

FIGHT BACK!

News and Views from the People's Struggle

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SK Hand Tools Teamsters: On Strike for Health Care



Strikers in front of SK Hand Tools. Workers, members of Teamsters 743, are on strike after their employer unilaterally canceled their health insurance. Workers didn't even learn of this until they went to fill prescriptions.

'We Say Fight Back!' national conference to be held in Chicago

By Chapin Gray

In the midst of the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression, leaders and organizers across the country are gearing up for the "They Say Cut Back, We Say Fight Back!" national conference planned for Oct. 3 in Chicago, Illinois. From California to New York, people who for the past years have been fighting back against cuts to programs that serve our communities, against home foreclosures and evictions and against plant closures will come together to share experiences and make plans to work together in the coming years.

"Massive cuts are taking place to the programs that benefit poor and working people, while the government tries

to balance budgets on our backs," said the organizers. "Inequality is growing and oppressed people - African-Americans, Chicanos and Latinos - are the last hired and the first to lose their jobs." Over the last decades, the banks and the billionaires have accumulated enormous profits by exploiting people's labor and through speculation. Now, with an economic crisis underway they are trying to shift the burden onto the backs of poor and working people. In response, there are growing fight backs in communities and workplaces around the country.

This past year has seen sharp struggles, such as the one waged by Republic Windows and Doors workers last December. Armando Robles, a lead

Conference, continued on page 2

By staff

Chicago, IL - When the owner of SK Hand Tools in Chicago unilaterally cut off health care benefits for his employees, he provoked a strike. As a result, the picket line of striking workers on Aug. 25 was also a health care rally.

50 Teamsters hit the sidewalk in front of the plant at 6:00 a.m., as passing truckers blasted air horns in support. With arthritis in both knees, Sam Pope was having a hard time marching. "The concrete really hurts, but I'll do my part," he winced. For 15 years he had set up mills to make the inner bodies of the sockets for Craftsmen and SK brand tools. "All the union people are out," he said, turning to join the line, which was true, as the members of Teamsters Local 743 had voted unanimously to strike.

The chant that rose up loudest and longest was, "What do we want? Health care! When do we

want it? Now!" Most in the U.S. who have health insurance get it from their employers, and for Sam with his chronic condition, there was no question that he'd fight to get it back.

The company is demanding major wage concessions on top of stopping health care coverage without notice.

David Biedrzycki, a union steward at the plant and employed as a welder/grinder/polisher for 25 years, only earned \$8,000 this past year. He has not worked in six months and noted the irony that Claude Fuger, the wealthy French owner, returned to France recently for treatment when he became ill. France has national health care. "Claude makes \$280,000 a year. He wants us to pay for health insurance, but says he can't afford it himself."

Biedrzycki said "We're not going in until Claude comes back with a fair offer."

Fighting Foreclosures: The Rosemary Williams Struggle

By staff

Minneapolis, MN - "Every day that Rosemary Williams stayed in her home was a victory for the people against the banks," stated Linden Gawboy of the Minnesota Coalition for a People's Bailout, Sept. 11. Gawboy, along with many others, was part of the round-the-clock presence supporting Ms. Williams as she stayed in her home, despite an Aug. 7 sheriff's eviction.

On Sept. 11, another phase of the struggle began. As Ms. Williams was busy with preparations for a birthday party for her two-year old grandson, dozens of Minneapolis police came. They cordoned off sidewalks, streets and alleys, then stood watch as a security company used perforated metal shields to cover windows and doors - a process that took five hours. About 100 supporters came by to protest this latest eviction. Seven people - five members of the Minnesota Coalition for a People's Bailout, along with members of the Coldsnap Legal Collective and the Twin Cities Avengers - tried to

get onto the property in an effort to save Rosemary Williams's home and were arrested.

Asked on the night of Sept. 11 what was next, Ms. Williams said, "Number one, we've got to get our people

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Rosemary Williams: ‘The fight isn’t over’

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out of jail. After that I’ve got to get my stuff into storage, but we are not giving up and it is not just about my family. This is happening all over and it’s got to stop. We are mobilizing as many people as we can to come downtown tomorrow, we’re going to have a big action outside the Obama rally. It’s time to get up. Stand up or shut up.”

35 days of people’s occupation and support

On Aug. 7, Hennepin County sheriffs served a notice of eviction and changed the locks. However, soon after they left, supporters

reopened the home. For the first week supporters slept shoulder to shoulder on the living room floor, rotating overnight guard duty on the porches. Rosemary didn’t leave her home. Later in the month, the watches were trimmed to a few people, punctuated by dozens of visitors.

There were three to four actions per week to keep up the pressure on GMAC and government officials. Solidarity rallies from the anti-war movement, immigrant rights movement and others were held at the house. The faith community held vigils. Neighbors gave up their garages for the family to store possessions and brought food.

Williams has advice for others: “Don’t put your faith in the ‘washing machine’ [the many programs that promise, but don’t deliver much help]. Don’t leave like a thief in the night. Stay in your home.”

Bailout Coalition member Kim DeFranco, who was on watch Sept. 11 when the police came and was allowed to help the family gather some things, stated, “The more I carried out of the house, the angrier I got. With all the bailouts that big banks

have gotten, there’s no reason that people like Rosemary and her family should have to lose their homes.”

Besides physically evicting her, GMAC, Lehman Brothers, Aurora Financial and others came with insulting offers. Williams is taking a stand: “They tried to buy me off with 30 pieces of silver [cash for keys], they tried to make me into a renter. I won’t stop until I get back the title to my house and a fair mortgage.”

Chicago conference builds fight back!

Conference, continued from page 1

organizer in that now internationally-known plant occupation, is one of many who will be speaking at the Oct. 3 conference. Robles said, “I think it is important for workers to attend this conference to share experiences and learn from each other to become better fighters.”

Over 30 individuals and organizations involved in the labor movement, the student movement, housing and anti-cutback activism, community organizing and other progressive movements have already endorsed the conference.

“I’ll be at the Oct. 3 conference and help out everybody like we are getting helped out here,” said David Biedrzycki, a worker at SK Hand Tools and union steward with Teamsters 743 in Chicago. “Some are losing their homes. We lost our health insurance, so we understand how we need to fight together. We are on strike fighting for health insurance and also for justice.”

Carlos Montes, a veteran Chicano activist who was a founding member

of the Brown Berets and now is an organizer in the Los Angeles immigrants rights movement, will also be attending. “Activists nationwide need to come together and unite around common goals and plans to fight off the attacks and cuts to our schools, jobs, health care and housing,” said Montes. “The attacks against Latino immigrants brought on by the economic crisis are worsening and need to be stopped.”

Rosemary Williams, a housing rights activist in Minneapolis, Minnesota and who opened her home to community activists to defend it against foreclosure, also plans on attending. As this goes to press, Williams is still in the midst of battling for her home. “I am going to the conference so I can share what I’ve learned from fighting my foreclosure. I want to help others to fight back and win all across the country.”

If you or your organization would be interested in endorsing and attending the “We Say Fight Back!” conference, visit <http://wesayfightback.com/word-press/>



Rosemary Williams in the kitchen of her home.

Subscribe to *Fight Back!*

Dear Readers,

We are now in the midst of the worst crisis of capitalism since the 1930’s. Unemployment is rising. Home foreclosures have hit record rates. Vital services that serve our communities are facing cuts in cities, counties and states around the country. The rich and powerful are doing everything they can to make working people, employed and unemployed, bear the brunt of this crisis.

In this issue of *Fight Back!*, we not only provide analysis on the direction of this crisis, we have lots of coverage about the growing resistance to the attacks we face. The strike for health care at SK Hand Tools in Chicago, the

heroic struggle of Rosemary Williams against home foreclosures in Minnesota, and the fight of undocumented workers in California are all examples of battles with the potential to ignite a more powerful fight back movement across the U.S.

So if this is the kind of news you want to keep up with, subscribe to *Fight Back!*. We publish 5 times a year and the paper is distributed in every region of the country. We are committed to bringing you news and views from the front lines of the people’s struggle.

Sincerely,

Mick Kelly,
Editor, *Fight Back!*

WHERE WE STAND

This newspaper exists to build the people’s struggle! We provide coverage and analysis of some of the key battles facing working and low-income people.

We are not ‘neutral’ or ‘even-handed’ in our coverage. We are opposed to exploitation, discrimination and oppression. We hold that the rich class of people, who run the economy and government of this country, are unfit to rule. We support all movements that challenge their power and privilege.

