



Equal rights for working class youth!

Working class youth, no matter what race or income level, have one thing in common: they are not treated equally with rich children by society.

From before they are born, working class youth are treated unequally.

Working class mothers are often deprived of proper pre-birth care — a good diet, a calm and supporting environment, sensitive doctors — so when babies are born, they already start well behind babies of wealthy parents.

Working class youth suffer because their parents work very hard and they often work long hours. Working class parents don't have much energy left to give children the attention they deserve and need. Parents are forced to choose between working more hours to make enough money for the family and spending time with their children. 75% of all households of multiple job holders say that the reason for more than one job is to

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Jersey City, New Jersey: Lincoln high school students walkout protesting the killing of Amadou Diallo by NY police.

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- **Top quality healthcare** for all funded by a public, non-profit fund.
- **Top quality public education** for all at all levels, including pre-K, technical and university, so everyone has access to quality education, not just the rich.
- **Decent jobs for all:** a \$10 minimum wage with automatic increases in line with price increases; a shorter work-week without cutting pay.
- **Expand affirmative action:** Quotas for working class youth of color and working class youth of all ethnic groups; equal rights for immigrant youth, including the right to vote.

Workers' control of multinationals! - Inside

Workers' control and public ownership

Thousands of youth and activists will demonstrate against the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, for canceling the debts of the poorest nations, in Washington, D.C., from April 9 to April 17.

The International Monetary Fund and the World Bank are organizations owned and controlled by the largest multinational banks, corporations, and governments of the richest nations. They have been responsible for drawing up and imposing programs for various countries calling for cutting workers' wages, workers' benefits, and public funds for healthcare, education, housing, etc., as a condition for lending these countries money, or renegotiating terms for payments on debts they already have. The IMF and the World Bank function like loan sharks. If a country is in financial trouble, they offer to lend the country money, on the condition the country agree to usurious terms that ensure it will be forever in debt. The IMF and the World Bank also have their enforcers, but they aren't local punks. They are armies — often trained and armed by the U.S. — who attack workers and oppressed peoples rising up against these policies.

The April demonstrations in Washington are a continuation of the international struggle against "globalization" and "neoliberalism," which first entered U.S. consciousness in a big way when the Zapatistas in Chiapas rose up against NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) on January 1, 1994, in part because it allowed giant U.S. agricultural firms to wipe out local producers. The breadth of the struggle became more apparent when thousands demonstrated against the World Trade Organization (WTO) — another organization owned and controlled by the largest multinationals and richest governments — in Seattle in November, 1999. They forced the WTO to postpone a meeting and contributed to its inability to reach agreements. Most recently, thousands of indigenous peoples in Ecuador rose up against IMF policies, took over government buildings, established a popular assembly, and forced the president to resign.

Globalization

What are "globalization" and "neoliberalism"? Lots of different things are said about "globalization" and "neoliberalism," many aimed at hiding the truth. We see "globalization" as the expansion U.S., European, Japanese and other multinational



Youth and workers demonstrate against the WTO in Seattle, November, 1999.

banks and corporations at the expense of national banks and corporations, publicly-owned banks and corporations, small businesses, small farmers, etc. We say U.S., European, and Japanese, because the majority of multinationals are owned and controlled by rich families living in the U.S., Europe, Japan, and other wealthy nations, are joint ventures between them, or joint ventures including a small number of rich friends in poor countries. They aren't "multinational" in the sense they truly represent a multitude of nations as some of their spokesmen would like us to believe. "Neoliberalism" — that is, the political policy of allowing these multinationals to do whatever they want to do and striking down laws and institutions getting in the way — is the political policy that has flowed from the expansion of these multinationals. Everybody knows the biggest multinationals are now so big they can buy politicians and government officials easily; one after another has ceded to their demands.

Bourgeois economists in the United States argue over the extent to which "globalization" represents a change. Some say the world economy is simply going back to the way it was before World War I, before national economies tried to become totally self-sufficient and destroy each other during the War. Others say the level of global cooperation between the biggest banks and corporations and the level of global domination of the biggest banks and corporations is unprecedented. But they all agree there has

been a qualitative change since the period immediately following World War II. One-third of world trade takes place *within* multinationals; one-third takes place *between* multinationals; one-third takes place *outside* of them. Economists predict the percentage outside is going to continue to fall.

The opposition

Many opponents of "globalization," "neoliberalism," multinational banks, corporations, their institutions (IMF, World Bank, WTO) and trade agreements (NAFTA, GATT, Maastricht), are saying these multinationals and their policies are hurting workers and oppressed peoples and undermining their democratic rights in the U.S. and throughout the world. They are causing cuts in jobs, wages, benefits, funds for social services, the privatization of social services, and making it difficult for people to exercise control over their own governments. The "boom" in the U.S. is temporary; it's a result of the expansion of the multinationals based in the U.S., the superprofits they are extracting from the poorest workers in the U.S. and poorer countries, and their policy of making concessions to the most powerful groups of workers in the U.S., and to the middle classes, so they won't join more exploited workers and oppressed in struggle. Divide and conquer.

