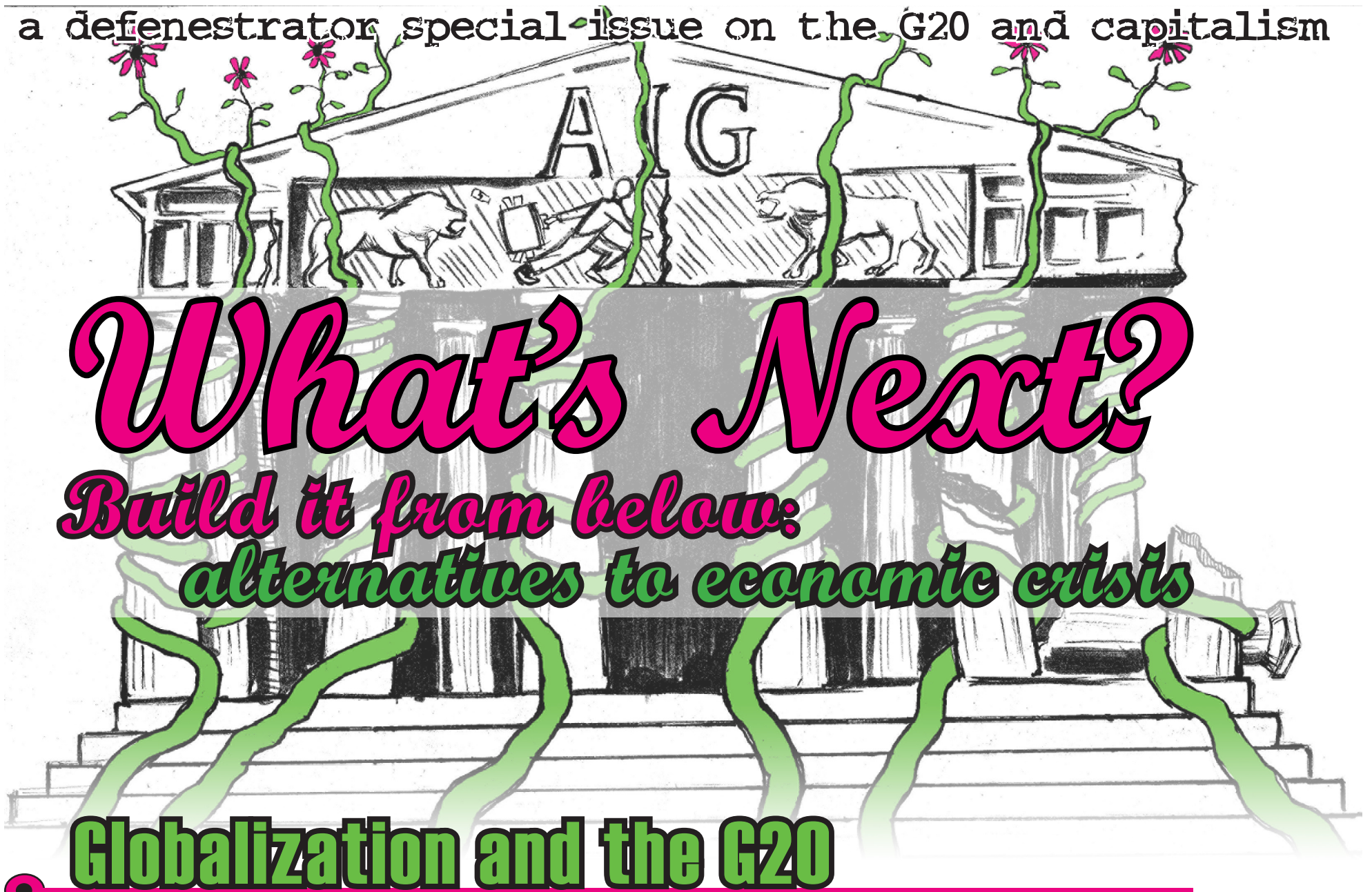


a defenestrator special issue on the G20 and capitalism



# What's Next?

Build it from below:  
alternatives to economic crisis

## Globalization and the G20

A glowing Los Angeles Times assessment of Obama's first hundred days reproduced an interesting statement from Obama to the leaders of the banking industry last March. As the financial chieftains began to complain to him about the public's failure to understand their industry's need for high levels of compensation, Obama cut them off. "Be careful how you make those statements, gentlemen," Obama said. "The public isn't buying that. My administration is the only thing between you and the pitchforks." Excerpted from: Barack Obama, and the Corporatist "Punking" of America, Frank Rich, Z Magazine

"The fact is that the world is only at the beginning of a depression that will last for quite awhile and will get far worse than it is now. The immediate issue for governments is not how to recover but how to survive the growing popular anger they are all, without exception, facing." -Immanuel Wallerstein

### G20:

In the late 1990s an "Asian Economic Crisis" raised concerns of a possible global economic meltdown. Similar to the current crisis, economists such as Paul Krugman read the crisis as the result of greed, inefficiency, and "hot" or "virtual" trading (trading/speculating on moneys that do not yet or actually exist).

In response to the crisis, the world's wealthiest countries (combined they represent 85% of the world's economy) got together and formed the G20 with the purported goal of promoting dialogue between established industrialized countries and emerging market economies in order to "promote economic growth" (increase global capital's reach). Each member country is represented by its financial ministers and Central Bank Governors. The G20 excludes the world's poorest countries, and as with the United Nations and the G8 (the 8 wealthiest countries), countries with the most global power or reach – i.e. most money and biggest military – have the biggest influence or say. The US is the most powerful member country, despite its massive debt and the fact that much of the responsibility for the current economic crisis stems from US-based financial institutions. The G20 isn't a replacement for the G8 (which has greater global decision-making power) it is an

addition to it, but the groups hold separate meetings in different countries each year.

The G8 was originally formed in response to the oil crisis in 1973 and the resulting global recession. In 1974 the United States convened an informal gathering of senior financial officials from the United States, the United Kingdom, West Germany, Japan, and



France called the Library Group.

The oil crisis was a watershed in economic policy. In 1971, Paul Volcker, Chairman of the Federal Reserve under United States Presidents Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan (from August 1979 to August 1987) and currently chairman of the newly formed Economic Recovery Advisory Board under President Barack Obama, pushed for the abandonment of the Bretton Woods economic system. The Bretton Woods system was a system of international economic regulation which was created in the aftermath of the Great Depression, while World War II was still raging, to address the wild speculation that had precipitated the economic crash. At Bretton Woods, the nations present agreed to peg their currencies to the value of gold, and to empower the newly created International Monetary Fund to help bail out member nations in need of loans in

times of economic duress.

In response to the economic crisis of the 1970s, Volcker employed a sort of "shock therapy," purportedly to help the ailing US economy. The Volcker shock was, in fact, a classic example of what is referred to as "beggar thy neighbor" economics, with a boost to the US economy—in particular to ailing corporate profits—came at the expense of the rest of the world—especially the working class at home and abroad. Volcker raised interest rates to over 20%, which caused a serious recession and increased unemployment. Another effect of raising interest rates was to exacerbate the debt crisis in Latin America, with many debtor nations being forced to default on their loans because of exorbitant interest rates. This worked in favor of the U.S. by fostering a new era of Dollar hegemony in place of the gold standard.

The 1970s ushered in an era of economic deregulation, extreme speculation, declining wages, attacks on workers' rights and a drastic increase in corporate profits we know of today as globalization. In a sense, the unstated mandate of the G8 was originally to secure the place of the Western, formerly colonial-powers at the helm of world affairs, and to remind the oil-producing nations, all of whom were significantly excluded from the closed door meetings, who was boss. The oil crisis, which occurred when the members of OAPEC (constituted of the Arab members of OPEC, plus Egypt and Syria) boycotted the US over its support of Israel, shook the economic order, and the fearful elites responded with a vengeance to the oil producing upstarts.

The G20, whose first summit was held in December 1999 in Berlin, Germany, is, like the G8, an undemocratic institution with a lot of influence; none of its meetings or debates are open to the public. All the public is privy to is a brief press report about what's been decided, where the next meeting might take place, etc.