The writers and staff of *Fight Back!* are activists and organizers - in the trade unions, low-income community, oppressed

nationality movements, on the campuses and in other people’s movements. We welcome articles, letters, comments and criticisms. Some of us working to put out this paper are members of Freedom Road Socialist Organization. Articles represent the views of the people and organizations that author them.

For the time being, *Fight Back!* is being published five times a year

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University of Chicago Workers Win New Contract

By staff

Chicago, IL - In the final days of August, members of Teamsters Local 743 accepted a new contract at the University of Chicago Medical Center. A month ago, the 1350 workers overwhelmingly rejected an offer from the employer which offered no meaningful pay increases or job security. With this support behind them, the bargaining committee returned to the table and emerged with significant improvements. 68% of their fellow workers voted yes on the new offer.

Local 743 Business Agent J Burger remarked that while the contract has "...more money for our

members, of course it doesn't go far enough." In looking at the struggle that lies ahead for the union there, Burger said, "This is an aggressive, multi-billion dollar employer. To defend our jobs and the community and to get what we really need, we've got to use our greatest strength - our members."

Florrie Brooks, a member of the bargaining committee, spoke at a contract rally held one week before the final vote. In her view, the challenge for her coworkers is to realize the power they have at the University of Chicago Medical Center. "We have 1300 people who work here. They couldn't run this place without us."



Teamsters Local 743 member Kendra Mitchell, representative J Burger and President Richard Berg in front of University of Chicago Hospital.

Ousted Teamsters 743 Gangsters to Jail

By staff

Chicago, IL - Richard Lopez, once the overpaid \$160,000-a-year president of Teamster Local 743, was sentenced to two years of prison on Aug. 27. His co-conspirators and former employees, Ted Bania and David Rodriguez, are going in for 40 months and 18 months respectively.

The federal time is a result of rigging two union elections in 2004. They did this to keep from being voted out of office and replaced by the reform group, the New Leadership Slate, headed by Richard Berg.

Jean Moore, a housekeeper at the University of Chicago Hospitals, said Lopez and company are "...dirty dogs,

and they got what's coming to them." When they ran the local, Moore noted, "If you filed a grievance or called the union office, you never heard from them." Further, Moore explained that Lopez even got her co-worker Berg fired from his job. "They didn't like Richard because he was a union steward that raised hell with management."

Now president of the local, Berg commented, "Stealing elections worked for ten years for the criminals who controlled our union. But in the end, through unity and hard work, we were able to figure out how they stole the election; we gathered the incriminating evidence; and in 2007, with our election, the members finally won. With their jail sentences, we are getting a little more justice."



Richard Berg, current president of Teamsters Local 743. "Through unity and hard work, we were able to figure out how they stole the election; we gathered the incriminating evidence; and in 2007, with our election, the members finally won."

Latino Workers March to Demand an End to Mass Firings

By staff

Los Angeles, CA - Over 2000 Mexican and Central American workers marched here, July 29, to demand legalization and an end to the mass firings of immigrants. The mass firings have been brought on by the Department of Homeland Security's push - backed up by the threat of sanctions on the employer - to identify undocumented workers by auditing companies' employee data.

The militant marchers shouted, "Obama, escucha estamos en la lucha," (Obama, listen, we are in the struggle) and "We are here and we are not leaving. This is my land, this is my struggle!"

The march, led by rank-and-file workers from Overhill Farms and American Apparel went up historic Alameda Street to the Los Angeles Federal building for an enthusiastic rally. The rally was emceed by Carlos Montes of the Southern California Immigration Coalition (SCIC), which organized the events. The Southern California Immigration Coalition is composed of community groups, teachers, activists, students and immi-

grant rights groups.

The contingent from Overhill Farms included workers fired in June. They have organized a fight back campaign with weekly protests and a boycott of company products. The American Apparel workers were active in the May 1 marches and have promoted the Legalize LA and now Legalize America campaigns.

At the rally, speakers demanded an end to the threat of employer sanctions that are being used by companies to fire longtime workers and hire new workers at lower wages without benefits.

Among those addressing the crowd was veteran leader and fighter



Los Angeles workers march to demand an end to mass firings of immigrants.

Nativo Lopez, of Hermandad Mexicana Latino Americana and Daniel Montes, of SCIC, who spoke of the fight for true equality

and liberty.

For more photos and details see: www.immigrationcoalition.org

Job Cuts Continue to Hammer Workers and Communities Stock Market Cheers Rising Profits

By Adam Price

San José, CA - Layoffs continued to hammer workers and their communities in July and August. Job losses are leading to more and more home foreclosures. State and local governments are losing tax revenues and making more cuts to education and social services. At the same time the stock market has been on a tear, as the profits of big businesses have benefited from layoffs, furloughs, wage cuts and benefit cuts.

Businesses cut almost 250,000 more jobs in July, bringing the total number of job losses to more than 6.5 million since the recession began in December of 2007. The unemployed continued to have a harder and harder time finding jobs, as the number of people out of work for more than six months rose by more than a half million in July, to a total of 5 million. By August there were more than 9 million Americans either collecting state unemployment insurance benefits or the federal extended benefits.

The rising tide of cuts to jobs, hours and wages are causing the home foreclosure rate to rise to record highs. In the second quarter (April through June) of this year, more than 13% of all home mortgages were late or in foreclosure, the highest since records began in 1972. Leading the way was Florida, where the housing boom and bust and double-digit unemployment have led to almost a quarter of all mortgages to be late or in the foreclosure process. While so-called subprime mortgages are still the most likely to be in trouble, the fastest growing group of late mortgages are prime

losses (and the resulting loss of income and sales) cut state tax revenues. Local governments are also feeling the pain as sales tax revenues fall, states cut back on local spending and the

twice that of whites, while the unemployment rates for Latinos and Asians have been increasing most rapidly. Foreclosures are concentrated in African American and

unemployment rate dropped slightly - from 9.5% in June to 9.4% in July. But this was because so many jobless workers gave up looking for work, as the official unemployment rate only counts those without work and who are actively looking for work. The increase in home sales this year has been largely due to investors snapping up foreclosed properties at low prices, and it is estimated that as much as 90% of sellers are either foreclosures or other sales due to economic distress. State and local governments who thought that they balanced their budgets over the summer are staring in the face of hundreds of billions of dollars in deficits.

Government programs designed to soften the blow of the recession are being overwhelmed by the sheer size of the economic downturn. Despite the total of



Workers at Quad City Tool and Die took on Wells Fargo bank. Wells Fargo received billions in bailout funds and still refused credit to Quad City Tool, forcing it to close.

housing bust cuts into property taxes. Here in California, which has one of the worst fiscal situations of all the states, state workers have been furloughed three days a month, which is almost a 15% pay cut. Colleges and K-12 schools are laying off instructors and staff while cutting wages and benefits. College students face higher fees, with community college and California State University fees up by almost one-third from a year ago and the budget cuts mean many are able to get the classes that they need to

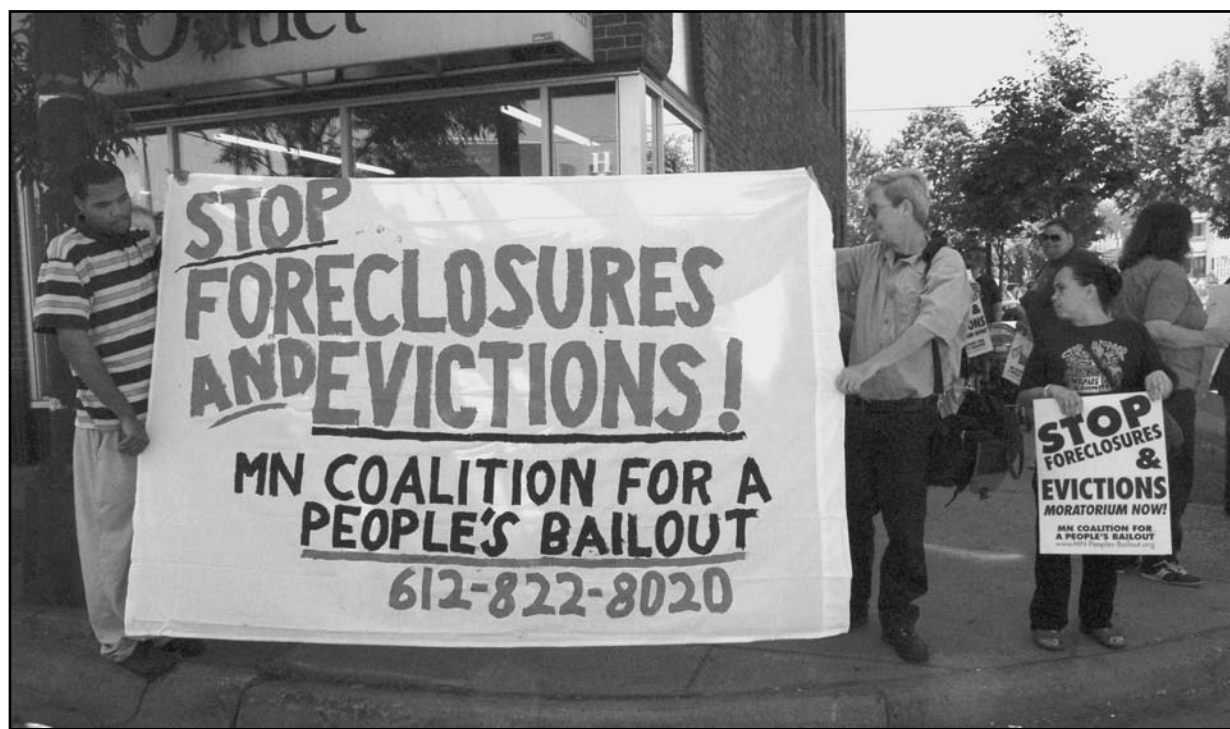
Latino communities, which were targeted by banks and mortgage lenders for risky subprime loans. Service and education cuts are hitting oppressed nationality and immigrant communities the hardest as the right wing tries to scapegoat them for causing state and local government's budget problems.

