

Labor-NAACP march on Washington: 'One nation' is *not* 'working together'

BY JEFF MACKLER

A tremendous outpouring of working people will assemble at the One Nation Working Together rally in Washington, D.C. on Oct. 2. They are protesting because they are the victims of an anti-social system, capitalism, which has destroyed 9 million jobs and foreclosed 2.3 million homes during the present Great Recession.

They are protesting because that system has gifted \$16 trillion to bail out the banks, insurance companies, and corporate plunderers while destroying union contracts and eliminating a half century and more of social gains. And they are protesting because they increasingly understand that the capitalist system has neither the ability nor intention of changing gears to provide any relief from the bipartisan government and corporate attacks that have ruined the lives of millions of Americans.

Were it not for these attacks on every aspect of social life, on the broad trade-union movement, on Blacks, Latinos and other oppressed nationalities, on immigrants, and on civil liberties, few would be marching on capitalism's seat and symbol of power.

Were it not for the trillions given away yearly to the military-industrial complex to boost already bloated profits and to conquer poor people in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the world over—to steal their resources and re-colonize their nations—there would be no antiwar contingents on Oct. 2, like the one organized as part of the Peace Table by the United National Antiwar Committee (UNAC). The latter contingent will demand the immediate withdrawal of all U.S. troops, mercenaries, and war contractors from Iraq and Afghanistan. It will champion the civil liberties of the scapegoated Muslim and immigrant communities, and demand an end to U.S. aid to Israel and an end to U.S. support to the Israeli occupation of Palestine and the siege of Gaza.

UNAC is the antiwar committee that organized the highly successful Albany, N.Y., conference of 800 participants in July and is planning a mobilization against the war and regressive social policies to take place in San Francisco and New York City next April 9.

Many workers understand that the present Middle East wars were a fraud from the beginning. Every poll shows that a growing majority opposes Washington's imperial interventions. They know that there were no "weapons of mass destruction" in Iraq and that the Iraqi government had no connection to al-Qaida—the now totally refuted twin pretexts for Washington's murderous wars. They understand that this has been a war for Iraq's oil, the second largest oil reserve in the world, and a war for U.S. domination of the Middle East more generally.

They understand more than ever that the U.S. government of the rich does not conduct "wars for democracy" abroad while it is smashing democratic rights and civil liberties at home.

Last month's FBI raids and blanket witch-hunting subpoenas issued across the country to antiwar, union, and social activists tell another story. The Sept. 24 raids on the homes of leading activists in Minnesota, Illinois, Michigan, California, and elsewhere are a warning that the "terrorist" pretext may well be a prelude to overt government attacks on all social movements that seek to challenge the status quo in the interest of the working class. In Minnesota, those whose homes were broken into, and whose computers and files were confiscated, included union and antiwar activists who participate in



Tony Savino / Socialist Action

Workers are protesting because the system has bailed out the banks while destroying union contracts ...

the leading bodies of UNAC.

Workers and their allies today understand that the 150,000 U.S. troops and mercenaries (paid contract killers) in Afghanistan are not there to capture the 81 or so al-Qaida members that the CIA has identified. More to the point, the recent *New York Times* revelation that Afghanistan is the source of \$1 trillion in natural resources—including the world's second largest reserve of lithium, a metal vital for the production of batteries for computers and cell phones—sounds eminently more reasonable as an explanation for the U.S. war against that nation, today run by the U.S.-imposed corrupt and universally hated Hamid Karzai dictatorship.

Two opposed perspectives

But what the working masses and their allies among the oppressed are rallying for on Oct. 2 and what their bureaucratic misleaders ("labor fakers" or "labor lieutenants of capitalism" is what they, accurately, used to be called) are pushing are two entirely different and opposed realities.