Lots of leftist radicals like to use the original meaning of crisis (from the Greek *krisis*): "a sudden change in the course of a disease or fever toward either improvement or deterioration" or "a point in a story or drama when a conflict reaches its highest ten-continued on page 3

# understanding the crisis...

*A sheriff looks on as a family crams all of its worldly possessions in a car, not knowing where they'll go. The bank has foreclosed on their home and the sheriff has delivered the eviction notice...Kids walk down to the public pool and see a lock and an empty pool. They start shaking the fence and cursing. The city closed it to balance the budget and they won't cross over to the next neighborhood public pool for fear of getting jumped...A woman rushes through traffic to get to a job interview. Her unemployment has run out and she needs to land this gig. She passes a cop car on the side of the road, hears the siren and sinks into her seat as she pulls to the side. Her lapsed inspection sticker caught the cop's eye. She hasn't kept up with her car insurance payments and she sure as hell won't be landing the job showing up late for the interview...*

This is what economic crisis looks like.

The economic crisis has been in the news a lot in the last year—with the nightly news bombarding us with terms like “sub-prime mortgages,” “toxic debts,” “bailouts,” and “stimulus.” It's clearly a mess, but what does all of this really mean? And how did we get here? It's easy to get the impression that the crash came out of nowhere—after all, it seemed to surprise Wall Street, the government, and most everyone else. As the G20 comes to Pittsburgh to “fix” the problem, it's worth figuring out what actually happened.

## Financial Crisis

The crisis came to a head last year in the financial sector—the part of the economy that supplies credit to businesses, governments, and individuals. This includes banks, the stock market, mortgage companies, credit card companies, and trading houses. All private businesses (like building and running a factory) and all public works projects (constructing a highway or school) need credit, making the financial sector an extremely influential—if invisible—determinant of what happens in the world around us. Major purchases by everyday people, such as buying a home or car and going to college, often depend on credit from the financial sector. Like other parts of a capitalist economy, most of the financial sector is owned by private individuals and corporations making loans in order to make a profit. Banks have no requirement to serve the public interest, but rather to earn a profit from interest payments and fees from the businesses, governments, and individuals they loan to. Inherently, banks have a very short-term view. They have to turn a profit every quarter to stay competitive. So when they make decisions, they're not thinking long-term. These day-to-day, “business as usual,” aspects of the financial sector con-

verged in just the right way to create the current financial crisis.

Banks loan out more money than they keep; this is called fractional reserve banking, and it's essential to banks making a profit. When banks loan out more money than they have, they are essentially creating money. While banks have done this for centuries, they have done it in a relatively “safe” way: keeping 1 dollar on reserve for every 10 they loaned out, loaning to people and institutions they know can pay the money back, investing in businesses that actually produce something, and limiting speculation. But through deregulation and their need to turn a profit every quarter, banks made larger, riskier, and more complex loans—with less and less money in reserve—over the last 10 years. But this recent crisis in the banking sector goes further back to deeper changes in the U.S. economy of the last 40 years.

## The Changing U.S. Economy

After World War II, the U.S. was the most powerful economy in the world. U.S. corporations were profitable, U.S. manufactured goods and agricultural products were exported across the globe, and U.S. leaders determined the direction of the world's non-communist economy through loans—often through newly formed international financial institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. Things changed by the mid-1960s: the newly-rebuilt German and Japanese economies were able to compete with U.S. manufacturing sector; the U.S. went deeper into debt, largely to pay for the Vietnam War; and there was greater unrest from the U.S. population in the form of the civil rights movement, anti-war protests, the student movement, wildcat strikes, and the feminist movement. While this “golden age” was good for some U.S. workers, people demanded more.

In the 70's and 80's, elite planners in the U.S. economy made decisions that fundamentally changed how things worked. The dollar was de-linked from gold, which led to increased currency trading and speculation and forced countries that loaned to the U.S. government to continue to do so for fear of having their loans paid back in devalued currencies. Major industries that had employed well-paid union workers, such as the auto industry and heavy manufacturing, moved to the non-unionized South and West of the U.S. or overseas, where wages and regulation were lower. Unions were attacked by the government and bosses. Federal programs that provided resources to urban communities, such as Community Development Block Grants, were cut. At the same time, policing and prison construction increased. Wages decreased; the single-paycheck family became a thing of the past, with the gaps

being filled by second and third jobs as well as the credit card industry, which became larger and less regulated. Public institutions, such as schools, transportation, and universities, were partially or fully privatized. Gaps between the rich and everyone else increased. A similar process happened around the world; it is often called neoliberalism.

The financial sector became increasingly powerful in the U.S. economy. Banks and bond traders began to play a more powerful role in the financing of city budgets. Credit card lending exploded, and banks were allowed to charge higher interest and higher fees. Pension funds became increasingly tied to the stock market. Banks were less and less regulated by the government; in the Clinton administration there were a series of laws passed that allowed banks to invest more heavily in securities and other forms of speculation that can be highly profitable in the short term. In the 1990s, the U.S. economy had a stock market boom, largely driven by new internet stock companies. More and more households began to invest in the stock market. While some people did very well during this period, many lost big. The increase in wealth wasn't based on more production, but on the assumption that stocks would go up forever. In early 2001 the bubble burst.

## The Housing Bubble and the Current Crisis

We heard a lot about a jobless recovery in 2001. This is because the Federal Reserve reinstalled another speculative bubble by lowering the interest rate, making money very “cheap” for banks and other financial institutions. These banks, recently deregulated and seeking the highest profits available, invested in the housing market and increasingly complex financial instruments such as derivatives. Housing prices shot up through the first 6 years of the 21st century; at the same time, the number and complexities of loans increased as well. Many people were able to buy houses for the first time, and those who already owned homes were able to use them like ATMs by taking out second mortgages, counting on rising house prices to cover the cost.

These mortgages were then repackaged through a process called securitization, where mortgage debt was repackaged by

a string of financial institutions and sold off—often to large investors such as hedge funds or pension funds. At each point various financial institutions (mortgage brokers, investment banks, credit ratings agencies) were able to make a lot of money from selling mortgage debt. As such, there was an economic incentive to sell as many mortgages as possible—even if people couldn't afford to pay. This was the financial sector's incentive for sub-prime mortgages—mortgages issued to people with poor credit scores that offer a low initial “teaser” rate and then increase dramatically. The financial sector wasn't interested in getting more people to own homes; it wanted to gamble and profit off of their promise to pay. Defaults were expected; the mortgage issuers—preying on the poor and elderly—didn't care if they paid, since the mortgage was going to be sold off anyhow. Investigations continue to reveal mortgage companies encouraging fraud in order to seal as many of these lucrative mortgage contracts as possible. Major investment banks such as AIG, Bear Sterns, and Lehman Brothers encouraged and profited off of this process of financing, reselling, and producing insurance for these risky mortgages. In 2006 default rates began to increase, pulling down housing prices.

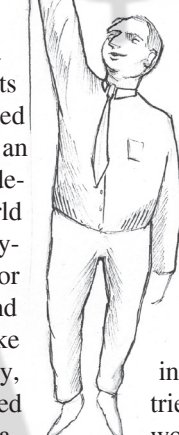
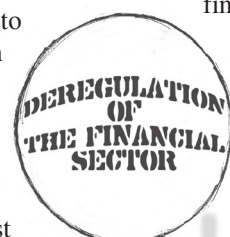
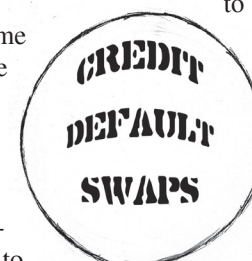
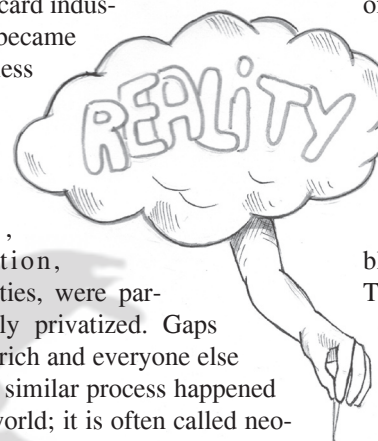
Other parts of the financial sector made bets on anything it could—the future price of commodities, buy-outs of other companies—through a slew of non-bank financial institutions that have been called the “shadow banking system.” While sub-prime mortgages got the most attention, these risky investments made with loans played an important role in the crisis.

