

SOCIALISM!



NO. 37 • MARCH/APRIL, 1998 • \$1.00 • BOX 441723, DETROIT, MI 48244 • 313-730-4089



For a united political fight against the rich bosses! Join the Labor Party!



Indonesians confront police while fighting layoffs and rising prices.

In the last weeks, there have been dramatic signs of the enormous crises and struggles ahead.

— Continued economic crisis in Asia. Demonstrations of tens of thousands against layoffs, workplace closings and rising prices in Indonesia. Clashes with armed forces.

— Continued economic stagnation in Europe. The occupation of unemployment offices in France. Demonstrations and campaigns for a 35-hour work week without cutting pay so more can work.

— U.S. threats to bomb Iraq. Demonstrations of tens of thousands in the Middle East against U.S. threats. The first conflicts in the U.S. Demonstrations. Youth chanting: "1, 2, 3, 4, we don't want your racist war." Others pointing accusing fingers at U.S. government officials.

— Bitter conflicts between the ruling parties, Republicans and Democrats. Accusations of lies and corruption on both sides.

Unfortunately, the leadership of the labor movement in the U.S. is not taking advantage of this situation to advance the interests of the labor movement and working people.

Since the UPS strike, the labor movement in the U.S. really hasn't made any progress. The owners of the giant corporations retaliated against UPS workers by initiating a slander campaign against Ron Carey, president of the UPS workers' union, accusing him of corruption, ordering the union to conduct new presidential elections,

Continued on the back

Inside:

- Lessons of labor struggles
- Jail killer cops!
- Lessons of the struggle against war on Iraq
- Why the Labor Party should fight war on Iraq
- The degeneration of the Republicans and the Democrats
- Questions and answers about *Socialism!*

Lessons of labor struggles

There have been a number of very bitter and important labor struggles in the Midwest in the last years. Their names are well-known to every labor activist: Staley, Caterpillar, Bridgestone-Firestone, the Detroit newspaper workers, UPS ...

While workers at Staley, Caterpillar, Bridgestone-Firestone, and the Detroit newspapers fought for many months, and in some cases are still fighting, they didn't achieve their original goal: a union contract comparable to the one they had had before.

Staley workers were pushed and pushed until they finally agreed to sign a contract that was a step back; it allowed 12-hour days. Caterpillar workers were forced to go back to work without a contract and without many of the most devoted union workers. They recently refused to sign a proposed contract that didn't bring back fired workers; they finally signed a contract that did, although it called for a two-tiered wage system and steps back on many other issues. Bridgestone-Firestone workers were also pushed into signing a contract that was a step back; it allowed 12-hour days although it brought back most fired workers. The national leadership of the Detroit newspapers agreed to force Detroit newspaper workers back to work "unconditionally"; jobs and wages have been slashed; most still aren't back to work; there aren't even any proposed contracts.

UPS strike

185,000 UPS workers, after a big but brief national strike, did get a contract that they thought was a step forward. But shortly after their strike, the owners of the largest banks and corporations and U.S. government officials, frightened by the strike, retaliated by initiating a slander campaign against the leader of the strike, Ron Carey, by forcing the Teamsters to run another election, and by legally prohibiting Carey from running in the election. They have also been threatening the most militant members of the top leadership of the AFL-CIO, like Rich Trumka, with prosecution for alleged crimes.

Thus the labor movement has not been able to use the UPS victory and the popularity of the UPS workers' struggle for more full-time jobs as a springboard for a nationwide offensive against the rich owners of the banks and corporations.

What can workers and labor activists learn from these experiences?

We think it shows that it is very difficult

for relatively small groups of workers (even 185,000 UPS workers!) to make progress against the giant monopolies and their media (remember, the same families who own the banks and corporations, also own the media!) simply through bargaining and strikes.

Workers are going to keep on organizing these struggles and trying to take them as far as possible and their efforts must be supported.

Independent political struggle

But it is also necessary to organize a new

"...it is also necessary to organize a new struggle, on a new level, against the rich owners. ... an independent political struggle..."

struggle, on a new level, against the rich owners. It is necessary to organize an independent political struggle.

It is necessary to work to bring together all the individual, separate struggles for various demands and causes into a single, unified struggle for a single, unified program of demands and laws favorable to the working class and the oppressed population, and for a government to enforce those laws.

