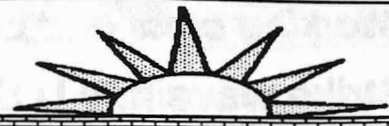


NEW LIFE



A WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY BULLETIN IN DETROIT

NO. 6 • OCTOBER, 1994 • 25¢ • BOX 441283, DETROIT, MI 48244-1283 • PHONE/FAX: 313-584-6556

GM workers' strike for more jobs shows the way!

Forward to a general strike for jobs for all!

Rally in solidarity with striking
and locked-out workers!

Rally!

Decatur, Illinois
October 15

Sponsored by striking
Caterpillar workers,
Bridgestone-Firestone
rubber workers, and
locked-out Staley workers

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584-6556.



Police attack workers demonstrating in Decatur, June 25.

Strike wave hits U.S.

Below are some of strikes this year in the U.S. by the number of workers, union, companies, locations and dates.

United Mine Workers Local 4358, in Indiana, against Buck Creek Coal Company for over a year.

165,000 workers, Teamsters, against United Parcel, February 7.

3,500 workers, United Steel Workers of America, against Allegheny Ludlum in Pennsylvania, April 1 - June 9.

70,000 workers, Teamsters, against 22 trucking companies, April 6 - April 29.

2,000 workers, United Food and Commercial Workers, against Meijers stores, Ohio, for 6 weeks starting May 7.

850 workers, UAW, against Chrysler, Technical Center, Michigan, May 31 - June 8.

1,800 workers, International Ladies Garment Workers Union, against Leslie Fay, June 1 - July 13.

3,500 workers, United Auto Workers, against General Motors, Technical Center, Michigan, June 2 - June 8.

2,000 workers, UTU, against Long Island Rail Road, New York, June 17 - June 19.

1,900 workers, UAW, against General Dynamics, Michigan, Ohio and Pennsylvania, June 20 - July 15.

700 workers, International Association of Machinists, against Kennedy Space Center, Florida, July 5.

1,000 workers, United Rubber Workers, against Dunlop Tire, Alabama, July 7 - September.

1,100 workers, UTU, against the Soo Line Railroad for 46 days, ending August 29.

3,000 workers, URW, against Pirelli Tire and Titan Wheel International, July 15 - September.

6,500 workers, UTU and Amalgamated Transportation Union, against the Los Angeles Transit Authority, from July 25 to August 2.

2,000 workers, UAW, against NUMMI, California, August 3.

1,000 workers, Teamsters, against Pony Express since August 8 at locations across the U.S.

7,900 workers, UFCW and Teamsters, against grocery stores, Oregon, since August 18.

4,200 workers, URW, against Firestone, Oklahoma, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, from August 18.

3,300 workers, UAW, against GM, Indiana, August 23 - 25.

750 workers, UAW, against Eagle Electric Manufacturing, New York, August 31 to September 13.

4,000 workers, International Electronic Workers, against General Electric, New York, September 1.

185 workers, Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union, against Cliftex, Massachusetts, September 1. ■

Why workers of all ethnic groups should oppose the trial against O.J. Simpson . . .

For an independent Black court . . .

O.J. Simpson's trial is now beginning and may last well into next year.

Workers of all ethnic groups know that O.J. Simpson beat his wife, Nicole Simpson. There are eyewitnesses to this, plenty of physical evidence, and Simpson himself pleaded no contest to charges that he beat her. Workers also know that it's quite possible that Simpson did murder Nicole and her friend Ron Goldman.

Nevertheless, neither working women, nor working men, from any ethnic group have anything to gain from this trial.

The U.S. judicial system is racist, sexist and anti-working class. The vast majority of men in this system are white men from comfortable families. The Blacks, the women, the individuals from working class families, and other oppressed people who are given positions within the judicial system, are not selected for their devotion to the Black people, women, working people, etc., but for opposite reasons. For their ability to "fit in," for their ability to serve the status quo. In other words, many of the Black and female faces in the judicial system are just that, faces. On the inside, they are quite like the rich white men they work with, profoundly hostile to Blacks, women, working people, etc.