## Bailout: Socialism for the Wealthiest, the Free Market for Everyone Else

The bubble has been pricked, and the financial sector lost its multi-trillion-dollar gamble.

By fall of 2008 these bad bets were circulating through the financial sector. Defaults were rising, home prices were falling in many markets, and investment banks that had invested billions in them weren't sure what was good and what was junk—what have been called toxic assets. Mortgage-lending arms of investment banks began to go under, and banks were unwilling to lend to one another. The gambles were running through the circuits of the banking system, and there was a serious risk that lending was going to stop, which would have thrown the economy into collapse.

After decades of rhetoric about “the free market” and “private enterprise” and “re-



sponsibility,” the U.S. government stepped in and handed them a check. Initially for \$700 billion dollars, the total is now estimated to be over \$12 trillion if you count various handouts and loan guarantees made by the government and Federal Reserve.

## A Blank Check, Not A ‘Takeover’

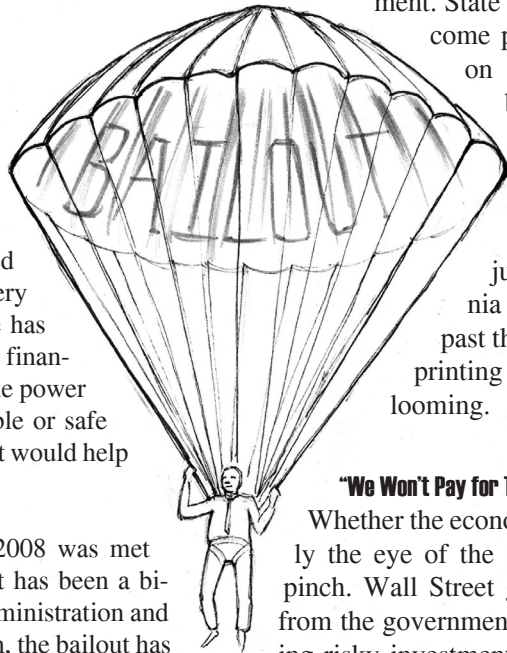
Contrary to the right-wing rhetoric about ‘socialism,’ this was not the government “taking over the banks.” The U.S. Treasury Department received non-voting stock, meaning it has very little say in how the banks run. There has been little additional regulation of the financial sector, and the government has little power to make banks loan in more responsible or safe ways, or loan towards development that would help everyone.

While the initial bailout in October 2008 was met with a massive popular disapproval, it has been a bipartisan policy. Started by the Bush administration and continued by the Obama administration, the bailout has continued to throw money at the largest banks, with the hope that they would start lending. They have taken this money to pay themselves lavish bonuses and buy out other banks.

## What Next?

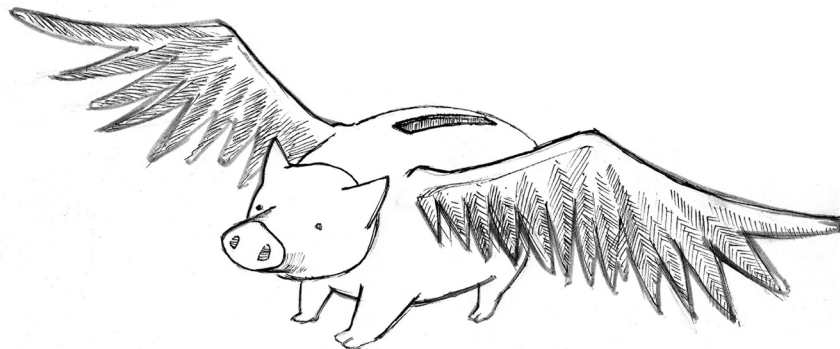
As the G20 summit approaches in Pittsburgh, the media is reporting that the U.S. economy is recovering: stock and housing markets are starting to move upward once again. This optimism is based on the performance of asset

markets dominated by wealthy investors and institutions, not on everyday people’s well-being. People are losing jobs less quickly, but millions are undergoing frustrating job searches and applying for unemployment. State and city budgets that have become progressively more dependent on the financial sector through bond sales and dependence on the housing markets, are reeling from the crisis. California’s \$42 billion deficit and the cuts that followed are just one example; Pennsylvania and Connecticut are months past their deadline at the time of this printing with cuts to essential services looming.



### “We Won’t Pay for Their Crisis!”

Whether the economy is recovering or it’s merely the eye of the storm, people are feeling the pinch. Wall Street gambled, and lost. With help from the government they’re getting back to making risky investments and paying lavish bonuses. Meanwhile, schools are making cuts or closing, fire departments are being reduced, library hours are being cut. As millions are struggling to find work, foreclosure and high credit card fees loom; even during a crisis the wealthiest find a way to squeeze every penny out of those below them. The rest of this publication documents resistance, as people across the U.S. and the world refuse to pay for their crisis, instead fighting for—or taking—what they need to lead dignified lives.



# Globalization and the G20 *continued from pg 1*

sion and must be resolved” to describe our current global situation. Globally, we face crises of democracy, ecology and economics; they are all interconnected. There are two different paths we can take: one, a path of life, of sustainability, of sharing, of recognition of the interdependence of all life on earth requires the Earth’s inhabitants to work together from the bottom up and could nurse the patient towards health; the other, the unsustainable, top-down, profit-and-war-driven path has led and will continue to lead to environmental devastation, gross inequities and injustice world-wide, and economic crisis.

The G20, a top-down global organization which operates without public reckoning, represents the second path: exploitation of resources, including human labor, debt for poor countries, and governmental collusion with corporations as opposed to human needs. Over and over again capitalism and the lies of trickle-down economics have failed humanity, and yet even with the awareness of the crisis, like a death instinct, neoliberalism keeps regrouping and pushing on. But globally people’s movements have never and still aren’t taking it lying down.

*You don’t call me desperate when I’m knocking on the door  
Every wall you build I’ll knock it down to the floor  
See me see me bubbling quietly  
See me see me acting like you ain’t met me  
Hands up  
Guns out  
Represent the world town*

MIA, Kala

In “Promissory Notes: From Crisis to Commons,” the Midnight Notes Collective describes how “there is a worldwide recognition that we aren’t just in another round between workers and capitalists to see how to organize the economy; we are facing catastrophic climate change and generalized social and environmental breakdown in a world where ‘the civilization of oil’ has placed a great part of humanity in cities and slums that were already reaching their breaking point before the crisis set in.” In response, “broad movements have risen worldwide that...must be recognized,” and they’re knocking on the door. The G20 meeting in Pittsburgh is one such door to knock on, one wall to take down. The doors of the meetings of political and financial leaders of the world’s twenty wealthiest countries, where decisions are made that affect us, are closed to those not of the elite. Outside, we raise our voices.

We create alternatives.

## economics for *the rest of us*

**Capitalism:** An economic system based on private ownership and profit. In general, productive resources (factories, banks, stores, restaurants) are owned by private individuals or a group of people (corporations with stock owners) in order to make a profit. Owners of productive resources hire workers and pay them a wage to produce commodities or services. These workers use their wages to pay for things they need in other parts of the economy, such as housing, food, education, and transportation. Often these services that everyone needs to survive and lead a meaningful life are also owned by individuals or corporations seeking to make a profit, such a landlord.

**Finance:** The field of financing business (bankers, brokers, traders etc.).

**Stocks/Shares:** Having stock in a company means you own part of the company and receive a share of profits and can usually vote for the board of directors. Stocks are traded in the stock market and prices go up or down based on perceived value by investors.

**Bonds:** Interest-bearing loans arranged through institutions (national, state, and local governments, companies) that are bought by investors. Trading U.S Treasury Bonds (U.S. government debt) constitutes the largest financial market in the world.