Oct. 2 was initiated by the 300,000-400,000 member SEIU local 1199 and the NAACP, and later endorsed by the AFL-CIO. One Nation Working Together is the name of the coalition they formed to organize the march. The name itself is a fraud. There is no "one nation working together" in the U.S. There is a capitalist elite that runs the country and exploits workers in every industry without exception, and there is a working class that produces all the wealth and yet is denied the benefits of its labor. The two have nothing in common, just as the slave

(Above) Thousands rally in Washington, Aug. 28, to "take back" the spirit of M.L. King's "Dream" speech and the civil rights movement. Glenn Beck's right-wing rally took place at the Lincoln Memorial the same day.

and slave master have nothing in common.

Unions were originally organized to defend the interest of the working class against the boss class. But today's union misleaders see a partnership with the corporate world and its parties as the way forward, at least the way forward to protect their own separate and anti-working-class interests and privileges.

In the name of this "partnership" (the bosses used to say, "what's good for General Motors is good for America"), today's union bureaucrats have submitted to and helped orchestrate the most rapid fall in union membership in history. Without a whimper, they have presided over the decline of union membership demanded by the ruling rich to the lowest levels in the past 100 years. And their partnership with the boss class has resulted in the annihilation of the hard-fought union victories that brought a semblance of decency to the lives of millions of American workers.

Canvassing for the Democrats

One Nation Working Together's Oct. 2 theme is to demand, or better plead, for the Democrats to implement the "Change We Voted For." Their objective, stated repeatedly by the labor bureaucracy and by NAACP President Ben Jealous, is to use the Oct. 2 mass mobilization to form yet another coalition for the midterm elections and then on to 2012. This theme was repeated in the website's "Call to Action." There is no union leadership in the country that has organized today to go to Washington, D.C., without an electoral, Democratic Party orientation in mind.

Many of those who stay behind will be organizing door-to-door canvassing activities for the Democrats. The Ohio NAACP is not sending any buses to Washing-

(continued on page 3)



WHAT IS SOCIALISM?

The German socialist Karl Marx once asked what his favorite maxim was. He replied with a line by the Roman playwright Terence: "I am a man, and nothing that concerns a man, is a matter of indifference to me."

If for the moment we ignore the use of sexist language in this ancient quotation, we get a feel for the profoundly humanitarian spirit of Marx and of socialists since his time. Socialists are very concerned about the injustice and social ills in the world today—hunger, poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, disease, war, the exploitation of workers, the oppression of nations, races, women, and gays, the destruction of the environment, and the threat of nuclear annihilation.

Socialists, unlike many other socially concerned people, do not view these

problems as a normal or inherent feature of the human condition. We believe that these problems have historical and social causes, and that they can be solved through conscious, organized political struggle and change.

Socialist Action argues that capitalism is ultimately the main source of these problems in the United States and the world today. Under capitalism, the chief means of production are privately owned by a super-rich minority, the capitalist class. The capitalists run production on the basis of what will bring them the biggest profit. This leads big business to exploit workers, to pay their employees as little as possible—a mere fraction of the actual value that they produce.

Capitalism's striving to obtain maxi-

mum profits at all costs contributes to the racist oppression of Blacks, Latinos, and other groups, based on discrimination in employment and other areas of life.

The main basis of women's oppression in capitalist society is the segregation of women in lower paying jobs in the labor market and the relegation of women to unequally shared child care and housework in the family. These unequal labor relations between men and women sustain the sexist ideology that justifies different and unequal gender roles. The oppression of gays, lesbians, and bisexuals is largely derived from this sexist ideology since they do not conform to conventional standards of masculinity and femininity.

Capitalism has led the advanced industrial nations—especially the U.S.—to dominate the world, condemning the populations of third world nations to poverty and misery. Imperialism's wild scramble for markets and raw materials has erupted into wars that have engulfed the entire world.

Socialist Action argues that the problems of exploitation and oppression in the world today can only be solved by first replacing the capitalist system with a socialist system. The chief means of production should be taken out of the private hands of the capitalists and put under public ownership. The economy should then be run by councils of democratically elected representatives of workers and consumers at all levels of

the economy. Instead of being run on the basis of what will maximize profit for a super-rich minority, the economy should be planned to meet the needs of the people.

