

Shame on You, Republicans

By Rick Olanoff - December 2010

I expect that there are still celebrations going on in Washington DC and elsewhere toasting the GOP gains in the Senate and the House. But what does America have to celebrate from “the party of no”? The Republicans, before and after the 2010 election, have consistently blocked major legislation that would have helped millions of us. This abuse of true democracy used to stop Democrats’ bills to address our problems include saying no to:

- 1) A second job stimulus
- 2) Allowing gays to serve openly in the military
- 3) A jobs bill to help small businesses
- 4) A child nutrition bill
- 5) GOP Governors refusing stimulus money for high speed railroads
- 6) Campaign Finance Reform
- 7) Ending tax breaks for multi millionaires
- 8) Financial help for the long-term unemployed
- 9) Wall Street regulation
- 10) Ending tax breaks for shipping jobs overseas
- 11) An energy reform bill
- 12) An immigrants’ rights bill
- 13) Equal pay for women

Just think of all the average Americans, especially those out of work or under-employed, who would have been helped by these changes. Take a good look around your town and see what is needed. (Health care coverage for all of us is badly needed too—The GOP wants to repeal this.)

What is particularly shameful, though, is the GOP attempt currently to block the New Start Treaty negotiated between President Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev. Republican administrations under Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush, and George W. Bush have successfully signed treaties with Russia reducing nuclear weapons and missiles. But not now, says Sen. John Kyl, the lead GOP strategist on foreign affairs. Kyl is following the lead of GOP Senate Head Mitch McConnell, who after the midterm elections told America that his *main goal* in the next two years is to defeat Obama in 2012. Thanks for thinking of us, Mitch!

Reducing the world’s stockpile of nuclear weapons is clearly in everyone’s interest: less chance of world destruction by governments or terrorists. Also less money wasted on weapons that could be used to help schools, small farmers, infrastructure, America’s cities and rural towns etc. And this is only part of what this new SALT treaty would accomplish.

According to a recent column by Eastern Michigan University Professor of History Walter G. Moss, failure to ratify New Start would also mean this:

“Foreign policy experts agree that the New START Treaty has major implications beyond its stipulations regarding a small-scale reduction of long-range missiles. Most importantly, its signing has helped improve Russian cooperation on several other major issues, including dealing with Iran and North Korea and supplying NATO forces through Russian or former Soviet territories. The negotiating and signing of the treaty in April also helped bring about commitments at the subsequent Washington Nuclear Summit, where many states agreed to strengthen their safeguarding of nuclear materials. Richard Burt warned that if the Senate does not ratify the treaty “we miss the opportunity to improve relations with the Russians we lose all credibility on the problem of stopping nuclear proliferation.” He added, “there

are only two governments in the world that wouldn't like to see this treaty ratified, the government in Tehran and the government in North Korea.”

Shame on you, Republicans for putting your partisan goals ahead of national and world security and economic recovery. America, we must no longer remain silent about these abuses of power.