



Speak Out Now

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The World Cup Reflects the Common Struggles of Workers

The 2026 World Cup finally kicked off across the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. It is the biggest sporting event on the planet, watched by billions, unified by their love for the game of soccer – the most popular sport in the world, a game that belongs to working class people everywhere. But wherever we look, that beauty has been stained by the corruption of FIFA – the international soccer federation that oversees the World Cup – and the racist practices of the U.S. government, who have organized this whole tournament in the interests of the rich and at the expense of working-class fans.

This World Cup has the most expensive tickets of any tournament ever. FIFA has imposed so-called dynamic pricing, meaning costs rise with demand. The best seats for the final are on sale for nearly \$33,000. Affordable group-stage tickets are nearly impossible for ordinary fans to find, and the lucky few who got any likely paid several hundred dollars each. The result? Tens of thousands of tickets sat unsold days before the first kickoff, but rather than lower its prices and face refund demands from fans who paid full price, FIFA is dumping unsold seats onto resale sites at a discount, a scheme now being investigated for fraud.

Even getting to a match is a racket. New Jersey Transit announced it would charge fans \$150 for a round trip to MetLife Stadium, host of several games and the final, a ride that normally costs about \$13, before public outrage forced the fare down to around \$100. Hotels are gouging visitors. Parking and concessions cost a fortune. Ordinary supporters are shaken down at every step to getting a seat. And, the U.S. government is using its hosting of this event to carry out open, racist exclusion. The Trump administration previously imposed travel bans on several countries that qualified for the tournament – including Ivory Coast, Haiti, Iran, and Senegal – meaning most, if not all, fans from these nations have been barred from attending matches on U.S. soil.

Iranian supporters who waited years to cheer on their team have had their visas denied on the ridiculous claim that Iranian fans pose a security threat because of the ongoing U.S. war on Iran. And, the Department of Homeland Security has put its agents in U.S. host cities, spreading fear and making immigrants think twice about leaving their homes near a city that is hosting matches.

And the exclusion reaches right onto the field. Iran's team has been forced to run its camp out of Tijuana,

Mexico because it is not allowed to operate its team camp inside the U.S. – they are only allowed to enter the U.S. for its games and must leave the country immediately after – and more than a dozen of its staff were denied visas days before kickoff. All because the U.S. military launched an unprovoked war on the people of Iran!

Omar Artan, Africa's referee of the year from Somalia, slated to officiate his first World Cup, was turned away at the border because Somalia is on Trump's racist travel ban list and he has been falsely linked to "terrorist activities." And FIFA has done nothing to defend these players and referees because FIFA's president, Gianni Infantino, likes his cozy relationship with Trump and supports this blatant display of the racism of society.

The World Cup is a reflection of the world we live in, where the interests of the rich come first and working people pay the price. All while the players and the thousands of workers behind the scenes working at the stadiums, hotels, in transportation, and more are the ones who make this World Cup happen. The same forces squeezing fans out of the stadiums are squeezing working people everywhere – inflicting ICE terror on our communities, and funneling wealth to billionaires and corporations, while waging wars that working people pay for in money and blood.

But the World Cup shows us something else too – something they can't sell and can't ban. For one month, billions of people across every border will watch the same matches, celebrate the same goals, and share the same joys and heartbreaks. Working class fans around the world will be united by something far deeper than anything that divides them. That is no small thing – it is a glimpse of the common interests of workers around the world.

Our real power lies in exactly that unity across borders. The billionaires and warmongers depend on keeping us divided by nationality, while they organize internationally to serve themselves. If working people can come together across every border for these games, we should be able to see the common interests of workers across borders too. The World Cup doesn't have to just be a time to celebrate our love of soccer, it can also be a reminder of the international working class and our common struggle against this capitalist system of exploitation.

We live in the wealthiest country in the world, and it is our labor that has created all of this wealth. We aren't the ones who benefit from this. The super rich — the bosses of the big corporations and banks — keep the wealth and make all the decisions. Working people do the work that makes society run, and we can organize to unite our forces. When we do, we have enormous power to change things and make a better world.

Hopkins is Always Looking for More

Johns Hopkins Hospital makes over three billion dollars each year. This is possible due to the labor that thousands of employees provide. Many of the employees are paid under average for their field, even though Hopkins gets its prestige from our work. . On top of that, Hopkins is charging many employees monthly for parking. Some hand back \$80 per month to their employer! With rising rents, BGE bills, gas and groceries prices, these \$80 per month really hurt our pocketbooks and everyone who relies on them: our spouses, our children, and others. Hopkins claims to care about their employees, but things like parking charges make it very clear that they don't.

Stop Poisoning Curtis Bay!

On June 3rd, 200 gallons of waste oil was spilt along Pennington Avenue in Curtis Bay. It came from a waste oil collection truck operated by Petroleum Recovery and Remediation Management, Inc. (PMI). Residents in the area complained about a foul odor, skin and breathing irritation, and headaches.

This is not the first time PMI has done something reckless. In 2022, a fire killed one of their workers. They also operated without an air permit for eight years, and they are a major emitter of harmful pollutants. Currently, they are looking to expand operations and, shamefully, the Maryland Department of Environment, rather than holding them accountable for their past negligence, are actually moving the process along.

It is sickening to see an entire neighborhood being treated like a sacrifice zone for profit. Working-class people deserve to live in safe and affordable neighborhoods where they don't have to worry about the lives and health of their loved ones.

ICE Grab Two at Baltimore Elementary School Entrance

During school drop-offs, ICE thugs captured a mother and father outside of Commodore John Rodgers Elementary/Middle School in East Baltimore. This was after two ICE vehicles ran into the back and side of the couple's car. Then, in view of their two children, and other children as they arrived at school, ICE struggled with the man, pinning him to the ground. The couple's child was heard screaming that their father had done nothing wrong. Other school children reportedly panicked about the possibility of being taken by the ICE officers. The man detained has no criminal record. An April car accident between the man and an ICE officer, from which the man fled, was the only reason reported to justify his capture. Outside of the specific details, this arrest constitutes the first breach of a pledge ICE made to leave schools alone. ICE admitted in a statement to the governor's office that they should not have been on school property.

People being violently pinned down in front of their children and detained for who-knows-how-long, and often deported, is something we mustn't accept! Whatever the government says about migrants' legal status, , do they deserve to be ripped away from their children? ICE's presence in Baltimore has been terrorizing neighborhoods and communities for over a year. It is affecting people's ability to sustain themselves and their families and devastating small local businesses by keeping people away from shops and restaurants, consequently threatening the local community and economy. Do we want to let ICE reshape entire neighborhoods into something unrecognizable, or do all we can together to tell them to GET OUT?

**FILM SCREENING
& DISCUSSION**
WITH SPEAK OUT SOCIALISTS

PRIDE

SAT 6/27 | 3:30 PM
RED EMMA'S FREE SCHOOL (DOWNSTAIRS)
3128 GREENMOUNT AVENUE, BALTIMORE, MD

