answer - of course you will. Labor built that table. There's going to be enough chairs around it for everybody to have a place. We're going to negotiate a new American bargain - for all of our people. Let me tell you what it will include:

First, I will fight for every single job in America, we can't save them all, but we're going to save a lot more of them than we have been lately. Then we're going to create millions of new, high paying jobs that can't be outsourced. President Bush has stood by and watched as we've lost 3 million manufacturing jobs since he became president. He's doing nothing about the loopholes in our tax code that actually encourage companies to ship jobs overseas.

Meanwhile, Senator McCain believes business as usual on trade is just fine. He says that some lost jobs "are not coming back;" that seems fine with him too. Well I think it's time for a different approach.

Today, I am announcing an aggressive infrastructure agenda will create at least 3 million jobs over the next decade. After the failed levees in New Orleans, the tragic bridge collapse in Minnesota, we don't need any more devastating wake up calls. And you don't have to look any further than the problems you had with I-95 to know that we have to take action now.

We're trying to run today's economy on yesterday's infrastructure - our bridges, our tunnels, our roads, our water systems and so much else - and we are jeopardizing American prosperity. So I will rebuild America by rebuilding, repairing and modernizing our infrastructure.

And I want to salute the work of your great governor, another incredibly visionary effective leader, Ed Rendell on this issue. He has not only made great strides here in Pennsylvania but he's leading the way nationally on infrastructure. I intend to work closely with him as President.

My Rebuild America plan will create a \$10 billion Emergency Fund to identify and repair critical infrastructure problems. We'll modernize our transportation systems. We've got a lot of transportation and transit workers here and I'm proud to have your support. We're going to invest in public transit and inter-city rail. We're going to connect America with a national broadband infrastructure. All of our communication workers, our electrical workers, we need to have super information highway the way we have an interstate highway system so every part of America gets connected up, part of the global economy. We'll create a National Infrastructure Bank and I will use bonding authority to make these long-term investments.

Think about it, in World War II we had War Bonds. Maybe it's time we ask Americans if they want to play a part in rebuilding America. I think millions and millions of Americans will make those contributions. Then we're going to turn around and put them into projects that will strengthen our economy and create room for that economy to grow. We can put at least 3 million Americans to work.

We're also going to create at least 5 million additional jobs in green energy. Jobs making public buildings more energy efficient. Jobs weatherizing homes to make sure that people get more value for their dollar, to save on home heating and cooling bills. Jobs that will re-open shuttered factories to build the clean energy technologies. I was last night in Bucks County at one of the keystone industrial port centers, I saw these big wind turbines being made, with as I understand it union workers from the steelworkers, and I saw the future, and it is a future that we can expand.

How will I pay for that? Take the tax subsidies away from the oil companies and put them to work in clean renewable energy.

This is another critical difference between me and my Democratic opponent. My opponent talks about clean energy on the campaign trail, but when he had a chance to do something about it in the Senate - remember where I come from, my dad was from Scranton, actions speak louder than words - when he had a chance to do something about it he actually voted for Dick Cheney's energy bill. I voted against it. Once again, when it was time to turn talk into action, his promises were just words. We have to be smart and tough at the same time, it's not going to be easy to take on the oil companies and the oil producing countries. But I'm ready to do it and with your help starting on April 22nd that is just what I will do.

We'll going to make trade work for American families. Now, I've been criticized by both President Bush and Senator Obama for this, but I believe we need a time-out on new trade deals. I've been saying that for some time now. We've got to have new trade policies before we have new trade deals. That includes no trade deal with Columbia while violence against trade unionists continues in that country.

I appreciate Gerry talking about how I did speak out and oppose NAFTA, the president made a different decision but whether its President McEntee or David Gergen or the people that were in those meetings in the White House, they know that I raised a big yellow caution flag, I said I'm not sure that this will work. And I have a plan to fix NAFTA, with the strongest possible labor and environmental standards in the core text of the agreement. And unlike my opponent, I will never come to Pennsylvania and tell the people here one thing while my staff says something else to a foreign government. You won't find me saying anything like that. When I say I'll fix NAFTA, I mean it - and I will back it up with action.

Yes, we will finally get tough on China. Right now, China's steel comes here and our jobs go there. I testified before the international trade commission to try to put the breaks on the dumping of steel in our market. They manipulate their currency, they give illegal subsidies, they abuse workers' rights. And what do we get in return? Tainted fish, lead-laced toys, and poisoned pet food and polluted pharmaceuticals. That is a bad deal for America. When I'm President, China will be a trade partner not a trade master. And we're going to get that done.

