We Are the 99% Too: SEIU 1021 joins Occupy Oakland for Peaceful Day of Action

Hundreds of SEIU 1021 members took to the streets of Oakland on Wednesday, joining thousands more in a city-wide general strike that caught the entire world's attention after a peaceful Occupy Oakland encampment was brutally smashed by police in the dark hours before dawn a week earlier. Indeed, signs in support of Oakland could be seen on TV throughout the Middle East.

The day's actions were widely reported in the press (see links below) and don't need much repeating here. Three major marches took off from 14th and Broadway, in front of City Hall and the epicenter of the strike, Frank Ogawa Plaza (renamed Oscar Grant Plaza after a young African American man shot by a transit cop in Oakland a few years ago).
At the first two, protesters surrounded nearby branches of Chase, Citi and Bank of America to demand an end to the rampant foreclosures that have ravaged families and communities across the nation; in the evening, thousands more marched a mile to the Port of Oakland to shut down operations.

All the while, thousands more stayed put at the plaza, site of the now-rebuilt encampment: listening to speeches and music and spoken word poets, hanging with the returned occupiers, visiting booths and memorials, and generally keeping up the buoyant attitude that made the general strike as upbeat as an outdoor music festival.

The crowd was pure Oakland, reveling in its diversity and unity at the same time. Police initially put the crowd at 5,000 strong, which meant there had to be at least twice that many; later reports in fact revised the estimate to 10,000.

**The union difference**

Like the Oakland General Strike of 1946, this general strike was not a union-led strike either, but unions played a major role nonetheless. As union members, we know how much we're always trying to win the support of sympathetic organizations and the public for our contract campaigns, political actions, elections and more. This time the tables were turned, and organized labor had a chance to show its support for someone else's movement in a tangible way.

Indeed, on Monday and Tuesday the Twittersphere was abuzz with wondering if our local would join the strike, and when our official statement and call to action appeared on SEIU1021.org, word spread fast through Facebook and especially Twitter; we gained more than 80 new followers in just a few days.

Throughout the day, the NewsWire kept hearing from non-union members how glad they were to see unions -- and SEIU 1021 in particular -- taking part in the action. Teachers' unions were out in force. Teamsters Joint Council 17 trucked in thousands of bottles of water, and the Alameda Labor Council set up a food booth and handed out fresh, hot hamburgers and hot dogs for free to a very hungry crowd. SEIU 1021 members and staff donned orange vests and served as safety monitors on the marches.

The Occupy General Assembly hadn't consulted the Alameda Labor Council or local unions before voting overwhelmingly for the action. It was hard to decline the opportunity; at the same time, many locals (including ours) could not tell members to "go on strike," as that would violate the no-strike clauses in many of our contracts and is a decision that only members can make.

Instead, we encouraged members to find legitimate ways to take time off for what labor called a "Peaceful Day of Action." In discussions, SEIU 1021 moved the City of Oakland to let city workers use paid (and unpaid) time off to participate; at least 200 city workers took the opportunity. Other SEIU 1021 members joined in from as far away as Napa and Sacramento.

**Union members are the 99% too**

Throughout the day, labor's message was that even though this wasn't "our" general strike, we're part of the 99 percent as well.

Like other unions, the International Longshore Workers Union -- the radical vanguard of the Bay Area labor movement since the 1930s -- endorsed the goals of Occupy Oakland, but did not call on its members to strike. Still, when the job orders came into the dispatch hall that morning, most longshore workers made the individual decision to work in solidarity with the general strike. The few jobs ordered eventually got filled, but work started late and slowly.

"We're standing with the 99 percent of people who just want to live and work in a dignified way," said SEIU 1021 First Vice President Gary Jimenez. "We're not getting rich, but we do create the wealth in this nation by the work that
we do, and it’s not fair that the one percent at the top are hoarding all that wealth instead of reinvesting it back into Main Street so that working families have a chance to live with dignity and respect."

SEIU 1021 Photo Album: "Oakland Occupied"

SFist: "Oakland Braces for Occupy General Strike"
Excellent hour-by-hour capture of the day’s events, with photos

PBS News Hour: "Occupy Oakland Movement Tries to Flex Muscle With General Strike"

Rachel Maddow Show (Nov. 2) with good background on 1946 Oakland General Strike

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Act! Here! Now!

Members needed to help get out the vote on Tuesday

Election Day is this Tuesday, November 8. Please vote!

And help get out the vote from our San Francisco and Fairfield offices:

San Francisco, 350 Rhode Island, #100 South Building
Sa 11/5 - 10a-2p
Su 11/6 - 11a-3p
Mo 11/7 - Report 10a or 4p (two shifts)
Tu 11/8 - Report 7a (all day)

Fairfield, 2300 Boynton Ave.
Sa 11/5 - 10a-2p
Su 11/6 - 12-5p
Mo 11/7 - 10a-2p or 4-8p (two shifts)
Tu 11/8 - 8a-8p

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SEIU 1021 Endorsements: Nov. 8 Local Elections

Find our complete endorsements in The Live Wire: SEIU 1021 Political Action Central.

