

# MAY DAY 2011

## STAND UP FOR EQUALITY, FREEDOM, & PEACE



## LONG LIVE THE FIGHTING SPIRIT OF THE WISCONSIN WORKERS!

—By Freedom Road Socialist Organization—

[www.FRSO.org](http://www.FRSO.org)

**MAY 1** is International Workers Day, a day to celebrate the struggles of the working class and oppressed peoples. On May 1, 1886, hundreds of thousands of workers in the United States walked out on strike for the eight-hour day. Eight organizers in Chicago, six of whom were immigrants, were later framed on charges of killing a policeman and four of them were hanged. The international workers movement adopted May 1 as a day of struggle and it is widely celebrated around the world.

Here in the United States, the tradition of protest on May 1 was revived by the immigrant rights movement. Mega-marches of hundreds of thousands of Chicanos, Mexicanos and others in Los Angeles, Chicago, and San Jose and large marches in big and small cities across the country protested the anti-immigrant Sensenbrenner bill and called for full legalization of the undocumented.

In the 125 years since the first May Day protest, struggle by U.S. workers and their unions has resulted in the eight-hour work day, the 40-hour work week, health and safety rules at work, the right to unionization, unemployment insurance, welfare and social security, just to name a few.

The massive struggle of African Americans for their civil rights, full equality and liberation in the 1950s and 1960s led to the end of legal segregation and major steps towards legal and political equality. The Civil Rights movement also inspired struggles by Chicanos, Asians and other oppressed nationalities as well as Native Americans, Native Hawaiians and other indigenous peoples for full equality. The struggles for the equality of women and LGBT rights was also pushed forward by the African American struggle.

These movements not only expanded democracy, but also set the stage for the expansion of health care security to seniors and the poor in the form of Medicare and Medicaid programs. The doors to public education were opened wider through struggle.

Today, with the continuing crisis of capitalism, these programs are under attack. When the financial crisis brought down major banks and corporations, the government rushed in with hundreds of billions of bailout dollars. While corporate profits have recovered, there are still 7 million fewer jobs than when the recession began. Now there is a push by the Right to put even more of the burden of the crisis on working people as they pro-

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pose to dismantle Medicare and slash spending on education and government services, while cutting taxes for the rich and corporations and spending ever more on wars.

The growing corporate fear-mongering about government budget deficits and the growing bipartisan effort to cut spending at both the state and federal levels is trying to start a new era of austerity for working people. This is similar to the efforts by governments in Greece, Ireland, Portugal, Britain and other European countries to slash pensions, wages, education and social services for working people. But workers and the people in Europe are fighting back with general strikes and massive protests against austerity.

grand jury are leading activists in the labor movement and others are active in the immigrant rights movement. This grand jury is an attempt to criminalize the anti-war movement and pave the way for even more wars. But a movement that has united many forces from the anti-war, international solidarity, labor, community, student movement and the left is building resistance to this attack and other government repression of political activists.

With more than 100,000 troops still occupying Iraq and Afghanistan, the United States, along with Britain, France, Italy, and other NATO allies, is starting another war with a bombing cam-

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May Day 2011 is a day to commemorate the fighting spirit of Wisconsin workers, who rallied in the tens of thousands along with students and other allies to fight back against the anti-union attack by Tea Party Republicans. Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker's move to smash public workers unions was not only an attack on the labor movement, but was also meant to smash unions that are fighting back against the cuts to health care, education and public services that the Tea Party and Republicans are demanding.

The anti-immigrant Arizona SB1070 last year aroused a massive protest movement by Chicanos, Mexicanos and others. These protests continue against copycat laws in other states that are trying to criminalize the undocumented and force them out of school. With no legalization bill moving in Congress, undocumented immigrant youth came out in dramatic protest to push for the DREAM act that would legalize undocumented students and youth. Workers are fighting back against the growing number of 'silent raids' where hundreds and thousands of mainly Mexicano and Latino workers are getting fired for allegedly not having proper work documents. There is also a growing fight against the federal-local "Secure Communities" or S-Comm program that has police officers check the immigration status of everyone they arrest.

There is also the fight back against the secret court known as a federal grand jury in Chicago that is trying to indict 23 Midwest antiwar and international solidarity activists on charges of supporting terrorism. Many of those subpoenaed by the federal

campaign against Libya. The U.S. is sending aid to its allies in Libya and NATO countries are sending military advisors. Another war for oil has begun. The U.S. anti-war movement is fighting back, as seen in the mobilization for protests on March 19 and April 9 and 10 from coast to coast.

One of the most dramatic victories by oppressed people was the fall of Egyptian President Mubarak. Mubarak had been in power for more than 30 years and was supported by the United States with billions of dollars of aid. A massive popular protest movement forced Mubarak out and continues to struggle for a democratic and independent Egypt. The loss of Mubarak is a major setback for the United States and Israel rulers' dreams of domination of the Middle East and has led to uprisings against the U.S. backed ruler of Yemen and the monarchy in Bahrain.

The 2012 U.S. presidential campaign has begun. While President Obama is starting to raise \$1 billion for his reelection from big business and Wall Street moguls who benefited from his administration's bailout of corporate America, Republican candidates are falling over themselves to appeal to the Tea Party extremists. What is needed is not a 'better' Democrat or even a progressive third party candidate, but a people's movement that is rooted in our workplaces, communities and campuses that can fight for jobs, equality and peace.

We must fight back with the spirit of the Wisconsin workers who fought to protect their unions, and follow the example of the Egyptian people and against a 30-year U.S. backed dictatorship.