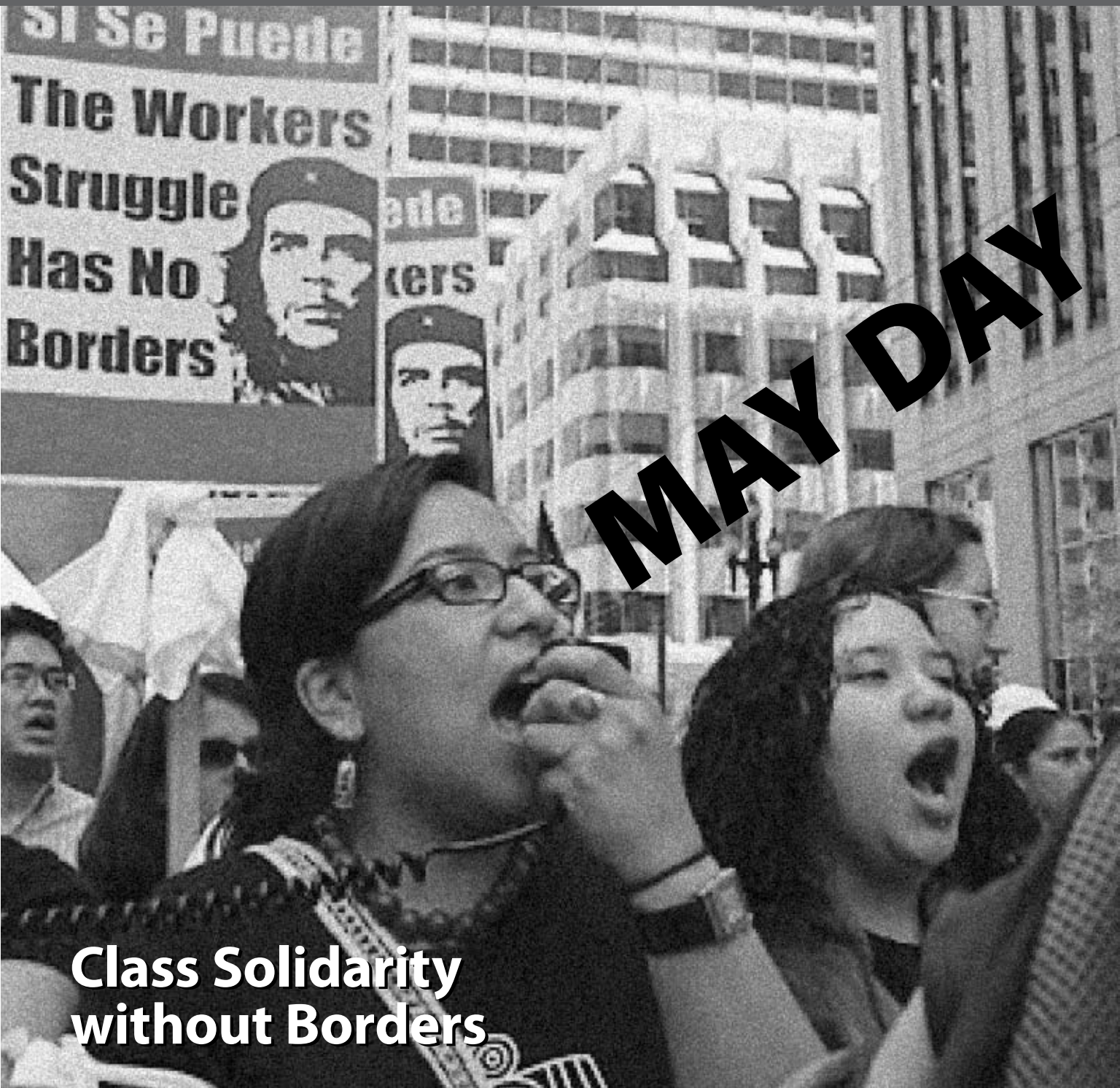




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The **Socialist**

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**Class Solidarity
without Borders**

THE SOCIALIST

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The Socialist is always looking for interesting, insightful, well-written material. In particular, we are looking for work that highlights the struggles and triumphs of the working class. We will accept news articles and stories about organizing and protests, but we are also looking for short fiction, poetry, and music/arts/theater/film review. Please mark all letters to the editor as such and limit letters to 250 words; articles should not exceed 2,500 words. Submit as e-mail attachments in Microsoft Word .doc or .rtf format to SocialistParty@sp-usa.org, or by mail to: The Socialist, 339 Lafayette St. Room 303, New York, NY 10012.

May Day Greetings 2007

Editorial

May Day is a day to remember the struggles of working people around the world for a truly just society. This day reminds us not to take for granted the sacrifices made by past generations to win the decent wages and working conditions that are still enjoyed by many workers in the advanced capitalist countries. Yet around the world the spread of a globally integrated capitalist economy is undermining the well-being of working people. As a few become grotesquely wealthy, and powerful, the many confront acute poverty and economic insecurity.

As democratic socialists, we remain dedicated to building a broad movement, at the ballot box, on the streets, in our homes and neighborhoods, and in our workplaces - one that can create a new society based on cooperation not greed, and equality not misery. We continue to see signs that people around the world have had enough, and that they are prepared to struggle for a new world built on fundamentally different principles.

