

“Ma’am, tell that man if he does not stop running off at the mouth, we will cut out his tongue.”*

An anonymous caller recently made this threat to the wife of a union member in Colombia. The husband had just returned home from a contract negotiating session. It serves as an example of the brutal reality for trade union members in Colombia. **Fifty-two were murdered last year.** At least 17 have been killed this year. And, now that a disastrous deal over the debt ceiling is done, there is news that the free trade agreement with Colombia, along with others involving Korea and Panama, will be brought up after the August Congressional break.

Take Action to Oppose the Trade Agreements

- Lawmakers are back at home now. Make sure your local is taking part in the national action on trade and generating letters to your U.S. Representatives. Our pressure has already helped to move many lawmakers' positions. This is the time to fight back.
- View the national action on the pending free trade agreements here: <http://bit.ly/iWlrpM>
- **It is critical that we know what activity is happening.** We have reports of hundreds of locals that are already taking action, but we need every local to participate. Please report any activity done by your local to your District Coordinator (in PA, alert your Congressional District Coordinator). Not sure how to reach him or her? Call us toll-free at 1-866-297-3817.

About the Debt Ceiling Agreement

We avoided the rampant economic devastation that some predicted – at least for now – but are left with a bad deal that can ultimately inflict tremendous pain on those who can least afford it. An initial round of budget cuts will focus on government agencies' spending over the next ten years. A bipartisan committee of twelve lawmakers from the House and Senate will be tasked with finding an additional \$1.5 trillion in cuts before Thanksgiving. Social Security, Medicare and more will be on the table. If the ugliness and extortion that characterized the debt ceiling fight is any indication, we are in for a real struggle.

Thank you to all locals who have participated in the recent actions on the debt ceiling and the free trade agreements. Please keep up the good work!

*From a recent Dylan Ratigan Show on MSNBC. View this and the series, *Trading Our Future?*, by clicking [HERE](#).