

Democrats and Republicans Are on the Attack!

Billions for Bankers, Cutbacks for Workers? *HELL NO!*

Students and working people welcome the opportunity to protest against government budget cuts and the Wall Street crooks who benefit from them. The bankers and capitalists got trillions of dollars in government bailouts after they wrecked the global economy. Now they and their politicians are trying to force the working class to pay for the crisis their system caused. Teacher and other public sector layoffs, increased class sizes and cutbacks in vital services threaten misery for workers and youth, employed and unemployed. That's why workers should say, "Billions for Bankers, Cutbacks for Workers? HELL NO!"

In Wisconsin, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois – and more states all the time – politicians are attacking the very right of workers to organize, so that we won't be able to defend ourselves against the capitalists' offensive. Now, after years of taking punches, the working class is trying to stand up and fight back. In February, hundreds of thousands of workers and youth rallied and occupied the Wisconsin state capital to protest budget-cutting and union-busting laws. But union bureaucrats derailed the militant fightback, rejecting the increasingly popular call for a general strike in favor of passive pro-Democratic Party electoralism. To avoid that trap here in New York, militant workers will have to fight for concerted and escalating mass action. That fight must include making demands on the union leaders and remaining vigilant about their attempts to delay or divert us from building the united defense that is needed.

Mayor Bloomberg is more than happy to be the axe-man in New York City, demanding major layoffs and cutbacks. Republicans around the country are calling for some outrageous attacks on workers' rights, jobs and living standards. But we can't afford to forget that Democrats are advancing their own anti-working class policies. With the votes of most Democratic and Republican state legislators, New York governor Cuomo passed a budget with big cuts to Medicaid and public education and the cutbacks being announced by Mayors and Governors across the country are in part being driven by president Obama's big cutbacks in the federal budget.

ALL UNIONS MUST FIGHT TOGETHER!

In the face of all these attacks, from service cuts to layoffs and much else besides, workers, youth and all those willing to fight must be mobilized in a series of escalating protests. The unions – being virtually the only organizations that unite masses of workers now – have a responsibility to take the lead in organizing such a defense.

But that will not happen without a struggle against the current union bureaucracy. May 12th saw one of the most militant rallies in NYC for years. But while DC37 says "Stop the layoffs," their union leaders did not mobilize on May 12th, when the union facing the most layoff threats immediately – the UFT – and other unions and activists groups organized a protest. *Instead, the UFT and DC37 held their rallies a month apart!* Why? Because behind the scenes their leaders want to cut a deal – and they are willing to cut the other one out to get it. The UFT and DC37 plans follow

the old union-bureaucratic strategy of cutting separate deals with the bosses and abandoning other unions and workers.

For the union leaders, protests like these are used as a bargaining chip and as an attempt to get the workers to accept concessions thinking that their leaders "tried." But for the ranks and others looking for a fightback, protests like these are an opportunity to see our strength when united in action, to pressure the union bureaucrats – and to organize to overcome them.

UNION LEADERS SABOTAGE FIGHTBACK

Another betrayal by the union bureaucrats has been the consistent refusal to connect the struggle of organized labor to that of the most oppressed sectors of the working class: non-union and immigrant workers. There has been an escalation of attacks on immigrant workers: from the Arizona Bill criminalizing undocumented immigrants, to Obama's increase in ICE deportations, to racist assaults on immigrants. Union leaders have done nothing.

The union leaders also have refused to wage a class-based battle that could unite public-sector workers and the working-class public who use and rely on public services. They ignore the racist nature of the current budget cuts and anti-union attacks and refuse to draw attention to the disproportionate amount of pain being "shared" by Black and Latino workers. The layoffs and attacks on public workers are hitting workers of color the hardest. In this era of capitalist crisis, workers will only win if we unite workers to fight on the broadest possible basis: union and non-union, employed and unemployed, and documented and undocumented.

The union leaders don't want a militant working-class fightback. They don't even oppose all the cuts. The United Federation of Teachers (UFT) accepts Obama's "Race to the Top" testing and school-closing scam. In Illinois, the leaders of all three teachers' unions supported the state senate SB 7 bill, which guts seniority rights and effectively destroys the right to strike for Chicago teachers, although a rebellion by Chicago teachers has succeeded in overturning their leaders' support for the bill. Even in Wisconsin, where masses of workers and students fought valiantly, the union leaders and their Democratic Party buddies were promising from day one that they would accept every economic attack proposed by Gov. Walker as long as collective bargaining was left intact.

