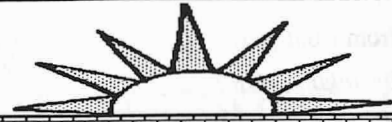


NEW LIFE



A WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY BULLETIN IN DETROIT

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Why you should join Labor Party Advocates

L.A. and Decatur
show the way!
Inside ...

Anyone who's tried to find a job, or train for a better one, knows it's difficult to live on the wages that are offered today — especially if you're just starting out. Most young working class people can't find jobs that pay enough to move out of their parents' house. Many of us are working low-wage, unskilled jobs without health insurance. We try to go to school, hoping for better opportunities, and are saddled with huge student loan payments. No wonder so many young people are frustrated — without financial independence, we're stuck in a limbo of non-adulthood with little more freedom than children.

So, what do the politicians offer us? Nothing but excuses. They say it's not possible for everyone to have health care; they say it's just not realistic to expect everyone to have a job that pays a living wage. The Democrats blame it on the Republicans and the Republicans blame it on us — they suggest we just aren't working hard enough or managing our money well enough.

But we know it's not about working hard; many of us have watched our parents work overtime for thirty years without getting ahead. A lot of us work two or three jobs now, just to get by.

In a society as big as ours, it shouldn't be necessary to work so hard and so long. With our advanced technology and overwhelming productive capacity, we could all have good jobs; we could all have complete health care, our own place to live and excellent education. What's standing in our way is that a small number of rich people control society's wealth — 1% of the population owns 90% of the wealth. They want to control it for their own benefit, to control *what we produce*, as well as what our parents and grandparents produced. And the Republican and Democrat politicians just hand it over to them — saying that unemployment and limited health care are "facts of life."

Enough rhetoric from the politicians. We can't rely on them to change things. *If we're going to get health care, good-paying jobs, affordable housing or decent education, we're going to have to take charge of our*

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from front page)

own lives, by taking charge of our own society.

That's why we need a labor party. All of these problems are too big to solve individually. But by organizing a large group, we can take on the politicians and the selfish rich people they represent. If we have our own working class candidates, we can expose the politicians' excuses on issues like jobs and health care. In fact, if we elect our own working class representatives, we can use the government resources *we provide* for jobs, education and health care, instead of tax breaks for the rich.

If we build our own party, it would also give us strength as individuals. So much of the time each of us is isolated in our own routine, without the benefit of learning from others' experience. This allows us to be easily manipulated by the rich. *They* define the issues — like crime being about prisons, instead of jobs and education. As long as we let them define political issues, we will be divided among ourselves. With a large, working class party, we could not only decide for ourselves what should be done about crime, we could learn from and help each other with commuting, child care, school, etc.

All these things we could build with a labor party are things we need *right now*. The more of us who join the labor party movement — specifically, join and help build Labor Party Advocates — the sooner we'll gain control over our society and our own lives. — New Life ■

Join the Eugene V. Debs Five-Score Club!

Labor Party Advocates is asking members to give money for the convention to found the labor party. Members who give \$100



will become members of the Eugene V. Debs Five-Score Club and get a brass card. Members or union locals who give \$1000 will become members of the Fifty-Score Club and get a plaque. We urge LPA members to support this effort. Members who can't afford \$100 or \$1000 can join together and make a contribution. The more money for LPA and the convention, the better. — M.G.■

Young people and the labor party

Young people today are realizing more and more that their problems cannot be answered by the Republican or Democratic parties. But what other alternative is there? Electing a rich businessman like Ross Perot who has less in common with them than others of the major parties? Well, there is a viable alternative: a labor party that looks out for the interests of students and young workers.

Such a party could help students in getting money for college so they don't have to put themselves in debt even before they get out of school, or have to work a full-time job while trying to take a full load of classes. It

could also help young workers by creating programs so they could find themselves qualified for the job market. It could introduce a living wage for all working people so young people would not have to work 60 hours a week just to make ends meet.

