

TRUTH

A REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALIST TROTSKYIST BULLETIN

No. 295 • May, 1993 • 60¢ • Box 441283, Detroit, Michigan 48244-1283 • Phone/Fax 313-584-6556

Black South African workers show the way!



Six million Black South African workers strike after assassination of Chris Hanl, leader of African National Congress, page 2.

No to
U.S. "peace"
plan!

Freedom
for
Bosnia!
—page 4.

Black South African workers show the way!

On April 14 and 19, nearly six million Black South African workers went on nationwide strikes in order to protest the assassination of Chris Hani, a popular leader of the African National Congress (ANC) and of the Communist Party of South Africa and to demand an end to the racist apartheid regime.

The workers' strike obviously did not

achieve all their demands. But they did force De Klerk, head of the racist National Party, to agree to set the date for one person, one vote elections, before the end of May.

The Black South African workers' strike shows that workers have power, and that they can use that power to force the people at the top to make concessions.

This is the kind of struggle that workers in the U.S. are going to have to wage in order to make progress in getting more jobs, higher minimum wages, healthcare, etc.

It's no longer possible to rely on old methods, like small, isolated strikes, or voting for "pro-labor," or "pro-Black" Republicans or Democrats. ■

What kind of third party do we need?

Opposition to Republicans and Democrats continues to grow. Workers continue to think about and talk about building some kind of third party.

But what kind of third party do workers need? Should it be a labor party? Should it be a labor party based on the unions?

We think all workers — union and non-union, men and women, white and Black — should fight for a *labor party based on the unions*.

Why?

Because the unions are the only organizations that exist in the United States that are owned and controlled by millions of workers in any way. So they are the only basis that exists today for a party that is owned and controlled by millions of workers in any way.

There are other organizations that are owned and controlled by workers *to a certain extent*, for example, various neighborhood and community organizations. But the weight of workers in these organizations is usually much less than the weight of small business people, professionals, religious figures, etc., simply because these people usually have much more time and money to put into things like this than workers do.

We need a political party in which millions of workers call the shots, in which one fast talker doesn't have as much say as thousands of workers.

Unionized workers are the only workers in a position to initiate such a party today. They are the only workers in a position to act as a body. This is why we think all working people, whether they are in unions or not, should fight for a *labor party based on the unions*.

A labor party based on the unions will be much more representative of the vast majority of working people, than any other kind of third party, because it will be dominated by the unions, which are much *more* representative of the vast majority of working people, than any other institution in the society.

"A labor party based on the unions will be much more representative of the vast majority of working people, than any other kind of third party . . ."

Anything that is not based on some kind of solid foundation, can be easily taken over and manipulated by hostile forces.

There is no question that there are fundamental problems with the unions. They tend to be very aristocratic, concerned only about their own members, out of touch with the problems facing millions of unorganized workers, small business people, etc. But when the unions initiate a labor party based on the unions, they are going to be *forced* to change, at least to a certain extent. They are going to be forced to address the problems facing millions of working people or they aren't going to get any support.

This is why we think all working people, whether they are in unions or not, should fight for a labor party based on the unions.

A labor party based on the unions will be more representative of millions of working people than any other kind of third party not based on mass organizations representing millions of working people. And, forming a labor party will force the unions themselves to change and become more representative of the people, union and non-union alike.

This is also why we urge all to join Labor Party Advocates and actively build Labor Party Advocates. Labor Party Advocates is the only organization initiated by representatives of a major union that is advocating a third party and that the third party be a labor party. All the other third party movements — the New Party, the Ron Daniel's campaign, the 21st Century Party — are not initiated by unions and are not advocating that the third party be a labor party.

Those who advocate a third party, and aren't members of Labor Party Advocates, are taking a *neutral* position on whether the third party should be a labor party or not. Those who are members of Labor Party Advocates, but who aren't actively building Labor Party Advocates, are taking a neutral position on whether the third party should be a labor party or not.

Labor Party Advocates isn't always consistent. Sometimes members of Labor Party Advocates even say they are for a third party and they don't care what you call it. But Labor Party Advocates is *more* consistent in advocating a labor party than any other third party movement. And this is the most important question. Whether a party runs candidates or not, is a secondary question. The most important question is whether the labor movement needs its own political party or not.—M.G. ■

A workers candidate for Detroit mayor!