To date, many of the struggles against "globalization," "neoliberalism," the multinationals, their institutions and trade agreements, have focused on getting the multina-

of the multinationals!

nationals to change their policies, on getting them to agree to respect certain standards concerning labor or the environment, on passing laws limiting what multinational can do and protecting the rights of labor or the environment, or on abolishing the multinationals' institutions (IMF, World Bank, WTO) or trade agreements (NAFTA, GATT, Maastricht, etc.)

These struggles have been successful in the sense that they have brought the whole problem to the attention of millions of working class and oppressed people and made it more difficult for the multinationals to proceed with their agenda of taking over the entire planet and crushing anyone who gets in the way (an agenda, by the way, that is doomed to fail, just as it did at the beginning of the 1900s when multinationals last began to reach the size they are reaching today).

The struggles against the multinationals and their policies have to continue and grow. Above all, the U.S. labor movement has to support these struggles. The U.S. labor movement claims to be against globalization, neoliberalism, the multinationals and their policies. But they have policies of labor-management cooperation with these same multinationals. They campaigned for Bill Clinton and are campaigning for Al Gore, who is totally owned and controlled by these same multinationals. Clinton and Gore have a "situation room" in the White House with a huge map where they track the success of U.S. banks and corporations in their efforts to take over resources, enterprises and markets in other countries. They won the support of the majority of CEOs by arguing they were best able to promote the interests of U.S. multinationals and proved it with NAFTA, GATT, WTO, and other policies in the multinationals' interests.

As long as a small number of rich families in the U.S., Europe and Japan own and control these multinationals, it is going to be increasingly difficult for working class and oppressed people to retain any control over their lives, still less to make progress.

Workers' control

Workers and oppressed in the U.S. and throughout the world, labor movements and labor parties, need to join forces and fight for workers' control and public ownership of the multinationals by law.

What does this mean? Workers, organized in the fields, factories, and offices in

these multinationals, have the right to exercise control over what these multinationals do. They have the right to veto decisions to layoff workers, cut wages, cut benefits, takeover other enterprises, break them up, close them down, produce and distribute products in harmful ways or to produce harmful products. The enterprises themselves are publicly owned.

The fight for workers' control and public ownership of the multinationals is a very difficult one. The owners of the multinationals use their ownership and control of the media to try to convince workers and oppressed they are incapable of running the multinationals in the interests of the majority, that a special class of owners and managers is necessary, that no matter how bad things are now they would be worse if the workers were in control. They try to pit workers of different ethnic groups and nationalities against each other, to try to convince workers that other workers, not the rich owners, are their enemies. Leaderships of labor movements go along with this in exchange for special privileges for themselves and a small layer of workers.

Workers of different ethnic groups and nationalities need to build their own international organization, with their own media, to combat the multinationals' propaganda, to convince workers they are capable of running the multinationals in the interests of the majority. They need to fight for labor movements and labor parties to fight for political power, for labor and popular governments based on independent mass mobilizations to pass and enforce laws for workers' control and public ownership, and for an international federation of labor and popular governments to plan and organize the activities of the multinationals in accord with the most urgent needs of the masses of workers and oppressed, especially the poorest. There is no justification for some people living in luxury while children starve. Workers will fight for and carry out a radical change in priorities; they will put the production and distribution of food, clothing, shelter, transportation, healthcare and education for all, ahead of the production of luxuries for the rich minority. They will increase and redistribute the wealth.

It's a big job, and a difficult job, but it can be done. The time to start is now.— M.G.□

Solidarity!

Detroit Anti-Racist Action is organizing a **demonstration against Rock of Ages music store** on Sunday, April 9, at 1 p.m., at 31015 Ford Road, Garden City, Michigan. This store sells racist, white power music that advocates violent attacks on people of color. For further information, contact Detroit ARA at 313-438-6014 or detroitara@hotmail.com.

Detroit area activists are taking buses, trains, and planes to Washington, DC for the **demonstrations against the IMF and the World Bank** on Sunday, April 16. If you need information on the IMF and/or transportation, contact us at 248-542-7712.

Demonstrate against discrimination, Saturday, April 22, 3 p.m., Grand Circus Park, Downtown Detroit. Sponsored by the Pink Panther Project, querpir8@hotmail.com.

