No end in sight—
Youth unemployment hits record high

By Scott Williams
Raleigh FIST

According to the Aug. 11 "Global Employment Trends for Youth 2010" report by the International Labor Organization, a U.N. agency, more than 82 million young people aged 16-24, or 13 percent of 630 million young workers across the world, are unemployed.

Even this record high number evades the reality of global mass unemployment, underemployment and poverty faced by young workers. They generally work in low-wage jobs with no benefits or job security and live in constant desperation and uncertainty. One-quarter of all employed youth – or 152 million – remain in extreme poverty, living in households making less than $1.25 per day.

More than half of young people in the U.S., ages 16-24, do not have jobs. According to a study by the AFL-CIO, one in three young workers lives with their parents. About a third are uninsured and a third cannot pay their bills. Seven in 10 do not have enough money to cover two months of living expenses.

Youth from oppressed communities are being hit the hardest by the capitalist crisis. Black youth face unemployment rates above 50 percent. National Public Radio’s program "All Things Considered" reports that fewer than 14 in 100 young black men have jobs. Latino/a youth face similarly high rates of unemployment. Already given fewer chances to get a job, even with no benefits, youth from oppressed communities, including immigrants, face higher unemployment and more competition for low-wage jobs. They have been impacted by the loss of millions of manufacturing jobs in the U.S. in the past decade, as well as the current recession. They are subjected to racist discrimination and are often the last hired and first fired if they are hired at all.

The current large pool of unemployed workers can be tapped to replace workers who attempt to organize against the economic inequality of capitalism.

The capitalist class and the state increasingly criminalize and imprison youth of color, instead of providing living-wage jobs and benefits. While young people see fewer job opportunities, the U.S. military sees recruitment potential. Since the economic crisis began, military recruiters, who falsely

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Out of the Ballot Box, Into the Streets!

By Jennifer Waller
NY FIST

In this time of environmental, financial, and social crisis, many youth are becoming aware of the inequalities that exist in this country and around the globe, and are looking for ways to contribute to making the world a better place. In the mainstream, people are encouraged to get involved by working on local or national electoral political campaigns.

The most relevant and timely example of this trend is the surge of youth involvement during the Obama presidential campaign. Record numbers of youth participated in campaigning for Obama, and he received the highest share of the youth vote ever reported. Young people were mobilized and inspired by Obama’s message for hope and change; however, how are those young people feeling now? With the war in Afghanistan

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Out of the ballot box, into the Streets!

For example, the unemployment crisis (a result of recession caused by a lack of government regulation of corporate behavior) has reached a pitch so severe that the job market has reached a crisis, and it is now affecting the entire country. The new White House’s job security program aims to address this crisis by creating jobs in various sectors of the economy. The program has been met with mixed responses, with some arguing that it is necessary to address the crisis, while others believe that it will not be enough to create enough jobs. It is important to understand that the program was created by order of the President himself and funded by the people after an intense debate among the political parties. By articulating the struggles of U.S. families during their campaign, he won the hearts of many people, including countless student activists and community organizers. Many who had already given up on fighting for change through electoral politics had their hope rekindled by Obama, who had a strong bond in community organizing. Many people came up to actually get out and to get to the White House to support Obama and his campaign, going on with rallies and gatherings at the fundraisers in their areas. But by connecting to the people this way, the Obama campaign was able to bring together the community organizers and student activists from various walks of life to work together to help the campaign achieve its goals. Politicians care as little about what happens with Parkhi as they do about ending racism in this country. The only way the issues of Parkhi can be settled by people taking to the streets and expressing their own concerns and dreams of a more just and equal America is by being heard not just in New York City, or in this country. Many feel strongly about the jobs crisis, as well as the rights of both Native American and Muslim Americans. There is no excuse to express these feelings when working on an electional political campaign. The right way to make real changes around these is by building the people’s movement against racism and economic inequality.