Unfortunately, as people mobilize to confront the ruling powers, they find that many of the traditional working class institutions act to defend the existing system. Most working people in the United States vote for Democrats, if they vote at all. Yet the Democratic Party has never represented the interests of the working class. It continues to serve the interests of capital, providing pathetic excuses for its failure to address this dysfunctional system that places so much hardship on our lives. Mainstream business unions, whether affiliated with the AFL-CIO or Change to Win, no longer defend the wages and working conditions of their members. Instead, the leadership of these unions openly seeks to build a cooperative

relationship with corporate executives, helping them to become more competitive in the world market by slashing wages and benefits, while speeding the pace of production.

Working people need to create new organizations and new organizational forms in the coming period. Grass-roots militancy has to replace passive resignation and blind obedience. During the last year, we have seen the spirit of resistance growing as the dire impact of a globally integrated capitalist economy becomes painfully apparent. On May Day, we celebrate this spirit of resistance, as we reaffirm our commitment to a new global society.

Global capitalism has restructured the entire world. Class conflict has become harsher, and the illusion that capitalism can be reformed from within has been shredded by the further concentration of power in the hands of capital. A global economy provides the ruling class with enormous leverage, but it also creates the material basis for a genuinely international working class movement. This May Day, we reaffirm our commitment to the creation of a democratic socialist society on a global basis. We support efforts to organize a second general strike this May Day, dubbed "El Gran Paro Nacional 2007." We also stand for greater unity with our comrades from around the world who reject capitalism, patriarchy, bigotry and theocracy, and struggle for justice, democracy, and the abolition of every form of oppression. •

THE SOCIALIST PARTY strives to establish a radical democracy that places people's lives under their own control - a non-racist, classless, feminist socialist society...where working people own and control the means of production and distribution through democratically-controlled public agencies; where full employment is realized for everyone who wants to work; where workers have the right to form unions freely, and to strike and engage in other forms of job actions; and where the production of society is used for the benefit of all humanity, not for the private profit of a few. We believe socialism and democracy are one and indivisible. The working class is in a key and central position to fight back against the ruling capitalist class and its power. The working class is the major force worldwide that can lead the way to a socialist future - to a real radical democracy from below. The Socialist Party fights for progressive changes compatible with a socialist future. We support militant working class struggles and electoral action, independent of the capitalist controlled two-party system, to present socialist alternatives. We strive for democratic revolutions - radical and fundamental changes in the structure and quality of economic, political, and personal relations - to abolish the power now exercised by the few who control great wealth and the government. The Socialist Party is a democratic, multi-tendency organization, with structure and practices visible and accessible to all members. Join us today.

“We Are All Immigrants” – May Day 2007

By Bill Shakalis

It only took me a split second to understand why I must support the immigrant rights movement and their struggle for jobs, family, security, and citizenship. My grandparents were Lithuanian peasant émigrés prior, in the great Eastern and Southern European migration of labor that filled the jobs of basic industry at the turn of the twentieth century. Working in the sweat shops of Kendall Square, Cambridge, the stories of their working lives filled our family lore. My grandfather had served in the Russian Czarist army, then emigrated to the United States in 1908, after the 1905 revolution in Czarist Russia. When my father asked him, “Would you ever go back to Lithuania?” my grandfather replied, “Why? There is nothing to go back to.”

America is built upon immigrants. The great immigration of the early twentieth century, was repeated again in the 1980s and 1990s, with great numbers of Hispanics fleeing either political oppression (Guatemala, Chile, Central America), or even more often, economic oppression. The NAFTA trade agreement in 1994 propelled jobs to Mexico, only to continue their migration to Asia, chasing ever cheaper labor in a new era of economic globalization, fueled by the extremist ideology of neoliberalism. The combination of irrational markets, the failure of the Mexican peso, lack of state structural support for the expanding new industries, the resulting low wages coupled with attractive higher U.S. wages, have pushed Mexican immigrants across the border in search for better jobs and a better life. American capitalism and WTO-led policies have once again failed. There is nothing to go back to for Mexicans, Central Americans, South Americans, Haitians, Caribbean immigrants, nor the newest wave of Eastern European émigrés from the Baltic states and Poland.

There is a rich history of immigrant labor and working class struggle in the United States – but don’t bother to look it up in a public education text book. New immigrants to America in the 19th century made up the unskilled working class. Many entered into the workshops of Chicago after the Civil War. The working class took to the streets where they were confronted by the Chicago

**Once again, we
must struggle
against nativism,
racism, and
political reaction.
Anti-immigrant
attacks are
occurring nation-
wide at all levels.**

Police as early as 1867. The McCormick reapers factory was the scene of a strike called by Molders Union Local 23, which sparked a wider battle for the eight hour day. In 1886, McCormick cut wages by 15%. In a lock out, police shot dead four molders.

In 1884, the precursor to the AFL, the Federation of Organized Trade and Labor Unions of the United States and Canada, resolved “that eight hours shall constitute a legal day’s labor.” Wage laws supporting an eight hour day were passed by the Illinois legislature, but faced opposition in the courts and were

ignored and resisted by employers. The Knights of Labor, which had recently experience a boom in membership, called for nationwide demonstrations on May 1st, 1886. In Chicago, the industrial center of the country at that time, a peaceful rally was organized by the AFL and a local group of radicals called the International Working Peoples Association. Two days later, police fired on striking workers at the McCormick reapers factory.