However, this will only be possible if young workers and students help in building a labor party. Without the involvement of a mass number of people, the labor party cannot accomplish these goals. So I encourage you to find out more about LPA and to get involved in the shaping of the labor party and the future. — Tim Allen ■

Women and the labor party

We've fought for equal rights for women in this country for nearly 100 years. It seems that every time we make some progress, some of it is taken away. Part of the reason for this is that we've approached it from a standpoint of lobbying more than mass action. We've allowed the rich people's political parties, the Democrats and Republicans, to control the issues — while we try to influence what they do. Of course we're not going to get far that way. As long as the Republican and Democratic politicians are the ones who make policies, they will only come around when they want our votes — the same as they do with the whole working class.

We have to take control of the issues ourselves. We have to have our own, working class candidates, raise the issues in our own terms, and demand that our representatives actually represent us. The only way to do that is to build a labor party. The Democrats and Republicans have shown their true colors: they refused to pass something so basic as an Equal Rights Amendment — as well as failing to legislate freedom to choose abortion for all women. Their policies have, instead, divided us; many poor and working class women have had their right to choose whittled away.

At the same time, the wealthy and their politicians have continued to push more and more women into situations which make it nearly impossible to raise children: many of us work long hours, and pay huge proportions of our incomes for child care. Nothing has been done to improve the reliability of birth control. Women are still frequently subject to coerced sex, as well as rape and battery. And for all of

the mouthing about crime, all the rich people's government can come up with is more prisons — which tear people down and ultimately make the problem worse — rather than employment and education opportunities which build people up.

The only hope women have as a group is to build a labor party which strengthens the whole working class. We cannot rely on rich politicians to help us. If the whole working class is stronger, we will be able to join together to tackle issues like equal pay, birth control, child care, abortion, battery, sexual harassment, etc. It is not the working class holding up progress; statistically, the majority of working class people believe a woman should have the right to choose abortion, for example. And certainly working class people on the whole are not going to impose restrictions which require a woman to wait 24 hours after traveling far away from home (and having to take off more time from work.)

In many ways, the problems of women represent the problems of the whole working class. Because all of us are working more, more and more men are taking a greater role in child care and other domestic tasks — by necessity. All of us are tired. But we're going to get more tired if we don't pull together for control of the range of choices we all have.

A labor party would provide us all a vehicle for organizing solutions — both in elections, workplaces and our community. A labor party, where enough women play a role, could be a platform from which to organize child care, crisis centers, education and activism. It's something we all need. *Now.* — Kim Morgan ■



From Los Angeles ...

Continue the struggle against Proposition 187 until it is defeated!

In the months prior to the November 8 elections, there was a large series of mobilizations, strikes and marches in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and various cities in California against the racist "Proposition 187."

On October 6, more than 600 students demonstrated at the University of California-Los Angeles (UCLA), where in May and June in 1993, there was a victorious struggle for Chicano Studies (which shook the city with mass marches of 5,000 students and citizens who marched for almost 20 kilometers from Plaza Olvera [in the Chicano heart of Los Angeles] to UCLA on June 5, 1993) and where the mobilization continued with marches on November 16 (1994) of hundreds of students for "Non-Compliance" with 187, in which 27 students were arrested.

October 16 was the day of the biggest march of Chicanos, Mexican Americans, and Latinos in the history of the United States, with the presence of Korean, Chinese, African-American, white and other workers and students. Between 100,000 and 150,000 people marched from East Los Angeles (home of the Chicanos) to City Hall in downtown L.A. After three hours of marching, some contingents had not yet started, others were just arriving, and others were leaving after having listened to the speeches.

The march went beyond all the expectations of the organizers. The march was not only the biggest, it was also a big demonstration of the discipline and organization of the student, working class and popular movements. Each organization was well-established with placards, slogans, banners and pickets. The media and the reactionaries tried to say that it was "anti-American" and "foreign" because of the great number of Mexican flags, but the truth is that people responded to the attacks against Mexican immigrants with Mexican-American pride and solidarity with the suffering immigrant people under attack.