The working class has the power to overturn capitalism because of its strategic location at the point of production and its corresponding ability to shut down production by simply withdrawing its labor. A mass socialist movement can only grow out of a revitalized and radicalized labor movement, based on the trade unions and other organizations of the working class.

Socialist Action counterposes mass action by working people and the oppressed to reliance on the American two-party system, electoral campaigns, and behind-the-scenes lobbying of capitalist politicians.

We point out that the Democratic and Republican parties can be forced by mass action to implement progressive policies and reforms, at least up to certain limits. But fundamental and lasting change, and socialism, can only be achieved by revolutionary action of the workers and their allies, with the objective of replacing the capitalist state and capitalist political parties entirely.

If you want to fight for a society and a world free of all forms of exploitation, oppression, and social injustice, join Socialist Action! ■

For more information on what socialists stand for, see the Socialism 101 section at www.socialistaction.org.

A WORKERS' ACTION PROGRAM TO FIGHT THE CRISIS

We propose an **EMERGENCY CONGRESS OF LABOR** to discuss and take steps to implement the following demands —

1) **Bail out the people, not the bankers! Open the account books of the banks to full public inspection. Nationalize the banks to be supervised by workers' committees.**

2) **No foreclosures! No forced evictions! Cancel usurious debt payments, and reduce mortgage payments in proportion to their capitalist-caused decline in value.**

3) **Full employment at union wages! An emergency public works program to employ all jobless workers and youth! Employ people to build what we need — low-cost quality housing, efficient mass transportation, cheap and renewable sources of power, schools, clinics — and to conserve our water, forests, farmland, and open space.**

4) **Immediate and full withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq and Afghanistan! Close all U.S. bases abroad! No money for the military — use funds instead for public works! Convert the war industries to making products for people's needs and to combat global warming.**

5) **Reduce the workweek to 30 hours with no cut in pay, and cut the retirement age to 55. Provide unemployment and retirement payments at the level of union wages and benefits.**

6) **To combat inflation: A sliding scale of wages and pensions that matches the rises in consumer prices. To combat high medical costs: A free, universal, public health-care system.**

7) **Immediate citizenship for all undocumented workers. No job discrimination; equal pay for equal work — regardless of gender, sexual orientation, skin color, or national origin.**

8) **Nationalize manufacturing, big agribusiness, energy, and transportation corporations and place them under the control of elected committees of workers.**

9) **To mobilize support for the demands it adopts, the EMERGENCY CONGRESS should organize ACTION COMMITTEES in every workplace and neighborhood threatened by the crisis. These committees can draw up more concrete demands than the ones outlined above.**

10) **To put all these measures into effect, we need a LABOR PARTY — based on a fighting union movement and all people who are oppressed and exploited. For a workers' government!**

SOCIALIST ACTION • SPECIAL EDITION • OCT. 2, 2010

Editor: Michael Schreiber International Editor: Gerry Foley Canada Editor: Barry Weisleder

Socialist Action (ISSN 0747-4237) is published monthly by Socialist Action Publishing Association, P.O. Box 460501, San Francisco, CA 94146-0501. Postmaster: Send address changes to: Socialist Action, P.O. BOX 460501, San Francisco, CA 94146-0501. RATES: For one year (12 issues, 1st-class mail): U.S., Canada, Mexico — \$20. All other countries — \$30. Money orders and checks should be in U.S. dollars.

Signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of Socialist Action. These are expressed in editorials. Socialist Action is edited, designed, and laid out entirely by volunteer labor. It is printed by members of Local 583, Allied Printing Trades Council, San Francisco, Calif.

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... 'One Nation'

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ton because "Ohio is a swing state and door-to-door organizing is what is required." Several New York state labor councils are doing the same. Labor officials in the San Francisco Bay Area cancelled a planned Oct. 2 Oakland demonstration in favor of a joint effort of all Bay Area Central Labor Councils to canvas for the Democrats.

