

THE HAWKEYE WORKER



The newsletter of Cedar Rapids Socialist Action | Dec. 2010, 25¢

Welcome to *The Hawkeye Worker*! Socialist Action in Cedar Rapids will be producing this newsletter, a local monthly supplement to *Socialist Action*, in order to bring you the latest news from a pro-worker standpoint and keep you informed on our events in the area.

DEFEND IMMIGRANT RIGHTS! MAKE CEDAR RAPIDS SAFE FOR UNDOCUMENTED WORKERS!

(Note: Our campaign to make Cedar Rapids a sanctuary city is underway. To sign our petition, get in touch with a local SA member.)

Latino(a), black, Asian, Arab and white, immigrants with and without papers, we are all Iowans. Our lives and futures are inextricably linked. Immigration policies that limit our civil rights and freedoms, and divide our families, based on which side of an arbitrary line we happened to be born, are barbaric and untenable.

The ICE raids and deportations, which rip apart families, separating mother from child, brother from sister, classmate from classmate, are racist kidnappings, today's version of the fugitive slave laws that terrorized northern black communities in the 1850s. ICE agents are the modern-day slave-catchers whose aim is to terrorize, intimidate, and undercut the political strength of Latino communities, and cause all immigrant communities to live in fear of random harassment and deportations.

While undocumented students have the formal legal right to attend public schools in Iowa, this right is under attack by predatory ICE raids and Governor-Elect Terry Branstad's desires to bar the children of undocumented workers from attending public schools and bettering their futures.

The policy of repression against our immigrant brothers and sisters is bipartisan. Only by standing together can workers both native-born and immigrant guarantee the highest possible wages and conditions, quality education, full employment and equal rights. We cannot effectively organize union or social struggles if we are divided against ourselves.

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THE FIFTH SEASON IS PROGRESS?

(Note: At a recent 'Progress Report' sponsored by the City of Cedar Rapids, the Mayor and various city representatives spoke on the 'great strides' made towards recovering C.R. From the flood of '08. Socialist Action members were present to castigate the Mayor for his blatant disregard of democracy during the reconstruction process, exemplified by the city's desires to demolish several neighborhoods of workers' homes against the will of the homeowners and replace them with an expanded business district. Below is Cedar Rapids Socialist Action's counter-statement to the official 'Progress Report'.)

With over two years having gone by since the 2008 flood that devastated Cedar Rapids, a certain recovery is beginning to take shape – just not the kind of recovery that benefits working people. While the business district is being restored, working families languish in housing limbo.

Homes are set to be demolished in order to build playgrounds for the rich and well-to-do, leaving the pre-flood homeowners to fend for themselves. Now they find themselves in the same boat as those who rented apartments damaged by the flood: renters have entirely fallen through the cracks. This social devastation was preventable, but because levees aren't immediately profitable for the rich and powerful, it was allowed to occur.

The regime of capitalism has turned this disaster into a tragedy. City, state and federal government officials are all complicit. They say that there's no money for an orderly recovery, or for that matter education or jobs, yet they have plenty of money to finance tax cuts for the super rich, bank bailouts, and the brutal occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan.

It's time to stand up to the class and government that consistently puts profits over human needs.

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ICE raids and deportations can be stopped. In the wake of the Postville raids in Iowa and the racist SB1070 bill in Arizona which hearkens back to Nazi Germany's anti-Jewish laws, a sanctuary movement in Iowa is needed now more than ever. Iowa City is considering such a move. We need to make Cedar Rapids a safe haven for the presence of undocumented workers and their families – a safe haven for the presence of ALL Iowans.

- From the petition to the City Council to make Cedar Rapids a Sanctuary City

COPS IN HIGH SCHOOL – AND THEY AREN'T THERE TO LEARN

by MARLON PIERRE-ANTOINE

As part of the increasing degeneration of the public school system – not only in the U.S. but worldwide – Washington High School recently announced its decision to station a Cedar Rapids Police Department officer on school grounds full-time. While they claim that this move is in response to a fight on school property, a fight in which neither participant was armed and no injuries were dealt, the real message to students and faculty is clear: the eyes of the law are on you, so you'd better sit down and shut up.

From as far away as France to right here in the United States, the struggle of teachers and high school / university students for higher education standards and social justice has been increasing. March 4th and October 7th saw massive mobilizations of students from coast to coast against the austerity and education cutbacks being imposed on them; and due to the combination of Obama's No Child Left Behind-inspired “Race to the Top” program and state-level cuts to schools that began under Culver and will be continued by Branstad, the set is stage for a fightback in Iowa.

There have already been three demonstrations against education cuts since the beginning of the year, two of which were organized by Socialist Action and the other by an Iowa City teachers' union. With more attacks on the way, more defensive struggles by teachers and students are inevitable. We must not let ruling class intimidation stifle our struggle for education.

LOCAL ACTIVIST CALENDAR

December 18th - Immigrant rights forum @ the Paul Engle Center. **1:30 to 3PM**. Launch of SA campaign to make Cedar Rapids a sanctuary city.

If we take action, categorically rejecting disaster capitalism's twin parties, voicing our opposition to THEIR recovery in our workplaces, in city hall, on the streets, and where it would advance the struggle even in the voting booths, we can win the kind of recovery that's placed in *our* hands – one that bases itself on a massive public works program to create reconstruction jobs at union wages and conditions and puts the recovery plan under the control of democratically elected workers and community councils of those affected by the flood. Neither the Democrats nor the Republicans support these measures. Socialist Action does.

- THE EDITORS

FIGHT FOR YOUR FUTURE! JOIN SOCIALIST ACTION!

Socialist Action is a group of revolutionary socialists committed to the emancipation of working and oppressed people everywhere! We are active in the labor, climate change, anti-war, human rights, LGBTQ, student, womens', Black and Chicano liberation, immigrant rights, queer and all other social movements that challenge the injustices of capitalism and organize people to stand up and fight in their own interests.

We are active in a variety of social movements. In particular we support the self-mobilization of workers and the oppressed, and the building of independent working class institutions. We believe in mass action, and commit ourselves to using our time, energy and experience towards building successful protests and movements that give people a sense of the power they have as a class when they stand together.

We are a party that fights for workers' democracy and socialism, for human needs not profits!

We fight for jobs for all – 30 hours work for 40 hours pay. We advocate for a labor party based on the unions.

We oppose the Democrats and Republicans, all capitalist governments, and all of capitalism's representatives everywhere.

We have always been uncompromising opponents of Stalinist regimes from the ex-Soviet Union to China. We fight for a socialist world that is democratically controlled by workers through their own institutions.

Socialist Action is working to build a branch in the Cedar Rapids area. If you are an activist for social justice, or if you want to get involved in the struggle to create a world free of oppression and exploitation, get in touch with us to join Socialist Action!