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WORKERS NEED MASS ACTION, NOT RELIANCE ON CAPITALIST POLITICIANS

The reason for the union bureaucrats' kindness toward Wall Street is that they accept the capitalist system. Their behavior fundamentally comes from their political role as brokers between the capitalists and the workers. As well, capitalism may be pauperizing workers and busting unions, but it's still pretty good to union leaders. They get big salaries, nice offices and the chance to hobnob with the capitalists and politicians who suck our blood. The union hacks want to hang on to what they have, and that means hanging on to capitalism. They try to wheel and deal with capitalist politicians, especially Democrats, to get crumbs, or at least a good word. They reserve all their bile for the Republicans, who we are supposed to believe are the only source of attacks on our jobs and services. Thus, the DC37 webpage on the rally (www.dc37.net/news/headlines/june14_2011_rally.html) is full of what's wrong with Bloomberg but does not mention Cuomo – the Democratic governor at the source of many of these attacks!

Moreover, it was President Obama who set the tone for the attacks on the working class and poor. In 2008, even before he was elected president, he was the main player in insuring that the bailout of the banks and Wall Street would pass. Where would the money to pay for the trillions dumped into the capitalist coffers come from? Obama sent this message with his demand for a wage freeze for Federal workers: Everyone should make workers pay for the crisis. Both he and his Secretary of Education also applauded when a town in Rhode Island decided to layoff every teacher and rehire some in order to handle their local budget deficit. In the state-by-state battles, the Republicans have been out in front of the attacks, but the Democrats have the same basic policy. Cuomo is leading the attack in New York State. In Massachusetts, the Democrats are pushing public-sector union-busting legislation. In Illinois, a Democratic governor and legislature are destroying teachers' seniority rights and the right to strike. The list goes on.

WORKERS NEED A GENERAL STRIKE!

The strategy of lobbying and voting for Democrats has proved bankrupt. But the union bureaucrats still try to ram it down our throats. In Wisconsin, they succeeded in derailing the worker-youth mass action into new election campaigns. But while the workers and students were occupying the state capitol building and grounds, they were educating themselves. They felt their power together as the working class in struggle, and thousands said, "Let's go out in a general strike!"

That's exactly what we need. That would be real workers'

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unity in action. It means countering it to the union misleaders' strategy. It means fighting for big, unified demonstrations of all unions and oppressed people's organizations, and utilizing those actions to agitate for general strike to the largest number of people. It means assembling those who see the need for the general strike to campaign together for it, and pressure the union leaders to carry it out whether they like it or not. Workers should say, "All Unions Must Fight Together! Workers Need a General Strike!"

WHY WE NEED A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY AND SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

A general strike would be a huge step forward and could hold off the vicious attacks we are currently facing, but even that would not be enough to stop the attacks permanently and secure the future for workers. Why not? The economic crisis of 2008 was only the beginning of a deep and ever-deepening crisis for capitalism. The bosses and their parties have no choice but to attack us and escalate those attacks dramatically over time to try and prop up their profit system. For as long as the capitalist system survives, any victories that working-class struggles achieve can only be temporary because the worsening economic crisis will force the ruling class to try to squeeze the workers further time and again, and to use racism and national chauvinism to divide the working class so that it can't build an effective united defense.

The only way to ensure a decent life with jobs, health care, and all the other necessities for all human beings is to take the power to run society out of the hands of the capitalist bosses and their politicians: for workers to rise up and take control of society and run it in our interests. This is why the LRP says "Socialist Revolution is the Only Solution!" The crisis of 2008 has heightened attacks on workers all around the world, and in 2011, working-class and poor people are finally starting to fight back. The revolutionary uprisings in Egypt and Tunisia, where workers' strikes played decisive roles in toppling dictators there, are significant signs that in response to the bosses' attacks, there will be a surge in more uprisings around the world.

The most politically conscious workers and youth will come to see, by way of struggles today as well as the study of Marxism and the history of past struggles, that the working class can stop the whole capitalist economy and the capitalists' profiteering. It is workers who make society run. More workers and youth will begin to see the need to overthrow capitalist rule and seize power ourselves. Workers need a new leadership – a revolutionary working-class party – which fights for building the best possible defense today while aiming to convince our fellow workers over time of the need to fight for working-class state power. The League for the Revolutionary Party is working to build the foundations of such a party. Our work includes building a revolutionary opposition in the unions with the aim of developing an alternative leadership to the current pro-capitalist labor leaders. We hope all revolutionary-minded workers and youth will join us in this fight.

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***Democrats and Republicans: Two Parties of War, Racism
and Anti-Worker Attacks!***

***All Unions Must Fight Together!
Workers Need a General Strike!***

***Socialist Revolution is the Only Solution! Build the
Revolutionary Party of the Working Class!***