

THE ORGANIZER

NEWSLETTER OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY USA NATIONAL OFFICE

FEBRUARY 2011

Join us in Defending Public Services and Public Workers

Join the SPUSA campaign to stop budget cuts and defend public service workers

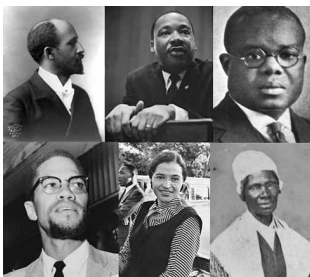
Today, around the country, public services and the workers who provide those services are under attack as never before. School, libraries, water districts, fire departments, police officers public highways, streets and sanitation—virtually every public institution is in jeopardy. And every public worker faces the threat of losing his or her job or finding their wages and benefits cut. We should be involved in the fight to save these services and to protect the jobs and standard of living of these workers.

The economic crisis and the fiscal crisis of government at all levels have become the excuse to attempt to privatize, shut down, or reduce services while at the same time attacking the labor unions which represent workers in the public sector. Republicans and Democrats are in agreement that because of the economic and fiscal crises, workers should give up wages and benefits. President Obama called for freezing federal workers wages while Republican and Democratic governors alike are calling for budget cuts, layoffs, furloughs and reductions in benefits.

The fiscal crisis of the federal government, states, cities and school districts could be solved simply by raising the taxes on the rich and on corporations. We should not be cutting school funding and laying off teachers, on the contrary we

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February is Black History Month



Statement on Black History Month

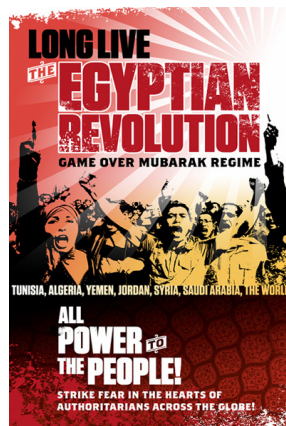
SPUSA People of Color Commission

February is Black History Month. It's a time when our public institutions, and corporations give a little extra attention to the accomplishments and of the Americas made by Black Americans. Established by Carter G Woodson in 1926, it's purpose was to promote the contributions made by Black Americans in an effort to undo the contention that Black people have no history, and have

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Socialism and the Spirit of Tahrir Square

by Andrea Pason and Billy Wharton National Co-Chairs



We send greetings to the working people of Egypt on the day of their victorious struggle to depose the dictator Hosni Mubarak. Their grassroots movement provides definitive proof to the world that radical political activity can change the course of history. The activities of the protesters in Tahrir Square transformed the idea of democracy from a stale ritual that occurs every few years to an open ended struggle for freedom. We are inspired by the example provided

by this mass revolt of the Egyptian people.

It is particularly important to recognize the central contribution made by the working class to the defeat of the dictator. While the occupation of the square and the street demonstrations in several cities galvanized the resistance, it was the mass strikes carried out by the workers that broke the back of the regime. On February 9th thousands of workers demonstrated the ability to shutdown the entire society and economy until their demands were met. After these mass strikes, the regime understood that surrender was its only option.

The victory of Tahrir Square need not be an isolated one – limited only to the removal of one dictatorial regime. The revolt was as much about the conditions imposed on Egyptians by capitalism – the lack of food, the unemployment, the poor housing, the declining environment – as it was about Mubarak. We can all join in the spirit of struggle initiated in Cairo by demanding a democratic socialist society where the needs of human beings are placed ahead of those of corporations.

See Tahrir Square for what it is – an open-ended struggle for freedom. And what the dissident voices in Egypt and many others parts of world are demanding are things that capitalism cannot deliver. In Egypt, the reorganization of an independent trade union movement, the experiences of direct democracy in the protests and the revitalization of a socialist left in the country offer greatest hope for advancing the political agenda for economic freedom developed in Tahrir Square.

As socialists located in the US, we pledge to continue to do our part in the international struggle for socialism. We see our own political activity as a part of the larger international movement for jobs, peace and freedom. As a part of a Socialism for the 21st Century!

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Defend Public Services continued...

should be expanding education to make it free from K to Ph.D., as it was in some state only a few decades ago. We should not be cutting back public services, but rather expanding them by creating a single payer health care system, one that provides free health care to all.

We can stop the attack on public services and workers, but it will take a movement. The current situation represents an enormous challenge but also a tremendous opportunity. If we involve our-selves in the fight for jobs and services—as public employees and as part of the community, as both librarians and the clients of the public library, as teachers, parents and students, as fire fighters and the homeowners and apartment dwellers that they protect, as social workers and those who receive public assistance—we can build a broad, popular movement to save our communities and our jobs.

As socialists we know that when given the choice between either sharp budget cuts or tax increases for the rich, working people will choose to make the rich pay. Such a choice was on the battle in Oregon in 2010, and more than 53% of voters chose to tax the rich. Only a political movement that stands for taxing the rich to pay for public services for all can make such choices available.

We socialists also understand that the end of Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds from the federal government will exacerbate the crisis of the state governments. State governments need federal government support and that means addressing federal issues as well, such as ending the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan and using that money to support aid to the states so we can continue to receive our public services.

We ask you, as members and friends of the Socialist Party, to join us to this work. We will be creating groups in SP branches as well as a national network of our members who are working on this project. We need you to provide us with information about what's happening in your community. We want to know how you've become involved and what you have found to be successful or unsuccessful strategies. Together we can become part of what will certainly be a national movement of unions, community organizations, and working people to protect our public services and public jobs.

Until we get a formal campaign e-mail and list set up you can contact the National Office at natsec@socialistparty-usa.org for more info and to get involved. Hope to hear from you!

Keep your membership up-to-date! You can renew online at: www.socialistpartyusa.org/joinus/paydues.html or by mail to: SPUSA 339 Lafayette St. #303 NY, NY 101012

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Black History Month continued...

made no significant contributions to the history of the Americas.

Since 1926 this project has come along way. What started as a one week remembrance of Black American accomplishments has become an entire month. As a child Black History Month began and ended with the ring of the school bell. By the mid 90's McDonalds (if only on BET) began crafting ads for fast food to coincide with the month of February. If we weren't yet recognized as key players in the American experience, our spending power certainly was. As with all things in our country whatever can be turned into a commodity will be turned into a commodity.

The Socialist Party USA is pleased to recognize and celebrate February as Black History month. As socialists we recognize the central role in American, and global history that African peoples occupy. You cannot address the history of religion, science, art, or the study of history itself without beginning with the story of the African. For socialists it is also important to move the stories of Black people out of it's box in February and into the larger narrative of American History in order to reconstruct a story of the Americas as seen and experienced from the people on the bottom.

There can be no legitimate account of American history that distinguishes between it's peoples contributions based on the color of their skin.

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS TO HOST THE 2011 SPUSA NATIONAL CONVENTION

The Socialist Party has put out a call for proposals to host the 2011 SPUSA National Convention. This convention must be in a location west of the Mississippi River.

Info: www.socialistparty-usa.org/convention/

Deadline for proposals: March 31, 2011

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Information listed on www.socialistparty-usa.org and in the March issue (IWD) of The Organizer

March 8th: International Women's Day

March 19th: Resist the War Machine! Actions in Washington DC, Los Angeles and across the US

March 31st: Deadline for Hammer & Tongs – send articles (1500 word max- no personal attacks on other members) to natsec@socialistparty-usa.org or SPUSA/H&T 339 Lafayette St. #303 NY, NY 10012

April 9th & 10th: Rally Against the Wars at Home and Abroad Washington DC (9th) San Francisco (10th)