The Detroit Branch of the Socialist Workers Party is running candidates for Detroit mayor and city council.

They are: RoseAna Berbeo for mayor; James Harris, Arlene Rubenstein, John Sarge, and Candace Wagner for city council.

We urge all working people and their organizations in the Detroit area to support the Socialist Workers Party campaign and candidates against the Republican and Democratic party candidates in this election.

Workers in Detroit already know about Reagan, Bush, and the Republican Party.

The first four months of the Clinton administration show that workers can't rely on Clinton and the Democratic Party either.

— When Senate Republicans organized a filibuster and blocked passage of the only bill providing funds for jobs that Clinton has put forward, Clinton did not do anything to stop them.

— Clinton's plans for health care aren't complete, but it's already clear that his plans to cut costs aren't going to begin by cutting the fantastic profits of the insurance companies, the drug companies, and the medical equipment companies. They are going to start by cutting workers' benefits.

— Clinton's plan to aid college students *excludes* students who are working, that is, the majority of working class and middle class students.

— Clinton supported the bombing of Iraq, the establishment of a U.S. base in Somalia in opposition to the wishes of the Somali people, the exclusion of Haitian refugees from the U.S., the totally unprovoked and murderous attack on the religious group in Waco, Texas ...

These things show that workers can't look to Clinton to resolve the problems facing the people of Detroit.

Workers who want more jobs, higher minimum wages, health care, education, etc., are going to have to build their own party and their own candidates to fight for these things.

We need a working class mayor in Detroit, who will use his or her position to fight for the interests of the working class.

This is why we urge workers to campaign and vote for RoseAna Berbeo. She is the most working class candidate on the ballot.

In this issue of *Truth*, we are reprinting one of her statements. Workers will see right away that her message is very different from the message of other candidates. — M.G. ■

Statement of the Socialist Workers Party, Detroit Branch

Workers should not sacrifice . . .

President Bill Clinton's call for "shared sacrifice" to boost the economy is a cynical exercise that will benefit the wealthy and continue the attacks on the living standards and working conditions of working people. Clinton claims that "we are all in this together." Somehow rich and poor alike must take a hit if the country's economy is ever to rebound.

The problem with this approach is that working people have already been hit and hit hard by the policies of the capitalist families that run this country. Both the Democratic and Republican parties would like to convince working people to accept a lower standard of living so that the wealthy capitalist families who rule this country can work themselves out of their economic crisis. Politicians are working overtime to gain acceptance for higher taxes and major cuts in Social Security, health care and other programs.

The Socialist campaign says that working people have sacrificed enough. The city of Detroit is an example. The unemployment rate here is well above the national average and one-third of the population, including those with jobs, live below the official poverty line. Should we sacrifice more?

The capitalist ruling families and their Democratic and Republican party politicians advance proposals for solving the economic crisis on the backs of working people. They propose that we work harder for a lower standard of living.

They also propose that we be prepared to fight their wars — whether they are in Iraq, Yugoslavia, or Somalia. It is the working class in those countries as well as those here in the U.S. who will pay for these military adventures with our lives.

Our campaign puts forward the perspec-

tive of working people unifying and fighting in our own interests.

We propose:

— Shorten the workweek from 40 hours to 30 with no cut in pay, to spread the available work around.

"The Socialist campaign says that working people have sacrificed enough. The city of Detroit is an example. . . ."

— Enforce affirmative action and raise the minimum wage.

— Begin a massive public works program to meet the need for decent housing, transportation, medical services and childcare.

— Cancel the \$1.5 trillion Third World debt owed by the world's poorest countries to the world's richest. This debt helps to block solidarity between the world's working people. Working people here in Detroit, for example, have more in common with the working people of South Africa and Iraq than with the people who run this city.

We are against the demagogic demands of the other mayoral candidates to put more cops on the street; this will do nothing to advance the safety of the working class in Detroit. In fact, they will only mean more attacks on our democratic rights and more Rodney Kings and Malice Greens. Our demand is to jail the cops who killed Malice Green ... ■

Solidarity with Black South Africa!

We urge workers and oppressed of all races and nationalities in the Detroit area to support the struggle of the Black people of South Africa to bring an end to the racist apartheid regime and to demand that the U.S. government break off all diplomatic relations with the racist DeKlerk government now.

White Europeans occupied Black South Africa; they took the land and enslaved the native peoples. They have no right to continue doing this. The Black people of South Africa have the right to own everything in South Africa and to build their own, independent nation.