The most numerous and active participants were the workers organized in unions, such as Local 11 of Hotel and Restaurant Employees, Local 399 of Justice for Janitors, the United Farm Workers of the legendary Cesar Chavez, day-labor

"The most outstanding thing of all was the rapidity of the reaction of the students and workers, aimed at responding to the concrete effects of the implementation of 187 ..."

workers, the Latin American Truckers' Association (LATA), which brought several semi trucks to the march, garment workers from downtown L.A., students from MEChA (Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan; Chicano Student Movement of Aztlan) from several campuses and colleges, high school students from Belmont, Venice, Franklin, San Fernando, and many other places; Student Organization of Latinos (SOL), and many Korean and Chinese working class and student organizations.

The march went through East L.A. and Chinatown and reached downtown where speakers from popular organizations addressed the crowd.

The leader of the Pro-Immigrant Mobilization Coalition (PIMC), Alvaro Maldonado, said that the racist attacks on immigrants in all states is the product of the policies initiated by the Democratic Party politicians as well as the Republicans, insisting again and again that "it is the Democratic Party," so that the message would be clear that it was not an electoral rally but a mass demonstration against immigrant-bashing by politicians from both parties. In a TV interview, Maldonado said that it is not a surprise that 187 passed since the media, the big enterprizes and political leaders of both parties were pushing it. He insisted again on the role of the Democrats which, although they said they opposed 187, in reality did everything possible for it to be approved. Latino Democratic Party leaders like Gloria Molina, CHIRLA and the Mexican-American Legal Defense and Education

Fund (MALDEF), tenaciously opposed the march for weeks; even after October 16 when the people were celebrating the big victory that shook the political foundations of California and the entire country, these "leaders" were blaming the organizers of the march for provoking a turn to the right and using a mistaken tactic which, according to them, provoked fear on the part of the right and caused the defeat of the Democrat Brown. The truth is, the Democratic Party was defeated in all states, with or without marches. On the other hand, opinion polls show that before the march, 67% of voters were for 187, after the march, 59% were for. Among Latinos, the difference was dramatic: before the march, 53% supported 187; after the march, the percentage fell to 20% for 187 and 80% against.

Immediately after this glorious working class and popular march in Los Angeles, student "walk-outs" or strikes began, the abandonment of the schools, and the "taking of the streets" on the part of middle school and high school students. Thousands and thousands of young people went into the streets to spontaneously protest against 187. Some Latin American journalists estimate that more than 200,000 youth participated in the walk-outs, but the exact figure could be larger and is difficult to determine because of the big variety, scope, and rapidity of the walk-outs.

The last high school student uprisings were in the 1960s. It was in 1968 when five high schools in East Los Angeles went into the streets to demand that they "teach the true history" and an end to discrimination. This gave birth to the Chicano Movement of the 1960s.

The following year, there was a wave of university strikes called "the Third World," the most famous of which were in Berkeley and San Francisco. In 1970, the Chicano people were on their feet fighting against the war on Vietnam in the "Chicano Moratorium," in which 30,000 took to the streets in East L.A. in order to protest against the war. This was the biggest march of the Chicanos in the 1960s.

The walk-outs in October and November of this year were different; those who took the initiative were the youngest in the middle



schools, youth from 12 to 16 years old were the ones who went out first and went in groups to knock on the doors of high schools and demand that they come out and "take the streets," others organized strikes and occupied the school, others demonstrations in the school yards, and other forms of protests. Then the colleges and universities followed. The marches were spontaneous, but also well-disciplined with a clear objective: defeat 187 which leaves us without education and any future.

Nevertheless, the mobilization didn't go far enough to change the results in the elections. Clinton and the Democratic Party were soundly defeated; they lost 9 national senatorial positions, the majority in the national Congress, and the majority in the Senate and House in California. Governor Wilson won and 187 was approved.

The advance of the right cannot be explained in any way other than as a result of the collaborationist and destructive policy of the Democratic Party and the Latino and Chicano politicians allied with it, who called for voting for Brown and Feinstein, two promoters of the anti-immigrant campaign and allies of Wilson against the workers.

