

facts for working people

A Publication of Labors Militant Voice April 2009 \$1
Building a Democratic Socialist Alternative to the Dictatorship of Capitalism

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Bankster Capitalism

Wells Fargo Inc

1st Quarter Profits 2009:

\$3 billion

**Federal Bailout money taken
by Wells Fargo:**

\$25 billion

WE JUST got ROBBED (again)

>>> Latest Economic Projections from the Federal Reserve

"Fed staff no longer expect growth to recover this year."

from the Minutes of the Federal Reserve Board April 9th 2009



**3M executive taken
hostage in March**

"Bossnapping" on the rise in France

The Executives of Caterpillar and 3M had it done to them. British companies have had it done to them. All companies that attempt to close their plants in France are worried that the workers will do it to them. On April 8th workers released four Executives of British manufacturer Scapa after workers held them for 18-hours. Workers are taking their bosses hostage to ensure that their rights are not ignored. Bossnapping, holding the bosses hostage, has become so widespread in France that the conservative President was forced to publicly condemn it. The leader of the "socialist" Party opposition argued that bossnapping was understandable when workers were "asked to accept layoffs without making a noise." The leader of the CGT trade union made an announcement outside the Scapa factory, "we decided to release (the bosses)" as negotiations must have gone well.

Unemployment The real Numbers:

Total Unemployed in February: 12,500,000

Number of Jobs lost in March: 1,188,000

Less number of part time jobs created: 373,000

NEW TOTAL unemployed in March: 13,200,000

Plus involuntary part-time workers = 22,200,000

Hands Off Our Homes

"It's an honor to be here. I came here today because just last week I was arrested and spent time in jail for defending my home ... We have to speak up and we have to take this country back," so spoke June Reyno, to the Los Angeles conference of Labors Militant Voice. June is a slightly framed woman whose single-handed battle against the banks to save her home has been watched by millions. Chaining herself to her home last year she captured the attention of news stations across the nation.

On March 12th together with supporters she was thrown out of her home, only to re-enter it and then be arrested by the San Diego Police. While hundreds of thousands have been evicted or left



**Part of Labors Militant Voice conference
in South-Central LA. June Reyno at right**

their foreclosed homes, some 19 million homes, according to the Census Bureau lie vacant. This is the real crime. June has inspired so many in her fight and spoke out to the 25 people in the "People's Library" in South-Central LA. Another woman, the Secretary of a newly established renters union in her building, explained that despite fear of not having papers residents have organized and forced their landlord to make repairs. An elderly home owner brought many near to tears when she spoke of her foreclosure and her grandson explained the initial feeling of shame around losing your home.

June's battle against the banks is now being forced to a new level as other struggles move forward.

**Join HANDS OFF OUR HOMES. Fight to save what we
have and fight for the world we could have.**

Contact us today:

Oakland/Bay Area 510 595-5545

Los Angeles/San Diego 310-404-6729

Toronto 416 323-0620

Chicago 773 913-8068

www.laborsmilitantvoice.com

www.myspace.com/lmvprofile

www.weknowwhatsup.blogspot.com

Editorial

Surrendering without a Fight is No Way Forward

Politicians, bankers and employers are peddling the lie that we are all in this economic crisis together, that we all helped create the mess and we must all work together to fix it. The trade union leadership, unfortunately, are not offering an alternative view. By accepting the sanctity of profit, they are effectively allowing some of the most severe attacks on jobs, collective agreements, wages, benefits and pensions in decades. We are told that these are "tough times" and workers must share the "collective pain" and make "tough choices."

More than 5 million jobs have disappeared in the last year, yet part of the Auto bailout/restructuring is 47,000 more layoffs. To pay for the \$3 trillion thrown at the banks, the public sector is expecting many times more layoffs. The madness of the market is that more layoffs are supposed to help the economy.

In March over 27,866 teachers in California were pink-slipped. In Newark, New Jersey, union leaders complied with 18 furlough days equal to a 10% pay cut. In Minneapolis the Governor "offered" 24-hour furlough days to state employees. Despite what we're told furloughs are pay cuts. One furlough day a month steals approximately \$2100 dollars out of a unionized public sector worker's pockets per year.

