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Resolution to Spur Mass Action in the Fight against Austerity and the Domination of the Banks

Whereas, austerity is a worldwide phenomenon. In country after country and throughout the United States, banks, corporations and their partners in government are imposing severe cutbacks in wages, education and basic human services on working people, while promoting privatization and union-busting; and

Whereas, the City of Detroit along with Puerto Rico have been at the epicenter of this crisis of imposed austerity. Since 2005, 65,000 Detroit families lost their homes to foreclosure, as a result of predatory and fraudulent lending practices by the banks. In addition, tax foreclosures have thrown tens of thousands of Detroiters out of their homes. Some 100,000 Detroit homes have had their water shut off for unpaid bills of as little as \$50, while in nearby Flint children suffered lead poisoning from contaminated water following cutbacks ordered by an appointed “emergency manager”; and

Whereas, after precipitating a financial crisis in Detroit, the banks benefited directly by the imposition of “emergency management.” This was to guarantee the payment of debt service to banks and financiers – while slashing social services, and taking the city into bankruptcy to implement a 43% reduction in constitutionally guaranteed pension payments to Detroit city retirees; and

Whereas, the devastation from the hurricane that hit Puerto Rico has been magnified by a crumbling infrastructure. Behind it all is \$72 billion in bank debt and bonds, being imposed by finance capital like an albatross around Puerto Rico. This has led to astronomical net interest payments as high as 734%; and

Whereas, even less-hard-hit cities like San Francisco and Portland, OR have seen many poor and working people driven out of their communities by gentrification, for the benefit of developers and the rich; and

Whereas, the Trump Tax plan and massive Pentagon war build-up herald more cuts in basic social services for the poor, slashing food stamps, Medicaid, funding for public housing and every benefit; and

Whereas, the recent victorious teachers strike in West Virginia, now spreading to other states once considered “Trump country”, heralds a resurgence by labor in the movement against austerity; and

Whereas, the 2018 Poor Peoples Campaign is reviving the efforts launched by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. 50 years ago to build a movement challenging the war against the workers and poor and for basic human rights for all human beings; and



Whereas, to spur mass action in the fight against austerity and the domination of banks that are destroying our communities, a National Conference to Defeat Austerity will convene on March 24, 2018 at St. Matthews-St. Joseph's Church in Detroit. Initial endorsers include Moratorium Now Coalition (Detroit), Michigan Poor People's Campaign, Baltimore Bus Transit Riders Union, Detroit Association of Black Organizations, Detroit MLK Day Committee, Flint Rising, Labor-Community Alliance of South Florida, Michigan Welfare Rights Organization, North Carolina Public Service Workers Union UE Local 150, Southern Workers Assembly, USW 8751 (Boston), Rev. Edward Pinkney, Restaurant Opportunities Center-Michigan, and Ricardo Santos Ramos, former President of UTIER electrical workers union in Puerto Rico, now director of Refund America Project,

Therefore be it Resolved, that the San Francisco Labor Council endorses the National Conference to Defeat Austerity on March 24, 2018 in Detroit to spur mass action in the fight against austerity and the domination of banks that are destroying our communities.

Submitted by David Welsh, NALC 214, and adopted unanimously by the San Francisco Labor Council on March 12, 2018.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim Paulson", with a long horizontal line extending to the left.

Tim Paulson
Executive Director

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