

Editorials

May Day 1975

Working Class Assembles, Ruling Class Trembles

The bourgeoisie is in crisis.

The working class is on the rise.

This is how things stand in the U.S. as we approach May Day, the most solemn and joyous holiday of the working class of every nation. May Day is a celebration born in struggle of the proletariat against the capitalists. It is a day on which class conscious workers dedicate ourselves to intensify this generations-old battle and to bring closer the final victory of our class.

May Day 1975 cannot help but be the largest and most powerful in recent years, because it will reflect the upsurge of working class struggle and consciousness since last year's May Day.

When the monopoly capitalists demanded "national unity" to help them out of their deepening economic troubles, the proletariat responded with the biggest strike wave since World War 2. Our hatred for the ruling class and its corruption, and anger at Watergate, forced them to take the unprecedented step of dumping a President in midterm.

Every move the bloodsuckers make, whether it be laying off millions, threatening war in the Middle East, cutting back social services or unleashing the cops to attack the working class and terrorize minority communities, just makes people fighting mad. In every struggle against such attacks more and more working people are learning very clearly the nature of U.S. society.

May Day is a day to sum up the lessons learned in battle and to apply these lessons in the battles to come. The most important lesson points to the great responsibility of the working class: because it is the largest social class, because its labor is the very source of the vast bulk of society's wealth, because it has *no* interests in common with the bourgeoisie who rip off and live off this wealth that the working class creates, the proletariat alone is able to mobilize the masses and aim all their struggles straight at the heart of the enemy.

And we are beginning to do so! Battles against unemployment both at the unemployment offices and at the work place; the struggle against soaring living costs and grueling exploitation have spearheaded the mass resistance to the attacks of the ruling class. And workers are increasingly in the front lines of battles against cutbacks, police repression, imperialist war preparations and other struggles centered in the communities or in the streets.

Main Slogans

Organizing for May Day means putting this call, this task, out directly and sharply to the whole working class—**WORKERS UNITE TO LEAD THE STRUGGLE AGAINST ALL OPPRESSION!**

There is another major slogan that should be inscribed on our banners this May Day—**FIGHT, DON'T STARVE!** This battle cry is the answer of the working class and masses to the question, "Who shall bear the burden of the crisis?" The ruling class and its politicians, media mouthpieces, and labor lieutenants say *everyone* (except them) must share it! We say that's a crock. We didn't create the crisis and we will put the burden where it belongs, with the only means at our disposal—all out struggle.

WORKERS UNITE TO LEAD THE STRUGGLE AGAINST ALL OPPRESSION! FIGHT, DON'T STARVE! Both these slogans are directed to the mass of working people. Both point out that every day to day struggle against exploitation and oppression is linked to all the others and must be made part of a general struggle zeroed in on the vultures responsible. As the imperialists' crisis deepens, it is clear that the major day to day struggles are bound to burn white hot as the working class and masses rise to protect their interests against those of the monopolists:

1) **The struggle against unemployment.** With layoffs on the rise, employed workers and unemployed alike are taking up the demand for "Jobs or Income Now!" This is becoming a genuine class-wide slogan, mobilizing people for struggle and exposing the bankruptcy of a system that cannot even provide jobs for

millions of the class whose labor it lives off of.

2) **The fight against wage cuts.** At a time when workers need substantial pay increases to keep up with the cost of living, many employers are using the threat of unemployment to try to force wage cuts in their factories, shops and offices. Unity of employed and unemployed workers is vital to defeating this blatant effort to lower the living standards of the whole proletariat.

3) **The battle against police repression.** All around the country cops are stepping up their attacks on workers in their communities, on strike lines, at demonstrations and other struggles. In many areas they are carrying out open terror campaigns in the neighborhoods of the oppressed nationalities to prevent resistance. The many struggles of the past year against police murder and frameups prove that only the outrage of the masses can beat back these assaults.

4) **The struggle against imperialist wars.** Competition from their main rival, the Soviet social-imperialist ruling class, and movements for independence and national liberation are forcing the U.S. imperialists toward war to maintain their dwindling empire. But Vietnam taught the American people a great lesson about U.S. imperialist aggression, and we want no part of it. The proletariat and masses say, "We won't fight your bloodsucking wars," while at the same time fully supporting all just wars of national liberation and revolutionary civil wars. The working class demands that the U.S. imperialists pull out of Indochina and stop funding whatever remains of their puppets there, and opposes the schemes of the two superpowers to control the Middle East, schemes that threaten to erupt into a new world war.

