



Fight capitalist austerity! No to the Republicans and Democrats!

This Labor Day workers are facing harsh austerity at the hands of the capitalists. Obama and the Democrats and Romney and the Republicans are both claiming they will save us. A glance at the record shows this isn't so. But that doesn't mean nothing can be done. The mass struggle of workers and poor folk can advance our demands for relief from the crisis, for jobs, better pay, for real environmental measures, the protection of women's rights, for full rights for immigrant workers, against police murders of black people, against imperialist wars, etc. In various countries around the world anti-austerity actions have raged and the Arab Spring has shown how the downtrodden can rise up and rid their country of tyrants. In the US, there have been certain strikes and protests that show the potential for building a powerful mass workers' movement.

The Republican insanity

The Republican leaders cheer on the austerity drive. Their motto is that the capitalists should be free from any restraint, and then there will be a veritable heaven on earth for all. Hence, taxes and regulations on the rich, and unions, of course, should all but disappear. Workers should be seen but not paid, at least not very much.

As for global warming, they say it's a hoax, or at least not caused by human activity, and pretend that industrial and corporate activity have nothing to do with the climate. And the health care crisis? They don't worry about that. So what if 50 million people are uninsured? Supposedly young people have decided to "self-insure", and the free market will take care of everything else.

And women's rights? The Republicans are backing one more crazy law after another, from eliminating equal pay provisions in Wisconsin to opposing abortion rights and limiting the availability of birth control. They even talk of redefining rape to blame the woman. As for racism? They are eager to expand the police state at the Mexican border and to harass Latinos with racial-profiling measures in Arizona, Alabama and elsewhere. The police, under mayors of both parties, go on murdering Blacks.

But the Republicans are first and foremost for slashing social programs. They blame unemployment on unemployment insurance, and poverty on anti-poverty programs. They moan about balancing the budget in order to slash social programs, but their worry about deficits disappears when it comes to granting millionaires more tax breaks, or expanding the trillion-dollar war machine.

The Democrats are no real alternative

What, then, is Obama's alternative?

Social programs? Even before taking office, Obama lined up Democratic support for Bush's bank bail-out, then

gave trillions to the banks and nothing to the mortgage foreclosees. When he had a large Congressional majority, Obama put social programs on the chopping block in the name of deficit reduction! Obama passed health care reform, but this was mainly a giveaway to private insurance groups. He is ravaging public schools, teachers and students alike, with his "Race to the Top" program.

Tax the rich? No, Obama extended Bush's tax cuts for the rich. Then this February, he proposed lowering the tax rate for companies from the present 35% to 28%, and down to 25% for US manufacturers. His State of the Union Address preached the Reagan-style trickle-down economics of cutting regulations and taxes for the business elite. Jobs? While millions are out of work, Obama has no real jobs program. Instead he backs measures that would cut hundred of thousands of postal service jobs. And his bailout of GM and Chrysler may have revived their profits, but it was at the cost of cutting wages and tens of thousands of jobs.

Climate change? Beneath Obama's sweet talk about "green energy", his program is drill more oil, strip-mine more coal with mountain-top removal, frack more natural gas and license new nuclear power plants. This year he has boasted of opening up millions of acres of land and offshore for drilling, and of helping develop fracking technologies to extract natural gas from shale rock. Never mind that fracking poisons water resources and produces large carbon emissions just like coal and oil.

Union leaders give in to the capitalist program

Faced with this onslaught, one might think the trade union leaders would be organizing a revolt. Hardly. Instead, the dominant trade union bureaucracies routinely give big concessions to the capitalists, and work to limit worker mass actions or outright squash them.

Rather than opposing Obama's pro-capitalist program, the AFL-CIO bureaucrats have endorsed him for reelection and promise to mobilize tens of thousands of workers to doorbell for him this fall. The UAW bureaucrats heap praise on Obama's auto bailout despite its major job cuts and half wages for new hires.

The AFL-CIO leaders denounce the Republicans, but even here they try to please the capitalists. They have organized rallies and a recall campaign against Republican Governor of Wisconsin Scott Walker who wants to effectively end negotiating rights for public sector unions. But this was only after Walker failed to accept big contract concessions offered by the bulk of the union hierarchy. Far from organizing a serious fight, the present pro-capitalist AFL-CIO and CTW leaders subvert it. For example, when

Occupy activists successfully organized port blockades on the West Coast in solidarity with longshore workers and truckers battling anti-union measures, ILWU longshore union officials denounced them and even physically assaulted an Occupy planning meeting.

