

Break with Obama, the Democratic Party and the AFL-CIO

Build a socialist movement against mass unemployment, war and repression

Socialist, International Students for Social Equality
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The following leaflet will be distributed to participants at a rally on October 2, in Washington, DC, organized by the AFL-CIO and sections of the Democratic Party, under the slogan, “One Nation Working Together: For Jobs, Justice and Education for All.”

Workers and young people who are taking part in today’s demonstration want to fight for jobs, peace and social justice, but the organizations that stand at the head of this protest offer no way forward. The AFL-CIO, the NAACP and their supporting groups are committed to the defense of the profit system, the Democratic Party and the Obama White House.

Nearly two years since the presidential election, the Obama administration has proven its class character. It is a government of, by and for the financial aristocracy, which has plunged the world into the deepest economic crisis since the Great Depression.

Obama provided trillions for the banks, while rejecting any significant measures to create jobs or alleviate growing poverty, the spread of home foreclosures, hunger and cuts to education and social services. He escalated the war in Afghanistan and continues the war in Iraq. He intensified the war against democratic rights at home, including last week’s police-state raids on antiwar activists in Chicago and Minneapolis. More people are being wiretapped, spied on and persecuted today than under George W. Bush.

Those who tell you from the platform today that you must do everything possible to elect Democrats on November 2 are betraying your interests, and doing so deliberately and consciously. They are promoting the biggest lie in American politics: that the two-party

system offers a genuine choice for working people. No less than the Republicans, the Democrats are a party of Wall Street.

It is not only the two-party system that is a blind alley. The organizations which claim to represent working people and minorities—the AFL-CIO, the NAACP, etc.—have become nothing more than secondary instruments of the ruling elite.

AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka and UAW President Bob King are not “workers’ leaders.” They are tried and tested representatives of the coal bosses, the auto bosses and big business as a whole. They defend the profit system, in which the union executives have an enormous personal financial stake.

Workers and young people looking for an alternative to war, economic crisis and political repression must carry out a rebellion from below against these organizations that claim to speak for the working class while seeking to strangle it.

All over the world, insurgent workers and youth are straining to break out of the straitjacket of these outlived and discredited organizations:

- More than one million public service workers in South Africa shouted down union leaders at mass meetings, rejecting a sellout contract.
- Millions of French workers marched on September 7 against plans by the right-wing government, with the support of the unions, to increase the retirement age.
- Ten million Spanish workers carried out a general strike against similar cutbacks being carried out by the union-backed Socialist Party government.
- Mass strikes and protests against austerity policies have broken out in Greece, Romania, Portugal and many other European countries, in many cases in the

form of wildcat and unofficial actions.

- Chinese auto workers defied the official Stalinist unions and police-state repression and walked out at plants supplying Honda and other carmakers.

- Indian auto workers have gone on strike despite violence by police and company unions.

The United States is no exception to this worldwide trend. Workers at the General Motors stamping plant in Indianapolis rebelled after the UAW ignored a membership vote against reopening the contract and agreed to cut wages in half. They drove UAW officials out of a meeting and subsequently carried out a vote on the contract which they videotaped to prevent UAW ballot-stuffing, defeating the agreement by a 5-1 margin.

Last month workers at the plant formed the GM Stamping Rank-and-File Committee to organize a struggle independently of the UAW, appealing for support from fellow GM and auto workers, and from workers all over the world. These workers understand that Bob King and the UAW are their enemies, not their advocates.

The Socialist Equality Party welcomes and encourages this spreading spirit of rebellion by the working class against all the organizations and political groups that defend the profit system. It is impossible for workers to defend their jobs and living standards and to oppose imperialist war and attacks on democratic rights without an offensive against the financial aristocracy that dominates our society.

We call for the formation of committees of action—genuinely democratic organs of working people independent of the trade unions and the two big business parties—at factories and other work locations, in schools and colleges and in working class communities to fight layoffs, home foreclosures, utility shutoffs, school closures, cuts in social services and all of the other social crimes committed against the people by the capitalist elite. These committees will spearhead the fight to unite all sections of working people and youth—native born and immigrant, employed and unemployed, black and white—in a common struggle.

Above all, the workers need a new political perspective. The Socialist Equality Party program calls for workers to take up the struggle for their basic social rights: the right to a job and a livable income, to decent housing, health care, education, utilities and a secure

retirement, to a healthy and safe environment, and access to culture.

These rights are the minimum condition for a decent life in modern society, but they are incompatible with a system in which a tiny minority, less than one percent of the population, monopolizes the wealth and controls the government and both political parties.

We are confident that the American working class will fight for these rights. We call on working people and youth to reject the capitalist system and the domination of the giant banks and corporations. End the rule of a new aristocracy that is expanding its own wealth on the backs of the people!

We urge you to read the *World Socialist Web Site*, the socialist voice of the international working class, study our program, and join the Socialist Equality Party and its youth organization, the International Students for Social Equality.



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Socialist Equality Party visit:

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