The following day, May 4, 1886, near Haymarket Square, Chicago, thousands of workers gathered to hear labor and anarchist organizers denounce the shootings. By 10:30 pm, with about 200 workers remaining, and maybe 175 police still present, the police tried to charge the crowd. An unknown person threw a ‘bomb’ or a stick of dynamite at the policemen, killing four of them and injuring others. Instead of pursuing an honest legal investigation, the incident was used as an excuse to round up leading anarchists who were railroaded in court, convicted and hung.

Outrage spread with the news locally, nationally, then internationally. AFL President Samuel Gompers declared May Day a holiday in the United States, while the Socialist (Second) International met in Europe to declare the day an international holiday. May Day quickly became a day to protest the hanging of anarchists, oppression of labor, and demand freedom for those political prisoners who remained in jail.

Today, immigrants are facing the Immigration Control and Enforcement (ICE) unit of Homeland Security, which is oppressing and terrorizing immigrant communities in scores of raids. ICE is a tool for the employing class and their political lackeys who want to crush the labor movement and the human rights movements that would help Hispanic communities defend their rights to unionize, gain citizenship, and enjoy

MAY DAY GREETINGS

SOCIALIST PARTY OF MASSACHUSETTS

Under capitalism: There is Liberty, but only for lies and crime.

Ricardo Flores Magon (1917)

social and economic justice. Their struggle is our struggle.

Once again, we must struggle against nativism, racism, and political reaction. Anti-immigrant attacks are occurring nation-wide at all levels. ICE raids on Smithfield packing plants disrupt union organizing efforts. The “disappearing” of immigrants, such as in Danbury CT, is happening nationwide. ICE is a sanctioned terrorist government agency promoting fear in immigrant communities. But the Danbury 11 campaign is organizing to resist the raids on immigrant communities, end the fear, and give immigrants their right to organize (See: <http://stoptheraids.org>).

Today May Day is being revitalized. Last year the day was marked by immigrant organizations announcing the “Great American Boycott”, and calling for a “day without a Mexican”, to protest repressive anti-immigrant legislation H.R. 4437, the Sensenbrenner bill, a piece of federal legislation meant to criminalize immigrants and their families, offering no legal path to citizenship, and establishing an anti-labor guest

worker program. That bill failed, and for the first time in recent memory, the U.S. press mentioned May Day traditions and linked them to the immigrant rights movement. Socialists have continued to play a vital role, offering solidarity and pushing more radical demands.

Born during the first waves of immigrants to the United States in the 19th century, the militant labor movement called for an eight hour day. Despite its domestic origins, May Day is less well known in the United States where the labor movement has been suppressed and coopted. Most nations with a healthy labor movement still recognize May Day as a day to recognize international labor solidarity. Only now, with new waves of Latino and Hispanic immigrants from Mexico, Central and South America, has rank and file participation revived May Day in the belly of international corporate capitalism - the United States.

The fight of immigrants for human rights in the United States is at its root political, and we must not allow ourselves to be limited to legal reform. It

is the obligation of the entire working class, regardless of citizenship, ethnic background or color, to stand with the poorest, most vulnerable and exploited of our class. We must overcome all our historic divides, if we dare to say we are socialists, if we dare to be human beings.

We must stand in solidarity with all our Hispanic brothers and sisters in opposing ICE repression, the guest worker program, the separation of families by oppressive immigration laws, and we support their struggles for citizenship, for union membership and collective bargaining – and for a new society built on justice. We point out that such a society cannot be had in a corporate controlled capitalist society. We need a radical democratic socialist vision for a new society.

On May 1, 2007, let us take back May Day in the United States. As working people, it is our holiday, founded in the United States. We are all human beings! An injury to one, is an injury to all! •

One Young Radical Unionist's Journey

Balancing life, politics and the class struggle

By Matthew Andrews

After graduating from the Labor Studies Program at UMass Amherst, I found myself facing the same major choices that most graduates face. But as a socialist, the challenge seemed even greater to find work to sustain myself while remaining true to the values that led me to study the labor movement in the first place. Deep set divisions between the larger labor unions in the United States and many popular social movements leave little room for a radical vision to be expressed, even for unionists with the best intentions. "As long as I don't have to work for Democratic Party politicians," I thought to myself. But I found the reality of union politics not so easy to avoid.

After sending out my resume, I had my first job interview with SEIU 1199 Healthcare Workers East, a union which represents thousands of hospital workers from New England to DC. I put on a suit and tie, and went downtown to their offices in Boston to take a test they give for all new research staff. Next, I had an interview where the basics of hospital union politics were made clear to me. The government is by far the largest spender in the health care industry, between financial aid to the poor, and coverage for state employees. Both hospitals and unions cozy up to the Democratic Party, which runs the state legislature in Massachusetts, in order to keep dollars flowing. Without any checks on pricing, the result is inflated prices, record profits for the industry, and a crisis for those with inadequate coverage. New legislation in Massachusetts, brokered by our outgoing Republican governor (often misnamed "Universal Healthcare" by the media) forces small businesses and low-income employees to buy private health insurance. The pri-

mary focus of SEIU 1199 Healthcare Workers East is oriented toward lobbying within the narrow framework set by the political establishment.

A couple weeks later I had a second job interview with UNITE-HERE to be a boycott organizer. It sounded like an exciting job, building campaigns to target hotel business and force concessions such as card check

It is both exhilarating and daunting to be organizing outside established norms. Fortunately, I am not alone.

neutrality. I might have taken the job except part of the job entailed picking up and moving to whichever city they needed you. I had just moved back to Boston and was eager to establish roots in the community.