For the last few months, the corporate media and government officials have been talking about the 'green shoots' of economic growth and the 'end of the

recession.' The stock market has bounced back from its lows of earlier this year. The grain of truth in the 'green shoots' claim is based on the rebound in corporate profits. Big businesses have cut their costs and boosted their profits by cutting jobs, hours and pay, while getting more work out of their remaining workers. This has showed up in higher labor productivity and boosted the bottom line. Big banks have responded by giving out thousands of millions of dollars in bonuses and raising the pay of their chief executives.

But much of the 'good news' on the economy has a downside. The

With economic pain rising and government programs failing to help or being cut back, there are more and more outbreaks of people fighting back, demanding to put the burden of the crisis back on the big banks and corporations. In Chicago, the plant occupation by the Republic Window and Door workers won a better layoff package and was an inspiration to the labor movement. Homeowners such as Rosemary Williams in Minneapolis are fighting the banks who profited from the mortgage boom and are now trying to put the burden on home buyers and their communities. Students across the country are organizing against the cuts in their schools and against higher fees. Many of these struggles involve and/or are led by African Americans and Latinos who are being hardest hit by the crisis. This grassroots fight back needs to grow and become more organized as it becomes more and more clear that there is no economic recovery for working people.



Minnesotans march against the banks while the foreclosure crisis deepens.

mortgages that were made to households with better credit and income, but which are now falling behind due to loss of income and falling home prices.

State governments are estimated to have a total budget shortfall of \$350 billion over the next two years as job

graduate. Health care, welfare and aid to disabled and seniors are also getting chopped.

The growing economic pain has been most intense for African Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans and other oppressed nationalities. Black unemployment is almost

39th Anniversary of Chicano Moratorium: The Struggle Continues

Commentary by Carlos Montes

Los Angeles, CA - Today, Aug. 29, 2009, shows that our people are continuing the fight for equality and self-determination. It was demonstrated by the many groups that were present today at Salazar Park, including the student group MECHA and the new Brown Berets, to commemorate the historic day in 1970 when over 20,000 Chicanos marched down historic Whittier Boulevard in East L.A. to protest the war in Vietnam and the high casualty rate of Chicanos. The mass peaceful rally in 1970 was attacked by the Los Angeles Police Department and the sheriffs. Ruben Salazar, news director for KMEX, was killed, along with Angel Diaz and Lynn Ward. A similar example of repression took place on May 1, 2007 when the LAPD attacked a pro-immigrant rights rally at MacArthur Park.

This year's event was organized by the local Chicano Moratorium Committee and had the backing of the East L.A.-based Latinos Against War. In Latinos Against War, we organize against the war in Afghanistan and against the military recruiters in our high schools. We support self-determination for Chicanos in the Southwest, the Chicano nation of Aztlan. Our strategy is working with community-based groups like the CSO to organize poor and working class Chicanos in our community to fight for our rights. This means fighting for better education,

living conditions, for the rights of our people displaced by poverty in Mexico and Central America now living here and for full legalization.

The campaign "Escuelas Si, Guerra No," (Schools Yes, No War) of CSO recently won the opening of a new high school in Boyle Heights. The



Chicano Moratorium commemoration in Los Angeles, California.

Mendez Learning Complex had an open house today, and will open September 2009. The new school is a concrete victory won after years of struggle to relieve overcrowding at Roosevelt High School and to stop the U.S. military recruiters on high school campuses in East L.A. This is the way to build the annual Chicano

Moratorium event that recently has had less participation, especially from the community.

Latinos against War also condemns and exposes the long history of U.S. military and political intervention in Mexico, Central and Latin America. For example many people do not know

struggling for democracy and self-determination. Now we have the example of Venezuela and Bolivia whose people have supported and elected leaders who defend sovereignty and work to improve the lives of the many poor in their countries. But U.S. intervention continues to sneak in - like in Colombia, which will allow the U.S. military to use several bases under the guise of fighting the war on drugs. But we all know it's a war against the revolutionary forces in Colombia like the FARC, and to attack the independent and sovereign nations like Venezuela. The U.S. is also giving billions to the Mexican army under the Plan Merida to fight the drug war, but the army commits many human rights violations against the Mexican people.

So on this anniversary of the Chicano Moratorium, we commemorate a proud past of struggle and stand committed to a future where our people achieve liberation and self-determination.

Carlos Montes is a veteran fighter in the Chicano Liberation movement. He was a founder of the Brown Berets and the Chicano Moratorium. Montes is currently active in the Southern California Immigration Coalition, the East L.A.-based Latinos against War and with CSO, which organizes parents in the East Los Angeles area to fight against the privatization of public education in Los Angeles Unified School District.

Newark: Justice for Police Murder Victim Basire Farrell

Commentary by David Hungerford

He was "unarmed, brutally assaulted and murdered, kicked and beaten on the ground while he was handcuffed, tasered, placed in a body bag but not zipped up..."

Is this a story from the Third Reich? The old south? Iraq's occupied Abu Ghraib? No: it was the May 15 killing of Basire Farrell, 30, African-American, by white officers of the Newark Police Department, as related by the aunt of the deceased, Sharonda Smalls. She spoke at an Aug. 8 street protest outside the headquarters of the Newark Police Department. The protest was called by the Farrell family, the People's Organization for Progress (POP) and the New Black Panther Party, among others.

Sharonda Smalls raised demands for an investigation by the New Jersey attorney general, prosecution of the killers, creation of a civilian police complaint review board and an end to genocide and police brutality against black people.

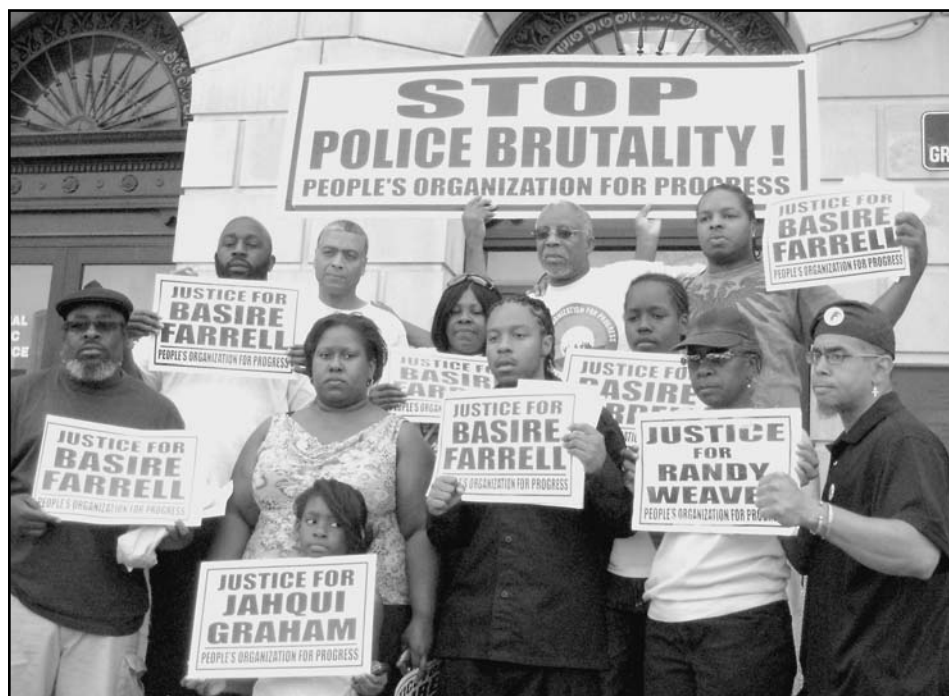
The protest reflected a volcanic anger rising in Newark's African-American community. Speaker after speaker compared the situation today with the conditions that led to the great Newark Rebellion of 1967. They demanded that killer cops be jailed and raised the

cry, "Power to the people!" People's Organization for Progress Chairman Lawrence Hamm said, "You talk about Guantanamo, we got torture and murder right here. Cops think they are judge, jury and executioner. Nothing in the training manual says when you arrest someone you have to hit him with a car, beat him so bloody you have to wash his blood off your hands."