The foundation of the Labor Party, and its adoption of a program, is a first step in this direction.

Unfortunately, there continues to be a tremendous amount of confusion about the Labor Party, its program, and its role.

Some think that the struggles taking place today — for better union contracts, for more jobs for youth, for more rights for youth and workers of color, for the construction of various socialist, communist, or anarchist groups — can make progress all by themselves, that there is no need for a Labor Party. Some think that trying to build a Labor Party is a distraction or a diversion.

Others think that the struggles taking place today aren't going very far and can't go very far, but that there is very little that can be done about this. That it is necessary to keep on trying to recruit to various working class and popular causes, and to various socialist, communist or anarchist groups, in

ones and twos, and wait.

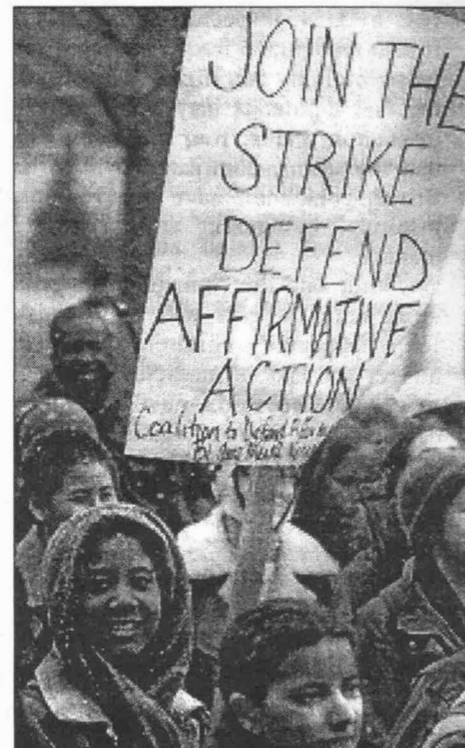
Still others counterpose the Labor Party and its program to the struggles that are going on today. They say to workers and activists, including those involved in building socialist groups — drop what you are doing, it's not going anywhere, join and build the Labor Party.

Still others see the Labor Party as one more coalition, as kind of a clearing house or center of solidarity for lots of different struggles as they are today. They don't see that what the Labor Party is working to do is to bring together all the working class and popular struggles that are taking place today into a new kind of a struggle: a political struggle for a common program of working class and popular demands and laws and for a political power to carry out and enforce those demands and laws.

It's a new approach to an old problem. Instead of each group, separately, trying to get the rich owners and their agents to do what it wants, all the working class and popular groups come together, develop their program, develop a struggle to win the population to their side, establish their own government, and overcome the resistance of the owners.

Unity

It doesn't make sense to dissipate *all* the energy of working class and popular forces



into dozens of different, long, drawn out struggles. It does make sense to bring struggles, as they develop, together, into a single struggle for a single program of working class demands and laws. Workers have got to stop thinking in terms of being the opposition to the powers that be. They have to start thinking in terms of how to get power, use it and sweep away the rich owners.

Should workers have to keep on fighting for decent unions contracts, against the corporations and against the government, for generation after generation? Or should workers start fighting for laws that dictate that workers must have decent union contracts and for a government of workers to enforce those laws? Should young people have to keep on fighting, generation after generation, for decent jobs and wages for young people? Or should they start fighting for laws that dictate that young people must have decent jobs and wages and for the kind of government that will enforce those laws?

Does this mean that we think that everybody should drop what they are doing and devote themselves exclusively to fighting for the Labor Party's program of working class and popular demands and laws and to building the Labor Party? No. Not at all. In order to make big changes in society, many different kinds of struggles and organizations are necessary. Many different kinds of gears are necessary, one next to another, in order to achieve a maximum amount of motion with a minimum amount of energy.

We are saying that it is not a good idea for working class, labor, or popular activists to expend *all* their energy on dozens of separate struggles. They need to budget, they need to save, they need to spend some of their energy on bringing these struggles together into a single struggle for a new program, a new party, and a new government — the Labor Party's program, the Labor Party, and, as soon as possible, a workers' or labor government.

This will strengthen existing struggles and pave the way for new ones.