We know that Nelson Mandela and the African National Congress (ANC) are continuing to talk to DeKlerk and to try to negotiate with DeKlerk. Workers in the U.S. should certainly support Mandela and the ANC *against* DeKlerk and the National Party.

But that does mean that we in the U.S. have to recognize DeKlerk and his government in any way, or allow the U.S. government to continue to recognize DeKlerk and to continue to pressure Mandela and the ANC to come to terms with DeKlerk.

On the contrary, we should demand that the U.S. government not recognize any government in South Africa that is not representative of the Black majority.

Moreover, we have had a certain experience in the U.S. that we need to share with the Black people of South Africa.

It took a *civil war* to crush the slaveholders and abolish slavery in the U.S. That war dragged on for a long-time; thousands of soldiers, citizens, free Blacks, and ex-slaves, who opposed the slaveholders and slavery were killed and wounded.

That war would have been over much more quickly, fewer people who opposed the slaveholders would have been killed, *if those who opposed the slaveholders had acted more decisively*, if they had declared all Black people to be free and if they had *armed* the Black people and allowed them to fight the slaveholders themselves.

Instead, Abraham Lincoln and others like him, took a lot of half-steps. It wasn't until Lincoln allowed Black ex-slaves to join the Union Army that the tide began to turn. The more slaveholders and their armed forces began to see hundreds of ex-slaves

in uniforms coming after them with guns, the more the slaveholders began to drop their guns and run.

Statement of the International League for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International

For the victory of the Black Republic in South Africa! African National Congress to power!

Workers!

Once again your eyes are turning toward South Africa. The strikes, demonstrations, the mobilization of the Black people that has broken out since the assassination of the African National Congress leader Chris Hani at the hands of the fascists, show very clearly that *the revolution is knocking at the door of this country*.

In the last years, enormous efforts have been made to contain the irresistible rise of the people against the bloody apartheid regime. All the big powers throughout the world fear the fall of the South African colonialist state. In a decisive way, through this racist regime, imperialism has maintained its "order" in Southern Africa: the subordination and the most ferocious exploitation of the Black masses, the plundering of their resources, war against the emancipating forces of the people in Angola, Mozambique ...

When it became obvious that the Pretoria regime could no longer maintain itself simply through force, they tried to conspire against the revolution, by means of a pact with the conciliationist leaders of the oppressed. De Klerk took Botha's place at the head of the State; Mandela was freed; they initiated negotiations with the African National Congress (ANC) under the aegis of and the pressures of Washington and the ex-communist Kremlin bureaucrats. Nevertheless, each concession on the part of the white powers has done nothing but make the Black majority perceive more strongly the *intolerable* character of the oppression that they continue to suffer; each provocation, each massacre, each repressive action on the part of the regime, has done nothing but increase the determination of the working people to finish once and for all with this hated power.

Solidarity with Black South Africa!

Stop U.S. recognition of the racist DeKlerk government now! — M.G. ■

Now, the revolution already seems *unstoppable*. A revolution that will shake to its very foundations the oppression that imperialism exercises over Africa, with a strength that has never been seen, under the decisive push of the most powerful, numerous, and organized working class on the continent.

Workers of all countries must place themselves firmly on the side of their brothers and sisters in South Africa and energetically support the revolutionary efforts of the Black people to *bring down the colonialist apartheid regime and conquer the national emancipation of this country*.

In spite of their persistent efforts to find a negotiated solution with the Government, the leaders of the ANC have been obliged, under the tremendous pressure of the people, to call for *six weeks of mobilizations* to demand the immediate celebration of *free elections to a Constituent Assembly*.

It is necessary to give the most determined support to this democratic objective. Yes! A *sovereign Constituent Assembly* is necessary, elected on the most democratic basis: *one person, one vote!*

The tasks of this Assembly are none other than those being raised by the immense majority of the Black people in their struggle for *national emancipation*.

— The dismantling of the apartheid regime: the dissolution of the police, the army, the racist courts and institutions.

— The dissolution of the bantustans.

— The proclamation of a *Black Republic*; that is, completely *demo-cra-tic*, as the expression of the free will of the immense majority of the country.

— The land to those who work it.

(Continued on page 5)

No to U.S. "peace" plan!

Freedom for Bosnia!