If the U.S. judicial system were sincerely interested in doing something about violence against women, it would push for establishing huge safe houses throughout the country where women and their children who are being threatened with violence could go and live in peace, safety and comfort. It would push for military training for women so that they can defend themselves.

But this is not what the U.S. judicial system is about. And this is now what the trial against O.J. Simpson is about.

Whatever O.J. Simpson may or may not have done, the bosses are using the trial against O.J. Simpson to try to discredit Black men, to try to discredit white working class woman, to try to discredit inter-ethnic couples, and to pit Blacks and whites against each other.

The media constantly refers to Mr. Simpson's "poor, Black origins" and his "wealthy, white milieu," as if it were the poor, Black origins that led him to beat and possibly kill Mrs. Simpson, and not his wealthy, white milieu. It also constantly refers to Mrs. Simpson's origins as a waitress, and her allegedly provocative behavior, as if these two things were synonymous.

There are plenty of rich white men who have committed crimes far worse than the worst crime O.J. Simpson might have committed: Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon — napalming thousands of innocent women and children in Vietnam; Reagan, Bush — bombing thousands of innocent women and children in Iraq; condemning them to starvation and disease. There are plenty of Black men and white women who work together, live together, have children together, and do very well together every day.

Why aren't these people getting the same publicity that O.J. Simpson is? To ask the question is to answer it. It wouldn't serve the status quo — a class society in which rich white men are found on the top, and thousands of Black and white working class men and women are found on the bottom.

Does this mean that we think it's OK for O.J. Simpson to do whatever he wants to do. No. But it does mean that we don't think that rich white men and their judicial system have a right to *judge* and punish Mr. Simpson. Black men and women never have gotten and never will get fair trials in this judicial system, which has existed since the time of slavery and has never served the interests of the Black people or white working class people.

Workers of all ethnic groups should demand that the trial against O.J. Simpson be stopped. A totally independent Black court should be established to investigate the charges against him and try him if necessary. The Black people are the people best capable of seeing that he gets a fair trial, of seeing that there is justice for Nicole Simpson and O.J. Simpson. — M.G. ■



Labor Party Advocates turns to striking and locked-out workers!

Labor Party Advocates (LPA) just made a decision to make membership in Labor Party Advocates free to workers who are on strike or locked-out. This is definitely a step in the correct direction.

Workers who are on strike or locked-out need a party that is going to fight for their interests. Republicans and Democrats aren't going to do this. They've passed all the laws that have made things so difficult for striking workers. Clinton went all out for NAFTA, but he barely lifted a finger for the bill against replacing strikers.

Working people need a labor party based on thousands of unionized workers who want to fight, like the ones who are on strike, locked-out or organizing new unions.

Both the strike movement and the labor party movement are growing. We need to bring these two movements together. Together, they will be unbeatable. They'll be able to reach out to Black workers, immigrant workers, young people against the U.S. war on Cuba, Haiti, Bosnia.

We urge all striking and locked-out workers to take advantage of LPA's decision and join LPA today. We urge all LPA members to take advantage of LPA's decision and reach out to striking and locked out workers. Let them know about LPA. Let them know that they can get involved in building a party that they will totally own and control and that they can use to fight for their interests. — M.G.■

Stop the union leadership's support to the bosses and their parties!

Vote for working class candidates in 1994!

The vast majority of working people have made it very clear that they oppose both the Republicans and the Democrats. They don't think either party represents the interests of working people. They are right.

Clinton hasn't done anything for striking and locked-out workers. His labor commission is considering legalizing company unions. He's abandoned universal health insurance; he's done nothing to stop the destruction of the school system.

Nevertheless, the top union leaderships continue pouring thousands of union hours and dollars into campaigning for various Republican and Democratic party candidates.

In an effort to counteract this, many workers are trying to build support for Labor Party Advocates within their union locals. This is a good idea; we support it.

We also think it's necessary to vote for working class candidates that are on the ballot, even if they are candidates associated with very small working class and socialist organizations that don't have any chance of winning the election.

This will make it very clear that workers aren't going to vote for any candidates that aren't part of the working class and clearly devoted to it, even if there aren't any candidates on the ballot like this that have a chance to win, and that we are going to be spending our time and money on building this kind of alternative now. We are tired of waiting.