This demonstrates once again the lack of a clear and consistent working class and popular alternative, which an independent labor party must be. The time is now for a big independent workers party, as the results of the Peace and Freedom Party in California show; it did very well in the elections with more than 700,000 votes (the Republicans got 4.5 million and the Democrats 3.6 million), when not many people voted, only 52% of the eligible voters, or 8 million in a state with 34 million inhabitants. The youth and the immigrants, those who fight the most, pay more taxes

"... California, Califas, Califaztlan belongs to us. We will not allow the Klan and the Grand Dragon Pete Wilson to come to us and say that we abandon a land that is ours. We are here and we are not going to go ..."

and work, are not allowed to vote.

The most outstanding thing of all was the rapidity of the reaction of the students and workers, aimed at responding to the concrete effects of the implementation of 187. The day after the election there was a demonstration at the Reagan Building, November 9, the anniversary of the "Night of the Crystals" in Germany, which was the beginning of Nazi-ism and the Holocaust against the Jews and German workers. About 1,000 demonstrators, mostly high school and university students, marched toward City Hall where there was an event. Max Espinoza from MEChA of UCLA, in the midst of signs against 187 and a black eagle, the Mechista symbol, said: "MEChA of UCLA calls on all students to exercise their rights to meet and to freely express their ideas and calls for taking the streets and mobilizing against the passage of the racist law 187 ... California, Califas, Califaztlan belongs to us. We will not allow the Klan and the Grand Dragon Pete Wilson to come to us and say that we abandon a land that is ours. We are here and we are not going to go. We must draw a line between the state

of the Democratic Party throughout the country and the state of the student movement. The two parties are equally responsible for the racist attacks on the immigrants. We, as leaders of the student movement, must not have any confidence in any of the two parties ... We students have demonstrated in the last year that we are stronger than ever. We have not been defeated; on the contrary, we are stronger. We urge students and the community to unite; now is a good time to mobilize ourselves even more forward. To Wilson and the followers of the Klan, we say: don't even think about touching our children; if you do it, you will be punished. We will fight, the struggle is continuing, this is only the beginning. Until victory."

The following day, two more demonstrations: law students at UCLA walked-out, and cleaning workers occupied the front stairs at City Hall. More demonstrations are being planned at UCLA on November 17 calling for "no compliance" with 187 in the hospitals, security, and administration in the university and for defense of the students jailed from California State University in Los Angeles on November 9 (they were freed that night but they are going to trial on the 16th). A large number of high school students from the area are expected. Other protests of workers, teachers, and students are being planned in other areas in the city and throughout the country so that laws like 187 don't pass in other states. At the same time, comrades of the Revolutionary Action Party are working to establish a new political alternative of workers, in the organization of the popular, working class, and student struggles and promoting a workers party. — C. Montes, Revolutionary Action Party, International Revolutionary Current (International Workers League) ■



Decatur workers show the way!

Workers in Decatur, Illinois are once again out in front showing all working people the kinds of things that need to be done to fight for the rights of working people.

300 striking Caterpillar workers, Firestone workers, and locked-out Staley workers organized a 40-mile-long march from Decatur, to Springfield, the capitol, to demand their right to keep up their picket shelters.

When Decatur workers arrived in Springfield, they went right into the room where legislators were meeting and sat down. They chanted: "Solidarity," "We are union," and "Victory to one, victory to all!" 31 refused to leave until Jim Edgar, Republican Governor, agreed to meet with them. They refused to leave even when public officials attempted to close the building at 6 p.m. Police arrested them and charged them with criminal trespassing; the penalty for this is a fine of up to \$1000 and/or a prison sentence of up to 1 year.

Decatur workers are also fighting for a change in the form of government in Decatur, that they think will be more representative of the workers, and they are considering running labor or pro-labor candidates for office in the coming election.

Workers in Decatur have been on strike or locked-out for many months now. The current city government has tried to do everything possible to help the bosses and hurt the workers, from harassing and trying to limit the number of pickets, to suing the workers' unions to force them to take down their picket shelters and fire burners that the workers use to protect them from the cold, to trying to pass laws limiting the workers'

right to hold public meetings and demonstrations.