Thus, to beat back the class offensive of the rich -- to say nothing of overthrowing their rule -- the working class is going to have to overcome this treachery by organizing in a way that is independent of the capitalists and all their apologists. In the US, this means opposing all the capitalist politicians, whether Democrat or Republican.

The spirit of struggle lives!

But the working class has begun to move. Workers in other countries are on the move. In the U.S. a number of small strikes have taken place – janitors in Houston and San Francisco, Caterpillar workers, Con Ed workers in New York. Chicago teachers plan to strike. Worker rallies were held in Philadelphia and in Wisconsin, where some workers demanded a general strike. Among the workers a critique has been gaining ground against the sellout

activities of the top union leaders. Many are concluding that the worker masses should keep the initiative in their own hands and carry out direct action. Similarly, workers are critiquing the agreements which have settled recent strikes and concluding the need for stronger mass action.

Neither candidate in the presidential election offers the working class anything significant. The only thing that will bring any changes in the workers' favor under the heel of the ruling capitalists – the only thing that will also help prepare for the day when we bring them down in a workers' revolution – is a mass movement of struggle of the working class and its allies among the oppressed. This must be a struggle directed against both parties of the rich, the Republicans and the Democrats, against the blood-sucking capitalist class itself. Let us join with the workers of the world and build that movement!

FIGHT THE AUSTERITY ATTACKS OF THE RICH!

BUILD THE WORKERS' MASS MOVEMENT!

***DOWN WITH THE REPUBLICANS AND DEMOCRATS,
ENEMIES OF THE WORKERS AND POOR!***

Striking South African miners slaughtered by police: police then charge miners with the murders committed by the police!

On August 16, South African police surrounded and shot and killed in cold blood 34 striking miners at the Marikana platinum mine of the Lonmin company, wounded 78 and arrested 350. In another barbaric move, the ANC government has now charged 270 of the miners with the murder of their comrades, who were actually shot and killed by the police!! The miners, who live in desperate conditions often without clean water or electricity, had been waging a wildcat strike since August 10. The strike was already a bitter struggle: two police and eight miners died in earlier clashes.

This massacre is a horrendous crime by the African National Congress government, which came to power in the defeat of apartheid 16 years ago but which has presided over and participated in extreme exploitation of

the workers and the poor by the rich capitalists. The ANC's mine union, the National Union of Miners, has increasingly merged with management. Its founder, Cyril Ramaphosa, sits on the Lonmin board of directors and has an annual income of \$167,000, while the miners live in shacks and barely survive on \$660/mo. They demand a raise to \$1,560. The slaughter and charges show the betrayal of the workers by the ANC and its cohort, the South African Communist Party, which long ago revised Marxism to abandon the workers' class struggle.

The workers are waging a stern fight. Makhosi Mbongane, a winch operator, vowed: "They can beat us, kill us and kick and trample on us with their feet, do whatever they want to do, we aren't going to go back to work." *Solidarity with the striking South African miners!*

Syrian people's rebellion persists against bloody Assad regime

For many months the Syrian people have mounted a struggle to bring down the tyrannical Bashar al-Assad regime. In 2011 the masses launched nonviolent demonstrations demanding the democratic rights denied them by the government, which has portrayed itself as a friend of the Palestinian people against Israeli zionism. But like his father, Hafez, who slaughtered thousands in the city of Hama in 1982, Bashar, the leader of the Syrian bourgeoisie, drowned the demonstrations in blood and tortured numerous activists. In response, the people seized arms from the Syrian military and began fighting back. As Assad continued the slaughters, soldiers began defecting and the defections turned into a flood. Defecting soldiers

and militant civilians formed military groups that challenged Assad's troops. Despite the great superiority of the regime in weaponry, the masses have challenged the government in the capital city of Damascus, in the largest city, Aleppo, and throughout the countryside.

The Syrian uprising is the latest wave in the flood of the Arab Spring, which has inspired the world with mass heroism and demands for democracy and relief from economic deprivation. As in the other Arab countries, it is a struggle against a brutal tyranny that has prevented the workers and poor from organizing in their own interests. The masses can only move forward through the fall of the tyrant. *Support the Syrian people! Down with Assad!*

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