

February 4, 2012

Workers World Forum

Labor Rights, Civil Rights:

A Legacy of Class Struggle

FEBRUARY 11 is the 75th anniversary of the victory of the 1937 Flint Sit-down strike, one of the most significant events in U.S. labor history. After occupying General Motors plants for 44 days, workers won recognition of the United Auto Workers and the first industry contract. This victory set off a chain reaction. Not only autoworkers but workers in steel, textile, retail, restaurant, public service and other sectors won union recognition. During this year of working class upsurge African-American workers, as well as Latino/a, Asian, Native, immigrant and women workers, played a pivotal role.

February 11 is also the 22nd anniversary of Nelson Mandela's release from prison and the first anniversary of the resignation—after the Egyptian masses took to the streets—of ex-President Hosni Mubarak. The struggle in Egypt inspired the occupation of the state capitol building in Madison, Wisconsin, and the Occupy movement that has swept the country.

FEBRUARY 12 is the 44th anniversary of the start of the Memphis sanitation strike. African-American workers began this strike on Lincoln's birthday to draw attention to the slave conditions they were working under, which led to the death of two workers who were crushed inside a compactor. Martin Luther King was in Memphis to show solidarity with the strike when he was assassinated April 4th, 1968. On April 16 AFSCME Local 1733 had won a first contract.

FEBRUARY is AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH.

We invite you to a public forum on these important historical milestones, where we will draw lessons for the struggles unfolding right now.

Speakers:

MARTHA GREVATT has been a UAW Chrysler worker for 24 years, first in Ohio and now in Detroit. She has written extensively on the crisis facing autoworkers for Workers World. She is the author of a pamphlet, "In Our Hands is Placed a Power: the Flint Sit-down Strike" and is working on a book on the same subject.

ABAYOMI AZIKIWE, editor of the Pan-African Newswire, has researched and written extensively on the political and social history of Southwest Tennessee where Memphis is located. His presentation will focus on the sanitation workers strike as a culmination of a decade-long struggle in the region and the relationship of these historical developments to the current situation involving African American workers in the South and in the city of Detroit.

Saturday, February 11, 5:00 PM

5920 Second Ave, Detroit, 48202

Dinner served before the program

donation requested, no one turned away for lack of funds

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