**Neoliberalism:** The current stage of capitalism that assumes that the most efficient way to organize society is to have everything for sale, including things that used to be public resources like education, health care, water, roads, libraries, transportation, pension funds, and even living organisms. It started in the early 1970s and has become the dominant ideology in economics, guiding most decisions by governments and international institutions, such as the G20, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank. Some call it modern imperialism because of the way that it puts poor countries at a total disadvantage to rich countries and prevents their economic development. The proposed privatization of parking garages in downtown Pittsburgh could be considered a form of neoliberalism.

**Credit:** The provision of resources (most often in the form of a loan) from one party to another.

**Speculation:** buying, selling and trading stocks, bonds, commodities, currencies etc with the hope of making a profit from a change in price. Risking losses, like gambling.

**Securities/Securitization:** Securities are repackaged stocks and bonds. Securitization is the process in which real assets that involve the transfer of money (mortgages, student loans, credit card debt) are turned into securities to be bought and traded on the market like products by other investors.

**Subprime mortgages:** Loans or Mortgages made to people who would otherwise not meet credit requirements. These mortgages often have a low initial “teaser” rate that increase dramatically a few years into the mortgage.

**International Financial Institutions (IFIs):** Multinational institutions that manage the international financial system. They include the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Meetings of the leaders of wealthy economies such as the G20 and G8 study and make recommendations to IFIs.



# ... are there alternatives to capitalism?

“We hustle hard to keep the sharks fed” - Hi-Tek

In capitalism, we can see the divide between the rich and the poor constantly increase. We can see decisions are based on profit as opposed to our needs. Wars are fought for political and economic control. In the richest country in the world, the poorest citizens are not just being systematically deprived of housing, health care, healthy food, etc., but increasingly imprisoned for profit and to keep the poorest of us in crisis (over 2.3 million US citizens are incarcerated by their own country—more than any other country on the planet). Those hardest hit by this system are of course also struggling the hardest to keep those proverbial sharks fed. We live in a place where a small group of corporations and rich set the agenda of our politics, of who controls space, housing, land and resources in general. Access to wealth in this system determines largely who is elected to the halls of power. And once there, politicians are expected to maintain the profits for those who got them there. And the goal is explicitly to make as much profit as possible and keep a trickle up economy working smoothly. For many, it seems like it could be no other way.

But capitalism is not the weather. It’s a system that is painstakingly kept in place by corporations, governments, police, armies and the media. But let’s imagine some examples of a world running on a different type of logic: on the basis of solidarity and mutual aid. What sort of organizations and ways of being would we need to create a world where poverty is never tolerated, where we make decisions as communities for our well being instead of struggling individually for survival? Around the world, some of those most impoverished by capitalism have gotten together, organized and created exciting new ways of building economies, ways which are intentional in their purpose to create collective wealth as opposed to benefiting individuals, where economic and political power is a shared experience rather than being assigned to politicians and business men.



Zapatista Women

## The Zapatistas:

**Everything for Everyone Nothing for Ourselves!**

The indigenous people of Chiapas in southern Mexico know economic crises well. Among the poorest inhabitants of Mexico, they were—from European invasion onwards—subjected to slavery, dispossession and brutal poverty. When Bill Clinton signed the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA—one of the many seeds of our own current economic crisis) it was Chiapas that could smell what was to come. This even before millions of Mexicans fled to the US as economic refugees and thousands of US Americans lost their jobs to southward fleeing industry. The Zapatista Army of National Liberation took the city of San Cristobal de las Casas by storm while the army and police were passed out drunk on New Year’s Eve of 1994, the date NAFTA went into effect. After suffering a bloody counterattack by the Mexican Army, the rebels withdrew to the jungle. But within a few years, the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN as their Mexican acronym) and their civil base of Zapatistas had taken over large swaths of land previously owned by a small number of rich and oppressive landowners and established an autonomous, parallel system of governance known as the Autonomous Municipalities. Here the Zapatistas established agricultural collectives, health clinics, their own school system, and in some cases created small scale power grids. New regional Zapatista community centers popped up across rebel territory, which serve as bases for organizing, settling disputes, and education. The Zapatistas have been a global inspiration for building combative and fresh alternatives to capitalism around the world.

## The Spanish Revolution

**Land and Freedom**

The biggest modern experiment in intentionally creating a directly democratic socialist economy was during the Spanish Revolution in 1936, a culmination of several generations of anarchist thinkers and labor organizers organizing revolutionary movements. In the thick of the Great Depression and just preceding Spain’s civil war and eventual defeat by the Fascists, massive amounts of industry and agriculture were taken over by workers and peasants. Profit, bosses, and competition (and in many places money itself) were largely eliminated, leaving workers and farmers to decide how to organize their workplaces and distribute their products. In practice, this led to increases in efficiency as well as goods and services being made widely available regardless of economic status. The Barcelona transit system, for example, run by the National Confederation of Workers (or CNT in Spanish) not only cut their fares to 60% and increased their salaries, but

increased running times and greatly improved the efficiency of public transport in general. The CNT’s health care workers managed to exponentially expand their health care system (including taking over production of pharmaceuticals) and expanded health care access to thousands who were previously without access.



Spanish, Anarchist trolley

The numbers involved were tremendous: According to various historians, during the Spanish Revolution there were an estimated 1,700 agrarian collectives, between 1,265 to 1,865 workers collectives “embracing 610,000 to 800,000 workers. With their families, they involve a population of 3,200,000. Historian Gaston Leval talks about a “revolutionary experience involving, directly or indirectly, 7 to 8 million people.”

The Spanish revolutionaries successfully countered a severe economic crisis through direct action and mutual aid in a way that not only made sense economically, but in the process played a role in challenging patriarchy and other social roles integral to capitalist daily life. Though the gains won by the Spanish revolutionaries were largely lost during the years of dictatorship under General Franco, today hundreds of workers’ collectives exist throughout Spain. The Basque based Mondragon network of cooperatives with roots in the pre-dictatorship workers’ collectives today contributes 3.8% of Spain’s GDP.

## Argentina

**Produce, Occupy, Resist!**

When Argentina’s (now a member of the G20) economy collapsed as a result of serious pressures to neoliberalize their economy in 2001, thousands lost their life savings, and hundreds of factories and workplaces closed shop. Hundreds of workplaces, no longer turning significant profits, were abandoned by their owners (many of whom lived overseas) resulting in massive layoffs. It wasn’t long before the now unemployed workers banded together and took back their former workplaces. Instead of profit generating businesses, the workplaces operated as worker run cooperatives. Many of these recuperated workplaces took on a very different nature under workers’ control. While virtually all of these businesses had been conceived and run with the goal of turning a profit for their owners, they ended up being used to benefit the surrounding communities as well. A ceramic tile factory opened up a free clinic in the poor neighborhood where they were based. A printing press opened up an art gallery and



Workers Without a Boss: at the Zanon ceramics factory laid off workers took back their factory and reopened as a democratically-run workers’ collective

free cinema in an unused part of their workplace. A worker-run, 4-star hotel in downtown Buenos Aires made conference rooms and performance spaces available for movement gatherings and theater groups. Though organizational styles vary, many recuperated workplaces are organized in the most directly democratic form possible. In many cases, workers actually improved their standards of living in the midst of a collapse of a capitalist economy by reorganizing in socially responsible ways. Networks of occupied workplaces formed to share resources and defend each other’s spaces from attacks by bosses, police, and the state. The recuperated factories also actively and materially supported other movements including unemployed workers and a network of directly democratic neighborhood assemblies.

## Brazil’s Landless Workers

Brazil’s Landless Workers Movement (MST) provides another inspiring example of direct action used to combat poverty. Since



Whose Land? Our Land! Formerly landless Brazilian peasants organize a land takeover

1984 the largely homeless families that make up the MST have organized in groups, sometimes thousands of families strong, to take over unused land owned by the rich and corporations (in Brazil less than 2% of the population owns over half the land). Once on the land, the formerly landless peasants get to work to create housing, infrastructure (including electrical and sewage systems), as well as sustainable agricultural and economic coops. The MST’s food production combines family-based small agriculture with cooperative agro-industry involving swine, poultry, and cattle, as well as dairies, mills, and the processing of fruit, coffee, sugarcane, vegetables, and flour, much of which is sold at various MST coops which then fund development in the communities. Decisions on the occupied land are made largely by consensus and though they participate in the larger capitalist economy in many ways, work on MST encampments is done with community empowerment, not profit, in mind. And the benefits are undeniable. Thousands of families with next to no power in society or the economy took collective action and created huge increases in quality of life. In the time the MST has been active they have taken over an estimated 55 million acres of land and claim a membership of some 2 million people.