During my interview with UNITE-HERE I again raised concerns about the Democratic Party. The union representative agreed that it felt dirty to work with some politicians, but he explained, "Sometimes it's necessary to win." He gave the example of supporting the incumbent mayor of Boston in exchange for his support in pressuring city hotels to sign union neutrality and card-check agreements. This seemed like a strong argument, and I spent several days pondering it.

I have never agreed with the popular view that ideology and pragmatism necessarily conflict. Political ideology should provide order to understand the world and guiding our actions. If it fails to serve us in that way, we must correct our ideology, not shrug off its contradictions.

I have no problem working with Democratic Party activists wherever we may have common ground, but trading favors with Party power brokers stinks of class collaboration. I concluded that the tactics of UNITE-HERE emphasize winning contracts, and not necessarily developing unionism among workers. This difference explains their tactical choices. The price for this tactical expediency however, will be dependency on the mercy of ruling class forces. Should a strike become necessary, they will not be able to depend on the mayor's support. Having "won" without learning militant struggle in the first place, workers will continue to expect union staff to fight their struggles for them. If the workers' power is not sufficient to win a contract in the first place, the union will not be able to defend victories or win new ones. Expediency has its advantages, but not without

May Day Greeting
to our Comrades in the Socialist Party
USA, a Party with Principles
- Greg, Andrea & Trevor Pason

a price. Once again union power is shackled by Democratic Party politics.

My friends in the Industrial Workers of the World encouraged me to salt - to find a regular job and organize as a worker. At this point I needed some kind of income to pay the rent so I decided to give it a try. I got a job at a local grocery store. I work evenings until ten o'clock for the state's minimum wage of \$7.50 an hour. I am learning first hand about low wages, irregular schedules, poor working conditions and incompetent management. Many of my co-workers have worked for two or three years without a raise. Many are immigrants from Latin America, working two jobs in order to send money back home. While we work they teach me Spanish and I help them learn English. I've made many new friends at work and have just begun to talk about unionizing with some. The working class in the United States is so severed from its own traditions and lessons of resistance that a sense of powerlessness prevails despite deep dissatisfactions.

It is both exhilarating and daunting to be organizing outside established norms. Fortunately, I am not alone. The IWW Food and Allied Workers Union (I.U. 460) has organized immigrant workers at five warehouses in New York City and is fighting to defend their basic legal rights. On March 19th, I marched with two hundred wobblies and other supporters from the region to protest the firing of union organizers, threats against workers based on their immigration status, sub-minimum wages, and the failure to pay overtime. Three of the target warehouses chose to shut down for the day at an estimated cost of \$20,000 each. It was inspiring to see our relatively small and low budget union exercising real strength. The courage of those workers in the face of such oppression gives me hope, not just for unionizing my workplace, but that we can build an industrial union for food distribution workers throughout the northeast that bridges differences between immigrant and native born workers and can win substantive improvements in wages, hours, working conditions and respect on the job. •

Socialist Greetings on May Day to workers throughout the world from the Socialist Alliance, an umbrella group for a number of left and green left organisations throughout England and Wales.

We are committed to campaigning for socialism, internationalism, environmentalism and republicanism, and we totally oppose sexism, racism and fascism



**Solidarity greetings from
Enhedslisten/ the Red-Green Alliance
in Denmark. Thank you for our fruitful
cooperation. We will continue the
coming year - we have still a lot to do
as red-green socialists: Stop climate
change, get the troops home from
Iraq and Afghanistan and fight
for welfare with a strong public
sector.**

**Looking forward to fight with you the
coming year.**

**Rune Lund, MP, Enhedslisten/ the
Red-Green Alliance**



www.enhedslisten.dk

Mass Protest in Denmark to Defend our Victories and our History: An Interview with Peter Dollerup of the Socialist Youth Front

Peter Dollerup is Treasurer for the Socialist Youth Front (SUF) in Denmark and sits on its Central Committee. We spoke with him on March 9, after International Women's Day protests in Denmark condemned the demolition of the Ungdomshuset (Youth House).

The Socialist: Could you tell us a bit about the politics and background of your organization?

Peter Dollerup: Sure. SUF formed in 2001 in a merger between two youth organizations: The Youth Affiliate of the Red-Green Alliance, which is the most leftwing political Party to hold seats in Parliament, and another organization called Rebel. The RGA Youth Affiliate was small but had a strong organizational structure, while Rebel had many loosely organized members, so both groups brought different strengths together. There was also a third organization, Red Youth, which participated in talks but did not join in the merger because RGA Youth Affiliate and Rebel members wanted to take a clear stand that the old East Block did not represent socialism. SUF has a minimum program that all members agree to, which is explicitly revolutionary and anti-authoritarian. We have socialists from every ideology except Stalinism. We do not practice "Democratic Centralism."

The Red-Green Alliance is not our mother party. Most parties in Denmark have youth affiliates with seats on their executive committees. SUF believes that change will come primarily from outside Parliament. We are good friends with the Red-Green Alliance though, and we work together on a local basis.

TS: Could you tell us about the Youth House? Why was it so important to so many people?

PD: The Youth House was over a hundred years old. It was originally a union building which hosted meetings for the Second International. Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht spoke there. It is where

**Activists
occupied the
streets and set up
barricades. They
threw bricks at
the police and
set fire to cars.
Fortunately there
haven't been any
injuries.**

the Second International declared March 8th International Women's Day. After the building was taken over by squatters, it became famous throughout Europe as a place for alternative youth culture. Many musical and theatrical acts got their start at the Youth House. The house also served food for the homeless every Wednesday.