Both Republicans and Democrats, including Clinton, are now talking about bombing the Serbian bureaucracy's positions in Bosnia and sending U.S. troops to this area in order to enforce the U.S. "peace" plan, the Cyrus-Vance plan.

But there will never be world peace as long as larger, more powerful nations, like the U.S., Britain, France, Russia, Serbia, and others, continue to deny smaller, weaker nations, like Bosnia-Herzegovina, the right to self-determination, the right to separate and build their own, independent nation.

The Cyrus-Vance plan calls for taking away a certain amount of land that the privileged Serbian bureaucracy and its armed forces stole from the people of Bosnia with its year-long war of ethnic cleansing and genocide. However, it also calls for *dividing and occupying Bosnia-Herzegovina*.

This is no "neutral" solution. It is aid to the oppressor nation (Serbia), with a tiny, worthless concession to the oppressed nation (Bosnia), to try to make it look neutral.

Why is the U.S. government intervening now, after all this time? Why is it threatening the Serbs? Because it's afraid that the Serbian bureaucracy is going to go *too far*, and *provoke* working class and popular uprisings throughout the Muslim nations in Northern Africa, the Middle East, and the old USSR.

The U.S. government wants to take advantage of the situation to establish U.S. bases in more places throughout the world. It is especially concerned with getting closer to Russia and the rest of the old USSR, because it is afraid Yeltsin and others will not be able to keep the people down.

We urge working people throughout the U.S. to oppose the U.S. government's big-nation chauvinism!

Down with U.S. and all big-nation chauvinism!

Down with the U.S. "peace" plan!

No to U.S. bombs and troops!

Freedom for Bosnia and all oppressed peoples now!

As long as the U.S. and other big nations continue to attempt to impose their will on other peoples and nations — whether it is Black South Africa, Palestine, Cuba, Iraq, Somalia, or Bosnia-Herzegovina — U.S. workers are going to suffer. They are going to have to pay the bill, with money and lives. They are going to be isolated

from workers and oppressed of other countries.

Anyone who really wants to help Bosnia can do so by fighting to:

Lift the embargo now!

Arms to Bosnia, not U.S. troops! ■



Two of the thousands of Bosnian women raped by Serbian oppressors in an effort to destroy the Bosnian people. If Bush or Clinton really wanted to help them, why didn't they lift the embargo and let them have guns to defend themselves, months or even weeks ago?

South Africa . . .

(Continued from page 4)

— The *nationalization* of all the resources of the country and of the imperialist enterprizes and investments.

— A government responsible to the Constituent Assembly.

But the ability of the Constituent Assembly to realize these tasks is *at stake now*. In order for the Assembly to be able to come together in conditions that are *really democratic*, it is necessary to *bring down the racist De Klerk government, through the strength of the working class and popular mobilization*. It is necessary to *disarm* the racist whites, their militias, their repressive forces, and *develop and arm popular Black militias*. It is necessary for the peasants to *begin to takeover the lands of the colonialists* and for the unions to *assume control of the mines, transportation, and the big factories*.

Any pact or new conciliation with the regime can only prolong its bloody agony or even frustrate the aspirations and heroism of the oppressed people. *What is decisive now*, is for the *ANC*, basing itself on this mobilization and organization of the people, to throw out the government, and *take all power into its own hands*. This is, today, the *condition* for a Constituent Assembly that is sovereign and democratic and for the conquest of national independence.

And this is the immediate objective that Trotskyists throughout the world must fight for, promoting, in the ranks of the workers movement and among the youth, the broadest *solidarity* with the Black people of South Africa.

April 25, 1993

Paris, France

An expression of the workers' political revolution ...

We are reprinting an interview with Anatoli Matvienko, a leader of an independent workers union in Bielorussia. This interview was acquired by a member of the Corriente Internacional Revolucionaria, a tendency of the International Workers League and of the Fourth International, and was published in their publication Correspondencia Internacional, March-April 1993.

As readers will see, Matvienko describes the struggles of the workers against the privileged bureaucracy in the factories and in the city administrations. He speaks of their strengths, and of their illusions, confusion, and the process of clarification taking place.

In our opinion, it is precisely this struggle, together with the struggles of oppressed peoples, that is the decisive factor in the crisis of the ruling circles in Russia and throughout the old USSR. These struggles show that a new working class and socialist political revolution is in the process of developing, as Leon Trotsky and the Fourth International both predicted and fought for.

