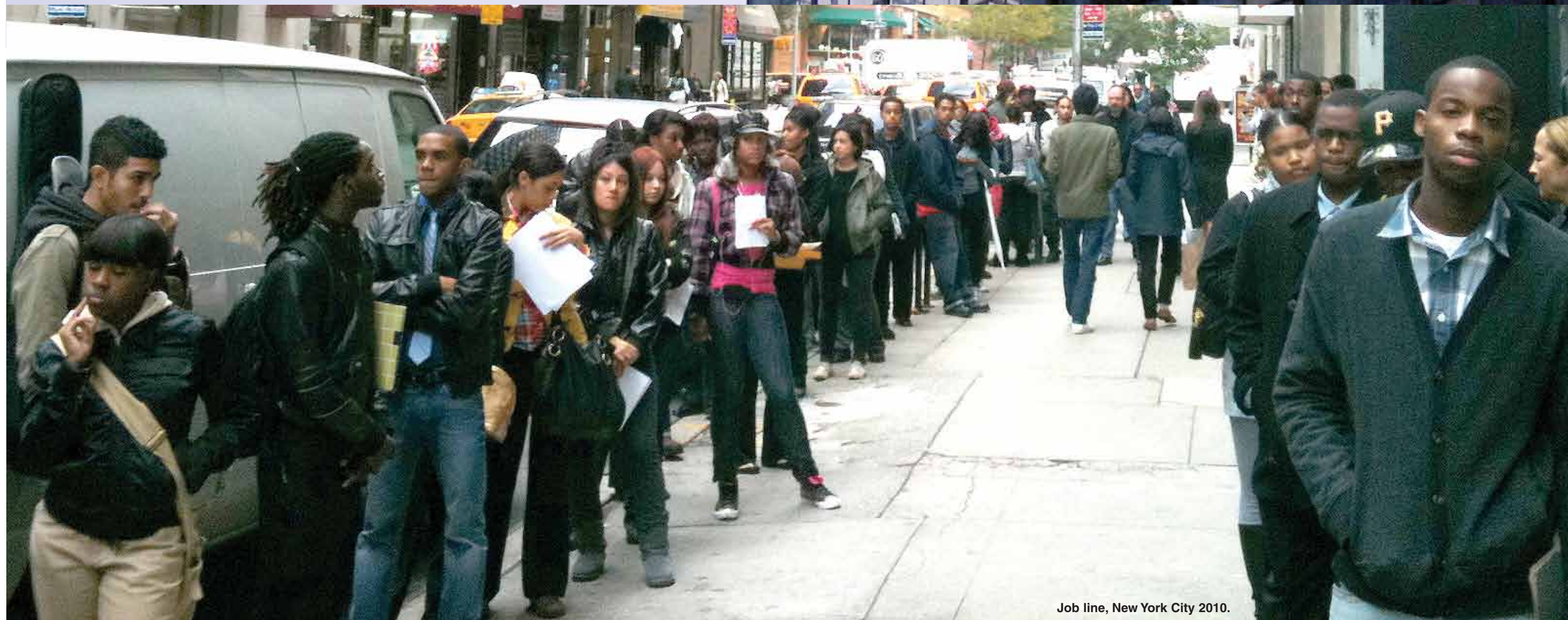


A World, and a System of Unemployment



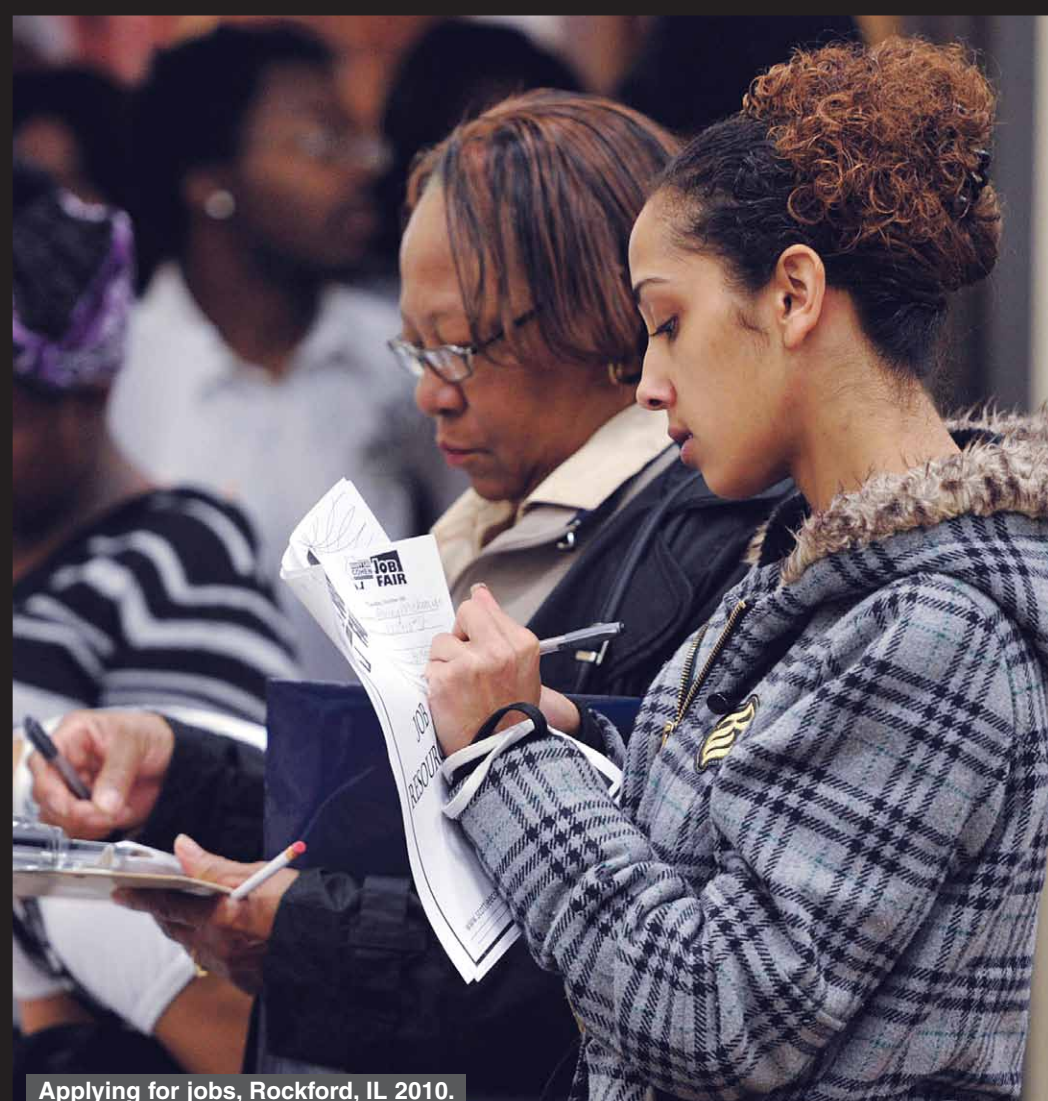
Job line, New York City 2010.



Migrant workers, Shanghai, China 2010.



Heading north to find work, Mexico 2009.



Applying for jobs, Rockford, IL 2010.

It's an all too familiar scene in every city in the U.S.:

houses and businesses are abandoned and boarded up; entire neighborhoods lie derelict; factories that once employed hundreds or thousands are ghostly hulks, their time long since passed. Youth—overwhelmingly Black and Latino—with no jobs and no hopes of getting one hang out, passing the time and trying to figure a way to scrape some cash together while everything around them crumbles. But there's no work, and no prospects for work.

Pull back a little bit. Entire cities and regions of the U.S. are desolate; once booming industries are shut down completely or teetering on the verge of extinction. The figures are brutal, but they only hint at the reality of crushed lives, abandoned dreams, and lost hope they represent. The unemployment rate for Black people is nearly double that for whites. It is higher still among Black youth. In the spring and summer, youth unemployment rose by 571,000, most of that among inner city Black and Latino youth. Hundreds of thousands of jobless youth live in largely Black cities like East St. Louis, Detroit, and Newark.