The One Nation Working Together website contains a "Mission Statement" with a video urging people to sign on for One Nation. The video features one speaker only, past Democratic Party National Committee Chair Howard Dean, who is also the chair "emeritus" of the Democratic Party today.

The One Nation website's "Policy Principles" include a lengthy list of social reforms long put forward by the labor bureaucracy and the Democratic Party. One statement reads, "Today, more than ever, we need to break the gridlock in Washington and we need decisive leadership and policy that will move all in Congress, especially in the Senate, forward."

Howard Dean aside, in the abstract the long list of liberal "Policy Principles" could be generally supported by almost anyone in the radical movement. In the concrete, however, we are confronted with a mass mobilization by the labor bureaucracy and pro-capitalist liberal organizations from A to Z, for a new coalition to elect the Democrats in the midterm November elections and in the presidential elections of 2012.

There is no mention in the Policy Principles of any of the U.S. wars in the Middle East or anywhere else—not even a mention of the word "peace," although a microscopic examination might find the concept mentioned in the abstract. A phrase mentioning the need for "peace abroad" is buried in another section of the website, likely a concession to the "peace movement."

In fact, the Oct. 2 rally glosses over all the critical issues of the day. There is no mention of Obama's spending more money and sending more troops to Afghanistan than George Bush; no mention of Obama's unbroken string of promises to labor; no mention of Obama's destruction of the UAW and its contracts that were extracted from the boss class over more than a half century of struggle.

And there is no mention of Obama's reactionary immigrant "rights" proposals embodied in the notorious bill authored by Democratic Party Senator Charles Schumer. The Democrats state that this "tough" measure will have "securing the border" as its major priority, echoing the repressive SB1070 legislation approved by the Arizona legislature.

The "lesser-evil" electoral scam

Some 40 speakers are slated to speak on the One Nation Working Together rally platform. Not one will place the responsibility for today's economic and social crises on the capitalist party *in power*, the Democrats. All will focus their "fire and fury" at the "Republican obstructionists" or the right-wing proto-fascist Tea Party fanatics.

The truth, however, lies elsewhere. The Democrats are no less the party of the corporate elite than the Republicans. They have been chosen by the elite and tiny ruling class of billionaire capitalists to lead the assault on workers.

Barack Obama received more corporate funds than any other capitalist candidate in history, Republican or Democrat. He was chosen to once again play to perfection capitalism's electoral "lesser evil" shell game, the better to foster the illusion that the Democrats were the party of "change."

American capitalism's electoral farce is consciously planned to perpetuate the illusion that elections are the vehicle for social change and that there are impor-



tant differences in the "two-party" contest that merit public participation. In reality, the Democrats represent the interests of corporate America—full stop!

History teaches that the Democrats were originally the party of the Southern plantation slave owners, whose descendents were aided in more recent times by the Ku Klux Klan and related racist-terrorist groups like the White Citizens Councils. The Democrats lost their racist voting bloc in the South due to President Nixon's and the Republicans' "Southern Strategy." But decade after decade, they have sought to regain national power by running Southern candidates only. Jimmy Carter, Al Gore, and Bill Clinton were selected for this task—that is, breaking off a few Southern states to try to win the presidency for their particular corporate sponsors.

Today, with regard to the working class, the two major capitalist parties have no differences. The corporate backers of both parties have no choice but to continue and deepen the exploitation of wage labor if they are to remain competitive on U.S. and world markets.

The capitalists now use the electoral process virtually on a year-round basis. They finance and engineer Tea Party bigots and Republican bluster to consciously make room for the Democrats on the right. The louder the Republicans and their media morons roar, the better prepared is the ground for the Democrats to take another pound of flesh from working people.

The logic of lesser-evil politics leads to a never-ending choice between evils. Of course, this is the logic of these who seek to perpetuate the system of a tiny minority ruling class prevailing over the vast majority.

Workers need their own party

Socialists want it the other way around. We fight for an egalitarian society where for the first time in human history the great majority rules in its own interests, through its own institutions, and for the purpose of advancing the well being of all humanity—as opposed to the profits of the few.