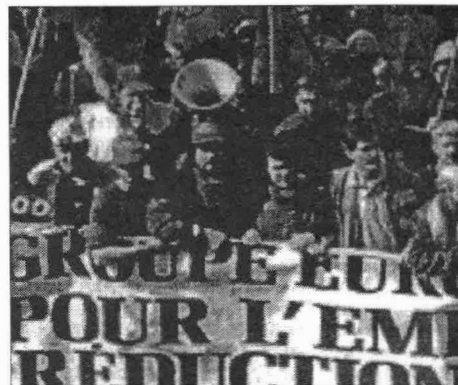
Does this mean that we think the Labor Party, as it is today, is a total solution to the problems facing the working class and the oppressed population. No. We think a workers revolutionary socialist party is necessary to lead the workers to power, build a new society, and overcome the resistance of the exploiters.

But the small socialist and communist groups that exist today are not going to be able to build a big workers revolutionary

socialist party, that brings together all truly working class, revolutionary, socialist tendencies in the working class, without learning how to build a big working class party that brings together different working class tendencies.

The Labor Party is a good place to start to learn how to do this.

For all these reasons, we urge all the workers, labor activists, and socialist and communist activists who have been part of the struggles at Staley, Caterpillar, Bridgestone-Firestone, the Detroit newspapers, and UPS not only to join the Labor Party, but also to set aside an important percentage of their time to build the Labor Party.—M. Guttshall □



French workers demonstrate for jobs. On February 10, the government passed a bill reducing the work week to 35 hours.

Jail killer cops!

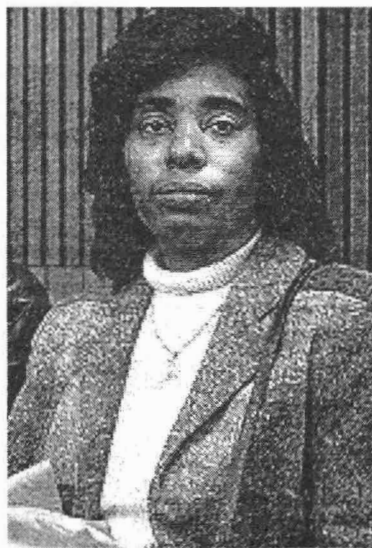
Walter Budzen, one of the cops previously convicted of second-degree murder in the death of Malice Green, was judged guilty again last week — but this time only of involuntary manslaughter. In spite of eye witness testimony which conflicts with his, in spite of the fact that he is known to have reigned terror over the community, he succeeded in legal maneuvering which may allow him to serve no more time in jail. Once again this shows that the legal system favors white cops over the Black men that they kill.

Budzen has only spent four years in prison for his participation in the death of

Malice Green, a young, unemployed steelworker. He claims that he did not hit Malice Green, and that it was his partner, Larry Nevers, who beat the man to death with a 14-inch flashlight. Yet nearly 200 Black men in Michigan have been convicted of second-degree murder, and are serving felony-murder sentences of life without parole for participating in crimes where someone else killed the victim. Clearly Budzen did at least that — he participated not only in the crime of assault against Malice Green, but admitted to holding him down while Nevers beat him. Why, then, is he not sentenced to life in prison?

With this new conviction of involuntary manslaughter, workers and unions in Detroit must demand that Budzen receive the maximum penalty allowed — 15 years. We must demand that Budzen be jailed while he attempts further legal maneuvering to avoid responsibility for having helped kill a man.

In the meantime, Larry Nevers, whose hands and clothing were covered with Malice Green's blood the night of the murder, is free on bond while waiting for his new trial. With appeals being dragged out in the courts, it's likely that he will remain free for two more years. We must also demand that this killer's bond be revoked. He has no right to walk free while so many of our brothers are imprisoned. We must demand *Justice for Malice Green! Jail the killer cops!* — Kim Morgan □



Malice Green's widow in court.

Lessons of the struggle against war on Iraq

The U.S. government has agreed for the moment not to bomb Iraq. But it is still enforcing the sanctions against Iraq, which have killed as many or more than the bombs. There is no reason to think that the U.S. government is not going to threaten to bomb Iraq again.