He recalled the savage beating in 1967 of cabdriver John Smith by Newark police. "The Fourth Precinct is notorious for torture and murder," he said. "People thought he was dead. That's what touched off the Rebellion. If you're serious about preventing future rebellions you got to fire those cops right now." He added that Newark Police Director Garry McCarthy also needs to be fired.

Earl Williams, the father of Earl Faison, also spoke. The killing of Earl Faison, 26, by Orange, New Jersey cops led to an epic five-year struggle that finally sent five of the killer cops to jail for civil rights violations.

Speaking rhetorically to the police, Williams said, "We used to look up to you and respect you, but who knows the pain especially if it's someone right in your family who's been killed and it's been done by those who are supposed to protect you. How can we look



POP members demands justice for Basire Farrell.

up to you now?"

Of the 1967 events, Williams said to call it a 'riot' is a "word game - it was a rebellion, but just a dress rehearsal of what is to come if this continues. This ain't no game and people are getting tired of it. I got mad love for some of you guys but there's a flip side and it's a rifle with sights on it. You don't know what can happen. Newark '67 signs are all over the place. Things can get a hell of a lot worse very quick - to this day there have been no murder charges against

the cops who killed my son."

"We ask why life in the black skin is worth less than life in the white skin," said Sharonda Smalls.

Long ago Karl Marx raised the same question to the entire working class when he said, "Labor cannot emancipate itself in the white skin while in the black it is branded." The working class and all progressive people must unite in the struggle to end racism and police brutality. Only then can a better society for all be built.

Minnesotans deported from Israel denounce 'the tight grip of Israeli occupation of Palestine'

By staff

Bloomington, MN - Israeli security forces refused entry to three U.S. solidarity activists for attempting to participate in a human rights delegation organized by the Palestine Solidarity Group. Sarah Martin, a member of Women Against Military Madness, and Katrina Plotz, of the Anti-War Committee, refused voluntary deportation and were later forcibly deported Sunday evening, August 2. It was an emotional reunion at the airport on Monday afternoon, as Martin and Plotz were greeted with cheers and embraces by dozens of friends and supporters, carrying signs reading "Free Palestine!" and "End the occupation!"

After a brief encounter with airport security, a press conference was held in the baggage claim area. The crowd gathered closely to hear the story of the Minnesota women who were the subject of an outpouring of support over the weekend, as hundreds made calls, sent letters demanding their release and their right to enter into Israel and the Palestinian Territories. Martin and Plotz are well-respected local peace and justice activists, especially known for their work in organizing protests at the 2008 Republican National Convention in Saint Paul. Palestine solidarity activists from across the U.S. joined the campaign as well, in hopes of shining a light on the situation.

"We believe that Palestinians should have the right to control their own borders," Jess Sundin said in an opening statement for the Anti-War Committee, "Their invited guests should not have to go through an Israeli controlled security apparatus to visit them. It was Israel that turned Katrina Plotz and Sarah Martin away before they reached their destination. We denounce Israel's policy of excluding Palestinians and those who support them. We know that this policy is part of a campaign to isolate the Palestinian people and prevent us from learning the truth about the impact of our country's policies in the Middle East."

According to Sarah Martin, "What we got to experience was the tight grip of the Israeli occupation of Palestine. If you're going on a human rights delegation, which we were, you cannot tell that to Israel or they will throw you out summarily. But they knew we were a human rights delegation anyway."

Each of the women was sent for questioning upon arrival at the airport in Tel Aviv. During the interview with Katrina Plotz, Israeli security officers showed her the Anti-War Committee website and accused her of lying about her plans. He was shouting and banging his desk with a book and then threw it on the floor.

Sarah Martin continued, "They regretted to inform us that we weren't going to be allowed into Israel because we were a security threat. We were a security threat, because they do not want the reality of Palestine known to the

outside world, and that was our point. So, Katrina and I decided, no we're not going, we're not going that easy and so we refused to get on the airplane."

Katrina Plotz agreed, "They're afraid of people knowing the truth. They are afraid of people who have any amount of courage to stand up against them and stand up for the rights and the dignity of Palestinians. So they kept us cut off from each other and from all of you and all the work that was being done." The women were put in separate cells and not allowed to speak with each other or make phone calls while they were detained.

There was graffiti on the walls of Plotz's cell. She was denied a pen or pencil, but wrote with the cap of a soda can: "Free Palestine," "Israel out of Palestine," "Justice for Gaza," and "Right of Return." When the guards discovered this, they took the rest of her food, turned the lights off in her cell, and ultimately handcuffed her to the bed. Some time later, the women were driven to the plane in separate cars, put on the plane separately and still not allowed to speak to one another. The women were never informed that supporters had secured a lawyer for them. They were never given the form required to file a formal appeal of their deportation. Their only outside contact was with the U.S. Embassy, who also failed to inform them of their rights or assist them in anything other than communicating their status to friends and family back home.

According to Plotz, "It's not democracy. It's not fair and it's wrong. I'm glad to have been able to take just a small stand against that."

Martin added, "One other irony, we were returned home. One of the main demands of Palestinians is the right of return, to go back to those lands that were taken and cleared in 1948. That's enshrined in UN law and has been reaffirmed year after year, but it's never been implemented and the U.S. and UN has never enforced that. Instead of a right of return, more and more land is being taken away, and more and more houses are being bulldozed."

Palestinian Sameh Shabaneh, of the Al Aqsa Foundation, also addressed the crowd. "What these courageous ladies went through, the Palestinians go through on daily basis. There are millions of Palestinian refugees in the world that cannot visit their homes the

original homes and villages, let alone resettle there. They have the keys for their homes and they cannot actually go there because they are not permitted by the Israeli occupation. Palestinians are barred from moving around their

towards 69-year old Sarah Martin, "neither is a threat for Israel's security. Those ladies should not be treated as such a threat to Israel's existence."

He also said, "Rest assured, we will



Katrina Plotz (on left, looking down) and Sarah Martin (in white shirt) speaking at an airport press conference after being deported from Israel.

towns and villages. Farmers are taken away from their farmlands. Teachers are being kept away from their schools. Doctors are not being able to go to hospitals to help the needy. And pregnant women are giving birth at checkpoints."

"I don't think a pregnant woman, or for that matter, Sarah my friend, look at her," Sameh continued, gesturing

soon extend an invitation for you when Palestine is free, very soon, inshallah."

Mary Beaudoin, Director of Women Against Military Madness, closed the gathering by expressing outrage at the events of the last few days, and called on people to use the organization's website as a resource to inform themselves of what is happening inside Palestine.

Minnesota: Anti-war groups blast call for more U.S. troops to Afghan war

By staff

Minneapolis, MN - The U.S./NATO military commander in Afghanistan, General Stanley McChrystal, submitted a report to the Obama administration stating that more U.S. military forces must be sent to Afghanistan. At a Sept. 22 press conference, Twin Cities anti-war groups spoke out against the proposed escalation of the war and announced plans for demonstrations this fall against the war in Afghanistan and the continuing occupation of Iraq.

Speakers at the news conference included Meredith Aby of the Anti-War Committee, Tracy Molm of

Students for a Democratic Society and Wayne Wittman, a member of the Saint Paul Regional Labor Federation.

A statement issued by organizers says in part, "There is growing sentiment against the U.S. war in Afghanistan among the people of the U.S. People want an end to the eight-year long war, not an escalation."

A CNN poll conducted this month said 39% supported the war and 58% opposed it.

Meredith Aby stated, "We are horrified

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North Carolina: Hundreds Protest for Single Payer Health Care

By Michael Graham

Asheville, NC - People from all over western North Carolina protested here in Pritchard Park, June 27, to demand a single payer system in which health care is provided to all people, with those able to paying their fair share.