TS: How did the squatters acquire the house, and how did the government later take it away?

PD: In the early 1980's there was a Squatters' movement looking to reclaim a building in the interests of the people. Before they came to the Youth House, they had occupied an abandoned bread factory, then later a museum. Each time they were evicted. When they occupied the Youth House, they decided to defend it with militant tactics. They barricaded themselves in, threw rocks at the police, and rallied thousands of supporters. In 1982 the municipal government conceded to their demands and signed an agreement with the squatters. The contract did not give ownership to the squatters, but promised that they could use the building indefinitely, so long as they used the building to promote culture and the arts.

Then, in 1996 there was a fire which caused significant damage to the building. The municipal government said to fix the building would cost half a million dollars so they wanted to tear the building down. The youth however, claimed they could fix it at a tenth of that cost. The government signed a temporary contract with the youth, giving them \$40,000 to fix the house. The house was repaired, but when the temporary contract ran out, instead of reverting back to the old indefinite contract, the government claimed the young people no longer had a right to the building.

TS: When did the Father House buy the building? Do you think the government was trying to provoke young people?



PD: The building was actually bought by an organization called Human Inc. in 1999. Nobody knew anything about Human Inc., but it was owned by a member of the Father House, and was later bought by the Father House. I think it was a front group, but I don't think the government knew.

TS: What is the Father House? Why did they decide to target the Youth House?

PD: The Father House is a Christian fundamentalist sect. They only have about forty members. Two thirds of their members left when their current minister took over because it became more cultish. They are on a crusade against the left in Denmark. They hate gays and lesbians. They hate immigrants, especially Muslims. And they hate leftists. Their minister thinks she received a message from God to tear down the building. She thinks she is saving souls or something.

TS: She? This Christian Fundamentalist group is led by a woman?

PD: Yes, she took over after her husband died. I think Christian fundamentalists in Denmark are different from those in America.

TS: So if the building was bought by Human Inc. in 1999, how did the situation come to a crisis seven years later?

PD: They tried to evict people in 2000 but they successfully barricaded themselves in. Then the sale was challenged in court and the eviction was put on hold. There was also a campaign to raise money to buy the

Mass Protest, continued on p. 12







Warm greetings of solidarity to all Socialist Party members joining us in Chicago this April and in this campaign in the months and years ahead.

With allies like you working by our side, we know it will only be a matter of time before farmworkers in McDonald's supply chain - and beyond - earn the wages and respect we deserve.

Thanks for your continued support for our Campaign for Fair Food.


Another World is Possible,

Coalition of Immokalee Workers
www.ciw-online.org

Student/Farmworker Alliance
www.sfalliance.org

Alliance for Fair Food
www.allianceforfairfood.org

In Memory of Comrade E. Shea
 Bread and Roses!
 Myrtle Kastner, Milwaukee WI



"If we would have kept silent, the stones would have cried out."
Michael Schwab, 1886

May Day 2007

Greetings from
 Diane Brand

Eyewitness to Chiapas: An Account of Indigenous Resistance to State Terror in Mexico

By Peter Weir

From March 1-7, 2007 I traveled to the state of Chiapas, Mexico with a solidarity delegation hosted by Higher Grounds Trading Co., a fair trade coffee company based in Lake Leelanau, Michigan. Every year Higher Grounds takes delegations to the farms that grow the coffee eventually sold in the United States in order to establish lasting relationships. We visited the collectively owned farms of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN), a movement of indigenous farmers that have created autonomous zones in the face of brutal oppression by both the Mexican government and paramilitary groups. This is what I saw and learned....

We're careening up the side of a mountain en-route to Oventic, a Zapatista Caracol, or capitol, to obtain permission to enter a number of EZLN communities spread out among Chiapas, the southern-most state in Mexico.

The fog is so dense it seems as if there is no more than five or ten feet of visibility through the windshield of the van. Undeterred by either the unforgiving fog or the many speed bumps which clutter the mountain roads of Chiapas, Julio, our driver and member of the Center for Political Analysis and Social and Economic Research (CAPISE), advances to our destination with a near reckless determination.

Almost an hour and a half pass before we are surrounded by colorful murals of indigenous farmers alongside images of Mexican rebel Emiliano Zapata and Argentine revolutionary Che Guevara.

As our group files out of the van and we clear the fog, we see an indigenous man clad in a black ski mask at the entrance of Oventic. Women and men talk amongst themselves in front of

artisan cooperatives and children look on at us with curious interest.

We'd left the Mexico of the spring-breakers far behind but now we were setting foot in the communities who for the past 13 years have been at the heart of the struggle for indigenous rights against the pitiless system of neo-liberal capitalism that currently governs the world economy.



The Zapatistas first gained the international spotlight when they ignited an armed uprising against the Mexican government on January 1, 1994, the same day that the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) went into action, a symbol of the oppressive economic policies that the EZLN were combating.

Their demands were simple, indigenous autonomy and rights protecting their communities, which are among the most dispossessed elements of Mexican society. Their demands were met in 1996 within the San Andres Accords, an agreement between the EZLN and the federal government that ensured that indigenous autonomy and rights would be protected at the state and national level.

However, the promises made by the government have proved to be empty and its actions have indeed proved to be not only ineffective at enforcing the Accords but antagonistic and opposed to them altogether.