U.S. and British oil companies want to contain Iraq as a competitor in the oil business. This is why the U.S. bombed Iraq in the first place and then established sanctions against Iraq, preventing it from selling Iraqi oil. This is also the purpose of bombing Iraq again. Everyone knows that bombing Iraq is not going to get rid of alleged biological or chemical weapons or Saddam Hussein. But it will make it very difficult for Iraq to extract, process and distribute oil.

It is necessary to learn everything that we can from the struggle against bombing Iraq, so that we can see how to go forward.

First, it is clear that there is not only massive opposition to bombing Iraq in the Middle East and in other countries, there is also substantial opposition to bombing Iraq in the U.S. The demonstrations that took place throughout the U.S. and the young people who spoke out against U.S. government spokespeople were proof of this.

Labor movement

Unfortunately, active opposition to U.S. bombing of Iraq and to U.S./UN sanctions against Iraq is still largely confined to socialists, communists, pacifists and young people. While there may not be much enthusiasm for bombing Iraq among workers, or in the organized labor movement, there is little or no active opposition.

This is a serious problem because the organized labor movement, and working people in general, are the only forces in this society that really have the power to put a stop to the U.S. government's policy of slaughtering thousands of people on behalf of U.S. corporations. The movement against the war in Vietnam showed this. Thousands and thousands of young people went into the streets. The more they reached out to workers and unionists, the more workers and unionists began to move against the war, the more the U.S. government was forced to back down. It was the combined efforts of the Vietnamese, youth and workers throughout the world, and the movement in the United States, that forced the U.S. government to stop.

Opponents of U.S. actions against Iraq need to make a common effort to reach out



to workers and unions and convince them to take an active stand against U.S. actions against Iraq. In order to do this, it is necessary to convince workers that U.S. actions against Iraq are not in the interests of working people in the U.S.

U.S. sanctions against Iraq cost working people in the U.S. billions of dollars. It costs billions of dollars to pay for the armed forces used to enforce those sanctions. Sanctions also lead to military conflicts in which U.S. soldiers die. They provoke hostility against the U.S. and attacks on U.S. forces. They keep the price of oil up because they keep Iraqi oil off the market. They cause death, injury, and illness to thousands of Iraqis and suffering to their relatives in the United States. They divide working people of different ethnic groups in the United States, and promote disrespect and hatred for other peoples and culture.

U.S. sanctions and U.S. threats to bomb Iraq hurt workers and the oppressed population in the U.S. and Iraq.

The Labor Party

Opponents of U.S. actions against Iraq also need to join the Labor Party and its struggle against labor support to the Republican and Democratic Parties.

One of the reasons that organized labor and working people are far behind young people when it comes to opposing U.S. actions against Iraq is that the unions are totally dominated by the Republicans and Democrats who, in turn, are totally united in serving the interests of U.S. and British oil and in their hostility to the Iraqi people. Thus most trade unionists and workers have little access to information other than what they get through the radio, newspapers and TV. Joining and building the Labor Party, against the Republicans and Democrats, even if it hasn't yet taken a stand against U.S. actions against Iraq, will undermine the

influence of the Republicans and Democrats in the unions, and in the working class in general, and help make these forces more open to the struggle against U.S. war against Iraq.

Opponents of U.S. actions against Iraq should support tendencies in the Labor Party for a serious discussion of this issue and for developing a policy that is independent of the rich bosses.

Socialism

Last but not least, opponents of U.S. actions against Iraq need to work together to build support for socialism and for a Workers' International to fight for workers' revolutionary democracy and socialism throughout the world.

As long as a small number of rich people continue to own and control all the most important resources throughout the world, they are going to continue to use them to enrich themselves at the expense of the masses of people, even if that means that they have to kill thousands to do it. It's hard to believe that the owners of U.S. oil corporations would be willing to inflict so much suffering and misery just to keep Iraqi oil off the market so that they can maintain their prices and profits. But don't we see that kind of thing every day? U.S. bosses kill at least 183 workers every day with workplace injuries and illnesses that would have been avoided if workers' safety and health came before the bosses' profits.

Workers need to collectively own, control, and manage the most important resources and have their own government, composed of their own representatives, to coordinate production and distribution. They need an international organization to fight for this throughout the world.

We think that the best way to build this international organization, which will have to bring together millions of workers and oppressed on all continents, is to rebuild the Fourth International, the world party of the socialist revolution that was founded in 1938 and the only international workers' organization for socialist revolution that has continued to exist in any way.

