



Defend Detroit workers and retirees against robbery by the rich!

Active and retired Detroit city workers are facing robbery of their paltry wages and hard-earned pensions at the hands of Emergency Financial Manager Orr and the avaricious banks and other creditors of the city as Detroit heads into bankruptcy.

All workers, youth and progressive people should take a stand against this robbery! Fellow workers, come out to any mass actions that may be called against the thieves in suits! Fight back!

President Obama has turned his back on a bailout. Governor Snyder appointed Orr. Mayor Bing and the City Council have collaborated in this robbery. The city workers' union leaders have contented themselves – so far – with legal challenges under the illusion that establishment judges will defend the workers against establishment robbery. We workers have no friends in high places; we must rely on our own strength, not on our enemies.

Every miserable excuse is being used by the Republican and Democratic politicians to justify this crime. Orr has called the city's people "lazy." But it's the fatcat bankers who sit on their behinds and want to pocket other people's pensions and wages. It's the auto bosses who have spent decades cutting jobs. And it's the

capitalist boom-bust cycle that has sent unemployment and wage cuts and homelessness soaring. In short, the rich are the real culprits, but they demand austerity for the masses. Thus \$300 million is available for a new sports arena while Detroit schools are closing right and left, and the wages and pensions of Detroit workers are on the chopping block.

There are plenty of resources, created by the labor of the working people. But they are all in the hands of the rich capitalists. Grosse Pointe and Bloomfield Hills eat steak while Detroit starves. Congress, the economists, and the politicians pretend this is because there just isn't enough to go around. But if there were a real material shortage, a shortage of houses, machines, farms, factories, and so forth, there would be a demand for more workers to build things. Instead people are begging for jobs. The capitalists are too greedy to provide for the wages, pensions, and welfare of the people who do the real work in this country.

It's time to take a stand. Workers, organize mass struggles and fight back! Preserve city services! No cuts to our wages and benefits! No pensions, no peace!

Racist justice system frees Trayvon's murderer

"No Justice, No Peace!" shout demonstrators across the country since the "not guilty" verdict for George Zimmerman, the vigilante murderer of black teenager Trayvon Martin. This outrageous verdict was not just the product of some jurors but of the capitalist justice system itself. The racist nature of the justice system remains regardless of whether the Republicans or Democrats rule. So it is up to the masses of all nationalities to again rise up against the injustice of the system.

The racism is clear: Zimmerman often called police about innocent black people he saw in his community, calling them "these assholes [who] always get away". He carried a loaded pistol on his "community patrol," though the patrol was not supposed to confront anyone. He identified Trayvon as black. Trayvon was merely walking from a store to the house where his father was. Zimmerman tailed him in his car. Against the advice of a police dispatcher, Zimmerman pursued Trayvon on foot. Clearly Zimmerman was racial profiling. Wherever Trayvon went, Zimmerman followed. Trayvon eventually could not escape. Trayvon rightfully defended himself against this armed and unknown assailant. Zimmerman received some minor injuries, but was able to shoot Trayvon to death. Zimmerman got away with murder.

Zimmerman's lawyers claimed that poor Zimmerman was pinned by Trayvon and was helpless to defend himself except by shooting Trayvon. But the "helpless" Zimmerman was free enough to draw his gun from his holster and somehow shoot. If Zimmerman was helpless, how did he get his gun in his hand?

Self-defense laws for Zimmerman, no rights for Trayvon

The "stand your ground" laws and other laws in Florida make it easier for defendants to walk no matter what actions they take in the name of self-defense. A person who thinks they might suffer serious harm or death in any public place need no longer even try to retreat. They can just shoot and kill, with an added incentive to do so since dead men tell no tales. The judge included "stand your ground" language in her instructions to the jury in this case.

The judge also forbade jurors to consider anything before the actual fight or to consider race as an element of the incident. This clearly tipped the field in favor of Zimmerman. Where was Trayvon's right to self-defense? He was the one hunted down!

The racist nature of the justice establishment

The Sanford police have a long history of racist actions. They apprehended Zimmerman, then let him go, accepting Zimmerman's claim of self-defense! They never bothered to contact Rachel Jeantel, a black teenage friend of Trayvon who was on her cell phone with Trayvon seconds before the murder. She had the most solid information and it indicated Zimmerman's guilt. It took six weeks of nationwide protests for state authorities to charge Zimmerman.

And what was the stand of Obama? He spouted a lot of generalities. But as for the verdict? He praised the judge! The same judge who had instructed the jurors that they should follow the "stand your ground" laws, that they should consider none of the

circumstances prior to the actual physical fight itself, and that they should ignore the issue of race in this incident! And Obama warned protesters to behave themselves. Above all else he advocates the "rule of law", that is, the rule of racist and capitalist law. (It was his Homeland Security that crushed the Occupy Wall Street encampments two years ago.) Of course, the Republicans consider Obama's meek stand against racism to be reckless militancy.