The protest was organized by Western North Carolina for Change (WNC for Change), an organization that campaigned at a grassroots level



Rally for Health Care in North Carolina

for the historic Nov. 4, 2008 defeat of the Republicans. There was a clear realization in the crowd that this fight will be a long one and that it is people in the streets who are going to make the real change happen.

One woman, who lost a son because he was denied health care, spoke strongly of the need for health care to serve people's needs, saying: "Thousands every year die because they are denied care, that's many times the number that died on 9-11. If we are going to be declaring war it should be on this awful health care system!" She then placed responsibility on congress

and big business for the sad state of health care. Speaking of congressional leaders she said, "They have a great single payer plan. As far as they are concerned the rest of us can die! It's about time that big business stop running this country and we took it back!"

Signs spotted in the crowd said things like "People over profits!" "Health care is a human right!" and "Damn the insurance companies!" People in the United States pay so much money for health care that it amounts to one fifth of the whole economy, yet patient outcomes consistently rank below those of other developed countries. Democrats with wealth and power have been claiming to want a national health care system for decades. Western North Carolinians are now demanding that those who called for change come through on their big talk.

Sarah Buchner, chair of the local chapter of Students for a Democratic Society, attended the rally. She said, "It comes down to the fact that we've got a bunch of rich white senators with Cadillac insurance plans trying to tell students, working people and poor people that we don't have the money to pay for health care. They are liars. If they would stop spending all our money to occupy other countries we could pay for whatever the people need. It's the same old story of the people with the bread telling the hungry to go eat cake. We all know how that story ends."

Colombia: Eyewitness report from solidarity delegation

By Angela Denio

In August, a delegation of U.S. students, trade unionists and anti-war activists traveled to Colombia to meet with leaders in the struggle there. The Colombian Action Network and the Campaign for Labor Rights, two grassroots organizations here in the United States fighting against U.S. intervention in Colombia, hosted the trip.

"I knew what I heard in the U.S. media about the benefits of U.S. tax money and aid to Colombia was true only for the rich. I wanted to see for myself what the reality is for Colombians," said Jeremy Miller, a member of the Colombian Action Network when explaining his decision to go on the delegation. Members of the Colombian Action Network and the Campaign for Labor Rights arranged meetings with

peasant, indigenous and student groups, as well as with political leaders, unions, political prisoners and families of Colombians killed or imprisoned by the government.

The first union the delegation met with was the National Peasant-Farmer Federation, FENSUAGRO. They unite farmers from all over Colombia to struggle for land reform and everyday rights for rural workers. It is the largest rural labor organization in Colombia and is unwavering in its principled defense of workers. Because of the work they do, this union is the most targeted for violence by the wealthy and their pro-government death squads.

During a rural community meeting, a

Colombia, continued on page 8



SDS Convention in Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

SDS Holds 4th National Convention

By Chapin Gray

Murfreesboro, TN - Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) held its fourth annual national convention here, July 11 -12, bringing together around 100 students and youth activists from across the country.

The new SDS was formed in 2006 and since then has grown to over 100 chapters. This past year SDS has organized students around many issues, including education rights, labor solidarity and against the wars in the Middle East.

This convention consisted of workshops, discussions and meetings that covered topics ranging from direct action and civil disobedience to Colombia solidarity and G20 resistance. The convention body also passed a proposal to have a national

day of action on Oct. 7 to protest the eighth anniversary of the U.S. war on Afghanistan.

Participants also decided to send a statement of solidarity to the Quad City Die Casting workers who, the day before the convention, held a dramatic action at Wells Fargo bank in Rock Island, Illinois.

"It was great meeting so many amazing activists, both 'veteran' SDS members who have been organizing for years and students who are in the process of starting a chapter," said Ryan Costello from Tuscaloosa, Alabama. "I am excited about starting organizing on my campus in the fall and proud to be involved in an organization that is playing such a leading role in the student movement, that is making history."



Traveling the countryside in Colombia to meet with peasant-farmers.

EDITORIAL

Out of the Frying Pan and into the Fire: Latino Immigrant Workers Face Mass Firings

Fight Back! Editorial
September 2009

Over the last few months, thousands of immigrant workers, almost all Latino, have been fired following the Obama administration's decision to crack down on employers of undocumented workers. There has also been a growing fight back, as seen in the struggle of the Overhill Farms food packing workers of southern California, who are protesting the firing of more than 300 workers.

Under the Bush administration, the Immigration and Customs Enforcement, or ICE, stepped up its raids on workplaces and communities. This led to a huge increase in workplace arrests, rising from less than 500 in 2003 to more than 5000 in 2008. ICE also began to contract out detention of alleged undocumented workers to private firms. These firms, such as LCS Corrections Services, have cut costs to increase their profits, leading to inhumane conditions and hunger strikes by detainees in their Louisiana prison. ICE also began to enlist local police departments in their efforts to round up the undocumented, known as the 287(g) program. This has furthered the trend of criminalization of the undocumented, as many workers are being charged with 'identity theft' by local police and sheriffs.

With the new Obama administration,



Thousands around the country have marched for an end to raids and firings.

workplace and community raids have been greatly reduced and the focus shifted to employers. But the government's threat to crack down on businesses has led to mass firings that target immigrant Latino workers. Even worse, the Obama administration has continued the Bush administration's policy of contracting out prisons for immigrants and the effort to include

local police in immigration enforcement.

The Obama administration still promises to push 'comprehensive immigration reform' in 2010. This could end up being pushed back even further due to the election year and difficulties in getting other reforms through congress. Another danger is that the 'reform' may end up like the proposed 2007 Immigration Reform Act, which would have eliminated family reunification and converted millions of undocumented into guest workers. This type of immigration 'reform' would mainly aid businesses that want more English-speaking educated workers instead of families, and who want to ensure a low-wage labor force of guest workers.

Three years ago millions marched in the streets for legalization and against the anti-immigrant proposals being promoted by the Republican right. We need to rebuild this movement on the basis of legalization, not guest work-

ers. We need to demand the end to firings, raids, deportation, contracting out of detention centers and the use of local police until a legalization bill is passed. The movement needs to fight to expand, not end, family unification, which would reduce long waits, which can be more than 20 years.

While continuing to push Congress for legalization and expansion of family reunification, we also need to take up local struggles against the mass firings, inhumane detention centers, and criminalization of the undocumented. This struggle needs to be built from the grassroots up, with a focus on building mass organizations in the Chicano, Mexicano and Central American communities hardest hit by the crackdown on undocumented immigrants. A broad coalition, including allies from the labor movement, other immigrant communities (especially other Latinos), Asians and Arab Americans and other progressive sectors needs to be built.

Hands Off Colombia, No To Bases

Colombia, continued from page 7

FENSUAGRO leader told the delegation, "75 of our members are currently in jail. We fight for a public policy that favors the peasant farmer and we are always clear about our demands. Because of this the government works daily looking for ways to finish us off. The government tries to connect us to the FARC [the largest armed rebel group in Colombia], in attempts to discredit us. The Uribe government goes after anyone who defends the working class. They claim that we are not the victims of violence, that we are the aggressors. Farmers have no support from the government. No rights even to housing or health care. The government does not care for the poor and has completely abandoned us to poverty. Human life is worth only the value of a bullet."

The stories from other groups told much of the same - of being afraid to leave the house in the morning, of being followed, of having family members killed by death squads, of being arrested for implausible charges - all of this because of the fight for the rights of workers and peasants, indigenous people and Afro-Colombians, everyday people. "I was shocked to hear the stories of the university students in Bogotá. They are doing the same kind of activism we are here in the U.S., but because of it, they are facing death threats, they are being imprisoned or assassinated," said

Sarah Buchner of Students for a Democratic Society, another delegate on the trip, speaking one night after a particularly intense day of stories.

During the trip, the theme that repeatedly came up was "what is most important for us as U.S. activists to bring back?" We decided to bring back the stories and pictures but also something more: to drive home the message that the terrible violence in Colombia is directly connected to the United States government. We can do something to change that, to stop it. It is the U.S. government that foots the bill for the war and violence that happens in Colombia. The people of Colombia are very clear on this. The people the delegation met with had all sorts of ideas about ways to build a better Colombia and about ways for peace. But all of them were united in saying U.S. intervention must stop, that the seven proposed U.S. military bases in Colombia would do nothing to end violence in the country and would serve only to increase it, that peace in Colombia would only come with the end of U.S. violations of Colombian sovereignty.

From this trip, members of the delegation have returned to the U.S. with the hopes of continuing to build a movement in the United States against imperialist intervention in Colombia.

Hands off Colombia!
No to the U.S. bases!