Like any and every revolution, it is not totally clear and conscious of itself at the very beginning, and it is not developing in a straight line. It is precisely the task of conscious revolutionaries to render the masses of workers and oppressed conscious of what is developing, and to build the party of the revolution that will ultimately lead the revolution to victory.

What is happening in Russia and throughout the old USSR today, shows that the Fourth International's program is valid. All the tendencies that remain true to this program and want to fight for it, need to unify their forces and rebuild the Fourth International, so there is a clear alternative to imperialism and the privileged bureaucracy for millions of workers and oppressed.

"We have to join together and fight together"

Q: What were the strikes like in 1991?

A: After April 1, 1991, the Government of Byelorussia tripled the prices of basic products. The first day, the people did not react; the second day they began to think; but the third day, when the workers were

at the stores and saw the prices, when they were eating in the cafeteria in the factories, they reached the conclusion that they could not live in this way.

And for this reason, on April 3. in the Electrotechichenskaia factory, the workers met and began to discuss. The administration of the enterprise tried by means of repression to make the workers go back to work. The threats of layoffs, the threats of the managers began.

But this day something happened that was not foreseen. The workers, instead of going back to work, went into the streets, interrupted transit. The place was very well-selected, since there were two big factories alongside: Autozabod Automaticheskoy Linea and Zabod Shestirionky. Since the workers of these factories had the same problems, they decided to do the same, in such a way that the workers of the three enterprises organized a meeting.

Throughout the entire day, transit was closed, representatives of the city administration came but they did not reach an agreement. The following day, workers from the tractor factory went on strike, the day after that workers from the Maz automotive factory and other enterprises. One hundred and ten enterprises participated in all.

The columns of workers marched toward the Lenin plaza, which is the central plaza in Minsk. The same situation happened again and again for two weeks.

For the first time, the workers organized a public meeting on April 4. The city administration tried to stop it through means of a special force, but they could not succeed in doing anything. This was the beginning of the big strike.

During the following three days, the strike committee of the city of Minsk, with representatives of over one hundred enterprises in the city, was created, and the council of the strike committee was also constituted. Committees of organization were also formed in such a way that there was no disorder, not even drunks, and this stopped any possible provocation on the part of the administration toward the goods in the factories.

During the week, the factories in the main cities in the interior of the country also

went on strike. For two months in Byelorussia, there was a multitude of strikes, some organized, others not.

As far as the demands of the workers were concerned, from the beginning they were clearly political. This can be explained by the fact that the strike committee that was created in Minsk was under the influence of the National Front of Byelorussia, which has a nationalist orientation. In that moment, it was the only organization that was anti-communist in the Republic, so this is very understandable. As the workers do not orient themselves very well in politics, the demands of the people were those of the National Front.

The demands were to change the Supreme Soviet of Byelorussia, pass to a market economy, etc. The workers did not understand very well what the market economy and the capitalist system were, and for this reason they raised these demands. We understand the market system in this way: the factories to the workers, the land to the peasants. We understand privatization as the passing of the factories into the hands of the labor collective, and the land to the property of the peasants.

But at the beginning of the strike there were also economic demands, an increase in wages, stop the price increases. 80% of these were satisfied by the government.

The leaders of the Popular Front more and more imposed their political demands and on May 22 they tried to organize a strike of Byelorussia with demands that were only political. This strike failed. That day, workers from only thirteen factories came to the Lenin plaza and after that the strikes went into a decline. This, of course, is normal. The strike could not last indefinitely.

What we could do, and this is a big benefit of the strike, was to create strike committees in all the enterprises. We won the office where we are now functioning in the building of the official unions. And on the basis of these strike committees we can then create independent unions.

Q: What is the situation of the workers and how are they reacting with respect to the policy of the Government? Because you tell us that they had many illusions in the market. What do they think now and how do you see the fu-

ture of the struggle against the Government?

A: ... The Government has a policy that is very concrete in relation to the workers of the big factories where more than 20 or 30,000 people work, like the tractor factory or the MAZ factory. They do not give many benefits to the state, but the Government gives them a lot of credits, even to be able to pay salaries. And it is for this reason that the salaries in these enterprises are pretty high, about 30 or 40,000 rubles (approximately \$50). In some enterprises, like MAZ, the workers get as much as 98,000 rubles.