5) **The struggle against deportations.** The bourgeoisie has brought in literally millions of foreign-born workers to labor as virtual slaves in its sweatshops. But now that production is falling, the bourgeoisie no longer needs this pool of very cheap labor, so it is using the government and the media to host foreign-born workers, whether "illegal" or not, out of the country, and is trying to whip up hysteria against them. Workers must fight to protect these class brothers and sisters from other countries, and bring them into our unions and organizations to add their struggle and strength to the rest of the proletariat.

6) **The defense of the right to strike.** As the recent strike wave proved, the strike is one of the working class' strongest weapons. The bourgeoisie hates and fears workers' strikes, and wants to cripple our ability to do it. The monopolists are preparing legal attacks, but their main method is to use the union misleaders against us. A weapon is not much use in a sheath and many top hacks refuse to call or authorize strikes. Some, like Abel, want to give the right to strike away entirely. The workers through their militant struggles, including strikes, should tear to pieces all no-strike agreements, while waging an overall struggle against all no-strike deals and laws.

7) **The fight against cutbacks.** In a desperate effort to maintain profits and survive the crisis, the bourgeois-

ie is trying to snatch back every victory the struggle of the people has wrung from it over the years. We must intensify and unite the individual struggles against cuts in education, health, housing, welfare, etc.

The Workers' Organizations

To wage these battles, the working class has built organizations—unions and, within them, employed/unemployed committees and rank and file caucuses; committees in plants and communities to fight police terror, to support important strikes, to oppose deportations, etc.; the Unemployed Workers Organizing Committee, working class newspapers, and the growing anti-imperialist, revolutionary workers' groups. Many of these organizations will be sponsoring and building May Day in cities around the country.

Above all else, though, the working class needs a revolutionary communist party to lead all of its struggles and organizations. Such a party of the proletariat will, through these struggles and organizations, develop the strength and consciousness of our class and march in its forefront in the struggle to topple capitalism forever. In the last year powerful strides have been made toward the creation of a new communist party.

While many self-advertised "communists" have shied away from this historic task, more and more workers and others have been won, through their own experience in the class struggle, to take part in the construction of the vanguard of our class. One of the things May Day this year will celebrate is the approaching victory of the struggle to bring into being a true communist party in the United States.

Reclaiming Our Tradition

This year will be a big step forward in reclaiming May Day as the holiday of the U.S. working class. The tradition of May Day was buried by the treachery of the old Communist Party, USA, which in the mid 1950s put aside the torch of class struggle to fasten on the collar of the capitalist class.

But May Day cannot be covered up or sold out by the bourgeoisie and its pets. May Day is reborn because its living soul is and always has been the struggles of the working class and the fight to demolish the tyranny of capital.

May Day was born in the U.S. in 1886 in the midst of the first great national struggle of the working class—the movement to limit the working day to eight hours. So successful were these first May Day strikes and demonstrations that in 1890 they were repeated in more than a dozen countries in Europe as well as here.

Since then, May Day has grown with the working class and its struggles.

May Day 1922 in China, miners in the Anyuan coal fields formed the Anyuan Workmen's Association which was to be a storm center of strikes and produce many leaders of the Chinese revolution.

May Day 1929 in Berlin, workers defied a police ban on their parade, and, when attacked, retreated to their neighborhoods and successfully defended them with barricades and guns.

May Day 1943 in Poland, the Jewish Fighters Organization paused to celebrate in the midst of the Warsaw ghetto uprising, then disguising themselves in German uniforms, annihilated a Nazi stronghold.

May Day during the Great Depression in cities across the U.S., millions of workers marched, putting forward with their slogans and banners the key demands of the working class: for jobs or income for the unemployed; for industrial unions; for freedom for nine Black youths, the Scottsboro Boys, being framed in a legal lynching in Alabama; in support of anti-imperialist struggles all over the world and in defense of the first workers' state, the Soviet Union.

May Day has always been one with the most important struggles that the working class was waging. When we celebrate May Day this year and every year, we take as our own all the heroic traditions of the entire international working class, and we, too, must ground May Day firmly in the main battles of our class.

Declaration of War

May Day is the day on which workers and their allies gather to sum up the struggles of the past and the advances and growing strength of our class.

May Day is the day on which workers and their allies gather to analyze the situation they are confronted with and plan their upcoming battles.

Above all else, May Day is the day on which the working class renews its declaration of war against the capitalist ruling class, stating its unbreakable resolve to destroy forever these parasites and build a new society, free from exploitation and oppression. ■

On To May Day!