Only mass meetings, marches and demonstrations have prevented the city government from going further.



Some of the workers in Decatur who marched 40-miles from Decatur, Illinois, to Springfield, where they demanded the right to keep up their picket shelters.

All young people and working people should support Decatur workers. Demand that the charges be dropped! Demand that Caterpillar, Bridgestone-Firestone, and Staley sign decent union contracts now! — M.G.■

Decatur workers: proud and strong!

"The brotherhood among us kept us warm ... Working together, we can accomplish anything ... I want to leave this country in the same condition my father left it for me. It's my responsibility as a U.S. citizen ... If we get bailed out, fine. If not, we'll stay there or we'll find somebody to bail us out. We didn't bring any money to bail ourselves out because we don't have any money. We don't have a job ..." — Roger Walker, striking Bridgestone-Firestone worker.

"They've taken away our rights in the factory. Now they're taking them away on the streets" — Bill Roseberry, striking Bridges-

tone-Firestone worker.

"... if we do nothing, nothing will be done" — Tom Armer, striking Caterpillar worker.

"I'll eat grass before I'll go back to what they're offering" — Larry Johnson, striking Bridgestone-Firestone worker.

"This is not an easy thing. But I couldn't be with a better bunch of people in a better place at a better time ... (union members are guilty of) trying to take our communities back from corporate greed" — Dan Lane, locked-out Staley worker, arrested in Springfield. ■

Notes

Cut welfare for the rich, not the poor! Since the Republicans won the November elections, they have announced that they want to cut off all public funds for women under 21 who are not married and their children. Naturally, they haven't said a word about cutting off public funds for all the rich politicians and generals who live in mansions, ride in limousines, and have servants who wait on them at public expense, not to mention all the public subsidies to private enterprises and infamous tax breaks for the rich, like the deductions for businessmen's breakfast, lunches, and dinners. It's hard to find words to describe how vile these rich old white men are, these pigs who stuff themselves at the expense of the people, while women and children go hungry and homeless. The "right to life" until you are born, say the Republicans. The labor movement needs to make an all-out fight against these scum, and all the cowards of the Democratic Party who refuse to stand up to them, for decent jobs, wages, working conditions, healthcare, and education for all young people and working people.

In the last few weeks, various figures in the U.S. government have started talking about withdrawing U.S. and U.N. troops and lifting the embargo against Bosnia. The right-wing militarist Jesse Helms, in particular, claims to be on the side of the Bosnian people. This may lead workers and activists in the U.S. to mistakenly think that the Bosnian people don't deserve our support. But it's necessary to look at things from a working class point of view, and not just put a minus where the enemy puts a plus. In reality, within old Yugoslavia, the Serbs have been privileged relative to the Bosnians. The Serbs dominated the Bosnians and took a disproportionate share of the benefits of socialism for themselves. This is why the Bosnian people withdrew and voted to establish their own Republic. Obviously the U.S. wants to take advantage of this conflict for its own interests; it doesn't want to openly side with the Serbs as France and Russia have done, because of its close ties to the richest Arabs and Moslems in the oil countries. But this shouldn't stop workers in the U.S. from supporting the struggle of the Bosnian people for independence and survival against the privileged Serbian bureaucracy and its armed forces. U.S., U.N., Serbian troops out of Bosnia now! Lift the blockade against Bosnia! Support the European unions' campaign of Workers Aid to Bosnia! ■



Is capitalism best for young people?

Dennis, a 23 year old who works at the Ford Rouge Plant remarked:

"You know, the older guys, with 25 years in here, they say that the younger workers at the Dearborn Assembly Plant (where they assemble the Ford Mustang) don't want to work overtime. They say that people my age are lazy. The young people at the DAP say back to them, '40 hours is enough! I want some kind of life outside of Ford.'

"The last generation said they worked so hard so that we would have a better life. So, how can they criticize us? We want a better life. We should be able to make it on 40 hours a week."