If there ever was a time when a break with the two-party capitalist system was needed, it is now. The formation of a Labor Party based on a reinvigorated and fighting trade-union movement, allied with all the oppressed and exploited, is a far better strategy than that of the labor fakers ceaselessly begging at the feet of big money capital. Such a party can emerge from the coming struggles of working people in every arena against the horrors that the boss class requires for its survival.

The power that working people generate in Washington on Oct. 2 with their sheer numbers can serve to remind them they are a social force capable of great

(Above) A year ago, one of the great labor battles in recent New York City history:

Stella D'oro bakery workers waged an 11-month strike against moves to slash wages and benefits. Finally, in September 2009, the bosses closed the plant and laid off all the employees.

Although the AFL-CIO Labor Council did little to mobilize solidarity, the Stella D'oro workers stood up and fought for their rights—a stirring example to working people everywhere.

deeds. The history of all social change in the modern era is the history of the working-class masses, in alliance with all the oppressed, breaking from the status quo of minority rule and embarking on an independent course.

American workers are no exception. They have a remarkable and tested capacity to fight back, which during the Great Depression of the 1930s broke the grip of industrial capitalism to exploit at will. They will do it again, this time taking the struggle forward to the construction of their own working-class party and to a definitive break with the heinous capitalist system itself.

Today's unprecedented assaults are changing the consciousness of millions. When these emerging fighters take the field of action, and convert their potential strength into great mass movements demanding fundamental social and economic change, the present labor bureaucracy will be swept from the scene, the deadly lesser-evil conception of politics will wither away, and a new world will be in the making.

The participation of today's militant fighters in the Oct. 2 mobilization—with their own class-struggle ideas and programs and under their own banners—can be an important step in this direction. ■

Socialist Action Midwest Educational Conference

Saturday, Oct. 9

10 a.m. Eco-socialism
2 p.m. Socialist election policy: What would Debs do?
4 p.m. Rosa Luxemburg: A revolutionary for the 20th century
7:30 p.m. Film: Land and Freedom (call for location)

Sunday, Oct. 10

10 a.m. Defending immigrant rights

Location (except Sat. evening film):
Mayday Bookstore, 301 Cedar Ave. South
Minneapolis, (612) 333-4719.

How can we win jobs for all?

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built around stepped up deportations. Instead, we should demand legalization and equal rights and services for all immigrants without documents.

The Oct. 2 organizers pin the blame for job loss on "a handful of senators" who "block urgently needed progress"—ignoring the fact that the Democrats' hold on the White House and Congress has been used to give trillions to Wall Street. Despite this, says One Nation, "On 11-2-10, we will march again—into the voting booths."

In an article, "Let's Have a Real Protest, Not a Democratic Pep Rally, on October 2nd," *Black Agenda Report's* Glen Ford wrote: "A Washington rally for jobs, justice and peace that makes no specific demands on President Obama would amount to a capitulation to the status quo on all counts, no matter if half a million attended."

He cited in contrast the demands voted on at the Uni-

ted National Antiwar Conference (UNAC) held in Albany, N.Y., in late July:

- Trillions for jobs and education, not wars and bank bailouts.
- Bring the troops, mercenaries and war dollars home from Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan, now!
- Stop government attacks on unions, Muslims, immigrants and people of color. Civil liberties for all.
- End U.S. aid to Israel. Billions for jobs, not occupation. End the siege of Gaza. Free Palestine!

And he cited also the demands of the Black is Back Coalition for Social Justice, Peace, and Reparations, which is marching alongside UNAC: an end to the ongoing wars waged against Black people through mass incarceration, police terror, and constant economic aggression against Black communities. Ford also criticized march organizers for saying they want to see money moved "from war

to jobs and education," yet staying silent on Obama's "rhetoric of open-ended warfare to infinity." He also called on marchers to lay the blame at Obama's doorstep for the trillions in bank bailouts.