Though these are just a few examples of what has been done, we can use their visionary fuel to imagine what could be done in our own lives where we live. It’s important to remember that although the logic of profit, individualism and greed that capitalism represents may seem so all encompassing that it can be difficult to imagine other ways of getting by, living examples of life with-

# when push comes to shove

global resistance to an international crisis

## In the United States

Every day in this country we're finding it harder and harder to make ends meet. At the time of this publication, official unemployment has risen to 9.6% nationwide, with the actual number much higher. Every day politicians, health insurance industry executives, business lobbyists and unelected officials are making decisions that impact our daily lives without our (explicit) consent. To be silent in the face of this daily exclusion and theft is to acquiesce, to throw up our arms and plead "take whatever you want, just don't hurt me." It is helpful to look around the world at everyone who daily is refusing to surrender, refusing to become a victim of capitalist society or a casualty of history. But first some scenes from the home front:

## City Life / Vida Urbana

In Boston, MA, City Life/Vida Urbana has been leading the fight against post-foreclosure evictions. This grassroots tenants' rights group has been able to stop countless evictions, sometimes through action in the courts, sometimes by linking arms to physically block police. A multi-lingual grassroots group, they use direct action to keep families in their homes and build coalitions against banks that put profit over people. As a result, Boston is one of the few places owners have been getting their homes



City Life defends a foreclosed home from eviction

back with significant reductions in debt.  
[www.clvu.org](http://www.clvu.org)

## Take Back the Land

In Miami, FL, Take Back the Land has been moving homeless families into foreclosed homes since 2007. The group maintains that people, not developers, should control land. Take Back the Land previously took over abandoned city-owned land in 2006 to build a homeless camp, and protest the lack of af-



Take Back the Land takes back some land



The Philadelphia Coalition to Save the Libraries

fordable housing in the city. Since 2007, the group has been repairing, cleaning, and painting foreclosed houses and moving homeless families into them—without asking the financial institutions that own them for permission. In response to Miami's skyrocketing foreclosure rate, the second-highest in the nation, Take Back the Land has moved 20 families into houses by April 2009.

[takebacktheland.org](http://takebacktheland.org)

## Philadelphia Coalition to Save the Libraries

This Philadelphia-wide coalition of community groups and concerned residents lead the fight to prevent 11 libraries from being closed when Mayor Michael Nutter bravely passed on Philly's mismanaged city budget's problems to underserved communities. Organizing creative protests and neighborhood organizing, the Coalition was essential in saving the libraries and proving that the city can do something other than give handouts to developers and the University of Pennsylvania.

[coalitiontosavethelibraries.blogspot.com](http://coalitiontosavethelibraries.blogspot.com)

## Republic Windows and Doors

In early December 2009, Bank of America, flushed with bonuses from the government, failed to extend a line of credit to Republic Windows and Doors, a factory in Chicago.

The company laid off the workers; the workers responded by occupying the factory. Proving that people can go up against greedy banks and win, the workers were able to win the jobs back after the company filed for bankruptcy and was bought out.

[www.ueunion.org/ue\\_republic.html](http://www.ueunion.org/ue_republic.html)

## United Workers

This Baltimore, MD, group has been organizing living wage and human rights campaigns since it was started by homeless day laborers in 2002. Inspired by past civil rights struggles, they've won living wages for stadium cleaners at Camden Yards. Currently, they are organizing at Baltimore's downtown tourist attraction The Inner Harbor, in response to countless reports of worker abuse. They've recently declared the Inner Harbor a "Human Rights Zone" and are

vowing to secure "health care, education, and work with dignity" for all workers in the area.  
[unitedworkers.org](http://unitedworkers.org)

## Picture the Homeless

New York City On July 23, 2009 members and allies of Picture the Homeless and the Housing Not Warehousing Coalition occupied a fenced-in, vacant warehoused property owned by the financial blood-suckers JP Morgan Chase. JP Morgan Chase—the recent beneficiary of billions in tax-payer bailout money—have benefited from predatory lending practices and provide funding to companies like Massey Energy, the biggest endmost controversial strip-mining company in Appalachia. Under the banner "NYC: A Place to Call Home," the gathering set up a colorful tent city at the site in the El Barrio (East Harlem) neighborhood, played music, barbecued, chant-



Picture the Homeless occupy JP Morgan lot

ed "They say gentrify, we say occupy," and demanded that warehoused lots and buildings be accounted for by the city, "uniting all who face poverty and racism toward a New York City that is a welcome home for everyone."  
[picturethehomeless.org](http://picturethehomeless.org)

## Around the Globe

Those in the United States raising their voices in frustration are not alone; they are joined by millions across the globe. The financial crisis and consequent government responses have prompted a surge in unrest and renewed resistance to neoliberalism and capitalism, whether capital wears the mask of a free market democracy, as in the United States, or the shroud of a state-capitalist dictatorship as in China. As it is

at home, all over the world struggles predating the economic crisis continue. It is important to remember that while some people are getting hit for the first time by this crisis, much of the world, including many among the working and unemployed poor in the United States, have been facing and fighting exploitation long before the "banks broke."

## China

Since December there have been major labor struggles in China. Teachers, textile workers, the jobless, and even security officers have gone on strike. Pitched battles between police and workers occurred in the southern province of Guangdong while elsewhere laborers swarmed government and managerial buildings, seizing equipment in lieu of back pay and blocking highways in demonstration against wage cuts.

## Nigeria

Armed rebels in the Niger Delta, brought together under the banner of MEND (Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta) have, up until a cease-fire in July, participated in armed attacks on Shell Oil facilities that exploit the region's natural resources. MEND now says that its cease-fire will be coming to an end in September.

## Spain

On September 17, 2008, as the world financial system approached collapse, Enric Duran, a Catalan anticapitalist organizer, announced a daring act of "financial civil disobedience."

Over the past two years Duran has borrowed 492,000 euros from 40 different banks with no intention of paying the money back. As a protest of the global financial system and of the inherently exploitative nature of commercial banks, Duran distributed money to various anticapitalist social movements in Spain and used it to publish 200,000 copies of a magazine called *Crisis* that printed detailed critiques of the commercial banking system. He was dubbed "Robin Hood of the Banks" by the media. He is currently participating in Spain's "We Can Live without Capitalism" campaign, which is organizing bank users and debtors to "bring this sucker down."

[17-s.info](http://17-s.info)

## Greece

In December of 2008 Greece erupted into insurrection in response to the assassination of a 15 year-old anarchist youth, Alexandros Grigoriopoulos, by the Athenian police. Led by youth and immigrants, protests and riots continued for weeks, destroying numerous corporate businesses and police stations. High youth unemployment and exploitative conditions for immigrants, worsened by the economic crisis, fueled the fire for a movement openly challenging the misery of daily life under capitalism.

[www.occupiedlondon.org/blog/](http://www.occupiedlondon.org/blog/)

## Iceland

In January 2009, normally calm, Iceland erupted into massive popular protest, with thousands of people demanding that the government resign. In the last years Iceland has become a major financial center, with much of the economy becoming dependent on the banking sector. When the crisis hit, Iceland's currency and

continued on page 6

# economic recovery? for whom?



*Pittsburgh's celebrated "economic recovery" didn't pan out for everyone*

by Mike Boda, Pittsburgh Grassroots Examiner

My parents, both high school dropouts, were able to own two houses in Pittsburgh's predominantly working-class North Side before my dad was 30 years old, through income from his job as a crane operator at US Steel's Edgar Thompson Works. When he came home from work, he smelled charred and was covered in a layer of greasy soot, as did the region. For the first half of my childhood, the riverbanks were still full of smokestacks that shot fire into the sky and the rivers were devoid of wildlife, but full of barges. A far cry from my grandmother's memories of darkness at noon, and of covering her collar with paper so that it would not be filthy by the time she walked to church during the Second World War.

