

“A campaign to revive the May Day traditions and socialist consciousness is much needed”

Workers speak on importance of International May Day Online Rally

Our reporters
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Registrants from more than 40 countries on six continents have so far registered for the May 4 **International Online May Day Rally**, organized by the International Committee of the Fourth International and the *World Socialist Web Site*. Over the weekend, campaign teams in the US distributed promotional flyers for the event and talked to workers and youth about its purpose—to organize the working class internationally in a common struggle against war, inequality and the attack on democratic rights.

Several gave statements explaining why they plan on attending.

Brian, an auto worker from Missouri, said, “In a globalized economy workers are pitted against each other to fight over the same job. A profit-based system can’t defend jobs; we have to accept ever lower and lower wages. You cannot fight against the capitalists and their war against the workers with national entities like the unions. Uniting internationally is the only way to stop inequality and distribute the wealth to everyone.

“They tell us wars are for ‘freedom,’” Brian added. “That’s a lie. If you look at history, when wars are fought it is the working class that suffers. It’s capitalism and the fight over profits and raw materials that cause war. That’s imperialism. Instead of fighting for ‘our’ country, workers internationally have to fight for a better world. The answer is global socialism, where the goal is not profit-based but meeting everyone’s needs.”

Wayne, a janitor at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) in California, said, “In the 1970s workers enjoyed some decent benefits. You worked

knowing that you had the security of retirement and other things. Now, they ask us to work longer in our lives for the same, if not less, money.

“The level of wages is so low that we barely make it paycheck to paycheck. When Obamacare came into effect, it didn’t make much difference to me, but now millions have to pay for health insurance. It was not some kind of free universal health care, although it was presented that way. But health care should be a basic right for all.

“I think the May Day issue is very important. It’s important that we use it to build consciousness among workers like me.”

Alonzo, an electrician in Los Angeles, said. “Nowadays, I feel that no one in official politics represents workers like me. The Republicans, the Democrats, they don’t represent me. Elections are set up by powerful people. They place their own representatives on the ballots, and then ask us to vote for one of their own. Then, whoever gets elected ignores us. I’ve become so disappointed I don’t even feel like voting anymore.”

Vincent, who also works at LACMA, explained, “The question of social inequality is central. I have seen the attacks on living standards in recent years. I have a 10-year-old daughter; I’m worried about her future. As Republicans and Democrats privatize public education and there are no decent jobs—sometimes I even think whether it’s worth it for her to pursue an expensive college if what she’ll get is a minimum wage.”

Speaking about the situation in Ukraine, Vincent

added, “The media reports on the Ukraine have been so confusing here. I tend to look at BBC for some kind of reference, and even that doesn’t reveal what’s really happening. The participation of fascists in the new government, supported by the US, for example, is news to me.”

“I’m glad the socialists are here to talk to us workers. When Obama was elected, I believed him. They called him a socialist, I was happy about that, or so I thought. But the reality is that he’s the opposite of a socialist. A campaign to revive the May Day traditions and socialist consciousness against social inequality and war is much needed.”

Bobby, a cement finisher from central Illinois, said, “Workers of the world must unite. I’m not the enemy of a worker in Russia or anywhere else, and they are not an enemy of me. Workers everywhere want the same thing. They want to feed their families and not have to worry about their kids getting sent off to kill other kids. Peace and having enough to feed your family—these are social rights that are the same for workers all over the world.

“The international corporations and trade organizations are united. The working class needs to be organized around the world too. Commodities cross national lines but we need one party for the workers that espouses what workers everywhere want.”

On Ukraine, Bobby said, “The interior of Russia has rich resources just like Iraq, and the imperialists have Russia surrounded already. It reminds me of what Mohammed Ali said during the Vietnam War—I don’t have any enemies over there. I have no quarrel with those people.”

For more information and to register for the International May Day Online Rally, visit internationalmayday.org .



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