

SENDING ON BEHALF OF SCOTT LUNNY, ASSISTANT TO THE DIRECTOR

Sisters & Brothers:

You will see below and attached some of the international support that we have been able to get for Napoleon Gomez and the struggles of free trade unions like Los Mineros in Mexico. I am asking you to take a minute and email your MP using at <http://petition.web.net/usw/node/8> . I would also ask that you please take the time to forward on this link to anyone you think might join in support of Napoleon and the Mineros.

In solidarity,
-sl

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Following is a link to footage of the Maritime Union of Australia's recent visit to the Mexican Ambassador in Australia (<http://www.mua.org.au/news/protests-kick-off-against-mexico/>, also at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y6c8pFZtD9o>) Letter they delivered is attached. MUA working with CFMEU is organizing some other visits to Mexican consulates in Australia as well as the Mexican Embassy in New Zealand with assistance from partners there. This comes out of a Mining & Maritime initiative involving unions primarily in Australia/New Zealand, South Africa and North America.

MUA also sent the attached pic of Napoleon speaking at the ITUC. MUA working with ITF were among the many unions and union bodies pushing hard to get Napoleon a speaking slot there.

Also see below in case you haven't already:

WORLD WAR 4 (Blog) – Jun. 22, 2010

Mexico: labor, left denounce "solution" at Cananea mine

Submitted by Weekly News Update on Tue, 06/22/2010 - 09:19.

<http://www.ww4report.com/node/8778>

Mexico's independent labor movement reacted angrily to the government's use of hundreds of police agents the night of June 6 to break a three-year strike at the giant Cananea copper mine in the northern state of Sonora. Later the same night, police stormed the sealed [Pasta de Conchos](#) mine in the northern state of Coahuila, where family members were protesting the failure to retrieve the bodies of miners killed in a methane explosion on Feb. 19, 2006; only two of the 65 bodies have been recovered. Both mines are owned by the powerful Grupo México corporation.

Officials of the National Workers Union (UNT), the largest independent labor federation, announced on June 9 that they would hold a national day of action protesting the assault on Cananea. They are also filing a complaint against the government of President Felipe Calderón Hinojosa with the International Labor Organization (ILO). The Cananea strikers are members of Section 65 of the National Union of Mine and Metal Workers and the Like of the Mexican Republic (SNTMMSRM). The national union has been in a

four-year struggle with the federal government over corruption charges against its leaders; supporters consider the charges an attempt to break the union.

On June 10 members of the Pasta de Conchos families resumed their protest by joining an encampment in the Zócalo plaza in downtown Mexico City where members of the Mexican Electrical Workers Union (SME) were on the 47th day of a mass hunger strike. The electrical workers are protesting their sudden layoffs last October. (La Jornada, Mexico, June 10, June 11)

Former Mexico City mayor Andrés Manuel López Obrador, the presidential candidate of a center-left coalition in 2006, promised to organize the collection of provisions for the Cananea strikers and to fight a "lynching campaign" in the media, which he accused of "demonizing" the workers. During a visit to the Section 65 union hall in Cananea on June 14, López Obrador charged that the miners were the victims of a "mafia of power" and noted that when the Cananea mine was privatized in 1990, former president Carlos Salinas de Gortari (1988-1994) "sold it to [Germán] Larrea [Mota-Velasco]," the main shareholder in Grupo México, "for \$400 million, when it was worth more than \$2 billion, according to an assessment by the Nacional Financiera," the government's bank for the development of small and medium businesses. (LJ, June 15)

US unions joined the denunciations of the police actions at Cananea and Pasta de Conchos. President Calderón "has launched a reign of terror against working people," United Steelworkers (USW) international president Leo Gerard said on June 7, calling on the US Congress to "halt delivery of all funding to Mexican security forces" under the [Mérida Initiative](#), which is nominally aimed at fighting drug trafficking. (USW press release, June 7) "As long as the Mexican military and police continue to violate the fundamental rights of workers, the US Congress should freeze current funding for these forces and any proposals for future support," Richard Trumka, president of the AFL-CIO, the largest US labor federation, said in a June 9 statement. (AFL-CIO blog, June 9)

Grupo México officials said they would need four months to get the mine operating again and would spend as much as \$114 million to clean it up. According to Gustavo Ortega, a technical director, the company had lost some \$3.5 billion during the 34 months of the strike. Isaac López, director of operations at the mine, told the Milenio Diario newspaper on June 14 that the mine would probably employ 800 non-union workers in the future, including some former members of Section 65. "The safest thing right now is for us not to have a union for the new workers," he said. "Later, we'll see."

Some people have asked why the company would accept big financial losses instead of just meeting the strikers' demands, which focused on health and safety issues. The answer may be in plans to step up mining activity in Mexico—apparently without unions. On April 7 Manuel Luévanos Sánchez, president of the Council of Directors of the Chamber of Mining of Mexico, told a meeting of the group that 70% of Mexico's territory could contain mineral wealth. He called on the government for a "complete solution to the union problems that generate a growing uncertainty in the industry and slow down

investments, putting at risk thousands of sources of employment." (El Universal, Mexico, June 14; Prensa Latina, June 20)

From [Weekly News Update on the Americas](#), June 20.

See our last posts on [Mexico](#) and the [labor struggle](#).