This relatively high standard of living enjoyed by a large segment of the working class, as well as its location at the point where the Northeast, Midwest and Appalachia converge, lent the region its own distinctive character and culture. Sports, both professional and scholastic, especially football and baseball, were considered high culture and were hotly debated in the region's thousands of shot-and-beer corner bars which catered to a predominantly male, working class clientele. Within walking distance of my childhood home, there were at least a half a dozen Catholic parishes, each with their own school whose enrollment was high enough for all of them to field football teams. People invested significant parts of their identities in their families, jobs and neighborhoods, as well as the region itself.

Obviously, local industry had begun its steady decline at least 20 years before I was born, but as a child, none of this seemed real until it hit home. I can remember standing in the dining room, my dad trying to explain to me that he had been laid off, and then trying even harder to explain to me why my suggestion of a strike would not have helped; an event that we both still remember clearly. Suddenly, like so many of my peers, the normal routine of my childhood became interrupted by food banks, toy drives and unemployment lines. This rapid decline in material conditions also enacted a heavy personal toll on the now obsolete workers, their families and their neighborhoods, resulting in failed relationships, psychological problems, increased rates of substance abuse and other social problems, the extent of which can likely never be measured.

Unemployment had come to be viewed in the same way that

excommunication from the Church had been viewed among medieval peasants and it was impossible not to overhear the apocalyptic ramblings of the grown-ups. This accelerated the "white flight" from the cities to the suburbs and eventually to other states. The industrial bedroom communities and mill towns were reduced to ghost towns and the Catholic schools began a cycle of closing and merging. This diaspora is the reason that many cities and towns have some kind of Pittsburgh-themed sports bar or Steelers club.

Although the industrialization of our region was a long time com-



US Steel Tower gets ready for rebranding with letters for UPMC signs

ing, we blamed Ronald Reagan. When he finally died, the local news crews seemed to have a hard time finding people who had good things to say about him, instead opting to broadcast network footage from his lying in the State Capitol. I remember the crazy boycotts that people thought could save their jobs, such as products that were packed in the newfangled cans made of aluminum, not steel, and Japanese consumer goods, especially automobiles. There was quite the scandal in my neighborhood when the man next door bought a little orange Honda, instead of the giant boats, like the huge Cutlass Supreme my parents drove. The capitalists must have been relieved that the working people once again channeled their anger away from the elite towards another group of workers, with a different ethnic background, as they continue to do with so-called "illegals."

As far as the average working person is concerned, Pittsburgh's much ballyhooed economic "recovery" is less a comeback than a surrender. Eventually, people accepted that they would never again enjoy the standard of living that they or their parents had, and those with the resources and aptitude for it managed to earn a degree from one of the region's many colleges, universities or trade schools, a considerable investment of time and resources to earn less than one could in the mills. The rest of us settled for selling our labor for whatever we could get for it, often part-time, temporary, low-wage, clerical or service jobs with no benefits.

The ongoing economic woes of the Commonwealth, the City of Pittsburgh, and the surrounding municipal governments can be directly attributed to the sectors which are so attractive to investors; namely health care and education, and a potent combination of the two. Hospitals and educational institutions are technically non-profits and are therefore exempt from many different forms of taxation. The University of Pittsburgh has used its non-profit status to buy up many of the region's hospitals and eventually got into the health insurance business. Now, they train the doctors at their medical schools, employ them at their hospitals and pay themselves with their various health insurance products. Several years ago, they affixed their corporate logo in lights to the top of the US Steel Tower in Downtown Pittsburgh, which speaks volumes. Just like the former mill sites that are now giant strip malls.

The region's desperation following the collapse of the steel industry has also led to a willingness of the local elites to be quick and generous in doling out the public subsidies to private business interests, perks better known as corporate welfare. They have also allowed the region to be used as laboratory for a host of neoliberal economic experiments. Our beloved sports teams have all threatened to leave town without new, publicly funded facilities; despite a voter referendum opposing this, they all got new digs. Businesses coming or going all expect the same kind of largess, and the politicians oblige and behave like lobbyists. This kind of silliness eventually resulted in the City of Pittsburgh being granted "distressed status" and therefore subject to similar kinds of "structural adjustments" that are imposed on nations that default on their loan payments to the International Money Fund and World Bank. Where this money to host the G20 is coming from is a mystery.

## when push comes to shove

continued from page 5

stock market dropped swiftly, bringing massive unemployment and threatening the country with national bankruptcy. Protesters clashed with riot police for several nights and eventually forced the government to resign. In Egypt, in April 2009, textile workers, tax collectors, and civil servants went on strike to protest cuts in wages and hours.

### Egypt

In April 2009, textile workers, tax collectors, and civil servants went on strike to protest cuts in wages and hours.

### South Korea

On May 22nd, 976 autoworkers in Ssangyong seized an auto plant in response to pending layoffs. They held the plant for 77 days before multiple police assaults evicted them. While jobs were lost, workers were able to negotiate better severance pay.

[www.libcom.org](http://www.libcom.org)

### France

French employers suffered a return of the French tradition of "bossnapping" as a response to layoffs from the economic crisis. According to an article in the UK Guardian this March France is braced for a wave of such "bossnappings", as desperate staff take desperate action. Mass layoffs blamed on the financial crisis have seen the protest movement splinter into spontaneous hostage-taking at plants and factories around the country. Chief executives arriving from Paris to announce redundancies find themselves barred from leaving. It is "our only remaining bartering tool" one union leader said.

France has a history of bossnappings dating back to May 1968 and the 1970s, when

executives were held hostage in the struggle for rights. Today's demands are more mundane: hostage-takers range from single mothers to the nearly retired—they want jobs, proper pay and no brutal layoffs. The two "bossnappings" this month are the latest examples in a rise of radical gestures that has seen members of the



Dramatic re-enactment of a bossnapping

public stage commando "picnics" in supermarkets, feasting from the shelves in revenge against multinationals, shouting "we will not pay for your crisis." [www.guardian.co.uk](http://www.guardian.co.uk)

### India

The Karnataka Farmer's Association (KRRS) of India is a very large—approximately 10 million members—and active example of global people's movements

organized both against transnational corporations and predatory global institutions and for goals of achieving social change "at all levels." The seeds of the movement were planted by

five farmers in 1965 and KRRS came into being in 1980 "as part of a very long process of construction of a new society, which must be driven by people at the local level but must reach the global level and cannot take place without the active and direct involvement of society as a whole." The KRRS was pivotal in the formation of People's Global Action (PGA) and in calling for direct action and mass protest against the World Trade Organization (WTO) meeting in Seattle in 1999. "Ghandian-based, they have a clear commitment to non-violence (understood as violence against living beings, not against inanimate objects) and have battled destructive corporations like Monsanto, calling up mass civil disobedience actions where tens of thousands were arrested in a single day.

After only this brief overview, the importance of understanding these movements and the societies in which they take shape becomes all too apparent. The United States is itself an international nation, home to people from all over the world, home to thousands of languages and cultures. Understanding these movements around the world helps us understand ourselves, and the different ways in which we relate to these larger ideas and structures.

# the Pittsburgh model

## capitalism and crisis in the rust belt

by Patrick Young

On May 28th, White House spokesman Robert Gibbs held a press conference to announce that President Barack Obama would be hosting the next G20 summit in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

The White House Press Corps broke into audible laughter...

Why was Pittsburgh chosen for the site of the most influential summit in the global political economy?

Gibbs responded, "[Pittsburgh] is an area that has seen its share of economic woes in the past, but because of foresight and investment is now giving birth to new industries that are becoming the jobs of the future."

In the midst of the most severe economic crisis in at least eight decades, the Obama administration chose Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania as the backdrop for the world's most influential economic summit. Pittsburgh was chosen as the backdrop for the talks in hopes of offering a model or a template for economic recovery after unmitigated crisis.