In the 11 years since the signing at San Andres, the Mexican government has not only left its end of the agreement unfulfilled, but has moved backward in its relations with the indigenous people of Chiapas and engaged in campaigns of state-sponsored terrorism against the Zapatista communities.

Although the government has not honored the San Andres Accords the Zapatistas have.

These communities have reorganized themselves into autonomous units, completely separate from the government, that work the land as ejidos, or communal land. Although the ejidos are officially recognized by Mexican law, the Zapatistas informed us of the military's attempt to systematically disassemble collectively owned land and sell it off as private property. Almost every EZLN autonomous zone has experienced this at the hands of the paramilitary group cleverly named, Organization for the Defense of Indigenous and Peasant Rights (OPDDIC).

While we visited the Zapatista autonomous zone of Olga Isabel, locals told us that daily OPDDIC is positioned around the community for a possible land seizure. Frequently OPDDIC attempts to tear down signs proclaiming the existence of autonomous zones as well as paint over Zapatista murals. Residents of Olga Isabel reported that members of OPDDIC, as well as official police, approach the community heavily armed provoking a battle.

The community noted they will not violently engage any official or paramilitary, as all Zapatistas are now practicing purely pacifist resistance. CAPISE researchers clarify that para- and official military violence is designed to provoke a reaction, knowing that the Mexican military has the capability to

exterminate every Zapatista within a week.

These abhorrent actions are not isolated to Olga Isabel. In fact they are the norm for EZLN communities throughout Chiapas.

We were invited to the autonomous zone of Nuevo Rosario to help document the atrocities committed there. Recently Zapatistas of other communities, as well as international observers, have come to Nuevo Rosario to deter future attacks by OPDDIC or the government.

Local residents of the community detailed the events of February 20-22, 2007 explaining that about 140 members of OPDDIC and government supporters came and torched houses, stole wood and animals, decimated trees with chainsaws, broke the community oven to pieces and burned crops such as corn and fruit.

Of the Zapatista crops that weren't ruined, many more were stolen.

As if the destruction of the community wasn't enough, members of the paramilitary physically attacked families and abused women and children. Practicing pacifism along with all other EZLN, the citizens of Nuevo Rosario could only watch as the plunderers burned their homes and fields to the ground.

The criminals of OPDDIC left only one thing behind, a message burned into the side of a home, "get out of here."

The point was clear, OPDDIC wants to force the Zapatistas to cooperate with government sponsored privatization and to

turn their collective land into another free market for capitalists to use at their disposal. The EZLN voices of resistance in Nuevo Rosario echo those of all the autonomous zones, that the struggle is about more than land ownership, but culture as well.

The ancestors of the Zapatistas always worked their land collectively and today the current generations are keeping up the tradition. The government's attempt to exterminate collective land will exterminate a people's culture with it, not unlike the genocide of Native Americans in the United States.

Despite the devastation experienced at Nuevo Rosario one man's answer came easily when asked if they'd stay on the land: "We'll always stay, it's our land that we'll always work and we'll use our word as our weapon."

In Morelia, another EZLN capitol, we spoke with a sitting "Council of Good Government."

The Council is made up of rotating participants elected from surrounding Zapatista regions to talk about their own experiences and relate on a level of communication that would be impossible without the Council. The men and women of Morelia reported the same happenings as those from Olga Isabel and Nuevo Rosario.

OPDDIC have been kidnapping Zapatistas, burning houses and stealing animals and crops. The Council feels that it is a wide-scale operation aimed

Chiapas, continued on p. 13

May Day Greetings from
Bill Fulcher, Enrolled Agent

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May Day Greetings

From the Socialist Party of Texas

www.socialistpartyoftexas.org
spoftexas at sbcglobal.net



Mass Protest, continued from p. 9

building back. We raised fifteen million Kroner (\$2.68 million). The Father House would have made a seven hundred percent profit, but they turned it down. After losing at the municipal level, we lost in the national court in 2006. On March 1st the Police rammed the building from above and stormed the building from helicopters. They arrested everyone.

TS: So you were fighting to defend the victories of the squatters' movement from the 1980's?

On March 1st the Police rammed the building from above and stormed the building from helicopters. They arrested everyone.

PD: Yes, we've regressed twenty-five years from the progress won by the squatters. That's what we've been fighting.

After the raids, protests broke out throughout the neighborhood. Activists occupied the streets and set up barricades. They threw bricks at the police and set fire to cars. Fortunately there haven't been any injuries. SUF does not endorse this sort of violence, but we are not surprised by it either. The violence made the media take us seriously, which forced the government to take us seriously as well.

The police arrested over 800 people, two hundred of whom are still in jail. They are arresting people in the area

for almost any reason. They have been searching people illegally and arresting people who received text messages about demonstrations on their cell phones. One police officer claims he can identify forty-four individuals for charges even though they wore masks. Two women were picked up by the police for having prior convictions. Although this is not true, they are still in jail.

TS: It sounds like the police have established martial law. Is there no government oversight?

PD: Yes, that is exactly how it is. Normally Denmark has a functional

system. The police and the courts have separate powers, and the police are not supposed to act in this way. The courts are supposed to discipline the police. But now that's not happening.

TS: How do you think young people will respond to recent events? Do you think protests will continue or will they be demoralized?

PD: Protests will continue. I think many young people are becoming radicalized, especially by the crazy behavior of the police. When the house was torn down, we saw many people crying.



