

“Freedom is never given; it is won.”
A. Philip Randolph



SOCIALIST PARTY USA
Lafayette St. #303
New York, NY 10012
For more info contact:
(718) 869-2279 or
socialistpartynyc@gmail.com
www.socialistparty-usa.org
www.socialistpartynyc.blogspot.com

**EVERY DAY CAN BE
MAY DAY!**



**STRIKE ON
may day 2009 and
the current crisis:**
a message from SP-NYC local

There is a new feeling this May Day. Though not exactly a haunting specter, there is sense that the world may be on the brink of something new and significant. In one short year, we have witnessed the near total collapse of a global financial system once so dominant that it motivated calls for “the end of history.” Capitalism is failing – drowning in a sea of its own debt, unable to direct the monumental strands of individual greed and unwilling to submit itself to the kind of emergency surgery it underwent in the 1930s. And now it is May Day again, a day for the victims of capitalism to gather strength through their free association and common desires for justice.

The depth of the economic crisis can be measured by the outburst of discussion about socialism. The term is bandied about on a nearly daily basis in the mainstream media. Much of this has been fueled by Conservatives who have continued the paranoid style of American politics by creatively discovering socialism inside of every movement of the Federal Government. Former Arkansas governor Mike Huckabee has led this charge by tagging Barack Obama “the world’s best salesman for socialism” and hailing the creation of “the Union of American Socialist Republics.” B-movie actor Chuck Norris boasted of thousands of right-wing cells preparing to curtail the march toward socialism.

In progressive circles, conversations have been less bombastic but equally searching. The Nation presented the choice as either “Reforming Capitalism” or “Re-Imagining Socialism.” Barbara Ehrenreich and Bill Fletcher Jr. were drafted to make the case for socialism and took some tepid steps away from their electoral support of Obama. Newsweek took a more direct approach declaring that “We are all Socialists Now.” However, their version of socialism amounted to little more than state intervention fueled by a non-descript “populist rage.”

Thankfully, May Day is about something besides the speculations of pundits. On this day workers who directly suffer under the worst impositions of capitalism claim public space to speak out about their common condition. This tradition was born as a commemoration of the 1886 Haymarket massacre in Chicago. From this point forward, the holiday served as a symbolic means to link working people across national borders in a common struggle to cast aside the social and economic limitations enforced by capitalism. Gatherings big and small – in jails, public squares and city streets – have pronounced the simple truth that working people are prevented from reaching their full human potential by a parasitic employer class.

This year, more than any in recent memory, there is much to speak out about. Our analysis always begins with the simple fact that we live in a society where 5% of the population controls 85% of the wealth. Even this is not enough for the employing class. The lure of super-profits through speculation has drawn them, and de-facto much of the world’s population, into a massive economic crisis. Humanity is left to deal with the consequences. In February alone, employers sent more than 500,000 workers in America to the unemployment line. The International Labour Organization estimates that as many as 230 million people will be put out of work by the end of 2009. Consequently, the UN Millenium Campaign estimates that more than 100 million more people could be forced into the deep poverty of less than \$2 a day.

Employer class spokesmen will respond by crying poverty and demanding “shared sacrifice.” May Day is the perfect moment to cut through such false declara-

tions. For instance, Economist Joseph Stiglitz estimates that, as a result of the economic crisis, the shortfall between what could possibly be produced and what is produced amounts to \$7 trillion (almost equal to the GDP of China). Tax structures throughout the world continue to unevenly favor the wealthy thereby allowing trillions more to be funneled into private hands. Banks and financial corporations who hold the immediate responsibility for polluting the global economy with “toxic assets” have also mostly escaped punitive taxation or nationalization to clean up their mess. In short, there is plenty of wealth and potential wealth which could be put to work productively. Only the profit-motive of capitalism is preventing this.

There is, however, a political and economic option available to the millions who will spill out into the streets this May Day. Democratic socialism offers the greatest hope for humanity to live in a world in which resources are used in rational productive ways to enhance the development of each individual. All of those things which make us human – good health, food, shelter, education – should become inalienable human rights. It is also time to trade in our credit cards for union cards – to begin to make demands for more wages, better working conditions and jobs in productive enterprises. Socialism will allow working people to take hold of their lives and become active creators of the future.

So, today, on May Day, we celebrate actions such as those taken by workers at Republic Doors and Windows. Faced with the possibility of their employer closing the plant and denying them back-pay and severance, these workers from the United Electrical Workers union occupied the factory. The occupation and nation-wide solidarity actions forced their employer to live up to his promises. This one bold act expressed the social power and creativity of working people.

Socialists think that every day should be directed by the fighting spirit of May Day. By marching, organizing, and extending bonds of solidarity we can create socialism for the 21st century from the bottom-up. Such a movement will be built to last since it rests upon the timeless truth that it is workers who create all that is valuable in this society.