Across the country our union leaders are saying the same thing. Minnesota AFSCME leaders asked members to call the Governor and wear green. The 3 million-strong California teachers union asked members to wear pink to protest pink slips. Union leaders implore members to "get involved" in figuring out how they'd like to be cut. SEIU Local 1000 President, echoing the leadership, sugar-coated furloughs as "lay-off protection." Furloughs are pay cuts and do not stop the attacks. More weakness will only invite more aggression.

The current labor leadership has nothing to offer workers who want to fight back. They have no plan and no solution. They threw hundreds of millions of members' dues at the Obama campaign for one piece of legislation: the Employee Free Choice Act. This Act, which may not pass the Senate, will make it easier for workers to join unions, a very good thing. But what we need are unions that fight not merely dues-collection agencies that facilitate a continuous policy of surrender.

The working class is now leaderless, but struggles and movements of resistance throw up new leaders and change old ones. History proves that and will prove it again.

WAR: The Administration's "New" Policy



The Brilliant Success of PRIVATE HEALTHCARE

	1993	2008
Healthcare Spending:	912 billion	2,500 billion
Americans Uninsured:	37 million	47 million

The Obama Administration 100 Days in ...

The Government's 3-month bailout of banks and investment companies is a continuation of the Bush Administration's policy of handing over money to the culprits of the crisis.

Upwards of \$3 trillion globally has been given to big business from public funds, of which the lionshare has come from the US government. This represents the largest shift of wealth from public funds (working class taxpayers) to the Corporations in world history.

... and \$3 trillion later

What is a Trillion?

A trillion is a thousand billion or a million million. One million seconds is 11 days. One billion seconds is 31 years and one trillion seconds is 31,546 years.

Unemployment Rights What we Fight For

**Jobs
Now!**

Unemployed Rights:

- ◆ Unemployment benefits equal to \$15.00 an hour / wages
- ◆ Unemployment eligibility should last indefinitely
- ◆ Increase unemployment office staff and pay to meet the increased demand of the recession
- ◆ Government-provided Health Benefits for Unemployed and their families, as a part of a Nationalized Health Service
- ◆ Unions, community organizations assist in building independent union locals of the unemployed

Full Employment:

- ◆ Unions must refuse to accept Layoffs: workplace occupations in solidarity with local communities
- ◆ 30-hour work-week, with no loss of pay, to create work
- ◆ A mass, environmentally-friendly public works program to create jobs: light rail mass transit: solar, wind, construction; community gardens: rebuild the country

- ◆ All jobs at Union rates of pay and benefits and through Union hiring halls
- ◆ Launch massive program of apprenticeships for full youth employment
- ◆ All hiring to be done on a first come first serve basis

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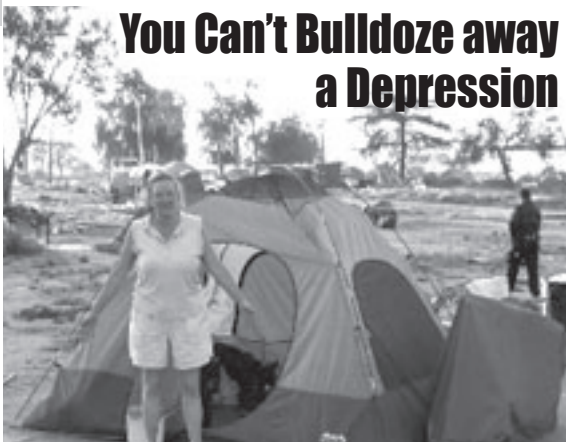
How Low Will Capitalism Go?
This month on the FFWP blog: "Observe and Report"
Movie Review: Date Rape as Comedy. It's just not funny.
weknowwhatsup.blogspot.com

Some signs of the recession are subtle and come from unexpected places like the increase in dentist visits due to people grinding their teeth in their sleep because of stress. Some signs are blatant and familiar like the increase in Hooverville-like tent cities in areas across the country.

Encampments consisting of people who have lost their homes to foreclosure, those who have lost their jobs to downsizing, and those who had already been homeless are springing up in Olympia, WA; Sacramento, CA; St. Petersburg, FL; Columbus, OH, and more U.S. cities.

A report from the National Coalition for the Homeless reports 61% of state and local homeless shelters experiencing a rise in homelessness since the foreclosure crisis began in 2007. Since the report, the problem has only worsened.