Brother Ford's critique of the official Oct. 2 program is on target. And we encourage marchers to read and discuss the demands outlined in our Action Program on page 2 of this newspaper—for demands that start from what workers need, not what ruling-class politicians find acceptable.

What should the next steps be? We think that the unions—together with national organizations for civil rights, peace, and social justice—should call an Emergency Congress of Labor to identify the priorities of U.S. working people and lay out a course of militant action to attain them. And to guide the struggle, working people need their own party—a militant, democratic Labor Party—which is fully independent of the bosses' parties, the Republicans and Democrats.

Let's take the spirit of Oct. 2 forward toward a genuinely independent working-class fightback! ■

How can we win jobs for all?

By **ANDY POLLACK**

The answer of union officials to the question posed in our headline is simple: elect more Democrats—even though control of the White House and both houses of Congress has meant more pro-business legislation and trillions in bailouts for banks and corporations. The answer of liberal economists is equally simple: another stimulus package to get us over the hump of what they see as merely a slow recovery.

And the answer of the Democratic and Republican parties is simple—and savage: cut deficits by slashing jobs, Social Security, pensions, and as many other public programs and benefits as possible.

The socialist answer, while equally simple, starts from a profoundly different vantage point—the needs of workers regardless of the impact on the bosses' profits or on the political fortunes of their parties.

The jobless so-called recovery

On Sept. 20, the National Bureau of Economic Research announced that the Great Recession had officially ended in June 2009. The bureau admitted that this only meant output of goods and services had stopped declining, not that unemployment, foreclosures, or any other recession-related phenomena had diminished. In fact, the U.S. economy has lost more jobs than it has added since the recovery supposedly began. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development said it doesn't expect the U.S. unemployment rate to fall to prerecession levels until at least 2013.

Gross domestic product has bounced up and down throughout 2010, but not even the most bullish forecasters see growth in the next few quarters being sufficient even to add enough jobs to keep up with population growth, much less to restore any of the millions of jobs lost during the Great Recession.

A typical example of the social impact of lingering catastrophic levels of joblessness is *The New York Times* story in September reporting that the average jobless worker over 50 years of age has no confidence that he or she will ever work again. And with rising medical costs and disappearing health-care insurance, vanishing pensions and plummeting home values, the fear of permanent joblessness for older workers often turns into worries over their very chances of survival.

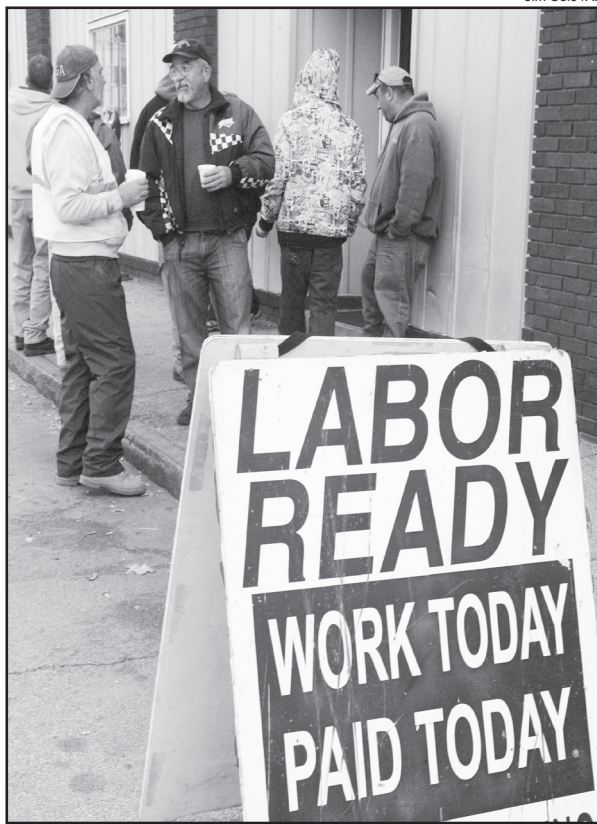
Mainstream analysts compare this decade's recession with other post-World War II recessions. But the more crucial comparison is with the Great Depressions of the 1890s and 1930s—periods in which, like today, there were occasional "recoveries" that proved in the long run to be mere blips on the longer-term downward slides. The current downturn has to do with the turn to speculative investments due to global manufacturing overcapacity and a decades-long slump in profitability, which is just part of the "normal" functioning of the capitalist system.

