

# WE WILL BE CLOSED FOR MAY 1st (MAY DAY)

We will be closed for two reasons:

1. There is a **March for Just and Humane Immigration Reform** on May Day. Meet at 6pm on the Texas Capitol South steps. March to City Hall begins at 7pm. The event is sponsored by Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition, NICA, Cristo Rey, MEChA, Workers Defense Project, Inmigrantes Latinos en Accion, Mamas of Color Rising, American Friends Service Committee, Grassroots Leadership, PODER, Austin Peace and Justice Center.

2. **May Day is International Workers' Day**, an official holiday in 66 countries, but rarely recognized in this country where it began. In the 19th century, workers were struggling for the 8-hour work day, when it was very common to work 10-16 hour days in unsafe conditions. By the 1880's organized labor, influenced by socialism, was strong enough to demand the 8-hour workday.

Tens of thousands became disillusioned with the political process and rejected it to create new, anarchist groups. Anarchism sought to end hierarchical structures, emphasized worker-controlled industry and valued direct action over bureaucracy.

On May 1, 1886, at least 300,000 workers in 13,000 businesses across the United States walked off their jobs. In Chicago, the epicenter, 40,000 went out on strike just with the anarchists, later swelling to 100,000. Two days later on May 3, the first violence broke out between police and strikers and a public meeting was called for May 4th in Haymarket Square. About 3000 people showed up, including families, children and the mayor of Chicago, who later testified that the crowd was calm and orderly.

As the meeting ended, police marched on the crowd and a bomb was thrown killing one officer and wounding seven more who later died. No one knows who threw the bomb, but speculation ranges from anarchists to a police agent. The police then fired into the crowd, killing about seven or eight civilians and wounding forty. As a result, the government, business and media conducted the very first "*Red Scare*". Anarchism became synonymous with bomb throwing and socialism became un-American.

Eight anarchists were arrested for murder, though only three were present at Haymarket and in full view when the bombing occurred. The world watched as they were convicted, not for their actions, but for their political and social beliefs. On November 11, 1887, after many failed appeals, four were hung, one took his own life and the remaining three went to prison and were pardoned after six years.

May Day is a reminder that people were shot so we could have the 8-hour day and that child victims of industrial accidents marched in the streets protesting working conditions only to be beaten down.