

They Say "Cutback" and They Say "Get Back!" We Say "Fight Back!"

March on Mayday 2008
A Rouge Forum Broadside

Why the cuts?

This is capitalism, an intense international war of the rich on the poor. Each nation's rich bosses must search for profits in cheap labor, raw materials, and markets, in order to expand, or their businesses will die (like Chrysler). Today, they must war for oil and control of the oil regions in order to maintain their military might, the key source of their power. The US invasion of Iraq and promise of endless war sparked worldwide financial crises: inflation; skyrocketing oil, transportation and food costs, bloated national debt; bank and mortgage crises. In every instance, the rich ruling classes want to force poor and working people, us, to bear the burden of their wars with our blood and treasure.

In every nation, ruling classes use the government, not as some form of democracy, but as an executive committee of the rich where they iron out their differences, then allow working people to choose which of them will oppress us best. Behind that bogus form of capitalist democracy is violence. The government is also their armed weapon: troops, cops, and courts protecting the rich in the name of the rule of law. This is not our government, not our laws, not our cops; it's *theirs*. But the bosses use every means they have, nationalism, racism, sexism, and superstition, to split us up and stay in power.

People Have Resisted, but How and Toward What End?

Thousands of people already fought back, because we *had* to fight back. California grocery workers struck, Detroit teachers wildcatted, San Diego and Portland students emptied their schools, auto workers struck, people marched against the wars. For what? Too often we were told we must fight less and vote more. Voting will never change a social system that is rooted in exploitation and motivated by greed and fear. In fact, the current election is a hothouse for witless patriotism, not a pathway for equality and liberty. All candidates speak only one truth: prepare for more war and a draft (with "national service," offered to middle and upper class youth to syphon off protest). Every candidate backs the rapid emergence of fascism, says nothing about the elimination of whatever civil liberties once existed.

We need to demonstrate our real power at the places where we create value; take control over what we create. We can organize to connect reason to power with direct action on the job, in the schools, in health care, and in the military. We can walk away from their oppression, their lies, and their killing machines. We can defend our actions with solidarity, the understanding that an injury to one really does just go before an injury to all. We know that concessions don't save jobs, or good schools, but like giving blood to sharks, bosses only want more. When the bosses say Cutback, or Get Back, we need to Fight Back. No concessions. We will advance! Nothing of value is created without us. But our fight must go beyond immediate gains to take on the system of capital itself. Our answer is an ethic of equality.

Walkout! March On Mayday!

Mayday is an international workers holiday that began in the US in 1886 when a battle for the eight-hour day was attacked by the Chicago police. Since then millions of workers around the world marched on Mayday—but it was forgotten for decades in the US where it became, "Law Day," the day we are to celebrate loyalty and obedience, the ethics of slaves. Mayday in the US was fully reclaimed by immigrant rights' marchers in 2006, a massive general strike. It is time to march on Mayday again. Shut down the schools, shut down the job sites, shut down the military and march on Mayday.

Justice Demands Organization!

The Rouge Forum is an organization of students, school workers, parents, industrial workers, professors, and community people dedicated to equality as the basis for real democracy. We are determined to link reason and power to take direct action to win freedom and justice. You are welcome to join us.

www.rougeforum.org