ALAMEDA COUNTY

Emeryville City Council: Ruth Atkin, Jacqueline Asher

Oakland Special Election (Mail-in only: Nov. 15)
1) NO on Measure H: Would change the Oakland City Attorney from an elected to an appointed position, serving at the pleasure of the council and Mayor and not accountable to the voters.
2) YES on Measure I: Parcel tax to maintain city services; will bring in about $11 million a year for the next 5 years to help Oakland recover from years of cuts to services due to the recession.
3) YES on Measure J: Retirement plan reform measure that allows Oakland to keep its promise to pay police and fire retirees while reducing costs to the city.
MARIN COUNTY

San Rafael Mayor: Greg Brockbank
San Rafael City Council: Damon Connolly
City of Fairfax: Yes on Measure D, a half-cent sales tax to prevent additional cuts to city services; sunsets in 5 years.
College of Marin: Eva Long, Joan Lisetor, Stephanie O'Brien

MENDOCINO COUNTY

YES on Measure A: - 1/8-cent sales tax to save county library services; sunsets in 16 years.

SAN FRANCISCO

Mayor (ranked choice voting)
First & Second Choice: John Avalos, Leland Yee (either first, the other second)
Third Choice: Bevan Dufty

Watch the candidates deliver their personal messages to SEIU 1021 members:
John Avalos Campaign Minute | Leland Yee Campaign Minute

District Attorney (ranked choice voting)
First choice: David Onek
Second choice: Bill Fazio
Third choice: Sharmin Bock

Sheriff: Ross Mirkarimi

Propositions
YES on Prop A: Bonds to Repair Our Schools
YES on Prop B: Bonds to Repair Our Streets
YES on Prop C: Real Pension Reform
NO on Prop D: Tea Party Measure/Anti-Working Families
NO on Prop E: Protect the People’s Voice
NO on Prop F: Unnecessary Regulation
YES on Prop G: Funds for Public Safety, Children and Seniors
NO on Prop H: Don’t Turn Back the Clock on Education

SOLANO COUNTY

Fairfield City Council: Pam Bertani
Watch her personal message to SEIU 1021 members.

Dixon USD School Board: John Gabby, JoeDiPaola

SONOMA COUNTY

Sonoma County Employees Retirement Association Board: Jerry Allen
Calendar

1021 Calendar  |  Find an SEIU 1021 Office

Moon Phases  - Full, Nov. 10 - 3rd Q, Nov. 18 - New, Nov. 25 - 1st Q, Dec. 2

SEIU 1021 Leadership Committees

Sa 11/19  - 1021 Executive Board - 10a-5p - Location TBA (Hayward/Fremont area)

Committee On Political Education (COPE)

Tu 11/8  - 1021 COPE - Postponed due to Election Day; new date TBA

Education & Training

View the complete catalog and register at www.1021training.info.

We 11/9  - Getting Results from Meetings - 5:30-8p - SEIU 1021, 600 B Street, Santa Rosa

Tu 11/15  - Union? What’s That? - 5:30-8p - SEIU 1021, 37 Hunter Square Plaza, Stockton

Sa 11/19  - Advanced Shop Steward Training - 10a-4p - SEIU 1021, 600 B Street, Santa Rosa

San Francisco

All events take place at the SEIU 1021 San Francisco office, 350 Rhode Island, #100 South Building, unless noted otherwise.

Sa-Tu 11/5-8  - GOTV - See schedule in Act! Here! Now!

Mo 11/7  - 5:30p - SF COPE - Regular meeting

We 11/9  - 5:30p - SF Industry Council

Social & Economic Justice

Tu 11/15  - Peace & Solidarity Committee - 5:30p - SEIU 1021, 350 Rhode Island, #100 South Building, San Francisco

Th 11/17  - Social & Economic Justice Committee - 6-8p - SEIU 1021, 350 Rhode Island, #100 South Building, San Francisco

Mo 11/21  - AFRAM Solidarity Committee - 6p - SEIU 1021, 100 Oak St., Oakland

Mo 11/21  - Disability Caucus - SEIU 1021, 100 Oak St., Oakland
Tu 11/22 - Lavender Solidarity Committee - 6p - SEIU 1021, 100 Oak St., Oakland

Regions & Industries

Sa 11/12 - Cities Industry Council - 10a-2p - Location TBA

Sa 11/12 - Counties Industry Council - CANCELLED

Sa 11/12 - Schools Industry Council - CANCELLED

Tu 11/15 - East Bay (Region 4) Area Meeting - 5:30-8p - SEIU 1021, 100 Oak St., Oakland

Tu 11/15 - Sonoma/Lake (Region 6) Area Meeting - 5:30p - SEIU 1021, 600 B Street, Santa Rosa - RSVP: Nancy Atwell, (707) 218-5195 or nancy.atwell@seiu1021.org

Sa 11/19 - Health Care Industry Council - 10a - SEIU 1021, 155 Myrtle St., Oakland

Retiree Councils

Mo 11/7 - Alameda Co. Retired Employees (ACRE) - 10a-Noon - SEIU 1021, 155 Myrtle St., Oakland

Mo 11/21 - West Bay Retirees - 12-2p - SEIU 1021, 350 Rhode Island, #100 South Building, San Francisco

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Send all Calendar announcements, corrections and changes to calendar@seiu1021.org.

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DO NOT REPLY to this email. Send all comments and questions about the NewsWire or website only to 1021CAN@seiu1021.org.

For all worksite issues or other questions, do not contact this email address; call the union office at (415) 848-3611.