From 1850 until at least 1970 Pittsburgh's economy was built around the steel industry and heavy manufacturing. Over decades of industrial development Pittsburgh became a boomtown for industry and a virtual magnet for European immigrants looking for economic opportunity in the United States. With the promise of gainful employment, workers uprooted their families and traveled half a world away. But when they arrived in Pittsburgh, they found some of the most dangerous working conditions imaginable and the most aggressive and oppressive bosses on the planet.

Over decades of often bloody struggle, workers in Pittsburgh and around the region fought aggressively to win union representation and collectively bargained for better wages and safer working conditions. Pittsburgh became the birthplace of the American Labor Movement, hosting the founding of dozens of labor unions including the United Steel Workers of America, the American Federation of Labor, the Congress of Industrial Organizations and later the AFL-CIO.

But as the conditions inside the mills were improving and the wages of workers in the Midwest were increasing, the steel magnates' interest in investing in new machinery in Southwest Pennsylvania's steel mills was waning. By the end of the Second World War, the big steel bosses' investment in North American steel had stalled.

At the same time, bolstered by huge wartime investments,

the global steel industry was rapidly expanding. Before long the Steel Belt—the section of the country stretching from the Pittsburgh to Chicago—was facing furious competition from imported steel.

As cheap imports continued to flood the market, local manufacturers, using antiquated equipment, struggled to keep up and the trend worsened. By the late 1970s the North American steel industry descended into a virtual freefall.

As mill after mill shut down the region was devastated. Between 1950 and 2000 Pittsburgh's population dropped from 671,659 to 334,563. Schools, grocery stores, churches and hospitals closed. Entire city blocks were left vacant. In one area of the city, when several blocks of a road collapsed, the City of Pittsburgh simply gave up and put up Jersey barriers at each end of the street.

### The Pittsburgh Model for Economic Recovery Emerges

But where so many saw crisis, some capitalists saw opportunity. With almost 20,000 vacant housing units inside Pittsburgh's city limits and over 4,000 acres of vacant and blighted property, Pittsburgh looked like a playground for developers.

In recent years three primary trends have dominated the Pittsburgh economic situation: the growth and emergence of entertainment industries like professional sports and casinos; a concerted effort on behalf of developers to recruit a "creative class" of artists and academics to move into and "turn around" impoverished neighborhoods; and the rise of high-tech, highly skilled industries that are dependent on bringing transplanted professionals into the community.

The result certainly has meant a significant turn-around in Pittsburgh's economy. Vacant buildings are being filled, the city's tax base is consistently rising as new professionals move to the area and Pittsburgh sports teams continue to be strong athletic performers and strong financial performers.

A stark indicator of this economic shift is the mega-hospital system, the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC). Over the past 30 years, UPMC has been steadily buying up hospitals and health care centers across the region. Today with more than 48,000 employees, UPMC is the largest employer in the state of Pennsylvania. And in 2008 UPMC made a huge symbolic move asserting its dominance in the region: The mega-hospital system leased the top several floors of the US

Steel Tower and had a giant rendition of its logo affixed to the top of the city's tallest building.

Another major economic driver in southwest Pennsylvania is the higher education industry. Pittsburgh is home to at least a dozen public and private universities and colleges, including the University of Pittsburgh, Carnegie Mellon University, Duquesne University and Point Park University. These institutions have attracted tens of thousands of students, researchers, and instructors to the region, even in the aftermath of the steel crisis.

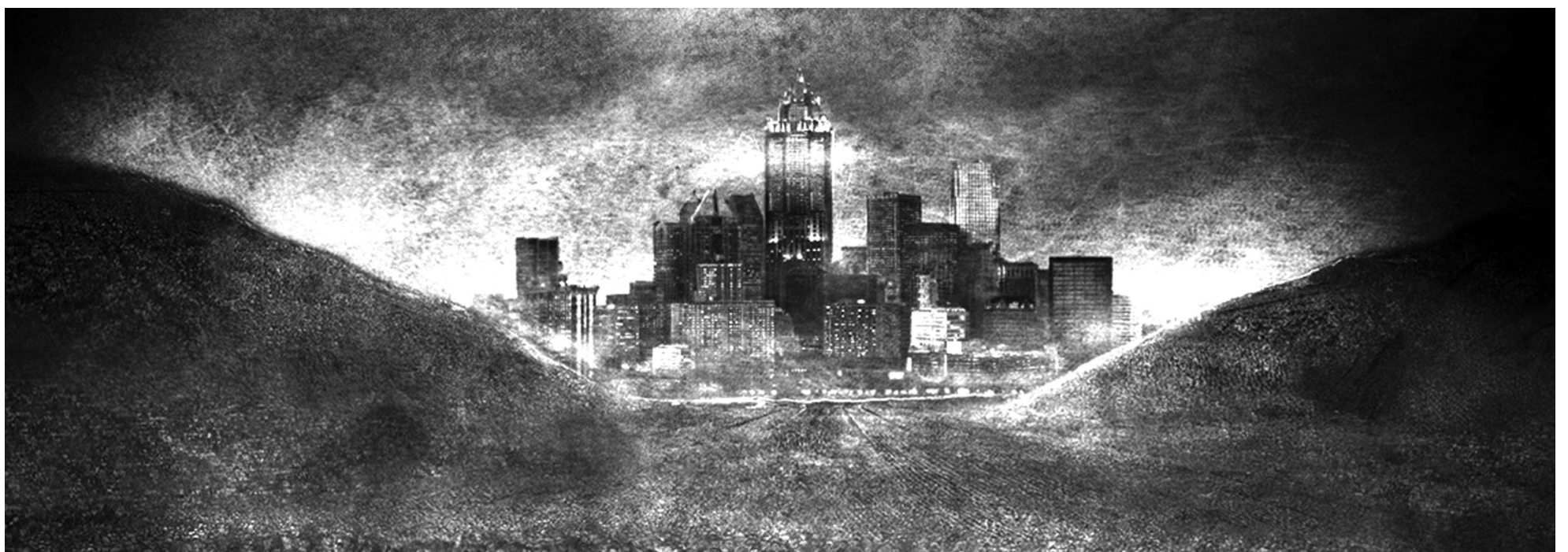
But this "recovery" certainly has not been a rising tide lifting all ships. When we think of jobs in the arts, athletics, health care and academia we generally think of high profile, high paying professions like doctors, nurses, professors, and researchers. And while there are a significant number of these people living and working in Pittsburgh, these positions have, by their very nature, generally been filled by outsiders moving into the region.

The vast majority of the jobs associated with this 'recovery' and particularly the vast majority of the jobs that have gone to people whose families have lived in this region for generations, are low paying, no benefit, unstable jobs in the service sector like maintenance, retail, janitorial and food service work. These jobs are largely non-union, offer little consistency or continuity, and pay a fraction of what the old steel and heavy manufacturing jobs did a generation ago.

The result then, has been an increasingly stratified local class structure with a widening rift between a growing class of professionals on one side and a class of low wage service workers on the other.

So while this Pittsburgh Model for economic recovery has certainly provided some major economic opportunities for some in the region, it can hardly be seen as a recovery for the tens of thousands of Pittsburghers working in the service industry for half of what their parents made in the mills a generation ago.

As the Obama administration attempts to trot out Pittsburgh as a model for economic recovery bouncing back from crisis, here in Pittsburgh we are consistently reminded that whether it's built around steel mills, hospitals, or research facilities, capitalism is crisis. The only difference is that a hundred years ago capitalist exploitation meant dangerous work and exploitation in the steel mills; today it means exploitation in the stadiums, shopping malls and restaurants.



# Protesting the G20

Thousands of folks will be heading to Pittsburgh to protest the policies of the G20 and capitalism in general. Though many protesters will have clear ideas about why they are angry or what sort of alternatives to this system they envision, don't expect to hear it on the news. Instead you can expect sensational stories of damaged corporate property or confrontations with police with no rational background on why this might be happening. Below, check out where to hear the most recent real news about what's happening on the ground and why we're out there!