TS: Yesterday was International Women's Day. Were there events in Denmark to commemorate the day?

PD: Yes, there was a huge rally for International Women's Day. Many speeches were made about how the Youth House had been a non-sexist environment for women. Three thousand women marched to where the house had been torn down. We hope to find a new building where the mission of the Youth House can continue.

TS: Has the labor movement been supportive?

PD: Yes, the labor federation in Denmark helped us raise much of the money when we were trying to buy back the house. Also, they boycotted tearing the house down. You have to understand, somewhere between eighty and ninety percent of workers in Denmark are in unions. The non-union workers that tore down the building wore masks for fear of retaliation.

TS: Is it common for organized labor in Denmark to stand up for social causes?

PD: The main federation is fairly conservative. They are closely linked with the Social Democrats. But there are many smaller affiliates that have progressive politics.

TS: Your story of resistance is inspiring for those of us in the United States. Thank you for taking the time to talk with us!

PD: Thank you. •

Chiapas, continued from p. 11

at displacing the EZLN community by community; looking at the facts and testimonies this stance is difficult to debate.

As in every community, the Council has noticed that official Mexican police and military have failed to stop the actions of paramilitaries. The government's inaction is perceived as tacit acceptance of the injustice being committed by OPDDIC. In fact, it is the opinion of CAPISE and the EZLN that the Mexican government enjoys the work of OPDDIC as a means of speeding up privatization and doing the governments dirty work.

The Council at Morelia has even documented federal representatives from the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) as helping funnel arms to OPDDIC.

The situation in Chiapas is critical.

The federal government of Mexico wishes to portray itself as a first world democracy and a land of opportunity with its own version of the "American Dream." In reality, Mexico is a stronghold of neo-liberal economic policies which have delighted capitalists and multi-national corporations based both in Mexico and the U.S.

At the same time, these policies keep the most marginalized elements of Mexican society and the indigenous communities in unacceptable poverty. The Zapatistas' efforts to create an alternative model to neo-liberal capitalism has not been appreciated by the government. The collaboration of the official military

and the paramilitary forces of OPDDIC have brought each and every Zapatista community under siege.

The EZLN have built autonomous communities that look to political solutions to problems rather than violent ones and have embraced pacifism, something the Mexican government seems incapable of doing.

The EZLN needs the help of the international community now more than ever.

Their slogan is, "our word is our weapon." In solidarity with the EZLN, indigenous communities worldwide, the dispossessed and the oppressed, the victims of the rich and powerful everywhere, and every person who longs for a life of liberty free of coercion and repression, please spread the word! •

Peter Weir:

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Research/News:

CAPISE: www.capise.org.mx (multi-lingual)

Indymedia Chiapas: chiapas.indymedia.org (Spanish)

Radio Zapatista: www.radiozapatista.org (bi-lingual)

EZLN info: struggle.ws/zapatista.html (English)

EZLN website: enlacezapatista.ezln.org.mx (Spanish)

Fair Trade:

Higher Grounds Trading Co.: www.javaforjustice.com



From the

Socialist Party of Wisconsin

and the

Socialist Party of Milwaukee

**Remembering the Spirit of
Frank Zeidler**

**MAY DAY Greetings
and
Let's Grow the
Democratic Socialist Movement!!**



HAPPY MAY DAY
FROM DONALD BUSKY!

SUPPORT THE CHANGE TO THE
SOCIALIST PARTY USA CONSTITUTION
TO ADD TWO LINES AT THE
END OF ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP
TO READ, "THE SOCIALIST PARTY
USA IS A DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST
PARTY. MARXIST-LENINISTS ARE
BANNED."

True Mission: Socialists and the Labor Party Question in the U.S., by Eric Chester

Reviewed by David Schaich

According to 'orthodox' Marxism, as capitalism developed workers would become conscious of their class and flock to the socialist parties that represented their interests. This hasn't exactly happened in the United States.

The failure of socialist parties in the US to quickly gain the allegiance of the majority of workers led many American leftists to advocate the creation of a non-socialist "Labor Party" that they hoped would attract mass support. Ideally formed around labor unions, like the British Labour Party, this labor party would become a major force by advocating mild reforms. Its socialist supporters then predicted that the dynamics of capitalism would inexorably -- indeed, inevitably -- drive it to embrace socialism.

More bluntly stated, socialist supporters of labor parties aimed to quickly gain power by temporarily abandoning, or at least moderating, their actual politics.

In "True Mission" (Pluto, 2004), socialist Eric Chester forcefully argues that this is a flawed approach. He explores several attempts to create labor parties in the United States during the last 120 years to argue that they have all failed completely,

Socialists need to avoid the scam of watering down their principles in order to increase their mainstream appeal.

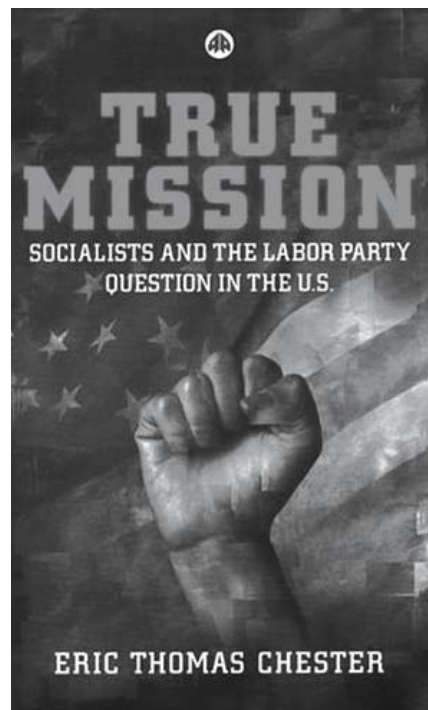
and that their failure is not difficult to understand.