Trying to bring back jobs through protectionism—such as the AFL-CIO's recent call for trade sanctions against China—will only exacerbate the crisis, as each nation's ruling class, already starved of productive investment outlets, finds itself cooped up even tighter within national borders, and seeks to save itself through erecting higher and higher walls, deepening austerity imposed on workers, and even, if need be, war against its competitors.

A decline in living standards

On Sept. 16, the Census Bureau issued a report detailing more fallout from the recession:

- 43.6 million Americans (or 1 in 7) are living below the official poverty line, and inflation-adjusted median income fell 4.8% from 2000 to 2009—stagnating even through the "recovery" of 2003 to 2007. One out of every three Americans in 2009 had income below a level that many economists consider just "making ends meet."
- More than 2.3 million homes have been repossessed since December 2007. More than 1 million American households are likely to lose their homes to foreclosure this year.
- Total student loan debt exceeds total credit card debt, with \$850 billion outstanding—and more and more young adults are living at home.
- The number of people without health insurance rose from 46 million in 2008 to 51 million in 2009 (or from 15.4% to 16.7%).



Jim Cole / AP

The U.S. economy has lost more jobs than it has added since the recovery supposedly began.

Meanwhile, government spending to restore jobs is off the table. The British magazine *The Economist* notes that despite Republican howls of "big government," "most of the growth in government to date has been temporary and unavoidable; the longer-run growth in government is more modest, and reflects the policies of both Mr. Obama and his predecessor." Obama's latest economic proposals, it said, "are designed more for political than economic impact ... less to power up the economy than to parry political attacks."

These proposals include letting businesses deduct the full cost of investment against taxes next year instead of over three or more years. But the impact "will be muted by low interest rates and the fact that businesses are much more worried about weak demand than their cost of capital..."

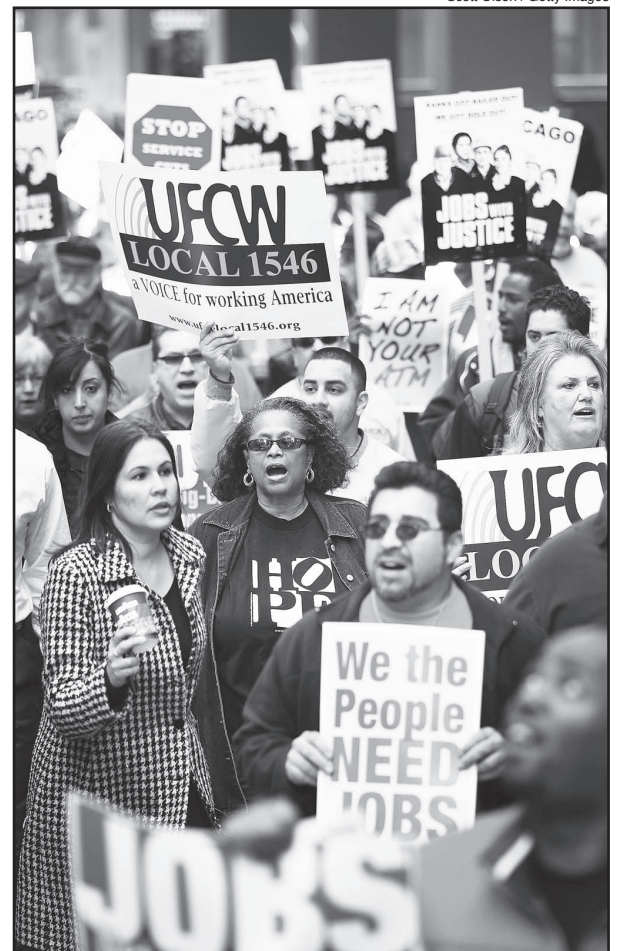
Banks have the cash, but nowhere to invest it. Yet Obama's response is to give the private sector even more cash. *The Economist* states, "Politically [the economic proposals] have served Mr. Obama's purpose, giving him some tax-cutting credentials at a time when Republicans are accusing him of proposing to wreck the economy by letting George Bush's tax cuts for the rich expire." But Republicans praised Obama's investment tax credit as "quite radically different" from his earlier "stimulus"—i.e., it avoids even the miserly direct spending on jobs that the "stimulus" provided.