Working class candidates on the ballot in Michigan: William Roundtree, U.S. Senate; Kristen Hamel, Michigan State University Board of Trustees; Kevin Carey, University of Michigan Board of Regents; Rebecca Flora, State Board of Education; Durk L. Barton, State Representative, District 4, Detroit; Joyce A. Erickson, State Representative, District 7, Detroit; Gertrude Cook, State Representative, District 9, Detroit; Beverley K. Bloedel, State Representative, District 26, Macomb County; Cynthia Jaquith, U.S. House of Representatives, District 16. ■

LPA forum supports striking and locked-out workers



Detroit Labor Party Advocates held a public meeting at UAW Local 3000, September 10, entitled "Union Struggles in Decatur and labor law reform." Over 70 people attended. \$300 was collected for the striking workers who came.

In addition to the speakers, the program included the video, "Struggle in the Heartland," on the June 25 demonstration and events in Decatur.

The speakers from left to right are: striking workers Charles Walker and Ken Best, United Rubber Workers Local 713, Firestone, Decatur and Randy Morrell and Morris Schott, UAW Local 751, Caterpillar, Decatur; locked-out workers Isaac Campbell, Allied Industrial Workers Local 267, National Metal Processing, Detroit; and Art Dhermy, AIW 7-837, Staley, Inc., Detroit attorney Ellis Boal.



No to the prosecution of Oliver French . . .

For an independent Black workers' commission of inquiry into the circumstances that led to the killings at the Rouge plant . . .

Greg Couls and Ron McTasney, a UAW committeeperson and the president of the Maintenance and Construction Unit at the Ford Rouge Plant (UAW Local 600), respectively, were killed by Oliver French, also a committeeperson, on September 10. They were all power electricians and they had worked together for many years.

There has been a lot of loose talk about how this was a "tragedy," as though what happened was a tornado. Talk of tragedy "for all," is an effort to hide the guilty parties.

Oliver French told nearly everybody he talked to that he felt he was being treated unfairly and discriminated against. To Black workers and union officials, he said that he was being racially discriminated against. He had complained to the UAW Local 600 leadership, to the UAW International leadership and even to the National Labor Relations Board.

No to the prosecution of Oliver French

The rich owners of Ford are the guilty ones, not Oliver French. It was their racist acts that take place every day in the Rouge — from Black workers being denied promotions or advancements to racial slurs by foremen — that drove Oliver French to kill. But the rich owners are not even on trial.

It is impossible for Oliver French to get justice in any court. The courts, especially those in Dearborn, home of Ford Motor Company, are known for their racism. The courts are anti-worker and anti-union. They have little sympathy for the problems of workers oppressed by the rich owners at Ford, for the tension and stress that working in a Ford factory causes.

Nearly all Black people in the Detroit area side with French. Many Black workers in the local are raising money for French's defense. All workers should support these efforts.

Freedom for Oliver French advances the interests of all workers. If French is freed, it sends a message that workers will stand

together when one of them is driven crazy by the racism of the rich owners, that workers have a right to live without oppression and racial discrimination and, that they do not trust the courts controlled by the rich to judge the conduct of workers.

Oliver French has suffered enough. Not only has he suffered from racism, but he has killed some of his friends. He will have to live with that for the rest of his life.

The only way that Oliver French can receive full justice is with an independent Black workers commission of inquiry to investigate what happened to Oliver French and the circumstances that led to the killing.

What can workers do about racism at the Rouge plant?

Racism at the Rouge stems from the rich owners of Ford who, along with the rich owners of GM, Chrysler, etc., systematically super-exploit the entire Black community of the Detroit metro area for their profits. But the workers created a union that is supposed to fight for the workers' interests.

One Black skilled tradesman of the unit, having served several years ago in the union leadership, put it, "I blame the local and the International. They should have investigated when French complained to them." This is true. The union officials ignored French's complaints of racism.

But even more, the UAW simply does not fight racism enough in the Rouge, or in the society as a whole. If it did, white UAW committeepersons would not be killed by UAW Black committeepersons.