The progressive parties or organizations occasionally hailed as either labor parties or potential precursors to labor parties were rarely willing to break with the two-party system.

Instead they tended to view themselves as pressure groups trying to promote progressive elements in the Democratic or Republican Parties. Additionally, they often coalesced around celebrity presidential candidates such as Henry George, Robert La Follette, Henry Wallace or Ralph Nader, who had little interest in the parties themselves and did little if anything to support them or assist independent politics in general following their electoral defeats.

Chester traces the occasional creation and collapse of labor parties and progressive parties such as United Labor Party of 1886 and American Labor Party of 1936. He begins with Henry George's run for president in 1886, and proceeds through the end of the 1930s, which saw the effective end of significant left-wing challenges to the two-party system. A final chapter skips to Ralph Nader's 2000 run for President under the Green Party, which Chester argues exhibited many of the same weaknesses as the earlier labor parties. At the same time, the Green Party did not cultivate the direct ties to unions and working people that socialists had in the past emphasized as the chief strength of labor parties.

Clearly and forcefully argued, "True Mission" is written in a style that is accessible, though somewhat dry and academic. It includes extensive notes and documentation, a helpful glossary of important people and organizations, a useful bibliography and slim index. Chester focuses especially on socialist support for labor parties, arguing that it should have been clear to these socialists, had they not been blinded by their



doctrines, that they were engaging in futility.

Not only were open socialists typically unwelcome in these parties and organizations, but the parties' strong ties to the two-party system, including support for Democratic and Republican candidates, and heavy dependence on charismatic but uncommitted celebrity candidates all provided ample evidence that they were not going to be around for long, and weren't going to accomplish much if anything during their brief existences.

Chester is especially critical of much of the moderate leadership of the Socialist Party of America (SPA) as well as Leon Trotsky and many of his American disciples. He portrays the former as almost comically eager to submerge the SPA into any reform party they could find, despite the SPA's relative electoral success and rank-and-file opposition to such mergers. He then tries to untangle the oft-reversed positions of the lat-

ter during the 1930s, on whether or not to work within labor parties, and if so how. Although this issue may seem (and, I would say, should be) irrelevant today, many of the socialists currently working within the Green Party identify themselves as Trotskyists of one sort or another, and may place more weight on the pronouncements of their patriarch than perhaps they should.

But if working within labor parties and the like holds little hope for socialists, then what is to be done? According to Chester, socialists need to avoid the scam of watering down their principles in order to increase their mainstream appeal. Instead we should embrace

the tactics pursued during the heyday of the SPA and championed by its left wing, standing up as independent democratic socialists and offering no apologies. "The true mission of a socialist party is not to rapidly achieve electoral success. Taking this as a goal can only point toward a morass of opportunistic compromises. Instead, socialists need to present a clearly defined radical perspective, to raise the demand for fundamental reforms that stretch the boundaries of the existing system, and to articulate a coherent vision of a new and egalitarian society" (209).

Well, "True Mission" convinced me; I'm signing up. •

Death in the Haymarket: A Story of Chicago, by James Green

Reviewed by Mary-Alice Herbert

The most comprehensive book on the events which led to May 1 becoming International Labor Day is by labor historian James Green and was published by Pantheon Books in 2006. It is written in a lively style and delivers on its title -- Death in the Haymarket: A Story of Chicago, the First Labor Movement and the Bombing that Divided Gilded Age America. In his lively style, Green describes the movement for an 8-hour

work day that had been building since the Civil War ending with triumphant labor marches on May 1, 1886 and the terrible toll our democracy suffered in the aftermath of the Haymarket tragedy. He describes how the "red scare" of that era was used by employers and the government to crush labor unions, vilify immigrants, and limit free speech and how it has repeated itself through the years and continues in our national culture. •

Missing from Haymarket Square, by Harriette Gillem Robinet

Reviewed by Mary-Alice Herbert

Missing from Haymarket Square by Harriette Gillem Robinet, is a novel for younger readers. Three children whose fathers were blacklisted from their jobs for being union organizers become the primary bread-winners of their families and now they have the added task of rescuing their fathers who have been imprisoned to obstruct their participation in Chicago's May Day Demonstration.

The two girls work 12 hours a day in a sewing factory, their meager wages only pay the room rent. Dinah, who is black and Olive, whose family is from Austria,

work together to distract wealthy passersby while Olive's older brother picks their pockets. Dinah feels guilty about stealing and is very relieved when Olive says she has arranged with the butcher, baker and greengrocer for them to work for food. "We'll do it by anarchism," Olive explains, "Produce for work!"

Robinet has carefully researched her story. She is very accurate in her accounting of the real people in the Haymarket drama and creates very believable fictional characters. Readers of all ages will find her book rewarding. •

From Vermont Socialists:

IN MEMORIAM

for BOB SANTWAY 86 yrs
Loyal and trusted Comrade.

Member of SPUSA.

WWII veteran member of
Veterans for Peace.

Veteran of more than 1/2
century of struggles
for peace and justice.

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