

Join the May Day Online Rally! For Socialism! Against war, genocide and fascism!

WSWS Editorial Board
30 April 2026

Today is May Day, the international day of working-class solidarity. The International Committee of the Fourth International and the *World Socialist Web Site* are holding our 13th annual International May Day Online Rally at 3:00 pm EDT. We appeal to all those looking to fight for socialism and put an end to the capitalist system to register and attend.

The ruling class has devoted endless efforts to stamp out class consciousness, to deny and cover-up the immense tradition of class struggle in America. Indeed, May Day was born in the United States.

One hundred and forty years ago, on May 1, 1886, hundreds of thousands of American workers struck to demand the eight-hour day. The center of the movement was Chicago, where 80,000 workers participated. Three days later, on the evening of May 4, a peaceful workers' rally in Haymarket Square came under violent assault by the police. A bomb exploded. In the explosion and police melee, seven officers and four workers were killed.

The ruling class of Chicago seized upon the incident to launch a violent witchhunt of Chicago workers. There was not a shred of evidence connecting any of the speakers or organizers to the bombing. But eight anarchist and socialist labor leaders were seized, tried in a travesty of justice that set the precedent for state violence and pseudo-legal frame-ups. Four workers—August Spies, Adolph Fischer, George Engel, and Albert Parsons—were hanged on November 11, 1887. Another, Louis Lingg, was driven to suicide in his cell.

The cause for which the Haymarket martyrs gave their lives was embraced by the working class all over the world. Three years later, in 1889, the founding congress of the Second International, meeting in Paris, resolved that May 1 would be the day on which

workers of all countries would simultaneously demonstrate for the eight-hour day. From that day forward, May 1 has belonged to the international working class.

The eight-hour day was the central demand of those first May Days. Today, May Day is a fight for the survival of human civilization itself. Indeed, such is the state of exploitation that even the most elementary conquest of the workers' movement, the eight-hour day, has been abandoned by the trade union apparatus. While AFL-CIO functionaries organize “May Day Strong” events with the Democratic Party, workers in the warehouses, hospitals, schools and factories endure 10-, 12- and 14-hour shifts.

The celebration of May Day came to be embedded in the fight for the unity of the international working class against capitalism, inequality and exploitation—a day dedicated to advancing the struggle for workers' power. Leon Trotsky wrote in 1918 that the original purpose of May Day had been “by means of a simultaneous demonstration by workers of all countries on that day, to prepare the ground for drawing them together into a single international proletarian organization of revolutionary action having one world centre and one world political orientation.”

That task—the construction of an international revolutionary leadership of the working class—remains the unfinished historical work of our epoch. It is the work of the International Committee of the Fourth International.

The annual International May Day Online Rallies of the ICFI, held now for thirteen consecutive years, have been organized in this spirit. They are not occasions for the empty radical phrases by which the labor bureaucracy and its adjuncts mask their alliance with the capitalist state. Each rally has been an indispensable

stage in the development of the perspective of the world socialist movement.

Since the first International May Day Online Rally in 2014, the International Committee has issued a central warning at these rallies: The imperialist redivision of the world—driven by the insoluble contradictions of capitalism—is propelling humanity toward global catastrophe. Those warnings have been confirmed. World war is not a future possibility. It is an unfolding reality. The US-Israeli war of aggression against Iran, launched on February 28, is the most explosive expression to date of a worldwide escalation of militarism.

Two interconnected processes predominate. First is the advance of war and, with it, the turn to fascism and dictatorship, and an unrestrained assault on the working class. This finds its sharpest expression in the United States, where Trump—the president of the oligarchs—tears up democratic rights, unleashes the immigration police as an instrument of political terror, and demands that society be reorganized around militarism and repression.

Second is the growing resistance of the international working class. The May Day Rally will document the developing struggles of workers and youth across continents and elaborate the program and strategy required to unify these battles into a conscious movement against war, dictatorship and capitalism.

Speakers will include leading representatives of the ICFI and its supporting organizations from the United States, Britain, France, Germany, Sri Lanka, Australia, New Zealand, Turkey, Brazil and Russia; along with representatives of the International Youth and Students for Social Equality and the International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees.

The rally will feature statements collected from workers and young people on every continent—postal workers, autoworkers, teachers, dockworkers, students—who are entering into struggle and looking for a way forward.

The May Day Rally will provide an assessment of this world situation: the history and meaning of the war on Iran; the drive toward dictatorship and the collapse of bourgeois democratic forms; and the accelerating eruption of class struggle internationally.

This rally is not a commemoration. It is a call to action. The ruling class is organizing society for war

abroad and class war at home, and it is doing so with the assistance of the trade union apparatus and all the capitalist parties. The May Day Rally will arm workers and youth with a program, a strategy and an international organizational perspective for the fight ahead.

Register now at [wsws.org/mayday](https://www.wsws.org/mayday). The rally begins at 3:00 p.m. US Eastern Time. Gather your coworkers, your classmates, your families, your friends. Today, May 1, 2026, take your place in the international socialist movement.



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[**wsws.org/contact**](https://www.wsws.org/contact)