Workers' Memorial Day March and Rally, Friday, April 28, 4 p.m., UNITE Union Hall, 1550 Howard, Downtown Detroit. Honor the thousands of workers killed, injured or made ill on the job. For further information, contact South East Michigan Coalition for Occupation Safety and Health (SEMCOSH) at 313-961-3345 or semcosh@mich.com.

The Detroit Metro Chapter of the Labor Party meets Sunday, April 30, 2-4 p.m., at UAW Local 417, Stephenson Highway just north of Maple. For further information, call 248-788-6527.

The Xicano Development Center is sponsoring a **demonstration for amnesty for immigrant workers** on Monday, May 1, at 3 p.m., at Clark Park at Vernor and Clark in Southwest Detroit. For further information, call XDC at 313-841-0838.

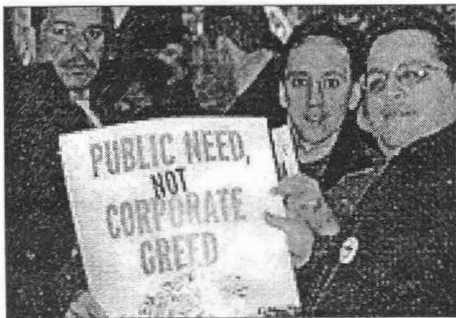
Rally for Mumia Abu Jamal in New York City, Sunday, May 7. For bus tickets from Detroit contact Dave at sole@dwsd.org.

First midwest regional demonstration for Mumia Abu Jamal, Saturday, May 13, Chicago. For further information call 248-788-6527.

Stop U.S. aid to the Colombian military! For information about this struggle, contact the Mexico Solidarity Network at 773-583-7728 or msn@mexicosolidarity.org. **Stop U.S. attacks on Iraq!** For information, contact the International Action Center at 212-633-6646 or iacenter@iacenter.org. **Solidarity with Russian workers fighting Russian attacks on Chechnya!** Send statements of support to: The Praxis Centre, Editorial board of the antifascist newspaper Chelovechnost, Fax (095) 292 6511, Box 385. Postal address: 127434 Moscow, Box 32.

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pay for "normal household expenses."

By the time many working class children enter school, they are already behind in pre-school training. A recent study in the Journal of the American Medical Association revealed a monstrous rise in doctors dispensing behavior-controlling drugs to working class children to suppress behavior that is often considered natural or even gifted in rich children.

Working class youth often attend schools that are overcrowded, meagerly supplied (a few computers, a few books, and a nearly empty library), and staffed by overworked and underpaid teachers and substitutes. The buildings are often in disrepair. And it is likely that there is no outdoor recess, something never denied rich children, forcing working class children to remain inside at their seats all day.

Sports, art and music are often eliminated or only available after school to those with money. Where working class and lower middle class youth attend the same school, the tone for the place is set by the richer ones: they wear new clothes; teachers and the administration allow or encourage them to attend college preparatory classes; teachers and the administration often hold them up as the model students, lowering working class students' self-esteem.

Even in schools where most of the young people are from working class families, it is the better off families that set the tone in the same kind of way.

In a million different ways society sends the message to working class youth: "You are not equal to the rich." □

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Who are the working class youth?

They are the children of workers, production and skilled, unionized and un-unionized; they are from families that have been here for 300 years and families that arrived yesterday. Their skin is all colors and they are from dozens of ethnic groups. They number in the tens of millions in the United States. □

Who causes the oppression of working class youth?

Society does not want to tell working class youth what it has planned for them: to give their whole life of labor, their blood, their sweat, in order to enrich a tiny group of rich people so these parasites can have a life full of culture, and their children can live freely and happily.

This small group of families — less than 100,000 out of some 70 million families — control 95% of the wealth. They own the big businesses, banks, multinational corporations where the vast majority of people work. They own the politicians and governments, through corporate contributions and the millions of ties forged in rich people's schools, neighbor-

hoods, clubs. The same families have been running America for the last 100 years and there is no change in sight. Indeed, in the last 10 years, the trend is an increasing gap between the rich and "the poor" (meaning large sections of the working class).

They have made life one long miserable work day for the parents, the grandparents, of working class youth. This class of rich people has demanded the long hours, paid the low wages, busted the unions, closed the factories, degraded and humiliated workers on the job, wearing them out long before their time. All this to line their own silk pockets. □

How society can serve everybody, not just the rich

Working class youth are not simply victims.

Only working class youth, when they become conscious of the true nature of the society, can change society at its roots. Only working class youth can energize and lead a powerful movement against the rich. Only working class youth can supply the intelligence, the courage and the perseverance that's needed to transform society so it serves, not just the few, but everybody.

Fighting for equal rights for working class youth is a first step in developing the vision of what the world will be like when working class youth are treated equally. □

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