The UAW should fight for affirmative ac-

tion for skilled trades, which means, if 90% of the production workers are Black, then 90% of the skilled trades should be Black. Instead the skilled trades remain mostly white. Most of the new Rouge apprentices are white.

The UAW should make sure that Blacks are proportionally represented for union office. This means if the union is 90% Black, the top union officials should be at least 90% Black. The Local 600 leadership should be mostly Black; it is not. The UAW international leadership should have many more Blacks; it does not.

The UAW should mobilize against all racist actions in the Detroit area. It was completely silent about the murder of Malice Green, and about many other racist actions that would embarrass the rich owners of GM, Chrysler and Ford. The UAW should fight to keep the factories in the city of Detroit open, and reopen those that are closed.

Workers should also continue the struggle against the UAW's policy of cooperation with Ford Motor Co. that McTasney and Couls began in a very modest way.

The UAW's policy of cooperation with the rich owners of Ford, who want more and more work for less and less money, is resulting in all sorts of physical, emotional and mental illnesses among workers.

The efforts in French's defense, along with the strikes unfolding today in the U.S. show the way forward — a united fight against the bosses, a united fight against racist discrimination in all its forms. Along this road, workers will find dignity, justice and the power to end all exploitation. — F. Russo ■

Greg Couls was not a racist

Greg Couls was among the least racist whites in the Rouge. Before he was ever elected, he took a public stand against racism in the Maintenance and Construction Unit in his newsletter, *The Second Voice*. His ex-wife was Vietnamese, his current girlfriend was Black.

Couls and French used to fish together, they had been friends for years. This was one more time when white people who are the least racist, suffer from the racism of whites much harder to reach and truly guilty. — F. Russo ■



Workers in Decatur and alternatives for the coming elections

Striking Caterpillar workers, Bridgestone-Firestone workers, and locked-out Staley workers are thinking of playing a role in the coming local elections for city council and mayor, and are considering various different ways of doing this.

An important number seem to agree that it would be a big step forward for union officials and/or union workers from all three unions to run for office and win, and that this is the direction workers should go in.

But an important number also express concerns about whether it would be possible for a union official or union worker to appeal to the majority of the voting population and actually win.

Perhaps it would be better to find someone who is not so closely identified with the labor movement, get a pledge from him to back labor, then map out a campaign designed to win the support of the majority of the population and carry it out, with the aim of getting the candidate elected.

Before going any further, it is necessary to say that the very fact that workers are thinking about and discussing this question is a big step forward.

Workers are absolutely right to consider all possibilities, not to reject any possibility in advance, out of hand, without thinking about it and considering it from all sides.

What would be best for the working class and the organized labor movement? Everyone thinks that it would be great to run union officials and/or union workers and win. But what if they lost? Would it be better to run union officials or union workers even if they lose? Or would it be better to run a "friend of labor" and win?

As partisans of the labor movement, we think the most important thing is to build up the independent power of the labor movement itself, to build the *size* of the labor movement (reach out to the new, young, unorganized workers), build its *independence* from the bosses and its fighting spirit, so that workers will be in a

better position to defend themselves and fight for their interests in many different ways (with meetings, demonstrations, strikes, independent labor candidates for office, etc.)

"Would it be better to run union officials or union workers even if they lose? Or would it be better to run a 'friend of labor' and win?"

From this point of view, it would be better for union officials and/or union members to run for office and lose, than for friends of labor to run for office and win (even if the friends of labor were actually true to labor in office, which is very unusual).

Workers need to stop relying on people from other classes — who aren't part of the organized labor movement, who aren't willing to identify themselves totally with the organized labor movement — to run for office and fight for workers' interests.

Workers can and must learn how to do all these kinds of things for themselves. All the propaganda that workers and their children are bombarded with from the time they enter kindergarten until the time they die — that workers are workers and bosses are bosses because workers aren't as intelligent and capable as bosses — is a lie designed to keep the workers on the bottom and the bosses on top.

If workers in Decatur run their own candidates for office, from their own ranks, and talk to the people about what the labor movement stands for — like forcing the bosses to hire more full-time workers with full pay and benefits; increasing the minimum wage; equal pay for equal work;

expanding public healthcare and public education; abolishing anti-labor laws that restrict workers' rights to organize unions and strike — workers will learn from this experience, they'll be stronger, they'll build more support for the labor movement, whether they actually win the office or not.