Money for Human Needs, Not For War

Afghanistan, continued from page 6

by the acts being done in our name in Afghanistan. On Sept. 7 U.S. troops kicked in doors, tied up hospital employees and family members of patients and forced patients out of beds during their 'search for insurgents.' On Sept. 5 the U.S. killed over 70 people when they bombed a tanker. There are weekly reports of horrible acts of violence against the Afghan people. They, justifiably so, want the U.S. to leave and we stand in solidarity with them and demand a withdrawal of all U.S. troops. October marks eight years of U.S.-led war, misery and occupation in Afghanistan. We say eight years too many."

Aby continued "During the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression, the U.S. government is spending billions for wars and occupations, while millions lose their jobs and housing and go without health insurance. This warped sense of priorities is not resonating with the American people."

On Oct. 7, protests organized by chapters of Students for a Democratic Society and others will take place on many campuses against the war on Afghanistan. On Oct. 17, local and regional anti-war actions will be held in cities around the country.

COLOMBIA

Informe basado en un testimonio

Por Angela Denio

Este mes, yo viajé a Colombia con una delegación de estudiantes, sindicalistas y militantes anti-guerra para reunir con dirigentes de la lucha para una Colombia mejor. La Red de Acción por Colombia (CAN, por sus siglas ingleses) y la Campaña por Derechos de los Obreros (CLR, por sus siglas ingleses), dos organizaciones basada en los Estados Unidos que luchan contra la intervención EE.UU. en Colombia, auspiciaron el viaje.

"Supe que lo que oí en las noticias de los EE.UU. sobre los beneficios de impuestos y ayuda estadounidenses para Colombia era la verdad solo para los ricos. Quería ver por mi misma como era la verdadera Colombia para la gente colombiana", dijo Jeremy Miller, un miembro de la Red de Acción por Colombia, explicando su decisión de ir con la delegación. Miembros de CAN y CLR planeaban reuniones con organizaciones de campesinos, indígenas, y estudiantes, y también con dirigentes políticos, sindicalistas, y familiares de colombianos asesinados o encarcela-

dos por el gobierno.

El primer sindicato con que reunió la delegación era la Federación Nacional Sindical Unitaria Agropecuaria, Fensuagro Unen campesinos y granjeros de todo Colombia para luchar para la reforma agraria y los derechos de obreros rurales. Es la organización rural más grande de Colombia y es inquebrantable en su defensa de trabajadores. Por el trabajo que hace, este sindicato es el grupo que los ricos y sus escuadrones de la muerte atacan mas que ningún otra.

Durante una reunión con una comunidad rural, un dirigente de Fensuagro nos contó a nuestra delegación, "Setenta y cinco de nuestros miembros ahora están en la cárcel. Luchamos para una política pública que favorece el campesino y ya estamos claro sobre nuestras demandas; así, el gobierno trabaja diariamente, buscando como rematarnos. El gobierno trata de conectarnos a la FARC (el grupo rebelde armado más grande de Colombia), con un intento de desacreditar a nosotros. El gobierno de Uribe ataca todos que defienden la clase obrera. Reclaman que no

somos las víctimas de violencia, pero que somos los agresores. Los granjeros tienen ningún apoyo del gobierno. Ni tienen derechos de habitación o cuidado de la salud . El gobierno no se preocupa por los pobres y nos ha abandonado completamente a la pobreza. La vida humana solo vale la pena de una bala."

Otros grupos contaron la misma cosa: de miedo de salir de la casa en la mañana, de estar seguido, de tener miembros de la familia matado por escuadrones de la muerte, de ser encarcelado por cargos implausibles; todo por razón de la lucha para los derechos de trabajadores y campesinos, gente indígena y afro-colombianos, para el pueblo. "Me horrorizó a oír las historias de los estudiantes en Bogotá. Estaban haciendo el mismo tipo de activismo que nosotros hacemos aquí en los EE.UU., pero para esto, encuentran amenazas de muerte, la cárcel o asesinatos," dijo Sarah Buchner del grupo Estudiantes por una Sociedad Democrática, otra delegada del viaje, hablando después de un día de haber oído historias intensos.

Durante el viaje, el tema que se asomó repetidamente era lo de "¿Cual es lo más importante para nosotros, como militantes estadounidenses, que podemos llevar de aquí?" Hemos traído

do las historias y fotos, pero también hemos traído algo más: el mensaje que la violencia terrible en Colombia es directamente conectado al gobierno estadounidense. Podemos hacer algo para cambiarlo, para pararlo. Es el gobierno estadounidense que paga la cuenta para la guerra y la violencia que ocurre en Colombia. El pueblo Colombiano es muy claro sobre esto. Las personas que la delegación conocieron tuvieron muchos diferentes ideas sobre los métodos para construir un Colombia mejor, sobre las avenidas a la paz, pero todos fueron unidos en decir que la intervención estadounidense debe parar, que los siete bases militares propuestas para Colombia no harían nada para acabar con la violencia en el país y solo servirían para aumentarla, que paz en Colombia solo vendría con el fin de las violaciones estadounidense de la soberanía Colombiana.

De este viaje, miembros de la delegación han regresado a los EE.UU. con la esperanza de continuar a construir un movimiento en los Estados Unidos contra la intervención imperialista en Colombia.

¡Manos fuera de Colombia!

¡No a las bases militares estadounidenses!

La crisis sigue para los trabajadores

Crisis, continúa de página 10

propiedades que han tenido una ejecución hipotecaria a muy bajo precio, y estiman que hasta 90% de ventas de casas son casos de ejecuciones hipotecarias o otras ventas debido a problemas económicas. Los gobiernos estatales y locales que pensaron que habían balanceado sus presupuestos en el verano ahora están enfrentados con cientos de billones de dólares de déficit.

Los programas que el gobierno tiene para ensuavizar el golpe de la recesión no alcanzan debido al tamaño grande de la recesión económica. A pesar de la disponibilidad de alrededor de un año y medio de beneficios para los trabajadores que han perdido sus trabajos en los estados con mayor desempleo, hasta 1.5 millones de trabajadores desempleados podrían perder sus beneficios antes del fin de este año. Los programas hipotecarios del gobierno federal han ayudado más que 200,000 hogares, pero eso solo cubre 10% de los prestadores elegibles. Más y más compradores de casas quienes ya no pueden pagar su hipoteca no están elegibles, porque los valores de las casas siguen cayendo y las pérdidas de trabajos forman obstáculo al refinanciamiento a través del programa del gobierno. Hasta el economista conservador Martin Feldstein, un ex-consejero al

Presidente Reagan, está preocupado que la economía podría caer aun mas cuando el estímulo federal termina el año que viene.

Con el dolor económico aumentando y los programas del gobierno no alcanzando o siendo recortado, hay mas y mas ejemplos de gente en lucha exigiendo que los bancos grandes y las corporaciones paguen la crisis. En Chicago, los trabajadores ocuparon su fábrica en Republic Windows and Doors y ganaron una mejor oferta para los trabajadores despedidos. Eso fue una inspiración para todo el movimiento de trabajadores. Dueños de casas como Rosemary Williams en Minneapolis están luchando en contra de los bancos quienes ganaron mucho dinero de la venta de tantas casas y ahora están intentando imponer los malos efectos encima de las personas que compraron casas y sus comunidades. Estudiantes en todo el país están organizando en contra de los recortes en sus escuelas y en contra del aumento de las cuotas escolares. Muchas de estas luchas involucran y/o están liderados por afro-americanos y latinos quienes son los más golpeados por la crisis. La lucha necesita crecer y organizarse por que se está poniendo claro que no hay recuperación económica para la gente trabajadora.



Angela Denio en el campo de Colombia

TRABAJADORES Y SUS COMUNIDADES GOLPEADOS POR PÉRDIDA DE TRABAJOS

Bolsa de valores aplaude que las ganancias de corporaciones empiezan a subir

Por Adam Price

San José, CA - Los despidos siguieron golpeando a los trabajadores y sus comunidades en julio y agosto. Pérdidas del trabajo están causando aun mas perdidas de casas por las ejecuciones hipotecarias. Los gobiernos al nivel estatal y local están perdiendo ingresos de los impuestos y están cortando los presupuestos de la educación y los servicios sociales. Al mismo tiempo la bolsa de valores ha subido de una forma impresionante mientras las ganancias de las corporaciones se han beneficiado de los muchos despidos, recortes salariales, vacaciones forzadas sin pago y recortes a los beneficios.

