

## **INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN A MAY 1ST PLANNING MEETING**

Tuesday, May 1st is International Workers Day. Next Monday, March 19 activists from the labor, civil rights, environmental and peace & justice movements are joining with OCCUPY DETROIT to plan a public celebration in Detroit. We offer the following narrative which we believe can bring together many of us who have been among the active 99%.

### **THE FIGHT FOR JOBS AND WORKERS' RIGHTS**

We are proud to be workers and a part of a vast working class, which is fighting back against unrelenting attacks here and around the world – in Wisconsin, at Tahrir square in Egypt, in the streets of Greece . As workers we are the overwhelming majority of the 99% without whose work our country would come to a standstill. And yet, our livelihoods, unions, and our identity as workers are at stake, as recession- and depression-levels of unemployment take their toll and become the new “normal.” This long-term unemployment and underemployment is being used by the 1% to degrade the conditions of life and work for those of us who are currently working. Over 100 years ago on the first May Day in the U.S., workers sacrificed their lives to win the 8-hr day, which is now once again disappearing.

### **DEFEND IMMIGRANT WORKERS**

Six years ago, millions of immigrant workers and their supporters staged political strikes across the country on May 1st, to protest the construction of a 700-mile wall along the Mexican border, racist profiling and harassment of “undocumented” workers (and those who help them). Immigrants flee to the U.S. from their homelands because of the misery they face due to super exploitation, repression, and unfair U.S. trade policies. Since then, mass demonstrations have become an annual May Day tradition, as the racial profiling and mass deportations have accelerated and spread beyond Arizona to other states. We will build on the tradition, fight for fair trade deals, and for an inclusive democracy.

### **THE FIGHT FOR OUR PLANET**

The underlying stability of mother earth - the source of our sustenance and foundation of human existence - is no longer a “given.” There is a growing awareness that the environment - and therefore humanity - is threatened by the warming of the planet, which we are accelerating by our reliance on fossil fuels (oil, coal, gas). The resulting carbon dioxide emissions are overloading the atmosphere with “greenhouse gasses,” which in turn are causing the planet to heat up. This is inducing extreme changes to our climate, including extreme heat waves, droughts, melting glaciers and ice caps, severe flooding, tornadoes and hurricanes, extreme snow, etc.

The 1% - the oil, coal and utility barons, the banksters on Wall St and their enablers in the halls of federal, state and local governments - are resisting making the necessary changes - *at the necessary scale* - to free us from the “addiction to oil.” We need to start serious work building a new economy based on renewable energy and energy efficiency, which will generate new, sustainable work and help reduce greenhouse gasses. We can and must create millions of jobs - to weatherize public, commercial and residential

buildings, recycle our waste, and install wind turbines and solar panels. We can convert our closed factories to make products that will harness wind, solar and hydro power. We can create jobs building more efficient transportation systems including energy-efficient buses, light- and high-speed rail that will in turn create jobs for engineers, drivers and mechanics needed to run and maintain them.

We can accomplish this by redirecting the hundreds of billions of dollars spent annually fattening the military-industrial complex and using it to “retool for peace” and build a renewable energy future that provides us with real safety and security. We need a massive public works program, on the scale of the Works Progress Administration of the 1930s New Deal, to put the unemployed and underemployed back to work, to create a more sustainable planet. “The Pathways Back to Work” (PBW) and “Project Rebuild” contained in Pres. Obama's American Jobs Act is a good starting point.

## **DEFEND DEMOCRACY AND DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS**

Everywhere we look the 1% are trying to squelch the democratic rights of the 99% so that they can jam through their corporate agenda without the consent of the governed. Consider

- Supreme Court rulings allowing corporations' to use their billions in profits to shape the outcome of our elections,
- Emergency Manager Laws which remove elected city leaders and School Boards and replace them with appointed corporate managers
- laws stripping public workers of the right to collectively bargain, or which strip unions of their power (in the name of worker “free choice,”), and
- State laws creating new voting requirements aimed at suppressing voter turnout of mostly the downtrodden, the poor, and the elderly, thereby reversing the surge in democracy ushered in by the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

These and other similar attacks are all designed to silence and weaken the 99%, and we won't have it!

## **THE FIGHT FOR THE UNITY OF THE 99%**

These are the core action principles around which we propose organizing a public demonstration to honor and celebrate May 1st. As a suggestion, we offer that we can march to or assemble at Roosevelt Park in front of the Michigan Train Depot. Maybe at Grand Circus Park? ?

Please join us 7 pm Monday March 19th at OCCUPY DETROIT at 5900 Michigan Avenue and bring your suggestions, ideas, and enthusiasm. .

thank you

Frank Hammer