

THE ORGANIZER

NEWSLETTER OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY USA NATIONAL OFFICE

JUNE/ JULY 2009

Building A Socialist Feminist Response to U.S. Militarism and the Global Economic Crisis

by the SPUSA War At Home Committee

In this period of rising unemployment and economic turmoil, an increasing number of people are being drawn to radical concepts and are ready to consider radical strategies for social change based on the link between the severe problems we face at home, the actions of the U.S. military world-wide, and the destructive nature of global capitalism.

Clearly, what we face right now are not only wars abroad, but also a war at home. In both cases, masses of people are living under siege as a result of actions by the U.S. government to perpetuate the inhumane capitalist system. In both cases, a collective, activist, response is called for: a response consisting of energetic, grassroots organizing based on a coherent analysis, a radical program, and internal democracy rooted in socialist feminist principles and practice. To move forward, we must develop a plan of action along the lines of the pre-9/11 anti-globalization/anti-capitalist movement, but with the added perspective of the global economic meltdown, and with the will to act independently of the Obama agenda.

Our demands should be inclusive; to reflect the interdependence of the local, national, and international crises we currently must deal with. These include the withdrawal of all U.S. troops from Iraq and Afghanistan, full-funding for domestic programs by taxing the rich and slashing the military budget, social and economic equity and justice, human rights and civil liberty guarantees, socialized health care, nationalization of the financial sector, and political independence from the Democratic Party.

As we proceed with this agenda, we need to be guided by the fact that women and people of color are disproportionately affected by wars, occupations, economic crises, and assaults on human rights and civil liberties.

These are bad times for increasing numbers of women—as workers, as caregivers, and as members of minority and immigrant communities. Due to the disastrous state of the economy, women face extra stress on the job and in the face of lay-offs. Besides that, they are even more responsible than usual for the social service needs of friends and family due to the budget cuts—and to Federal spending that continues to prioritize the costs of war and domestic surveillance and intimidation over the needs of people for housing, healthcare, education, and jobs. Indeed, due to foreclosures and lack of affordable housing, many women are struggling just to keep a roof over their heads.

These circumstances just worsen the underlying problems of gender inequality and ethnic and racial bigotry. Activism organized around “wars abroad and war at home” acknowledges this, while recognizing how strong and resourceful women and families have been, and continue to be, in the face of exploitation, discrimination, and harassment.

As we build our movement for fundamental social change, we must honor women’s strengths, demand women’s rights, and fight against those aspects of society that perpetuate oppression.

Statement on the 40th Anniversary of the Stonewall Rebellion

by Queer Commission Convener Amber Clifford-Napoleone

The Stonewall Inn, a gay and lesbian neighborhood bar with a large number of African American and Latino patrons, was also well-known as a safe space for those who did not conform to gender norms: butch lesbians, effeminate gay men, and transsexual and transgendered persons before the terms were in popular use. All of these factors brought the police to Stonewall in 1969 for the purpose of illegally raiding the bar, and arresting its occupants -- an action not unknown in New York in the 1960s. In the early morning hours of June 28, 1969, the New York City police raided The Stonewall Inn. On that fateful day, however, the Stonewall's patrons had enough. Nobody knows who threw the first bottle that day. It may have been Sylvia Rivera, a transgendered activist and later a founding mother of political movements on behalf of transgendered and transsexual Americans. It may have been a still unidentified butch lesbian arrested in the bar. Over 2000 GLBTQ Americans clashed with 400 police officers on June 28. Arrests and beatings were concentrated among Stonewall's African American, Latino, butch and trans patrons. What ensued was known in the New York press and among the police as the Stonewall riots. For gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, transsexual and queer Americans,

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Join members of the Socialist Party USA at the **National Assembly Anti-War Conference**

July 10-12, 2009
La Roche College
Pittsburgh, PA

www.natassembly.org

e-mail the National Office if you plan on attending.

natsec@socialistparty-usa.org

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Stonewall continued...

and later the world, that fateful day marked the beginning of the Stonewall Rebellion. With shouts of "Gay Power," the rebellion that lasted five days in New York began to spread across the country. Gay, lesbian, trans and other queer Americans took to the streets to protest their continued oppression, objectification, and criminalization. This singular event, the Stonewall Rebellion, marked the beginning of the modern GLBTQ liberation movement, and brought GLBTQ political and social struggles out of the closets on onto American streets. Using this date as the flashpoint, cities across America and around the world continue to celebrate the last week of June as Pride Weekend, a weekend where we remember the Rebellion, organize to continue the fight for queer liberation, and celebrate our culture, community, families and history.

Stonewall never meant fundraising at black-tie galas. It never meant focusing on marriage as the sole agenda. It always meant, it still means, freedom and pride. The fight for marriage is just one piece of a worldwide fight about rights. In American states GLBTQ people can still be fired, evicted, violated, attacked, and murdered for being anything except a heterosexual. There are 1,100 federal and state rights that are guaranteed only to "legally married" couples in America in 2009. Among these are rights to government and veteran's pensions, judicial rights, and the right to be considered one's next-of-kin in an emergency. Hate crimes against GLBTQ individuals are up 6% from 2008 already, with only half of the year behind us. Americans serving in the military are denied these 1,100 rights, and must remain silent for fear of being harmed and discharged under the repressive "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" doctrine. Everyday GLBTQ Americans are attacked, harassed, and forced to live in fear, but Americans are not the only ones. In Brazil, a GLBTQ person is killed every two days. In Iraq, homosexuality is still legally punishable by death. Stonewall was about refusing to submit to fear, tyranny, and violence. Stonewall was, and is, about a community that repudiated the very idea that being GLBTQ made you anything less than human. On this 40th anniversary of the Stonewall Rebellion, remember that.

Remember Stonewall.

The Organizer

c/o Socialist Party USA
339 Lafayette St. #303
New York, NY 10012

New Dues Payment Options

You can now pay your membership in monthly, quarterly or semi-annual installments.

We can also re-set your expiration date based on your payment schedule. Please contact the National Office so we can update our records and make sure your local and state organization is contacted with this new information.

More info: www.socialistparty-usa.org/altduespayment.html

New Local!

The SPUSA National Committee recently chartered the **Socialist Party of Central Virginia. *Welcome comrades!*** The Virginia comrades join the following new locals chartered over the last year:

Socialist Party of Kansas

Greater Oklahoma City Socialist Party

Memphis Socialist Party.

The Florida Party is about to charter a new local in South East Florida as well.

The National Committee also voted to help reorganize the California organization. Stewart Alexander is working on the project right now and could use your help. If you are a California member contact Stewart at (909) 223-2067

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

2009 SPUSA National Convention

October 9-11, 2009

Gateway Hilton, Newark

Updated info. including deadlines, requirements, registration, etc. will be posted at: www.socialistparty-usa.org/convention/

The deadline for submissions to the pre-convention discussion bulletin is August 15, 2009. Send resolutions to SPUSA 339 Lafayette St. #303 NY, NY 10012