If workers run a "friend of labor," who is not openly identified with the labor movement, who does not openly proclaim that his campaign is aimed at building support for the labor movement, and that he will use his position in office to build support for the labor movement, it's quite possible that workers will win office for this candidate, but lose the war. Workers will be spending thousands of hours and dollars campaigning for a candidate who is not using his campaign — literature, speaking engagements, TV, radio, newspaper spots — to build support for the labor movement. Even if he gets into office and keeps the promises he made — which, again, is very unusual — he won't be using his time in office to build support for the labor movement. And, of course, it's quite possible that he won't win, or that if he does, he'll break his promises, in which case, the workers will have wasted a lot of time and money for nothing.

So, taking all this into consideration, running union officials and/or union members who openly proclaim that the purpose of their campaign is to build support for the labor movement is really the best strategy, the surest strategy, the one with the least risks, and the greatest potential for gain. Workers will learn from this experience; if they don't win the office this time, they'll figure out what mistakes were made and figure out how to win it the next time.

Sooner or later workers are going to figure out how to build their own parties, their own candidates, their own governments, and their own societies, truly open and democratic societies in which working people can be comfortable. Workers in Decatur have already taken a big step in this direction. Now is a good time to take another. — M. Guttshall



Solidarity with Cuba against U.S. bosses! Demonstrate in Washington, D.C. November 12!

About 200 people attended a union conference in solidarity with Cuba at a union hall in Windsor, Canada on September 23-25. Organizers originally planned to hold the conference at the UAW Local 600 hall in Detroit, but the U.S. government refused to give visas to the Cuban trade unionists.

Cuban trade unionists talked about how much the U.S. bosses' blockade against Cuba has hurt the Cuban people. The U.S. bosses not only refuse to ship any goods to Cuba, they also refuse to do business with any firms that ship any goods to Cuba. Clinton has now made the restrictions against Cuba worse: he's making it against the law to send or take any money to Cubans; he's also making it much more difficult to travel to Cuba.

As a result of the U.S. bosses' policies, food, fuel, medical supplies, and school supplies are all in short-supply in Cuba.

Conference participants talked about what they could do to help the Cuban people. Plans include trying to get more unions to support the Cuban people, building support for the Cuba Friendship Caravan, which is collecting food, medical supplies, and other goods for the Cuban people, and building support for a demonstration in solidarity with the Cuban people and against the U.S. bosses' policies in Washington, D.C. on November 12.

We urge all young people and working people in the U.S. to support this struggle.

The U.S. bosses justify their policies against Cuba on the grounds that the Cuban government calls itself socialist or communist and on the grounds that it limits certain democratic rights, like the right to form independent unions and political parties, and the right to criticize the ruling Communist Party and the ruling government.

But these kinds of things haven't stopped the U.S. bosses from trading with other countries in the past or now. The Spanish government calls itself socialist; the French government called itself socialist; the Russian government called itself com-

munist for many years and was much more repressive than the Cuban government, but that didn't stop U.S. bosses from doing lots of business with it. U.S. bosses have been friendly with the bloodiest dictatorships on the planet — the Pinochet dictatorship in Chile, the apartheid regime in Southern Africa, the Israeli state and the Shah of Iran in the Middle East, the Ceausescu regime in Romania, the mur-

derers of Tianamen Square in China.

What bothers U.S. bosses about Fidel Castro, the Cuban Communist Party, and the Cuban people is that they took back land and natural resources that U.S. bosses had stolen from them, and began to try to use them to build a decent life for the majority of people. They haven't been willing to be totally servile to U.S. bosses. This is why U.S. bosses are trying to starve them into submission. It's similar to the kinds of things they do in the U.S.: if workers won't take a wage cut, they threaten to close the factory and throw everyone into the streets.

Workers in the U.S. and the Cuban people are fighting the same enemy: U.S. bosses. We need to join forces. Solidarity with the Cuban people! Stop the blockade! U.S. out of Guantanamo! All out for Washington, November 12. ■

What can you do for Cuba?