The rich owners of the giant oil corporations are a tiny minority. The workers and the oppressed population are the overwhelming majority, the ones who know how to do everything essential to society. They can put a stop to the U.S. government's attacks on other peoples and build a new world.—M.G. □

Why the Labor Party should fight war on Iraq

There are a number of immediate reasons why the labor movement and the Labor Party should take a stand against the U.S.'s war against Iraq (the sanctions, the threats to bomb Iraq, the presence of U.S. military forces in Iraq):

— the U.S.'s war against Iraq is costing billions of dollars;

— it is causing death, injury and illness to U.S. soldiers and to thousands of Iraqis;

— it will inevitably provoke a violent reaction against U.S. residents;

— the war is being waged on behalf of U.S. and British oil corporations who want to maintain control of the world's oil supply and contain, if not wipe out, Iraq as a competitor in the oil business;

— U.S. government officials are lying

"...The Labor Party will never be able to achieve its own goal — political power — unless it begins to oppose the U.S.'s war on Iraq, and every other war on behalf of U.S. corporations ..."

about Hussein and exaggerating the threat that he represents in order to justify their aggression against the Iraqi people on behalf of U.S. and British oil.

The labor movement and the Labor Party were founded to fight for the interests of working people against the owners of U.S. corporations. So it would be very natural for the labor movement and the Labor Party to take a stand against a war that doesn't serve the interests of working people, that does serve the interests of the corporations.

But there is another, more profound reason, why the Labor Party needs to take a strong stand against the U.S.'s war on Iraq and fight this war.

The Labor Party's goal

The Labor Party will never be able to achieve its own goal — political power — unless it begins to oppose the U.S.'s war on Iraq, and every other war on behalf of U.S. corporations, against the interests of working people.

The Interim National Council of the Labor Party recently adopted a statement on

Labor Party Electoral Strategy. This statement said, among other things:

"The Labor Party is unlike any other party in the United States. We stand independent of the corporations and their political representatives in the Democratic and Republican parties. Our overall strategy is for the majority of American people — working class people — to take political power. Within this framework of class independence, with the ultimate goal of achieving power, we accept the electoral tactic of running candidates ... Although we accept electoral politics as an important tactic, we do not see it as the only tool needed to achieve working class power. Unlike other political parties, the Labor Party will be active before, during and between elections, building solidarity in our communities, workplaces and unions."

"The majority of American people — working class people — to take political power." This is obviously a very important and a very difficult goal.

How is the Labor Party going to achieve that goal? What are the obstacles to achieving that goal?

The obstacle

The biggest obstacle to achieving that goal is the owners of U.S. banks, corporations, the media. They own and control the media, which lulls workers to sleep, convinces them that everything is as good as it can be, that even if it isn't that there isn't anything they can do about it, that workers are inferior, they just have to accept whatever comes their way, etc. When workers do start to wake up and stand up, they confront them with laws and armed forces that beat them back, imprison them, etc. How are we going to overcome the power of the owners? They own and/or control the natural and the man-made resources, the armed forces, the most important public places, the main roads, the media. How are we going to overcome all this power?

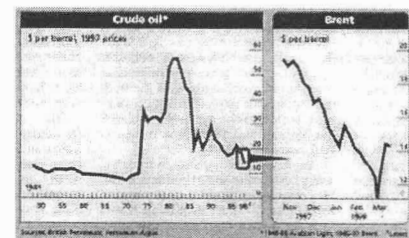
If the contest were simply one between the Labor Party and the owners of U.S. corporations, the struggle would be lost in advance. But it's not. Every day conflicts take place between the owners of U.S. corporations and workers and oppressed peoples throughout the world. What we have to do is take a look at all the different conflicts that are taking place. Take a look at the forces involved in these conflicts. Try to see the character of the forces involved in these conflicts. Always look for the labor, work-

ing class and popular struggles against the owners of U.S. corporations. Always support the labor, working class, and popular struggles against the owners. In this way we can begin to undermine, bring down, and eventually totally overthrow the power of the owners. We can make way for "the majority of American people — working class people — to take political power."