Finally, we're going to start investing in manufacturing again. Pennsylvania has lost 13,000 manufacturing jobs in the past year; nearly one-in-four manufacturing jobs since George Bush became president. Manufacturing thrived in Pennsylvania throughout the 20th Century. It can thrive again.

I disagree with people who say we can't be a manufacturing company again because I believe you can't have a strong economy if you don't make things. I don't believe you can support all these other jobs that you represent workers in if you're not generating jobs from actually producing things. So, for me, it's not just a question of what's nice, it's critical and essential that we bring manufacturing back. We also need it for our defense sector, as I mentioned earlier.

So, there's going to be a lot of work to be done and we're going to have a very progressive agenda for working families. I will provide health care for every body, not leaving any one out. Because it is long past time that we had affordable health care for every single American.

And the big difference between me and my Democratic opponent. I'm sure tomorrow he'll tell you he has a plan for universal health care, but his plan would leave out 15 million people, more than 400,000 here in Pennsylvania. You're going to leave out a member of the Painter's Union or a member of their family? Are you going to leave out someone who is already sick? You're going to leave out somebody who is making minimum wage? He chose to leave health care on the bargaining table when putting together his campaign. I'm not just going to talk about universal health care; I'm going to get it done.

And the reason I am is because I am passionately committed to making our country do what we have not done both morally and economically. I could tell you hundreds of stories and I bet all of you could. You are so fortunate to have health care because you a member of a union and people negotiate for it. But, I was in Ohio, along the Ohio River during that campaign - I really liked how that Ohio primary turned out by the way - and what I heard was this typical tragic story - the kind of story I've heard for 15 years and even longer going back to Arkansas. I was eating in a mobile with some folks in the area, the deputy sheriff.

He said I sure hope we can get health care for everyone and he told me about a young woman from that town. She worked at the local pizza parlor. She didn't have anyone representing her. She got

paid minimum wage, she didn't have anybody saying you know, minimum wage is a poverty wage, you can't make a living on minimum wage. She got pregnant and she was having trouble so she went to the nearest hospital. And I don't blame the hospital, but they said, look, we can't do anymore free care. You're from a neighboring town - there was no hospital in her county - you have to give us a \$100 before we exam you.

She didn't have \$100. She went home. A little while later, she was still having trouble. She went back to the hospital and they told her the same thing. The third time she went to the hospital, she was in an ambulance. The doctors, the nurses in the emergency room tried to help her, but they couldn't save the baby and the baby died. And she was in such distress, they had to airlift her to the nearest big city in Columbus - take her the medical center. In the intensive care unit for 15 days, doctors and nurses and the hospital personnel did everything they could to save her life.

Sitting there in that mobile home listening to that story was just upsetting me so much. I think it's morally wrong in our country, a young women and her baby died because she didn't have health insurance. I think it is so economically wrong. And for the lack of \$100 to examine her and do what was necessary to save her and her baby, hundreds of thousands of dollars were spent. We can do so much better than that. I will not rest as your president until we finally have quality, affordable, health care for every single American.

There's a lot of work to be done, and I'm prepared to do that work. I've apprenticed and I've learned how to do it. I have watched it being done for 8 years. I've been on both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue, and I know very well what it takes for the president and the Congress to actually make the changes we need. I'm going to propose cutting middle class taxes by \$100 billion and I think we can get it done. Because that money is going to go towards helping you afford college, help you afford to take care of an elderly relative, help you to afford health care.

I'm going to stand up again to President Bush's ill-advised policies, and I'm going to end the unfunded mandate known as No Child Left Behind and we're going to start anew with the kind of partnership we need from a president.

We're going to give Americans a secure retirement and we're going to make sure Social Security is safe and solid. None of this would be easy, but nothing worth doing is easy.

I was thinking about that looking at the sheet metal workers today. How many mistakes were made before that perfection was reached? How much work had to be done before you felt confident in trusting that new assignment or that young sheet metal worker? We could go through any kind of work any of you do and say the same thing.

Well, it's true about our government too. It's not going to be easy, but we can make it happen. Again, as Dr. King said, "either we go up together, or we go down together." And Gerry, he spoke those words 40 years ago this week, the sanitation workers on strike in Memphis - members of AFSCME Local 1733 - he urged them to move on, and that's what I urge us.

There isn't anything we can't do as Americans once we start acting like Americans again - once we roll up our sleeves and we get to work.

Some of you have heard me say this before, and I'll say it again it took a Clinton to clean up after the first Bush, and it'll take a Clinton to clean up after the second Bush and with your help, that is exactly what we're going to do.

Thank you and God bless you, and God bless America.