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Hoffa, Gerard, Williams Labor leaders issue strong dissent to trade report

Three prominent American labor leaders, including Teamsters President James P. Hoffa, who represent union workers on the most important presidential advisory committee on trade, believe the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) is “a bum deal” they cannot support.

That’s why Hoffa and Leo W. Gerard, president of the United Steelworkers, and Dennis Williams, president of the United Auto Workers recently issued a dissent to the majority report issued by The Advisory Committee on Trade Policy and Negotiation (ACTPN) that favored TPP.

The ACTPN is composed of no more than 45 members, is appointed by President Obama

for two-year terms. This government panel is supposed to represent broad national economic constituencies. Yet it generally is dominated by representatives of major multinational corporations

Following is the text of the message released recently by Hoffa, Gerard and Williams:

We serve as representatives of American organized workers on the Advisory Committee for Trade Policy and Negotiations (ACTPN) and together have stated that the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) is a bum deal we cannot support.

By registering our dissent to the ACTPN report that endorses the agreement, the Teamsters, the United Steelworkers and the United Auto Workers are letting

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Colorado Teamsters, left to right, Todd Redemacher, assistant lead driver for the West Coast Budweiser Clydesdale team, Howie Dorsher, secretary-treasurer of Local 267 in Fort Collins, and Mike Cova, Local 267 president, ride in the Amarillo, Texas, Veterans Day parade. The parade followed ratification by members of Local 267 of a national master labor agreement with Budweiser covering West Coast team drivers who are based in Fort Collins. Read more in Local 267 column on page 7.

Steve Vairma's Column

Time to go to war

Almost everyone agrees that the general malaise afflicting most workers today is a serious problem, but, unfortunately, those with power to do something about it haven't put much, if any, effort into finding a solution.

The workers' problem is caused by a growing income gap between rich and poor and the long term stagnation in the wages of working men and women. Politicians recognize the problem, but they talk around — rather than about — the subject.

Why should they help?

They know the rich only get richer, and the poor can't do much about it. Politicians, who could help, are more concerned that if they do, their bulging corporate campaign coffers will suddenly be closed.

So where have our friends been when we need-

ed them? Conspicuous by their absence.

After all, it's tough to be a gutless politician nowadays. It's a tough job but somebody has to do it, to say no to the workers on whom the public depends to keep the nation running.



Forbes recently quoted a new study that reported most Americans — 56 percent — don't even have \$1,000 in their combined checking and savings accounts.

The problem of stagnant wages began seriously in the early 1980s with the advent of President Reagan's so-called “trickle down” economics. Since then, private sector union membership

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