Electoral politicians address such issues in an attempt to convince the people to use the government to provide some relief from the economic crisis. Another example is the new racist Arizona immigration bill, SB 1070, which was signed into law and triggered by Arizona Governor Jan Brewer. After months of protests and a national/civil/civil/citizens movement, a federal judge blocked the most harmful portions of it. But the bill will only be abolished through struggle, under the pressure of a constant and struggle-people’s movement to end Arizona’s racist attack against Latinos.

A similar issue is the debate that has taken place on the streets of downtown New York City over Parkhi, the proposed Islamic cultural center. Elected officials can talk up the importance of religious freedom and the protection of the freedoms of victims of September 11th; however, they often forget that there is more than anything they have helped to the cause of ending racism. Politicians care as little about what happens with Parkhi as they do about ending racism in this country. The only way the issues of Parkhi can be settled by people taking to the streets and expressing their own concerns and dreams of a more just and equal America is by being heard not just in New York City, or in this country. Many feel strongly about the jobs crisis, as well as the rights of both Native American and Muslim Americans. There is no excuse to express these feelings when working on an electional political campaign. The right way to make real changes around these is by building the people’s movement against racism and economic inequality.

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Obama and the politics of imperialism

The following excerpts are from a talk given by Laila Donald of N.Y. FIST to a panel at the N.Y. Workers’ Conference on July 20, 2015.

While the election of a Black president was absolutely a historical moment of significance, the Obama administration has shown that the head of this empire must always be on the side of the empire, no matter his or her background. When it comes to war in general, the Obama administration has not only an extension of Bush’s policy, but has expanded a largely secret U.S. war against al-Qeada, the same war that one administration did not... Bush-era clashes between the Defense and State departments over Special Operations deployments have also been revived.

Under the Obama administration the United States Africa Command, or AFRICOM, has received additional funding. In 2008 the U.S. conducted a war games exercise in Pennsylvania that simulated a military response to “piracy” and insurgency in Somalia, as well as the collapse of the Nigerian government.

On Oct. 28 of last year, President Barack Obama signed the largest military budget in U.S. history, the 2010 Defense Authorization Bill. This bill allocates $680 billion, it’s a large, unprecedented expansion of the whole of the world united. And actually, if you look at the mili- tary expenditures that they conveniently leave out of the budget — jobless youth, it’s more than twice as large. The War Resisters League put real 2009 million expenditures at 8.4 billion.

The military budget has grown so large, they can’t even control and devour all social funding — and we should say that they always make us to keep these things separate — you know, that controlling or social funding is over here when, in reality, it’s the same money being divided up and put into both the budgets.

One of the most insidious tactics of the government is the attempt to get us to spend war by linking projects to government spending bills. For example, the_poor in the United States who are not entitled to unemployment benefits, which are billions of dollars, that are the basis for social funding are over here — when, in reality, it’s the same money being divided up and put into both the budgets.

Anti-war student targeted by FBI

By Morgan Spencer
FIST East Lansing, Mich.

National Organization for Women released on April 8, 2015, for the first time, a list of its members who were identified by the FBI as anti-war activists. This is the result of the FBI’s ongoing investigation of alleged anti-war activities.

According to the FBI, the organization identified more than 1,000 members of NOW as anti-war activists. The FBI claims that these individuals have committed a range of alleged anti-war activities, including organizing protests, distributing literature, and promoting anti-war messages.

However, a legal defense fund has been established to provide assistance to those targeted by the FBI. The fund is being supported by donations from individuals and organizations committed to protecting civil liberties and promoting peace.

In response to the FBI’s action, NOW has called for an end to the investigation and for the release of its members. NOW states that the targeting of its members is a violation of their First Amendment rights and an attempt to silence their voices.

NOW has also called for the FBI to provide clear and concise explanations of the criteria used to identify individuals as anti-war activists. NOW is concerned that the criteria used by the FBI may be subject to interpretation and may lead to the targeting of other organizations and individuals.

Finally, NOW calls for the FBI to provide a comprehensive list of the alleged anti-war activities in which its members have been involved. NOW believes that this information is critical to understanding the scope and nature of the investigation and to holding the FBI accountable for its actions.