1. Contribute food and other supplies to the Cuba Friendship Caravan.
2. Come to the demonstration in Washington, D.C. November 12.
3. Urge your union, school, or community organization to support this struggle.

U.S. out of Haiti! Arms for the Haitian people!

Clinton claims that he avoided an invasion of Haiti by reaching an agreement with Cedras to step down. What a cynical joke! The U.S. has invaded and occupied Haiti. U.S. troops are standing idly by while Cedras's armed forces shoot citizens demonstrating against him. Even if U.S. troops did intervene on the side of the people from time to time, it would only be to preserve their image and keep the strug-

gle from getting out of control. The Haitian people need arms and military training so that they can overthrow Cedras themselves and begin to build a society in which the Haitian people can be comfortable. Workers in the U.S. must not allow U.S. bosses and their armed forces to continue to oppress these people. U.S. out of Haiti! Open U.S. doors to Haitian immigrants! Arms to the Haitian people!

Bosnia: "We aren't afraid of hunger! We want freedom!"

Solidarity, a socialist organization in Detroit, sponsored a forum with Nada Selimovic, from the Center for Anti-War Activities in Sarajevo, Bosnia, on Sunday, September 18.

Nada Selimovic spoke very eloquently about her experiences in the struggle of the Bosnian people. She explained that the Bosnian people had a very long history of working together to try to build a multi-ethnic society. She herself is of Serbian origin and was accused of being a traitor because she did not line up with the Serbian bureaucracy's onslaught against the Bosnian people. She said that many people in Bosnia were very excited and enthusiastic when the old Communist Parties began to fall. They saw this as an opportunity to build a more open and democratic society. It was precisely this that the Serbian bureaucracy and its armed forces aimed to crush. She said that the Serbian communist or socialist party is not really a socialist or communist party at all, but a fascist party that wants to totally crush the people, and that it is very important for socialists or communists in the West to see this and

understand this.

Nada also said that the U.N. is not helping the people of Bosnia at all, that it's allowing the Serbs to continue to get arms, and that it also takes food and other supplies bound for the Bosnians and allows the Serbs to get them. She wants the arms embargo against Bosnia lifted so the Bosnians can get arms themselves.

Nada said that conditions in Sarajevo are very difficult, that it's hard to get food, water. She has been trying to get out for sometime so that she could tell people in the West what's really happening, but the U.N. wouldn't let her out. She said it's like being in a prison. But it was also obvious that she and other Bosnians are very determined. "They are trying to starve us," she said. "But we aren't afraid of hunger. We want freedom!"

Workers in the U.S. can support this struggle by contributing to Workers Aid to Bosnia and by demanding that the U.S. lift the embargo.—M.G.



Cuba and socialism

During a recent discussion with striking workers in Decatur, a Socialist Workers Party candidate offered Cuba as an example of socialism.

"The discussion quickly turned to what countries in the world Sedwick (the candidate) would hold up as an example of socialism. She pointed to Cuba's revolutionary government as the one government in the world consistently acting in the interests of working people."

This is very confusing, misleading. It hurts the struggle to defend Cuba against U.S. bosses and it hurts the struggle for socialism.

Cuba doesn't have to be a good example of socialism in order to deserve to be defended against U.S. bosses. The Cuban government doesn't have to be "the one government in the world consistently acting in the interests of working people" in order to deserve to be defended against U.S. bosses.

U.S. workers need to learn to defend peoples of other countries regardless of the differences they may have with these peoples or their governments. They have to learn that peoples of other countries have to have the same rights that U.S. workers have, the right to have their own nation, find their own road, make their own mistakes, that rich and powerful nations like the U.S. cannot be allowed to use that wealth and power to dictate to smaller, weaker nations.

The Cuban people took a *step* toward socialism, by taking back land, natural resources, and other resources that U.S. bosses had either stolen from them or developed at their expense, and by beginning to use these resources to try to build an economy that could provide for the majority of the Cuban people. Unfortunately, this process was cut short by the U.S. blockade and by the intervention of the privileged bureaucracy in the old USSR, which brought Cuba largely under its control and subordinated the development of the Cuban economy to the needs of the privileged bureaucracy in the old USSR and its supporters in Cuba.

