

Week of Action Events | WTO Turnaround 2009

Celebrate the Spirit from Seattle in 1999. Bring about a trade turnaround in 2009.

Hold a House Party. Use the “Battle in Seattle” DVD to bring people together. Have activists who were there introduce the movie. Have a call to action afterwards.*

Town Hall Meeting. Secure the local town hall or library, and open up a trade forum to the public. Invite the audience to start out by telling promises that were made about NAFTA. End by creating a list of actions citizens can take to make a difference. *(Sample agenda can be provided.)

Teach-In. Bring together activists who participated in the Battle in Seattle, and have them talk briefly about how average citizens can make an impact. Bring in an environmentalist, faith leader and labor activist to discuss respective problems with current trade model. Have the mayor highlight how this trade model takes away local control. Have a state elected leader discuss job loss. Show a brief power point on problems with secrecy and the WTO. Invite the media. End with a call to action.*

State Media Conference Call. Have a handful of local sector leaders and a prominent elected trade hero lead a press call on current problems with the WTO. Brief people before the call on their specific role. Limit remarks to 3 minutes each. Have a call to action, including an end to Doha round, holding a new round for global trade talks, and passing the TRADE Act in the US Congress.*

Trade Film Festival. From the turmoil of the 1999 WTO protests in Seattle to the perseverance of Maquila factory workers along the U.S.-Mexico border, highlight trade stories ranging from workers' rights and environmental justice to food safety and corporate accountability. Run a series of activist films, including Showdown in Seattle, Battle in Seattle, Trade-Off, Fresh, Thirst, King Corn, The Yes Men, The Price of Sugar, and Salt Of The Earth (1954). An extensive list of trade films is located at www.sierraclub.org/trade/movies/

March to Town Hall. In the Spirit of Seattle, lead a march from a labor hall or park to the town hall or trade meeting. Work it in conjunction with protest actions outlined on the accompanying sister sheet. Have plenty of trade signs. Get a prominent figure to lead you. Keep it short, and watch the weather. Hold a related trade action meeting at the end of the march. Invite the media.

Host a Public Debate. Bring in elected on opposite sides of the issue. Pack the audience. Have a question and answer session. Pick the best and the worst. In the alternative, have the local Chamber of Commerce goon debate an articulate public speaker from our side. Invite the media.

Schedule a Government Public Forum. Work with a local or state elected official to have a relevant committee meet, or to schedule a public forum, allowing citizens to testify before a government body on concerns about current trade policy. A member of

Congress may hold office hours, and you can hold a positive meeting rewarding their position in front of media.

Give a Trade Hero Award. If you have an elected that has been strong on trade issues, present the Coalition *Trade Hero Award* recognizing their great work.

Protest Congressional Elected. Present the elected that is bad on our record with a “job exporter” award. Give him a small ocean freighter trophy for “shipping” jobs overseas. Tie this action to a recent vote, or a recent campaign contribution from a company that moves jobs overseas. When he doesn’t accept, take a picture of the empty chair next to a podium with a flag in the back, noting the Representative failed to show up once again for you. (Note several protest actions on accompanying sheet.)

Trade Export Tour. Offer to take your representative and the press on a tour of a “job export zone”. Go to a fairly common and familiar place, such as Main Street in the largest city in the district. Point out the service sector jobs that could be offshored and outsourced. Offer numbers for the statewide total of such jobs. Have somebody who lost their job speak.

Candlelight Vigil. On a more somber note, hold a candlelight vigil for all of the labor leaders killed across the world since 1999. Do not tarnish it with attempts at humor. Make it 41 minutes long, from 7:00 pm to 7:40 pm, or about one second for every union activist that was killed in Colombia (2460). Have a powerful labor leader speak eloquently on the issue afterwards.