At the same time, the workers in the electronics factories, and there are many of those in the republic, receive only a basic minimum salary of 4,000 rubles (about \$5). Those who aren't hungry, don't understand the hungry.

The policy of the Government toward the working class is very simple, divide and conquer. But the workers have the experience of two years of struggle, we understand that the Government is trying to divide us and that only together are we strong. For this reason, in all the enterprises, we create organizations of the independent union, without paying attention to what the workers get in each enterprise.

Concerning the market economy, it is impossible to say what all the workers are thinking. The economic reforms are giving results different from what we expected, in such a way that the workers are suffering from shock. We know that we cannot go back to the past, nor can we follow the road that the Government is proposing to us, so that the situation is very difficult ...

There is not a single position among the workers concerning what is to be done. Some believe in the market, others in the Communist Party, others in Stalin. As far as we are concerned, we think it is necessary to resist, to be in opposition to any

power. We believe in our own organization of the workers and afterwards, seeing our forces, we will find a solution.

A: How do you see the development of the independent unions and what opinion do you have of the help that is being given by the AFL-CIO and the German unions?

A: So that the independent unions serve the interests of the workers, we need them to develop along a natural road. The foundation of this movement must be the democratic principles, which must be promoted among the workers of all republics.

And we will have the problems that there are in the unions in the West. There will be bureaucracy in the unions, attempts at agreements between representatives of the unions and representatives of the Government. For example, along comes a coal salesman and he tells the miners' union leader that if they organize a strike to stop the production of coal, that the strike will be very well paid for. These negative things that happen in the West we will also have. But if we maintain our democratic principles and we control our leaders, we will be able to avoid all the worst that is characteristic of the unions in the capitalist countries.

In relation to aid from the unions in the capitalist countries, the rich unions, the first thing that I want to say is that yes we need aid, but it must be well-thought-out. If it leads to bureaucratization and other negative things, then it is not help. I don't at all like the activity of the AFL-CIO in the ex-USSR. I don't know much about their concrete activity at this moment, but I can say that as a consequence of this help, which is only material, the leaders of the unions of the different republics in the ex-USSR, cannot find points in common ...

Q: What kind of common struggle is necessary with the workers of the West?

A: ... In order to struggle against international capital, it is necessary to work together. Concretely, it is necessary to exchange information.

We need to know your problems and you need to know ours, in order to think together on how to resolve them and to exchange our experiences in struggle.

We have a concrete experience of struggle against socialism, I speak of real socialism, as it was built here, and in which we have lived all these years. You have the experience of struggle against real capitalism.

The consequences of the two systems aren't very different. At least as far as the workers are concerned.

For this reason, we have to work together, develop common campaigns and actions, edit common periodicals and magazines to promote our ideas. And together seek the solution to the current situation. We live in a time that is very interesting and for this reason I am very happy.

There is a crisis of real socialism and there is also a crisis of liberal capitalism and we must find a new system in which we can live normally, without tears, without blood, without sadness, and without exploitation. ■

Why do we charge for Truth?

We sold 18 copies of *Truth* at meatpacking and auto plants, and various events.

Some readers ask why we charge for *Truth*? Others ask why \$.60 for a single copy and \$4 for a five-issue subscription and \$9 for a ten-issue subscription.

Truth costs money. Almost all of the reading, writing, and typesetting that goes into *Truth* is done with voluntary labor. But we have to pay for equipment and to reproduce and mail *Truth*. It costs \$.56 to reproduce each copy; \$.29 to mail.

We who publish *Truth* invest a lot of time and money into it. But we are small; our resources are limited. We need support from workers, students, and others.

We have also found that those who aren't willing to pay something for *Truth*, usually aren't interested in reading it. Charging is a way to make sure that it's going to people who are interested.

Truth is the fifth oldest Trotskyist paper in the U.S. *Truth* is the only regular Trotskyist paper in the U.S. struggling to unify all Trotskyist tendencies capable of fighting for the program and to rebuild the Fourth International. It deserves your support! ■

Truth is published by the Trotskyist Committee of Detroit. The Trotskyist Committee of Detroit is named after Leon Trotsky, a leader of the first successful workers socialist revolution and a founder of the Fourth International, the world party of the socialist revolution. The Trotskyist Committee of Detroit is associated with one of the international tendencies of the Fourth International, the International League for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International. Editor: M. Guttshall

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What should the goal of young workers be?

A classless, communist society!