Thus Cuba is *not*, by any stretch of the imagination, a fully socialist society. Nor can it ever be, by itself, a fully socialist society.

It's going to take the working classes of at least several of the most developed capitalist countries working together to build fully socialist societies — that is, societies in which:

— the power of the capitalist class has been overthrown;

- the workers have the power;
- the workers own the most important resources;
- the workers are beginning to produce the most important things that people need to live comfortably;
- oppression based on skin color, sex, language, culture, class, is beginning to go away and classes themselves are beginning to go away.

The Cuban people can't build a fully socialist society by themselves because it takes a relatively big working class and a certain amount of natural and man-made wealth to build a fully socialist society. (This doesn't mean they should "wait"; it simply means there are limits on what they can accomplish without more collaboration.)

Socialism is the struggle of the working class to improve its conditions of work and life, to eventually overthrow the power of the bosses, and be able to work together freely to produce the things that people need. Socialism is all the individuals and organizations that work to render the working class conscious of its tasks, and prepare, organize, and lead it in carrying them out.

The U.S. working class has taken important steps toward socialism by organizing unions and fighting for higher wages, shorter hours, and better working and living conditions. The Russian working class took a big step toward socialism by overthrowing the Czar, establishing a workers' government, and appealing to workers throughout the world to join them in building a socialist society. They took another big step, just a few years ago, when they rose up against the privileged bureaucracy in Russia, headed by the Communist Party, which has been oppressing workers in Russia and throughout the old USSR and undermining the struggle for socialism.

But there isn't going to be any really big, sure progress toward socialism until the power of the U.S. capitalist class is totally overthrown and destroyed and until the power of the privileged bureaucracy in the old USSR is *totally* overthrown and destroyed.

Every time workers rise up, these forces work together to put them down, whether it's in the U.S., Mexico, Cuba, South Africa, or Bosnia.

From this point of view, the Cuban government has *not been* "consistently acting in the interests of working people."

The list of working class and popular struggles that the Cuban government has *not* supported is very long. These are some of the most well-known — the struggle of Chilean revolutionaries to *arm* the Chilean working class so it could defend itself, while Allende and Castro encouraged illusions in a "peaceful road to socialism"; the struggle of Nicaraguan workers and revolutionaries in favor of following Cuba's example and confiscating foreign capitalists' property, while Castro argued that "Nicaragua shouldn't be another Cuba"; working class and popular uprisings against the privileged bureaucracy in Czechoslovakia in 1968, in Poland, Eastern Europe, and the old USSR in other years.

The force that has been most "consistently acting in the interests of working people" is not a government in Cuba or anywhere else. It is an international working class organization, the Fourth International, the world party of socialist revolution, with partisans active in the working class in dozens of countries throughout the world.

Young people and workers who want to fight for the cause of the working class and socialism should join the Fourth International. Embellishing Cuba and the Cuban government, pretending that they are something they are not, doesn't help the Cuban people or socialism. — M. Guttshall ■

New Life is a monthly working class and revolutionary bulletin published by the Revolutionary Committee of Detroit. The RCD is a supporter of the Fourth International, the world party of the socialist revolution, founded by Leon Trotsky and his comrades. The RCD also supports the Liaison Committee initiated by two tendencies of the Fourth International — the International Revolutionary Current of the International Workers League of the Fourth International and the International League for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International. Signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of *New Life*. These are expressed in editorials.

Editorial Board: Tim Allen, Margaret Guttshall, Kim Morgan, Fred Russo.

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GM workers' strike shows the way!

As we are publishing this issue of *New Life*, 11,500 GM workers at Buick City in Flint, Michigan are still on strike. They've been on strike since 10 a.m., Tuesday, September 25.

We don't know exactly how long this strike is going to last. We don't even know if these workers will still be on strike when readers begin to receive this issue of *New Life*.

Nevertheless, it's important to say, no matter how long this strike lasts, that this strike shows that the working class is the *only* class in this society that can solve the problems facing us.

GM workers are on strike to fight for GM bosses to hire more workers, as permanent, full-time workers, with full wages and full benefits, instead of using temporary, part-time workers, with reduced wages and no benefits.