The Economist also notes that the weight of lingering massive debt levels is still dragging down consumer confidence and spending: "Statistics say that the economy has been growing for nearly 15 months, but so sluggishly that most people seem to think it is still in recession." Almost a quarter of all Americans with mortgages still owe more than their houses are worth, and the journal predicts that "a fetid pool of underwater mortgages will ... corrode the financial system and harm the recovery."

Another Obama proposal is an "Infrastructure Bank." As *Black Agenda Report* Executive Director Glen Ford has pointed out, this bank has nothing in common with the direct expenditure on public works jobs of the New Deal, but would instead use federal money to guarantee profits of investors in investments that they would have a key role in choosing.

Obama supporters express frustration

Popular frustration with the economy was on display at a Sept. 20 CNBC town hall meeting, where one Obama supporter after another in the audience told the president to his face that they were disappointed in him and were tired of defending him against critics. But the week before, Obama was yucking it up at a



Scott Olson / Getty Images

fundraiser held at a Connecticut real estate mogul's mansion, mocking those who criticize his policies: "Democrats, just congenitally, tend to get—to see the glass as half empty [laughter]. If we get an historic health care bill passed—oh, well, the public option wasn't there. If you get the financial reform bill passed—then, well, I don't know about this particular derivatives rule, I'm not sure that I'm satisfied with that. And gosh, we haven't yet brought about world peace and— [laughter]. I thought that was going to happen quicker" [laughter].

Meanwhile, Obama's chumminess with the wealthy has only emboldened those wanting even further concessions. One of the most commonly cited was that of Steve Schwartzman, head of Blackrock private equity, who compared Obama's effort to close some billionaires' tax loopholes to "the Nazi invasion of Poland."

Liberal op-ed columnist Paul Krugman correctly noted that "when the tax fight is over, one way or another, you can be sure that the people currently defending the incomes of the elite will go back to demanding cuts in Social Security and aid to the unemployed."

In the midst of deepening misery and major party faithfulness to their rich funders, it's no surprise that union members are increasingly ignoring pleas from labor officials to get out there and hustle up votes (see the Sept. 17 *New York Times* article chock full of quotes from union officials bemoaning the rank and file's resistance to their appeals).

Labor's resentment will be on display in huge numbers on Oct. 2 in the streets of Washington. The event's lead organizers (One Nation Working Together) will seek to defuse and disempower the people who assemble in Washington by trying to herd them the day after into efforts to elect Democrats. This explains the timid and vague nature of the demands for Oct. 2 itself.

The Call to Action for the march demands "a million new jobs right away." Yet the more pressing question is how to obtain jobs for all, which would require tens of millions of old jobs restored and new ones created.

This would require a radical change in the priorities that are endemic to the profit-hungry capitalist system. What do socialists propose?

- A shorter workweek, with no cut in pay, in order to spread the jobs to the unemployed.
- The government should undertake a vast public works program—organized and controlled by elected assemblies of workers and community groups—in which many millions could be employed to provide the schools, clinics, mass transportation, and sustainable industry that the working people of this country need. How to pay for it:
- End the wars—and tax the super-rich!

The Call also advocates fixing the "broken immigration system." But every indication is that the organizers will back immigration "reform" that is still largely

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