Los negocios cortaron casi 250,000 más trabajos en julio. Eso significa que el total de trabajos perdidos desde el principio de la recesión económica en diciembre 2007 es mas de 6.5 millones de trabajos. La gente desempleada tiene más dificultad en encontrar trabajo, mientras el número de personas sin trabajo por más de seis meses aumentó por más que la mitad de un millón en julio por un total de 5 millones. En agosto había 9 millones de estadounidenses colectando los beneficios estatales de desempleo o los beneficios federales que han sido extendidos.

El aumento de recortes de trabajos, horas y salarios está causando un aumento de ejecuciones hipotecarias a un nuevo record. En el segundo cuarto de este año (de abril a junio), más que 13% de las hipotecas fueron pagados tarde o fueron bajo una ejecución hipotecaria, un record desde que empezaron a contar en 1972. Florida es el peor, donde el nivel de desempleo arriba del 10% y la crisis de ejecuciones hipotecarias ha causado una situación en que un cuarto de las hipotecas están tardes o están en el proceso de ejecución hipotecaria. Mientras las hipotecas "subprime" todavía son lo más probable de tener problemas, también las hipotecas en que están aumentando los problemas



Trabajadores de Quad City Tool and Die enfrentan al banco Wells Fargo. Wells Fargo recibió billones de dólares del gobierno y aún rehúsa prestar crédito a Quad City Tool, forzando la compañía a cerrar.

mas rápidas son las hipotecas "prime" hechas con gente con mejor crédito y ingreso más alto, pero que ahora están atrasándose debido a una pérdida de ingreso y a la caída de los valores de las casas.

Los gobiernos estatales faltan un estimado de \$350 billones de sus presupuestos en los próximos dos años debido a la falta de ingresos de los impuestos por la pérdida de trabajos (y como resultado la pérdida de ingresos y ventas). Los gobiernos locales también sienten el dolor de la perdida de dinero que reciben de los impuestos, de la perdida de fondos de los gobiernos estatales, y la pérdida de impuestos de casas debido a la caída del valor de las casas. Aquí en California, que tiene una de las peores crisis de todos los estados, los trabajadores del estado han sufrido un corte de pago de 15% en forma de tres días mensuales de 'vacación' no

pagada y forzada. Las universidades y las escuelas K-12 están despidiendo instructores y trabajadores mientras también cortan salarios y beneficios para los trabajadores que se quedan. Estudiantes universitarios enfrentan costos más altos, por ejemplo los gastos en los colegios comunitarios y en California State University han subido casi un tercio desde el año pasado y los recortes presupuestarios significan que muchas personas no pueden ingresar a las clases que necesitan para graduarse. También están cortando los fondos para la salud médica, welfare y ayuda para la gente mayor y los incapacitados.

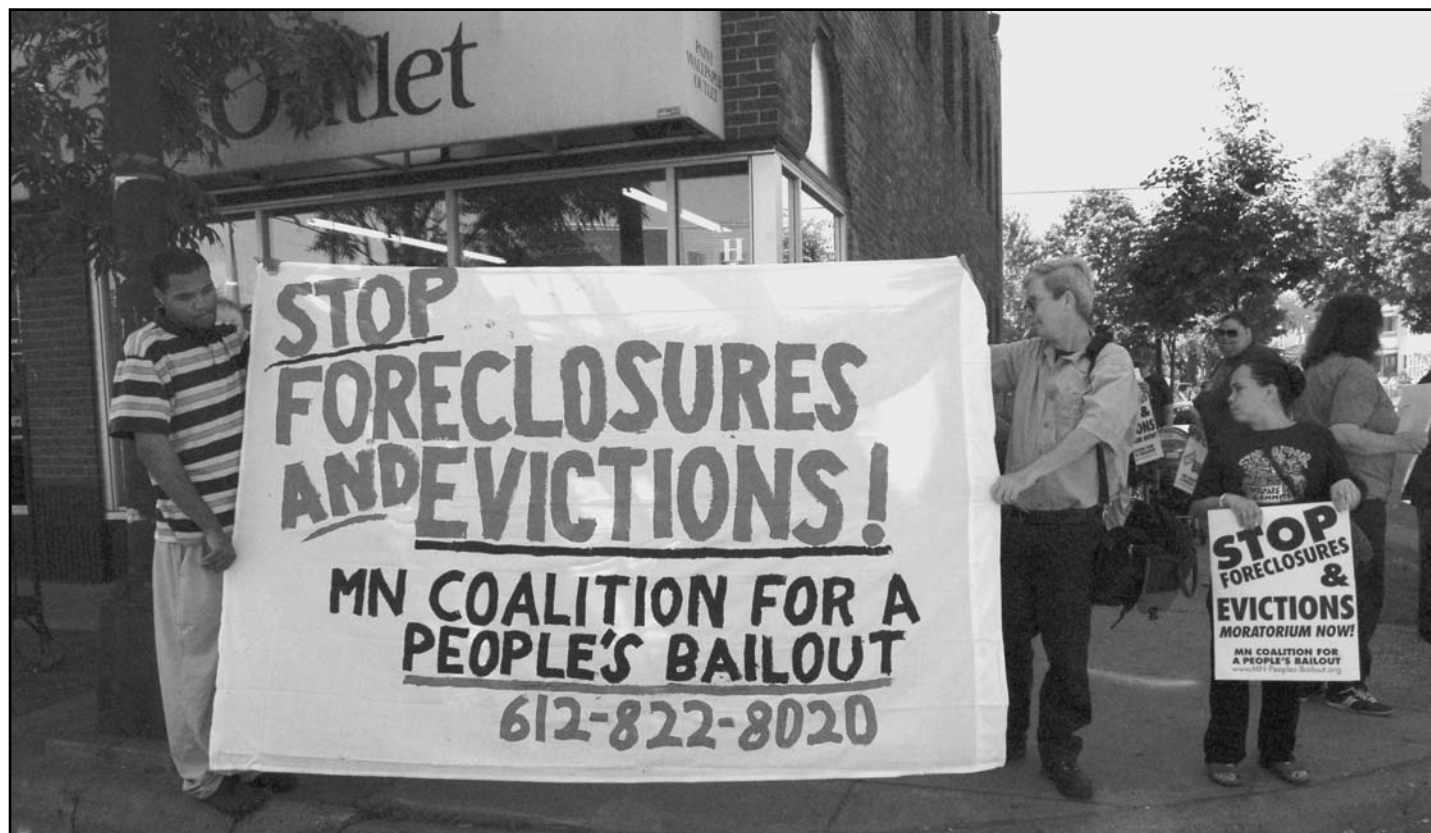
El dolor económico creciente ha sido más intenso para los afro-americanos, latinos, asiáticos y otras nacionalidades oprimidas. El desempleo de los afro-americanos es casi el doble que el desempleo de la gente

blanca, mientras el nivel de desempleo para los latinos y asiáticos ha subido más rápido que para otra gente. Las ejecuciones hipotecarias están concentradas en las comunidades afro-americana y latina, quienes eran el enfoque para los bancos con los préstamos más riesgosos al estilo "subprime." Los recortes a servicios y a la educación están golpeando a las comunidades de nacionalidades oprimidas y inmigrantes más duramente mientras los derechistas intentan culparles a ellos por supuestamente haber creado los problemas presupuestarios de los gobiernos locales y estatales.

En los últimos meses, la prensa capitalista y los oficiales del gobierno han hablado del 'fin de la recesión' y de las 'primeras ramas' de crecimiento económico. La bolsa de valores ha subido del fondo de su caída. El poquito de la verdad en su tesis es el aumento de ganancias para las corporaciones. Los negocios grandes han cortado sus gastos y aumentado sus ganancias a través de recortes de trabajos, horas y salarios, mientras exigen más trabajo de los trabajadores que se quedan. Eso se ha manifestado en un aumento de productividad laboral y un aumento de ganancias. Los bancos grandes han respondido a eso con el regalo de bonos de millones de dolores y con el aumento del salario para sus ejecutivos centrales.

Pero mucho de la 'buena noticia' sobre la economía tiene su lado malo también. La cifra del desempleo se ha caído un poquito – desde 9.5% in junio hasta 9.4% en julio. Pero solo es así porque tantas personas desempleadas han dejado de buscar trabajo, por que los datos oficiales solo cuentan las personas sin trabajo quienes están activamente buscando trabajo. El aumento de ventas de casas este año ha sido básicamente como resultado de inversionistas comprando

Crisis, continúa en página 9



En Minnesota marchan en contra de los bancos mientras la crisis de ejecuciones hipotecaras se profundiza.

FUERA DE LA CALDERA Y AHOOGADO EN EL FUEGO

Los trabajadores inmigrantes latinos enfrentan despidos masivos

Editorial de ¡Lucha y Resiste!