Pull back a bit more. You'll see that tens of millions of people live every day in a desperate struggle to survive. At least two million Mexican peasants were forced out of the countryside to seek work elsewhere between 1995 and 2008. In China, millions of young people live in wretched slums thrown up in China's large cities, struggling for the barest survival in China's headlong dash to establish itself as a capitalist power on the world stage. In the continent of Africa, devastated and tormented for centuries by colonialism, capitalism, and imperialism, official unemployment in Namibia is 51.2 percent; in Zimbabwe, a staggering 95 percent.

Massive unemployment rips like a plague across this planet. In the U.S., inner city youth grow up and come of age knowing that this society has nothing to offer them, no way for them to contribute, no way for them to even hope to live a life worthy of a human being. The paths this society—this capitalist-imperialist system—offers to countless youth are savagely hard and soulless: prison, crime, the military, a shit job in a fast food place—maybe, and for as long as you can take it. And quite possibly, whatever the choice, an early death.

The official unemployment rate for Black youth is 49 percent. As is well known, the U.S. government calculates unemployment in a way that conceals the actual number of people out of work; the true number is higher. A recent study by Northeastern University's Center for Labor Market Studies concluded that the actual unemployment rate for Black and Latino youth is over 80 percent. The study stated that "low income Black and Hispanic teens face the equivalent of a Great Depression."

Actually the situation is far worse for these youth. This same study pointed out that Washington, D.C., has the highest youth unemployment rate in the country—86 percent. New York City, Detroit and Chicago all have youth unemployment rates over 80 percent. In Gary, Indiana, whose population is 84 percent Black, jobs have decreased by 54 percent since February 2009. And this huge loss of jobs came after the large steel mills that shaped Gary had largely shut down.

This is not a world created by Black and Latino youth of the inner cities. It is a world twisted and distorted by capitalism-imperialism in its endless, global pursuit of profit. A capitalist world where every spark of friendship and love is extinguished, and everything—and everybody—is turned into a commodity to be bought and sold. A world where people can find work only so long as their labor enriches capital; and capital restlessly prowls the globe in its never ending drive to maximize profit.

To take an important example of all this, look at the history of Black people in this country. Black people toiled for centuries in the cotton fields of the South, first as slaves, then as sharecroppers. Their backbreaking labor was an essential component of what enabled the U.S. to rise in the ranks of capitalist and imperialist world powers. As agriculture mechanized, and other changes coursed through society, millions of Black people left the South, in one of the world's great migrations, and went to the cities of the North and West. Many worked in factories and mills—almost always in the lowest paying, most dangerous jobs, with no possibility of moving into another position. Many more, especially women, worked in the minimum wage service industry.

But these factories and mills ceased to be profitable. Thousands were shut down altogether. Commercial districts were abandoned, their restaurants and shops closed. Millions of people lost their jobs. And as capital continued its pursuit of profit, and its own expansion, factories moved from Detroit, Pittsburgh, and Cleveland to Mexico, then Vietnam, then China, bringing exploitation everywhere and leaving devastation in its wake.

The "pull" of a possibility of a paying job and an escape from the vicious Jim Crow regime of lynching and segregation that had brought many Black people out of the rural South within a few short decades became a bitter, dried up reality of dead cities, shuttered factories, and impoverished neighborhoods constantly prowled by police.

And to pile outrage upon outrage, the youth themselves are blamed for the situation that the system has caught them in!

This world was not created by the youth of the inner cities, but it is the world they have inherited. This system has no future for the youth. But the revolution does.

"A WHOLE DIFFERENT WORLD, A MUCH BETTER FUTURE, IS POSSIBLE. WE HAVE WHAT WE NEED TO FIGHT FOR THAT WORLD, THAT FUTURE."

"IT IS UP TO US TO GET WITH IT AND GET TO THE CHALLENGE OF MAKING THIS HAPPEN."

"As our Party's Constitution says: 'The emancipation of all humanity: this, and nothing less than this, is our goal. There is no greater cause, no greater purpose to which to dedicate our lives.'"

—From *The Revolution We Need...The Leadership We Have, A Message, And A Call*,
From The Revolutionary Communist Party, USA
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