The capitalist establishment failed to provide justice for Trayvon. It is a system where justice is denied to workers in general but even more seriously to the black masses. Racial profiling has long been a policy of the police across the country, as are shootings of supposedly "suspicious" blacks and Latinos. The relative lack of economic opportunity and education for the minority masses feeds discrimination in the justice system, and the lack of justice in the system reinforces the poverty. Tougher laws are written for the minority community, which is unjustly blamed for being "lawless". Drug laws have stiffer punishment for drugs used more in black communities compared to similar drugs in the white. Though drug use is roughly equal, arrests are much higher in the black community. And in court, the police manufacture evidence and lie, while the defendant only has an overworked public defender without proper resources or time for a sound defense. The result is an immense prison population of black and Latino men.

Massive harassment and deportations of undocumented immigrant laborers, hysteria against Middle Easterners and Muslims, are more examples of systemic racism.

Racism and the class struggle

The racism of the justice system is a product of capitalism. Capitalist austerity measures are driving down all workers, but the oppressed minority workers still more. The less rights, the easier the profits. When sections of the workforce can be singled out for special oppression, it is harder for all workers to unite for a struggle against the capitalist exploiters. Obama and Congress both are tied to the capitalists and are leading the austerity attacks. Only the force of the workers and poor of all nationalities banding together for struggle can improve conditions. Powerful mass actions are needed against all facets of the racist justice system.

Some organizers of the recent protests, like Rev. Al Sharpton, are diverting the anti-racist movement into faith in Obama and similar Democratic Party politicians who are carrying out the austerity measures of the capitalists. Obama and Sharpton use the trial to proclaim the justice system worked, except that maybe the "stand your ground" laws need change.

Workers and activists need a different orientation. Connect the struggle against racism to the fight against capitalist austerity which feeds bodies into the racist justice system. Mobilize the rank-and-file workers, not the sellout union leaders tied to the Democrats. Expose the basic connection between the racism of the justice system and capitalism itself. Organize independently of the reformists in the workplaces, communities, schools, etc.! Do not wait for the Sharptons and other reformist apologists for Obama! Take action! <>

For a working-class environmental movement!

Little improvement has been achieved on the environmental front. Natural disasters such as droughts and wildfires, hurricanes and tornadoes, melting of sea ice, the rise of CO2 in the atmosphere and rising world temperatures, the deepening of the Fukushima nuclear crisis – all show the impotence of the environmental measures of the capitalist establishment on a world scale. The corporations aren't going to do what's right out of the goodness of their hearts. There must be a force which can fight them successfully. That force is the working class.

A mass working-class trend within the environmental movement is needed. All the current measures of the establishment environmentalists are market-based; they rely on convincing the polluters they can make more money by not polluting. In contrast, a working-class program would demand serious direct regulation and control and call for radical change in the present privatized government apparatus. Building such a trend is not easy. But we can't just sit back, let the world be devastated and wait for the revolution to solve the environment for us. Nor will neo-liberal financial capital willingly regulate itself.

Many reformist trends have simply acted as pressure groups for establishment environmentalism. Some more militant environmentalists have built a valuable movement of protest, and have criticized certain market-based measures; but they have backed other market measures and generally have no critique of such major establishment environmental figures as Al Gore. Some environmentalists push a carbon tax, but the burden of a carbon tax will be shifted from the corporations taxed onto the backs of the workers; it must be fought.

Some environmental groups that look to market solutions talk about allying with the working class. They call for subsidies to the capitalists for green projects, call it "green jobs" for the workers, and unite with the pro-capitalist labor leaders. This is sort of the

idea of the BlueGreen Alliance of certain environmental groups and trade unions. But this naively hopes that the business class will voluntarily cure the environment.

A working-class class environmental movement will not rely on naïve hopes. It will demand environmental and economic planning -- planning for the welfare of the masses as an independent goal alongside that of protecting the environment. It will mean seeking mass oversight over government planning and environmental decisions and oversight of corporate compliance with environmental regulations. It will denounce the present privatized government apparatus. Without such oversight, the corporations will defy environmental regulations and planning will consist of squeezing the masses.

Working-class victories and planning can only be partial under capitalism, and government bodies will always be subject to regulatory capture. But constant struggle over these will eventually lead to a new revolutionary consciousness in the working class. This protracted struggle can be the bridge between revitalized programs and future utopia. However utopian this idea may seem at the present, it will look different as the world goes through major changes in the next few years. <>

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