En los últimos meses, miles de trabajadores inmigrantes, en su mayoría latinos, han sido despedidos después de que la administración de Obama decidió tomar medidas enérgicas contra las compañías que emplean a trabajadores indocumentados. También se ha aumentado la resistencia, como se puede ver en la lucha de los trabajadores de las empacadoras de Overhill Farms en el sur de California, quienes están protestando el despido de más de 300 trabajadores.

Bajo la administración de Bush, el departamento de Inmigración (ICE, por sus siglas en inglés) intensificó sus redadas en los lugares de trabajo y en las comunidades. Esto llevó a un aumento de arrestos en los lugares de trabajo, aumentando de un poco menos de 500 en 2003 a más de 5000 en 2008. ICE ha comenzado a subcontratar la detención de presuntos trabajadores indocumentados a compañías privadas. Estas compañías, tales como LCS Correction Services (LCS Servicios Correctivos), han recortado los costos para aumentar sus ganancias, llevándolos a condiciones inhumanas y huelgas de hambre por parte de los detenidos en su prisión de Louisiana. ICE también comenzó a reclutar a departamentos de la policía local en sus esfuerzos para arrestar indocumentados, conocidos como los programas 287(g). Esto ha aumentado la tendencia de la criminalización de los indocumentados, así como muchos trabajadores están siendo acusados de “robo de identidad” por la policía local y los sheriff.

Con la nueva administración de Obama, las redadas se redujeron en los lugares de trabajo y en la comunidad se redujeron y ahora el enfoque es contra las compañías. Pero la amenaza de tomar medidas enérgicas contra los negocios ha llevado a los despidos masivos dirigidos a los trabajadores latinos. Peor aún, la administración de Obama ha continuado la política de la administración de Bush de subcontratar prisiones para inmigrantes con el esfuerzo de incluir a la policía local en el refuerzo migratoria.

La administración de Obama todavía promete apoyar una “reforma comprensiva de inmigración” en 2010. Esto podría terminar demorándose aun más debido a la elección del próximo año y las dificultades que pasan otras reformas en el congreso. Otro peligro es que la “reforma” puede acabar como la propuesta de Ley para la reforma migratoria de 2007, la cual habría eliminado la reunificación familiar y convertido a millones de indocumentados en trabajadores huéspedes. Este tipo de “reforma” de inmigración básicamente ayudaría a los negocios que quieren a más trabajadores con educación que hablen inglés en lugar de familias, y quien quiere asegurarse una fuerza laboral inestable con bajos salarios.

Hace tres años millones marcharon por las calles a favor de una legalización y contra las propuestas anti-inmigrante apoyadas por la derecha republicana. Necesitamos reconstruir este movimiento sobre las bases de una legalización, no trabajadores huéspedes. Necesitamos exigir que terminen los despidos, las redadas, las deportaciones, las subcontrataciones de centro de detenciones y el uso de la policía local hasta que una ley de legalización haya sido aprobada.

El movimiento necesita luchar para crecer, no finalizar, la unificación familiar, la cual reduciría largas esperas, las cuales pueden demorar más de 20 años.

Mientras continuamos exigiéndole



Trabajadores en Los Ángeles marchan para exigir un fin a los despidos de trabajadores inmigrantes.

al congreso una legalización y expansión de reunificación familiar, necesitamos tomar luchas locales contra los despidos masivos, los centros de detención inhumanos, y la criminalización de indocumentados. Esta lucha necesita ser construida desde las raíces, con un enfoque hacia movimientos masivos en las comunidades chicanas, mexi-

canas y centro-americanas quienes son las más afectadas por las medidas enérgicas contra los inmigrantes indocumentados. Una amplia coalición necesita ser construida, incluyendo aliados dentro del movimiento laboral, otras comunidades inmigrantes (especialmente otros latinos), asiáticos y árabes y otros sectores progresistas.

¡LUCHA y RESISTE! QUIÉNES SOMOS

¡Este periódico existe para construir la lucha del pueblo! Reportamos y damos análisis sobre unas de las batallas centrales en las que se encuentra la gente trabajadora y de bajos ingresos.

No somos neutrales en nuestro informe. Estamos opuestos a la explotación, discriminación, y opresión. Sostenemos que la clase de la gente rica, que manejan la economía y el gobierno de este país, no están calificados para gobernarnos. Apoyamos a todos los movimientos que denuncian su poder y privilegio.

Los escritores y empleados de ¡Lucha y Resiste! son activistas y organizadores en sindicatos, en comunidades

de bajos ingresos, movimientos de nacionalidades oprimidas, en Universidades, y en otros movimientos populares. Esperamos recibir sus artículos, cartas comentarios, y críticas. Algunos de los que trabajamos para mantener este periódico somos miembros de Freedom Road Socialist Organization. Los artículos representan las perspectivas de la gente y organizaciones que los escriben. Por el momento, ¡Lucha y Resiste! es publicado cinco veces al año.

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50 centavos

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TRABAJADORES DE SK HAND TOOLS

Huelga para la salud

Cuando el propietario de SK Hand Tools en Chicago revocó unilateralmente los beneficios del seguro médico a sus trabajadores, provocó una huelga. Como resultado, las líneas de piquete del martes fueron también un piquete por el seguro para la salud pública.

Cincuenta (50) Teamsters tomaron las aceras frente a la planta a las 6:00 am, mientras que los camioneros que pasaban reventaban sus bocinas para mostrar su apoyo.

Con artritis en ambas rodillas, Sam Pope tenía problemas al marchar. “El concreto realmente me lastima, pero yo voy a hacer mi parte,” dijo lastimosamente. Él montaba máquinas de fundición para hacer las rosquillas para las herramientas de SK y Craftsmen. “Todos los miembros del Sindicato están fuera,” dijo, volviéndose para unirse a las líneas, lo cual era verdad, puesto que los miembros del Local 743 de los Teamsters habían votado unánimemente para irse a huelga.

La consigna que más se escuchaba era, “¿qué queremos? ¡Seguro de salud! ¿Cuándo lo queremos? ¡Ahora! La mayoría que tiene seguro de salud lo obtiene por medio de las compañías en las cuales trabajan y, para Sam con su condición crónica, no había que lucharía para recuperar el seguro.

La compañía está exigiendo concesiones enormes en los salarios además de eliminar la cobertura del seguro de salud sin ningún aviso.

David Biedrzycki, un delegado sindical de la planta y empleado como soldador/refinador /pulidor por 25 años, solo ganó \$8,000.00 el

ado dueño francés regresó a Francia recientemente para recibir tratamiento cuando él se enfermó. Francia tiene un sistema nacional para la salud pública.

puede pagarla para el mismo.”

Biedrzycki dijo “Nosotros no nos vamos hasta que Claude venga y



año anterior. Él no ha trabajado durante 6 meses y subrayó la ironía de que Claude Fuger, el acaudal-

“Claude gana \$280,000.00 al año. “Él quiere que nosotros pagemos por el seguro de salud, pero dice que él no

nos ofrezca una oferta justa.”

Forjemos la lucha para ganar empleos, salarios, vivienda y justicia

Por redacción

Estamos en medio de la recesión económica más grande desde la Gran Depresión de 1930 con millones de viviendas embargadas, desempleo masivo y recortes a programas para los pobres y personas de la clase trabajadora. Entretanto el gobierno balancea el presupuesto a costa nuestra, mientras los afroamericanos, chicanos y latinos

son los últimos en conseguir empleo y los primeros en ser despedidos. Los ricos y poderosos les están haciendo la guerra a los trabajadores y nosotros nos estamos defendiendo. Por todo el país la gente se está volcando a las calles para poner alto a los desalojos, exigir una moratoria a los embargos de viviendas y protestar contra los recortes a servicios básicos. Se

están librando intensas batallas para responder a los cierres de fábricas, tal como el caso de la fábrica de Republic Windows en Chicago. El 3 de octubre sindicalistas, activistas para los derechos de los inmigrantes y miembros de organizaciones comunitarias, progresistas, estudiantes, vivienda y personas de bajos recursos se reuniran. La información sobre la conferencia sigue.

Conferencia – 3 de octubre 2009 en Chicago *La lucha por empleos, salarios, vivienda y justicia*

En Teamster City, Chicago -- 300 S. Ashland Ave -- Large Hall, Lower Level

Construir un movimiento y conciencia colectivos -- Aprender de las experiencias de cada uno -- Apoyar luchas claves -- Hacer planes en común -- Causar un impacto positivo y forjar una lucha poderosa

Trabajadores
inmigrantes latinos
enfrentan despidos
masivos

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Trabajadores y sus
comunidades
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Informe desde
Colombia

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