"I just built it because I need it," said one man who built a one-room shack in a tent city called Taco Flats located in Fresno. The fact that so many people are in need is a big sign that capitalism does not work. That fact is easy to ignore in boom times. Big sections of the working class across the country are having to use their energy and ingenuity to build tents or lean-tos in order to get by while perfectly good houses--entire neighborhoods--sit vacant, owned by the bank. The boom has gone bust at the working class' expense.



Ontario, CA Tent city minutes before being cleared

You Can't Bulldoze away a Depression

global risings

General Strike rocks Carribean

Earlier in the year the Caribbean French colonial island of Guadeloupe, was hit with a massive General Strike. The 44-day strike won most of the workers' demands. Thirty thousand islanders marched to the largest town, Pointe-A-Pitre demanding that their wages increase and food prices be lowered. Salaries had not kept up with the rising prices, the unemployment rate is 20% and those who have jobs are paid very little. The food staples are much more expensive than that of mainland France because food is often transported from France to Guadeloupe.

France deployed hundreds of riot police to try and quell the strikers. The police encountered makeshift barricades made of burned-out cars and burning palm trees. Conflicts between strikers and police resulted in the death of a Guadeloupe striker, Jacques Bino. Elie Domota, leader of the union and socialist groups' coalition, "Liyannaj Kont Pwofitasyon" (Creole for League against Profiteering), responded to the death of Bino: "A comrade has fallen, the best thing we can do is to continue to struggle in his memory to continue to struggle for a better life, for our children and for tomorrow."

The workers shut down the schools, hotels, transportation, airport, chain stores and gas stations making French President Sarkozy give into their demands. Wages were increased by 200 Euros per month to the poorest families, food prices reduced by 20%, more teachers were hired and transportation costs lowered. In Guadeloupe a bold mobilization and organization of working people gained huge victories not by hoping the bosses will be nice to us, but by demanding what are our rights.

Top 10 Signs that their "Economic Recovery" May not have Reached You Yet

10. You throw a Networking Party and only friends looking for roommates or a cozy couch show up
9. You let your in-laws continue to think you still have a job
8. The local Army recruiter won't return your calls
7. Your landlord doesn't share your "positive attitude" on the first of the month
6. You discover Top Ramen doesn't go well with everything
5. That long line you joined at 7-Eleven wasn't for a free Big-Gulp, but for one job opening
4. You reach your all-time low and consider asking your old boss if your layoff was a technical error
3. You apply for one of those fake-consultant-like jobs with a flat check, no benefits and no rights
2. You think about calling State Disability to see what you need to do to get a check from them
1. Socialist Revolution starts looking damn good!

Poll Finds Rising Support for Socialism

In a poll conducted by Rasmussen Reports April 6-7 of 1,000 US adults, when asked if they favored Capitalism over Socialism, some 53% supported Capitalism and 20% sided with socialism. Adults under 30 were more evenly divided with 37% favoring capitalism and 33% favoring socialism.

Fighting the Clock Teaching Assistants

Education is being attacked on every front, from the teachers to the cafeteria workers. In Los Angeles there is a freeze on hiring teachers, custodians, teacher's assistants and cafeteria workers. Teachers are being laid off and placed into substitution positions. Since union officials are telling their members to choose between furloughs or layoffs, workers have no choice but to hope that they will not be fired. Teacher's assistants are meant to be in classes to observe and help teachers in the classroom. Since the freeze has been implemented Teacher Assistants are shifted around as yard supervisors and office helpers. There is less time spent in classrooms and more in errands. Demands are increasing for all workers in education: teachers will have more kids in their classrooms, cafeteria workers take more time to serve meals and custodians too will lose time with more cleaning.

The clock is ticking and workers in education are on the edge of their seats. Before it's too late, workers must network, start talking about the problems with the system and why education is important. Building a fighting unit within unions is crucial to place pressure on the leadership of the union. The union must take a stand against furloughs and layoffs, and fight for our interests.

Education is being attacked on every front, from the teachers to the cafeteria workers. In Los Angeles there





1 in 10 Americans are now on Food Stamps

In 2008 some 27 million Americans were on them

In 2009 (so far) 32 million are on them

Eligibility for a family of 4 are:

You must earn less than \$1767p/month, with less than \$2,000 in the bank and can be a homeowner

Join our fight against the profit system

Oakland (510) 595-4676

(also for contact info for San Diego, Columbus & Las Vegas)

Chicago: (773) 913-8068

Los Angeles: (310) 404-6729

Toronto: (416) 323-0620

How The System works

Capitalism is based on profit. In order for the rich to be rich they have to exploit the world. Since capitalism has existed it has needed certain things to be in place. Most of these you already experience.

