The Breakdown of Capitalism and the Fight for Socialism in the United States Program of the Socialist Equality Party

Part one

The following document was adopted by the First National Congress of the Socialist Equality Party (US), held August 11-15, 2010, in Ann Arbor, Michigan. The document is being published in three parts. Below is part one. Parts two and three will follow on September 3 and September 4.

The Economic Crisis and its Social Impact

1. The world capitalist system is ensnared in its greatest crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s. The financial turmoil that began in September 2008 with the sudden failure of Wall Street icons has metastasized into a global economic breakdown. For decades the apologists of capitalism have proclaimed that American-style “free enterprise” is the most perfect form of economic organization. They have ignored the many signs of the approaching crisis, while the corporate-controlled media celebrated the reckless financial speculation and irresponsible self-enrichment that define the business activities and personal lifestyles of the ruling class.

When the disaster finally struck in 2008, the US government intervened with a massive injection of hundreds of billions of dollars to save the banking system from collapse. The president of the United States publicly acknowledged that the survival of the capitalist system was at risk. The emergency bailout protected the wealth of rich investors but failed to contain the crisis.

2. The Obama administration’s claim that it has “broken the back” of the recession is a self-serving lie, told by cynical politicians who hope to convince the people that they can be made to believe anything. The reality of growing social distress is not so easily concealed. Approximately 26 million people in the United States are jobless or unable to find full-time work. Half of those counted on the official unemployment rolls have been out of work for six months or longer. This is the highest long-term unemployment rate since the 1930s. Young people, burdened with debts that they accumulated to pay for their education, graduate from college unable to find decent-paying jobs, or anything at all. In this period, some major US corporations have driven millions workers out of their homes every year. The income of American workers, which had been falling in the decade since the early 1970s, is now plunging. There has been a wave of wage-cutting since the onset of the recession. Millions of working class families cannot make ends meet. Those unable to pay their bills on time are treated with inhuman brutality. In cities like Detroit, the utility corporations routinely cut off gas and electricity to impoverished workers, leading to the deaths of scores of people throughout the country.

The overall state and local government is gripped by financial crisis. The response of the corporate elite is to demand austerity. The politicians who only yesterday bailed out the banks now proclaim that “there is no money” for essential social programs. Pension plans are being reneged on, schools shut down, and innumerable social services that are vital for the well-being of local communities drastically scaled back or eliminated. In the guise of “reform,” access to health care is being made subject to ever greater restrictions.

3. The attacks on the working class in the United States are part of a global process. The economic breakdown that began in September 2008 is comparable to the Wall Street crash of 1929. Now, as 80 years ago, the crisis began in the United States but has spread rapidly into Europe and throughout the world. In September 2008, Wall Street banks and investment houses faced bankruptcy. By the spring of 2010, with the financial solvency of European countries in doubt, one government after another announced its determination to implement painful austerity measures.

4. In the aftermath of the 1929 collapse on Wall Street, the government and the press repeated endlessly the refrain: “Prosperity is just around the corner.” But the depression that began with the stock market crash and then spread throughout the world lasted more than a decade and led to unprecedented suffering for the working class, the middle class and the peasantry.

5. The specter of past tragedies loomed large during the Second World War, Leon Trotsky, the greatest strategist of revolutionary socialism in the twentieth century, described the economic crisis as the “death agony of capitalism.” He warned that “a catastrophe threatens the whole culture of mankind.” His warnings were confirmed by the horrors that followed. Capitalism survived only by plunging the world into the catastrophe of war. The time it took, as described in Chapter 5, was approximately 70 million people had perished.

6. A new warning must be raised with all necessary urgency. The credibility of the United States, which has spread rapidly into Europe and throughout the world. In September 2008, Wall Street banks and investment houses faced bankruptcy. By the spring of 2010, with the financial solvency of European countries in doubt, one government after another announced its determination to implement painful austerity measures.

7. The attacks on the working class in the United States are part of a global process. The economic breakdown that began in September 2008 is comparable to the Wall Street crash of 1929. Now, as 80 years ago, the crisis began in the United States but has spread rapidly into Europe and throughout the world. In September 2008, Wall Street banks and investment houses faced bankruptcy. By the spring of 2010, with the financial solvency of European countries in doubt, one government after another announced its determination to implement painful austerity measures.

8. A new warning must be raised with all necessary urgency. The credibility of the United States, which has spread rapidly into Europe and throughout the world. In September 2008, Wall Street banks and investment houses faced bankruptcy. By the spring of 2010, with the financial solvency of European countries in doubt, one government after another announced its determination to implement painful austerity measures.

9. The current crisis is a new and deeper phase of the general economic slide that began in 1960. The deterioration of the living standards of American workers since that period is the worst since the Great Depression of the 1930s, under the leadership of the American ruling class to implement painless austerity measures.

10. The advances in communication and information technologies have created the material foundations for the global integration of all aspects of economic and political life. But the superficial features and productive potential of economic globalization are negated by the continued division of the world into nation-states that generate the greatest mass of surplus value. The potentiality of the planet is dominated by this contradiction. History has already demonstrated the horrific consequences of the World War II, the struggle among competing capitalist nations. The danger of a new global conflagration cannot be excluded. Rapidly. The United States views with anxiety the economic growth of potential rivals in any part of the world. In particular, the rapid development of China has provoked widespread discussion within the US political and military establishment about the implications of war with that country.

11. It is not only the monetary madness and pursuit of boundless personal wealth that drive the American ruling class to intensify the devastating war. The massive growth of financial speculation is nothing more than the parasitism. Thirty years ago, the financial industry accounted for only six percent of corporate profits. Today, more than forty percent of corporate profits are generated through money lending, stock market speculation and related forms of financial speculation. Moreover, to the extent that the financial aristocracy invests in production within the United States and internationally, it is for no other reason than to secure the maximum possible for American capitalism. The staggering cost of the war is being subsidized by the massive growth of financial speculation.

12. Millions of working people voted for Barack Obama because he promised to reverse the economic policies of the Bush administration. The “Yes We Can” campaign of the outgoing president has become the “No We Can’t” reality of his presidency.

13. The Failure of the Obama Administration

14. The result of such a war would be not only the intensification of the barbarism of the capitalist system but also, in the aftermath of the war, a new period of world economic development in which the United States would continue to be the world’s greatest industrial power, the world’s greatest center of finance capital, and the world’s leading military power.

Closing date: 31st September 2010

Enquiries:
Linda Nyunuya
Tel: 264-61-238346/56
Mobile: 264-81 295 2336

Hamunyera Hambaya
Tel: 264-61-238346/56
Mobile: 264-812 242 861

Post destination: HEADQUARTERS

SWAPO PARTY NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

VACANCY ADVERTISEMENT

Post destination: Secretary/Typist
Department: Information and Mobilization

Requirements:
1. SWAPO PARTY card holder, not less than five (5) years,
2. Must be in possession of a Secretarial Diploma or equivalent
3. Grade Twelve (12) certificate or equivalent
4. Computer Literate, excellence in spoken and written English and communication skills
5. Namibian Citizen.

In return, SWAPO PARTY Offers:
- Monthly Salary
- Pension and Medical Aid
- Housing Subsidy

Letter of application should be accompanied by the Curriculum Vitae and copies of documents.

Date of assumption of duty: As soon as Possible

Namibia Today
Friday 03 - 09 Thursday 16 September 2010