Young workers face a world of what appears to be powerful forces against them.

The world is a very difficult place to live — it is so hard to find a good job, it is so hard to get together enough money for a car, a place to have children with someone you care for. Nearly every young worker who is working is looking for a better job.

Then, there are the nasty people who own and run the places where they work. They treat the young workers like dogs.

There are unions at a few of the places where young people work. Many union representatives and leaders seem to be concerned only about themselves, their few friends and making sure that the company and the foremen are happy.

The local government in Detroit, Coleman Young and the City Council, is so out of touch. It doesn't speak honestly about the problems of destroyed neighborhoods, of police harassment. The state government of Governor Engler is openly hostile to young workers. The new Clinton government seems like it may be better, but young workers pay a lot in taxes from very small paychecks already and they don't like Clinton giving away money when there are so many problems here that aren't being solved.

Why does the world look like this?

We live in a class society.

The people in the society are divided into classes, depending on how they are involved in producing the things that the people of the society need — food, clothing, shelter.

There is a small group of very rich people, called the bourgeoisie. These people own all the places and equipment to make the things that people need — they own the big farms, the factories, the hospitals and the banks. They own the politicians and many union leaders. These people do not do any work. They live in luxury with big houses and servants. They are the only people who benefit from class society.

There is the major group in the society, the working class. These are the people who actually produce most of the goods that people need — they harvest the food from the fields, they build houses, they make the clothes we wear and the cars we drive. Even the "professional people" — doctors, lawyers, engineers — are more and

more becoming workers, working for the rich.

People say it has always been this way — rich and poor — and it won't change. But this hides two *key* differences.

First, the very rich are no longer *necessary* to producing things. There are a dying class, the *only* force behind all the other forces that seem to be so powerful. The very rich are a class of parasites, of vampires. They can only make the lives of the working class worse every day, not better.

Second, the working class works *together* to make everything. To make a car takes thousands of workers, working together. To make a canned ham, takes hundreds of workers, working together. This *social* labor, this *communal* labor, has been created by modern methods of producing things, by technology.

Advanced technology makes it possible for the working class to run society without any rich people.

The downfall of the very rich is *inevitable*. Just like the days of kings and queens ended, so will the days of the bourgeoisie end. It is just as inevitable as a dropped ball hitting the ground. Equally inevitable, the vast majority of people, the people who produce all the wealth (except natural wealth), will eventually control all the wealth in society for the benefit of all.

The working class is the beginning of a *classless, communist society* already being born inside the old class society. The overthrow of the very rich is the next step toward a classless society.

How will a classless, communist society be different?

There will be jobs for *everyone*, because unemployment only benefits the rich.

If all the people in society worked together to produce what we need without rich people than *everyone* will benefit from their communal labor.

There will be plenty of food, clothing and shelter for *everyone* because there would be no rich people who demand profits.

There will be enough time for educating *everyone*, for all people to pursue different types of work. If the work is spread among all the people, the amount of time each person works will be shorter and there will be more time for education and free time.

A classless, communist society is not some idle dream, although it will not happen tomorrow. It is a world that you can see glimpses of when you see lots of people working together to produce something together. This classless, communist society is similar to early Native American societies, where all the things were owned by everyone, everyone shared equally in the work and equally in the products of their communal work.

But a communist society will only come about after a long period of time when people have had the chance to live together without being dominated by the very rich.

The oppression of African-Americans, Latinos, etc., by whites and the oppression of women and children by men has been going on a very long time. It will not end even when all the rich people are gone.

It will take some generations of whites being raised in a world where African-Americans have full and equal rights to jobs, housing and schools, for the whites to stop being racist.

It will take some generations of men who are raised in a world where having children is something that the society really supports with child care, large communal dining areas, equal distribution of all house work, and high quality medical care for all women and children

What can young workers do now?

There are steps that young workers can take today to get closer to a classless, communist society.

Young workers can support the efforts to build a big workers party, like Labor Party Advocates, so that the working class can begin to act independent of the political parties of the rich, the Republican and the Democratic parties.

Young workers can support all of the efforts of the working class to fight the very rich, like stopping the closing of the General Motors plants, the struggles of African-Americans for their rights, the struggles of workers of other countries to be free. These efforts strengthen the working class and weaken the very rich.

And, young workers can educate themselves and train themselves for the future that will come, a classless, communist society.
—Jack Marlowe