Unemployment - the system needs people to be unemployed at one point or another. Why? To keep you afraid of becoming unemployed and to have a group of people always willing to work for less.

War - The system has to be at war somewhere at some point. War has to happen for the bosses to "destroy the competition" or take the resources. The war in Iraq was for oil. The War in Afghanistan is for oil and taking control away from other capitalists. Working class people from both countries are killing each other for someone else's profit.

Racism - We have a Black president but according to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics Black unemployment is twice as high as the national rate and 1 in 9 Black men (ages 20-34) are incarcerated. This is because capitalism is based on having one race being treated differently than another. Just like unemployment capitalism feeds on division to keep people in conflict. Blacks are paid less than whites, undocumented are paid less than documented, and women are paid less than men. This is to keep working people focused on each other and not on the

(not like you didn't already know)

common enemy, the bosses.

Economic Inequality - Capitalism needs most of the world to live in extreme poverty. According to the United Nations Population Fund, "The world's wealth is some \$30 trillion, but half the world lives on \$2 a day or less,". The notion that there is a "budget crisis" is a flat out lie! The wealthy people of the world aren't having a "crisis". The only criticism Obama has for them is to not flaunt it so much! During the Great Depression, the worst economic time in the US, American workers won Unemployment benefits, the 5-day week, Social Security, Pensions, Rent Control, and other social services. They have the money we are making it for them.

An angry mob - With all the media deception, "band-aid" solutions and appeasements, outright lies, racism, attacks on social services and a made-up budget crisis there is one thing the system can not erase. The working class is the majority of society. We are the ones who bake the bread, drive the trucks, hammer the nails and keep society functioning. Without the working class nothing would function. We don't need capitalists to make food but capitalists need us to work for them. If we organize ourselves as workers we can run this society humanely. Healthcare, education, food, shelter. We are the majority of society and we need a majority-ruled society.

How can you pay back your Student Loans these days?

Cancel All Student Debt Free College Education Now

Student debt in the U.S is now over \$500 billion and rising each year. During the down turn in the economy, more unemployed people will be looking to return to college and state budgets will force tuition higher and deepen the student debt. However, students are pressured to continue school, even if it means having an accumulated debt that could buy a home.

Ironically, students who have become teachers are still paying their debt after 10 years of teaching. Most recently

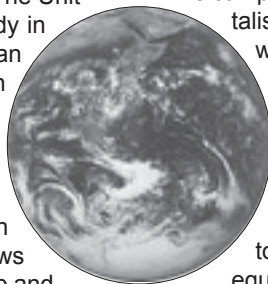
The average debt accumulated per student in the nation is \$21,899

there has been a petition going around through the internet to demand student debt be cancelled. This is a good start to raise consciousness and to bring people around on an issue of importance. During this phase of the economy if jobs are less likely to hire, how are students supposed to support themselves and pay off student loans? While banks are getting bailed out with trillions of dollars, working class students are getting higher tuition fees. This burden can only be ended when students and ex-students mobilize to demand that the debt be cancelled. Education should be free and should be a right, not a privilege.

Why we're against Capitalism

We are against capitalism because it does not work. More than half the world's population are in want or outright starving. The United Nations Development Program estimates that everybody in the world could have access to basic social services, clean water, food, housing, health care, education, for \$80 billion per year. The seven richest people in the world have \$1.54 trillion between them. Capitalism cannot transfer the tiny fraction of the wealth of its richest few that would be necessary to provide everybody with the necessities.

But it is not only a question of taking the ill-gotten wealth of the billionaires. It is having a system which allows the working people of the world to have access to ownership and



control over capital, machinery, land, water, energy and power so that we can plan production and plan distribution throughout the world. Capitalism cannot allow this. As the Argentinean worker said last year when he and his fellow workers had occupied and were running their factory: "They are terrified of us because we are showing we can run the factory and because we can run the factory this shows we could run the country".

Capitalism does not work. Capitalism is destroying our planet. We are for a new system where working class people work together and use the resources of the world collectively to create a sustainable economy and where what is produced is equitably distributed. This is a democratic socialist system. This is what we are fighting for. Contact us and we can work together.

www.labormilitantvoice.org

www.myspace.com/lmvprofile