The FBI’s action has sparked a wide range of responses from civil liberties organizations, political activists, and members of NOW. Many have criticized the FBI’s investigation as a violation of civil liberties and an attempt to silence anti-war voices.

On the other hand, some have argued that the FBI’s action is a necessary measure to protect national security and prevent terrorism.

Regardless of these differing perspectives, the FBI’s action has highlighted the ongoing struggle for civil liberties and the importance of protecting the rights of anti-war activists and organizations.

As the investigation continues, NOW and its supporters will continue to fight for the release of its members and to hold the FBI accountable for its actions.
Are elections the path to justice?

By Colin T. Maepa

Cleveland

With the congressional elections up

proaching in November, many workers,

union organizers and community

leaders are rallying to support

labour candidates across the
globe. These elections offer an
opportunity for workers to

forge a path toward

equality and social justice.

Elections are often

viewed as a means for

achieving political

power and making

progress. However, the

ability of elections to

effect meaningful

change depends on a
collection of factors,

including voter turnout,

political campaigns and

the political landscape.

In the United States,

for example, the two-party

system can limit the

diversity of voices in

politics and make it

difficult for alternative

candidates to gain

traction. Similarly, in

many countries, electoral

systems are designed to

favor certain parties

and exclude others.

Despite these challenges,

many workers and

organizers are working to

mobilize their communities

and make their voices

heard.

In many countries, workers

are faced with 

difficult working conditions,

low wages and lack of

protection. These conditions

can lead to a sense of

helplessness and disempowerment.

Elections offer a chance for

workers to come together and

fight for change.

By casting their votes, they

can support candidates who

promise to improve conditions

for all. This can include policies

such as raising the minimum

wage, strengthening labor

laws and providing access to

quality healthcare.

However, elections alone

are not enough. Workers

must also mobilize outside

the voting booth. This includes

building coalitions with

other communities,

organizing protests and

marching in the streets.

By combining electoral

action with these other forms

of activism, workers can

achieve meaningful change.

In conclusion, elections

are an important part of

the democratic process.

They provide an opportunity

for workers to make their

voices heard and to

demand better working

conditions. But to

realize this potential,

workers must actively

engage in the process and

work together to

achieve their goals.
No se atisba el final
El desempleo juvenil alcanza récord histórico

Por Scott Williams

De acuerdo al informe del 11 de agosto “Tendencias Mundiales de Empleo para los Jóvenes 2010”, ofrecido por la Orga- nización Internacional del Trabajo, una agencia de la ONU, más de 82 millones de jóvenes de 16 a 25 años de edad, o el 13 por ciento de 620 millones de traba- jadores jóvenes en todo el mundo, están desempleados.

Incluso esta cifra récord evade la re- alidad del desempleo global de las masas, el subempleo y la pobreza que enfrentan los trabajadores jóvenes. Por lo general, trabajan en puestos de trabajo con bajos salarios y sin beneficios ni seguridad en el empleo y viven en constantes desesper- ación e incertidumbre. Una cuarta parte de todos los jóvenes empleados – 152 millones – permanece en la pobreza ex- trema, viven en hogares que ganan menos de $1.25 por día.

Más de la mitad de los jóvenes en los EE.UU., de edades entre 16 y 24, no tienen trabajo. Según un estudio realizado por la AFL-CIO, uno de cada tres trabajadores jóvenes vive con sus padres. Alrededor de un tercio no tienen seguro médico y la otra tercera parte no puede pagar sus cuentas. Siete de cada 10 no tienen el dinero sufici- ente para cubrir dos meses de gastos.

Los jóvenes de las comunidades oprimi- das son los más afectados por la crisis capitalista. La Juventud Negra encara un porcentaje de desempleo por encima del 50 por ciento. El programa de la Radio Pública Nacional (NPR) “All Things Con- sidered”, informa que menos de 14 de cada 100 jóvenes Negros tienen trabajo. La juventud latina se enfrenta igualmente a altas tasas de desempleo.