This struggle is absolutely essential for every worker, every student, and every citizen who has to work for a living.

One of the most serious problems facing us, if not the most serious problem, is that the bosses are trying to force a smaller and smaller number of workers to work harder and harder and longer and longer, while more and more workers aren't being given an opportunity to work at all, or only from time to time.

This is destroying our civilization, our culture, our solidarity. It's leading to all sorts of physical, emotional and mental illnesses, including permanent back, leg, and hand injuries, alcohol and drug addiction, abuse of women, abuse and/or neglect of children.

This is happening in a "recovery"; what's going to happen in the next downturn?

The GM workers' strike shows that there is a solution to this problem: force the bosses to hire more workers, cut the number of hours workers are forced to work, reduce the speed of production, but don't cut the pay!

Naturally, the bosses complain that this will cut their profits. Too bad! The "profits" of the majority of working people are more important than the profits of a tiny minority of rich bosses.

The bosses are even saying that the GM workers' strike is going to drive them out of business, that they aren't going to be able to compete, and that this is going to

mean that there will be fewer jobs for workers in the U.S.

Bosses in every city and country say the same thing when workers fight for better conditions. The solution to this problem is *not* to go along with the bosses. The solution to this problem is for workers everywhere to make a common fight for more jobs, higher wages, better working conditions, so that the bosses in different cities and countries can't use them against each other. And workers are fighting more and more. Further, if GM bosses can't organize the production of cars in a way that benefits more people, then they shouldn't be responsible for this. GM and other essential resources should be publicly owned and run by workers through their own unions, parties, and government.

GM bosses are also trying to turn other workers against the GM workers' strike by saying that the problem is the GM workers' union, the UAW, and its demands for high wages. If GM workers in the UAW didn't make such high wages, the bosses would hire more workers. They point to GM workers who are part of the United Electrical Workers Union (UE) who have accepted lower wages, and say that this is the way to go.

This is another lie!

The problem isn't the relatively high wages that UAW workers make. They don't make a penny compared to what the owners of GM, Ford, Chrysler, and other giant corporations make. The salaries that we need to cut are the bosses' salaries, not the higher-paid workers' wages. The wages we need to raise are the ones at the bottom of the pay scale, until all workers are making enough to be comfortable and equal pay for equal work. We should make wages more equal by cutting from the top and giving to the bottom, not by cutting from the middle and giving to the bottom, while the top gets higher and higher.

The GM workers' strike also shows that workers have a tremendous amount of power. Workers at Buick City have been on strike for only four days, yet they've already brought 25% of GM production to a halt and closed 7 plants. We do everything. The country can't run without us. The planet can't run without us. Yet we are at the bottom of the barrel, walked over, tossed out, when we can't be used anymore.

It's not an accident that at the very same

time that this union local is on strike, a Labor Party Advocates chapter is beginning to grow within this same union local.

The U.S. working class is waking up. It's getting back on the road that it was on in the 1800s and early 1900s — before the U.S. became a major imperialist power, before it won World War I and II, before U.S. bosses began making super-profits off workers in other countries, enabling the bosses to buy off a whole section of the working class and keep down workers who were true to their class.

The U.S. working class is getting back on the road of building solidarity, unions, a labor party based on the unions, of fighting for political power for the masses of working people.

The GM workers' strike for more jobs and safer working conditions, the first steps in building a Labor Party Advocates chapter in Flint, show the way forward for every worker, every union local.

We urge all working people to follow this road.

Victory to the GM workers' strike for more jobs!

More strikes for more jobs!

Toward a general strike for jobs for all!

All out for the October 15 rally in Decatur, Illinois, in solidarity with striking and locked-out workers! ■

Why you should be in Decatur, October 15 ...

The more workers and students there are in Decatur on October 15, the more confidence striking and locked-out workers will feel in their struggles against the bosses.

The more confidence they feel, the farther they will go; the farther they go in their struggles against the bosses, the better it will be for all working people.

More, if you want to learn how to better fight the bosses, if you want to get an idea of what a society based on solidarity might look like, Decatur is the place to be.