Thousands protested the G20 last time they met in London

## Calendar

### Ongoing

**Three Rivers Climate Convergence**  
[3riversconvergence@gmail.com](mailto:3riversconvergence@gmail.com)  
 (Sunday Sept. 20th - Saturday Sept. 25th)

**Women's Tent City**  
[www.codepinkalert.org/pittsburgh](http://www.codepinkalert.org/pittsburgh)  
[codepinkpgh@aol.com](mailto:codepinkpgh@aol.com)  
 (Sunday Sept. 20th - Saturday Sept. 25th)

**International Peace, Justice, and Empowerment Summit**  
 Hosanna House, 807 Wallace Ave.  
 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
 412-371-3689 - [song@ceapittsburgh.org](mailto:song@ceapittsburgh.org)  
 (Tuesday Sept. 22nd - Wednesday Sept. 23rd)

**Tuesday Sept. 22**  
**"No" to G20 Community Gathering**

Friendship Park - 5 p.m. - 7 p.m.  
[resistg20.org](http://resistg20.org)

**Wednesday Sept. 23rd**  
**Panel Discussion on G20**  
 Location TBA - 3:30 p.m. - 6 p.m.  
[pittsburghunited.org/g20](http://pittsburghunited.org/g20)

**United Steelworkers & Alliance for Climate Protection & Blue Green Alliance Permitted March and Concert**  
 Point State Park, afternoon and evening

**Thursday Sept. 24th**  
**People's Voices: A Global/Local Exchange**  
 Emmanuel Episcopal Church, 957 W. North Ave 15233 3 p.m. - 5p.m.  
[pittsburghunited.org/g20](http://pittsburghunited.org/g20)

**"Kick Capitalism While It's Down" Unpermitted March**  
 Arsenal Park, Lawrenceville (40th Street & Penn Ave) 2:30 p.m.

[resistg20.org](http://resistg20.org)  
**Students for a Democratic Society Concert**  
 Location TBA, evening  
[studentpowerinthefaceofempire.wordpress.com](http://studentpowerinthefaceofempire.wordpress.com)

**Friday Sept. 25th**  
**Veterans Death March**  
 Location TBA, 8 a.m.

**Voices from Latin America**  
 David Lawrence Hall,  
 Univ. of Pittsburgh 9 a.m. - 11 a.m.  
[pittsburghunited.org/g20](http://pittsburghunited.org/g20)

**Anarchist Call for Decentralized Actions**  
 Ending at 11:30 a.m.  
[resistg20.org](http://resistg20.org)

**"People's March," Permitted March to Downtown**  
 Oakland, 12 p.m.  
[www.pittsburghendthewar.org](http://www.pittsburghendthewar.org)

**Counterinformation:**  
[phillyimc.org](http://phillyimc.org) • [allforthetaking.org](http://allforthetaking.org) • [indy-media.org](http://indy-media.org) • [news.infoshop.org](http://news.infoshop.org) • [libcom.org](http://libcom.org) • [narconews.com](http://narconews.com) • [defenestrator.org](http://defenestrator.org) • [prisonsucks.com](http://prisonsucks.com) • [www.blackagendareport.com](http://www.blackagendareport.com) • [counterpunch.org](http://counterpunch.org) • [therealnews.com](http://therealnews.com) • [auto\\_sol.tao.ca](http://auto_sol.tao.ca) • [www.alternet.org](http://www.alternet.org) • [venezuelanalysis.com](http://venezuelanalysis.com) • [www.zmag.org](http://www.zmag.org) • [electronicintifada.net](http://electronicintifada.net)

**Economic Crisis**  
[leftbusinessobserver.com](http://leftbusinessobserver.com) • [dollarsandsense.org](http://dollarsandsense.org) • [greatrecession.info](http://greatrecession.info) • [casinocrash.org](http://casinocrash.org) • [www.cepr.net](http://www.cepr.net) • [monthlyreview.org](http://monthlyreview.org)

**Movements**  
[www.labornotes.org](http://www.labornotes.org) • [upside-down-world.org](http://upside-down-world.org) • [syndicalist.org](http://syndicalist.org) • [leftturn.org](http://leftturn.org) • [www.agp.org](http://www.agp.org)

[org.struggle.ws/wsm/](http://org.struggle.ws/wsm/) • 17-s.info

**Alternatives**  
[populareconomics.org](http://populareconomics.org) • [participatorybudgeting.org](http://participatorybudgeting.org) • [www.geo.coop](http://www.geo.coop) • [www.cdcu.coop](http://www.cdcu.coop) • [www.usworker.coop](http://www.usworker.coop)

## the defenestrator

The paper you're holding was made by the defenestrator collective, a not-for-profit, collectively operated newspaper based in Philadelphia.

You can pick up the regular issue at bookstores and other spots around Philly or check us out online at [www.defenestrator.org](http://www.defenestrator.org). If you live in Philadelphia and want to contribute or help work on the paper, please get in touch. We'd love to hear from you!

**the defenestrator**  
 PO BOX 30922  
 Philadelphia, PA 19104  
[www.defenestrator.org](http://www.defenestrator.org)



# Join the People's Caravan!

Pennsylvania, along with the rest of the world, is in crisis. Many people do not have access to decent housing, education, health care, jobs, healthy food, transportation, and communication. While we are told that there are not resources to provide for our basic needs, bankers and the ultra-rich get trillions of dollars in bail-out funding, and our services are cut and costly wars are waged. From pools, libraries and health centers in urban areas closing, to factory layoffs and families losing their farms, Pennsylvanians are feeling the impact of an economic and political system that has placed profit over people. We will not pay for their crisis!

## The Caravan

We want to take this opportunity to focus on Pennsylvania, and strengthen our statewide networks. We want to meet up with people who are organizing locally for their dignity and a better Pennsylvania. Whether you are working for better wages, organizing for childcare, demanding health care, fighting pollution, struggling to keep your home and put food on the table or to keep your family's farm; we all have an interest in making our voices heard and working together to advance an agenda for economic human rights.

We will be taking our own vehicles, carpooling and splitting the travel costs. The caravan will depart Philadelphia on Monday morning, September 21, stopping in Lancaster, traveling to York for the afternoon, and then spend the evening in Harrisburg. On Tuesday, September 22, we will rally at the state capitol, make a stop in Altoona, and arrive in Pittsburgh for the G20 summit.

## Join Us!

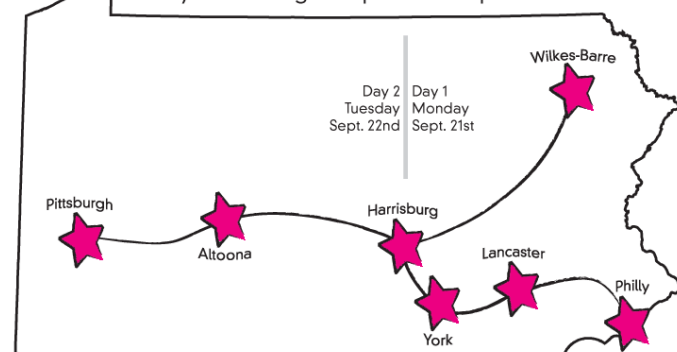
This is a perfect time to make connections between our struggles and communities so that we can break our isolation and work together. We want you to invite your neighbors, church, family, school, VFW chapter, and your community organizations to join us on this caravan. While we bring stories of our struggles in Philadelphia, we want to learn from people struggling throughout the rest of Pennsylvania.

Contact us if you are interested in organizing a local event along the route that can benefit your work, joining or supporting the caravan. We need RSVP's, and we can tell you about costs, ride information and answer any other questions.

[www.G20caravan.info](http://www.G20caravan.info)  
[G20caravan@riseup.net](mailto:G20caravan@riseup.net)

## Join the People's Caravan to the G-20

Philly to Pittsburgh - Sept. 21st & Sept. 22nd



**RSVP Today**

[www.G20caravan.info](http://www.G20caravan.info) 215-586-9198 [G20caravan@riseup.net](mailto:G20caravan@riseup.net)



★ [defenestrator.org](http://defenestrator.org) ★ for a world without cops or bosses ★