Why is it that young people can't make it on 40 hours a week? Why is it that, in spite of all the efforts of the past generation, things are more difficult for young people today, not easier?

All economic systems organize people to produce what they need to live. What drives our particular economic system is the desire for profits. It is called capitalism. Some companies, like Ford, are huge while other companies are quite small. But, the overall economy is controlled by a very small group of rich people who own the biggest companies and collect profits from them. The U.S. government helps and protects these rich people.

From 1945 until the mid 1970s, the U.S. economy, and the U.S. rich people, almost completely controlled the world economy. They were able to sell goods more cheaply than anybody else. The economies of the

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

other rich countries, Germany, Japan, France and so on, were destroyed in World War II.

The other countries have rebuilt their economies. They produce goods cheaply, too. The U.S. domination of the world has ended. Now U.S. rich people compete with the rich people of the other countries more than they ever had to before.

The rich demand U.S. workers join them to fight the rich in other countries. They demand that the workers become "more competitive."

The rich have demanded that workers, especially young workers, work harder for lower wages, with longer hours and reduced benefits. They want the poorest to live on charity. They want workers of other countries to live in complete poverty.

The last generation refuses to believe that the capitalism of their youth is gone. It will never return. Most of them will never accept this fact, but it is a fact. The world has changed.

If young working people want to make it on 40 hours, if they want a life outside of Ford, or any job, they will have to fight for socialism.

Socialism is a society in which the exploitation of the workers' labor for profits has ended. What drives a socialist economy is the needs of the people, not profits. Under socialism, all the factories and financial institutions are publicly owned and controlled. Socialist society lays the basis for a society in which there are no rich, no poor and everyone has everything they need. Socialism is the next stage of human development.

The first question anyone asks is: didn't socialism fail in Russia? Isn't that why U.S. workers never fought for socialism?

No. Socialism did not fail in the USSR. The people in Russia are not fighting to take a step backwards to a capitalist economy. They do not want a tiny group of rich people

to exploit them, to make Russia into an impoverished country. They do want democracy.

The people in Russia and in other similar countries are struggling to overthrow the privileged bureaucracies and the political parties that set them up, the Communist Parties. They are building new political parties to create societies that meet their needs. They are using the public ownership of the factories and financial institutions — which are gains of the socialist revolution — in their countries to go forward.

Young working people in the U.S. need to build a political party that represents them, that will fight to build a socialist society. In this way, they can "make it on 40 hour a week, have a life outside Ford" and have much, much more. — Fred Russo ■

Marxism and skepticism

Many old "socialists" have become very skeptical, even pessimistic, about the possibilities of achieving socialism. Marx wasn't. Engels, Lenin, and Trotsky — other great revolutionary Marxists — weren't. Here is just one of the many statements from their writings that show this.

"The modern laborer, on the contrary, instead of rising with the progress of industry, sinks deeper and deeper below the conditions of existence of his own class. He becomes a pauper, and pauperism develops more rapidly than population and wealth. And here it becomes evident, that the bourgeoisie is unfit any longer to be the ruling class in society, and to impose its conditions of existence upon society as an over-riding law. It is unfit to rule because it is incompetent to assure an existence to its slave within his slavery, because it cannot help letting him sink into such a state, that it has to feed him, instead of being fed by him. Society can no longer live under this bourgeoisie, in other words, its existence is no longer compatible with society.

"The essential condition for the existence, and for the sway of the bourgeois class, is the formation and augmentation of capital, the condition for capital is wage-labor. Wage-labor rests exclusively on competition between the laborers. The advance of industry, whose involuntary promotor is the bourgeoisie, replaces the isolation of the laborers, due to competition, by their revolutionary combination, due to association. The development of Modern Industry, therefore, cuts from under its feet the very foundation on which the bourgeoisie produces and appropriates products. What the bourgeoisie, therefore, produces, above all, is its own grave-diggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable." (From *The Communist Manifesto*, Marx and Engels, 1848.) ■

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