Aunque ya existen menos posibilidades de conseguir un trabajo, incluso cuando no hay beneficios, los jóvenes de las co- munidades oprimidas, incluidos los inmi- grants, se enfrentan a un mayor desem- pleo y más competencia por los trabajos de bajos salarios. Ellos han sido afectados por la pérdida de millones de empleos manufactureros en los EE.UU, en la últi- ma década, así como la actual recesión. Son objeto de discriminación racista y son a menudo los últimos en ser contratados y los primeros en ser despedidos si es que logran un empleo.

Los patronos se aprovechan del grupo de trabajadores desemplea- dos para sustituir a trabajadores que intentan organizarse en contra de la desigualdad económica del capitalismo. La clase capitalista y el Estado cada vez más criminalizan y encarcelan a los jóvenes de color, en lugar de crear em- pleos con salarios dignos y beneficios.

Mientras que los jóvenes ven menos oportunidades de empleo, el Army of EE.UU, los ve como un potencial de re- clutamiento. Desde que comenzó la crisis económica, a los reclutadores militares, que falsamente prometen fondos para la universidad, les resulta más fácil reclutar a jóvenes que no pueden darse el lujo de asistir a la universidad, o no encuentran trabajo. Los niveles de reclutamiento es- tán por encima de los del 2003, especial- mente entre los jóvenes de la clase traba- jadora, incluyendo a hombres y mujeres de comunidades oprimidas.

Mientras que el crecimiento de puestos de trabajo de bajos salarios ha sido tradicionalmente elevada entre las mu- jeres trabajadoras, el aumento en la com- petencia por un empleo ha afectado a las trabajadoras. Las jóvenes se enfrentan a una tasa mundial de desempleo de 13.2 por ciento, en comparación con la de 12.9 para los hombres jóvenes, considerado como muy alto también. Jóvenes lesbianas / gays / bi o tran- sexuales, enfrentan la incertidumbre cada vez mayor de la poca protección contra la discriminación y la intolerancia. Con la falta de derechos en el trabajo, así como la falta de empleos sindicalizados bien re- mineralizados que ofrecen seguridad laboral y protección para ellos y todos los traba- jadores, esta precariedad y desigualdad sólo continuará.

Los ataque contra la educación públi- ca van en aumento. Los gobiernos estat- ales y locales están reduciendo los fondos para la educación en todos los niveles. Hay más interés para capacitar a los tra- bajadores jóvenes por un mundo de em- pleos con bajos salarios, en lugar de pro- porcionar la educación superior.

Los gobiernos locales están cerrando las escuelas secundarias, en especial aquellas que son frecuentadas principal- mente por estudiantes de color. Este es el resultado de la “Race to the Top”, re- spuesta de la administración Obama a la política de la administración tremenda- mente impopular de George W. Bush de “No Child Left Behind”.

La matrícula se ha disparado en las universidades públicas y privadas, tales como el aumento del 32 por ciento en el sistema de la Universidad de California el año pasado. Mientras tanto, las clases son cada vez más grandes. Hay menos pu- destaos de trabajo con salarios dignos para ayudar a los estudiantes a pagar su mon- taña de deudas.

Los jóvenes necesitan empleos. Tienen que organizarse para conseguirlos. El 2 de octubre, los jóvenes estarán luchando por puestos de trabajo en un contingente de la Juventud y Estudiantes en la marcha de “One Nation” en Washington, D.C. El 07 de octubre, los jóvenes de todo el mundo se unirán para defender su derecho a la educación. Se trata de importantes movi- lizaciones, porque los jóvenes y los traba- jadores deben continuar la creación de un movimiento de contratación.

Los jóvenes siempre han sido la clave para la creación de las luchas populares, ya sea por la liberación Negra, los dere- chos de LGTB, en oposición a la guerra o en movimientos estudiantiles. Con su energía, entusiasmo y pasión, la juven- tud debe seguir luchando por un mundo mejor, que consagra sus derechos a la educación, un empleo o un ingreso, y la igualdad para todos.

Scott Williams es un miembro de la Juventud F.I.S.T (Fight Imperialism, Stand Together – Todos Juntos en la Lu- cha Contra el Imperialismo) de Raleigh, North Carolina.