

US SEP presidential candidate Jerry White to address Montreal meeting

20 June 2012

Jerry White, the Socialist Equality Party candidate in the US presidential election, will address a public meeting in Montreal this Thursday, June 21. (See below for full meeting details.)

Called by the SEP (Canada) under the title “Socialism and the defense of public education,” the meeting will discuss the international significance of the Quebec student strike and advance a strategy, based on the independent political mobilization of the working class, for defying Bill 78 and establishing education as a social right.

White’s decision to speak at the June 21 meeting and gain firsthand experience of the struggle in Quebec is an expression of the socialist and internationalist perspective for which he and the SEP fight. The attack on education, public health care, social services, jobs and living standards is a worldwide phenomenon. Whether it be in Europe, the US or Canada, big business and its political representatives are determined to place the full burden of the global capitalist crisis on workers and young people.

However, the Quebec student associations, trade unions and ostensible “left” parties have separated the fight against the provincial Liberal government’s university tuition fee increases from a broader struggle against big business’ austerity agenda. They have confined the movement within the borders of Quebec.

“When the Socialist Equality Party launched our election campaign four months ago, we placed the struggle for the international unity of the working class at the center of our program,” White told the *World Socialist Web Site*. “I am very pleased to be in here in Canada and want to express my solidarity with the hundreds of thousands of Quebec students who have waged a determined four-month struggle against university tuition increases and to defend their right to public education.

“All over the world it is becoming increasingly apparent that fight for education as a social right requires a struggle against capitalism, a failed social system that is producing mass unemployment and demands for ever-greater austerity. In every country the refrain is the same: ‘there is no money’—even as trillions are used to bail out the international banks, the transnational corporations rake in record profits, and vital resources are squandered on the military and war.

“In the US, the Obama administration has slashed trillions from public education, student grants and other vital programs. College students are graduating with impossible debts and half are either unemployed or forced to work in low-paid jobs outside of their fields of study. The grim prospects they face have driven the younger generation into political struggle from Egypt, to Greece and Spain, to the United States and Canada.

“But the last year has shown that protests and appeals to the powers-that-be have not led them to retreat. On the contrary, ever-greater repression has been employed—as in the case of the Quebec Liberal government’s Bill 78—and governments have redoubled their determination to force workers and young people to pay for the world capitalist crisis.

“The defense of the most elemental social rights—to education, a good-paying and secure job, health care, housing, access to culture and a future free from war—requires the struggle for socialism and a radical reallocation of resources to ensure that social needs take priority over private profit. The only force capable of breaking the dictatorial grip of the banks and big business over economic and political life is the working class, the broad mass of the population whose labor produces society’s wealth.

“This requires building a new leadership and perspective in the working class. In Canada, as in the US, the Socialist Equality Party is fighting to build this

leadership. I urge students and workers to attend this Thursday's meeting in Montreal to discuss the international context of the student struggle and the perspective and strategy needed to take this struggle forward."

Meeting details:

Montreal, Quebec
Thursday, June 21 at 7:30 pm

Centre St.-Pierre, Room 203
1212 Rue Panet (Near Beaudry Metro on the Green
Line
Map



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Socialist Equality Party visit:

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