We can also make sure that when "the majority of American people — working class people — take political power" that they will enjoy the support of the majority of people throughout the world, because their political party will have consistently supported the struggles of the majority of people against the owners of U.S. corporations. This combination will be invincible.

Some leaders and members of the Labor Party say that they don't want the Labor Party to take a stand against the U.S.'s war on Iraq because we will alienate workers whose sons and daughters may be in Iraq, or we will alienate workers who support the war. This is understandable. We will undoubtedly alienate some people. We will undoubtedly lose some people. But the party's first responsibility is to speak the truth. It's U.S. oil corporations and the U.S. government who are endangering the lives of U.S. soldiers, not those who are protesting the U.S.'s war on Iraq. In the long run, the majority of working people are going to see the truth about U.S. corporations, the U.S. government and their wars. They will value the Labor Party all the more because it had the courage to speak the truth.—M.G.

Oil prices fall to 24 year low



These charts show the fall in oil prices to a 24 year low in the months before the renewed threats on Iraq. The owners of the big oil companies want to maintain control of the world market in oil and in this way to maintain profits. This is the reason for the sanctions and war threats against Iraq.

War and socialism

War and socialism. Two words that evoke such different visions!

War — so many people killed, almost always for no good reason, the suffering of family and loved ones, the destruction of homes, of beautiful cities. Such horrible destruction that it always deeply troubles the entire generation that participates in or suffers in wars.

Socialism — the vision of a better life for all, an end to class society, an end to all violence, peace between all peoples and nations, harmony with nature and with ourselves.

The wars of today don't involve nearly all the nations of the world as World War I or World War II did. The wars of today — the Gulf War, the war in the Balkans — these are typical of the 20th century. We know of too many. In these so-called "localized" or "regional" conflicts, the death counts are only in the hundreds of thousands and not the millions! The destruction is only of a nation or a people instead of many nations and peoples!

As socialists, our attitude towards war is clear. We do not favor wars. We do not favor the wholesale destruction of people and property. As socialists, in general, we oppose war. We struggle for a world cleansed of all hate and violence.

"War," as the often-quoted saying by the German military theoretician Clausewitz goes, "is the continuation of politics by other means."

What does *that* mean?

The outbreak of war is the logical conclusion of another policy, a policy pursued in "peace time." War occurs when the policy pursued by a government cannot go forward along the "peaceful" road. War occurs when that policy is so important, so vital to the very nature and existence of the rulers of the society, that they would rather risk everything than change course.

U.S. war on Iraq

That is why the U.S. is threatening Iraq today. The U.S. government, an agency for the owners of the oil multinational corporations, is determined to maintain their profits. These profits as so important, so vital to the U.S. government and to the oil companies, they are willing to have thousands of American young people suffer from who-knows-what syndromes for these profits. With the economic sanctions against Iraq (truly a form of war), over 500,000 Iraqi children are dead — children who never did anything to

"As socialists, in general, we oppose war.... but, on rare occasions, war liberates peoples and classes. ..."

these rich owners — so that they can maintain their profits! That's what war is for the U.S. — the pursuit of profits by other means.

The war in the Balkans occurs for similar reasons. Why did the ruling bureaucracy in Yugoslavia attack Bosnia and Croatia? Why is it murdering Albanians in Kosovo today?

Under the former Stalinist regime, these smaller countries — Bosnia, Croatia, Kosovo — these peoples, were dominated by the Serbians. The Serbians lived better and their higher standard of living was due, in part, to the lower standard of living of these peoples. Now, even more importantly, national freedom for these peoples would cause a chain reaction spreading to Russia in the East, renewing struggles in Chechnya, Azerbaijan and to Europe in the West, emboldening the Basques in Spain, the Irish in Northern Ireland, and immigrants everywhere. That is why the ruling bureaucracy in Serbia led by the vicious Milosevic, after nearly 10 years of cruel war against these peoples, and increased suffering of the majority of Serbians, is still in power. He serves the interests of the rich owners in the West and the Stalinist bureaucrats in the East by maintaining national oppression in the heart of Europe. The war in the Balkans is the continuation of that oppression by other means.

Revolutionary wars

But, on rare occasions, war liberates peoples and classes. In this way, too, war is the continuation of politics by other means. We live in a class society, a society in which the working class struggles to free itself from oppression every minute of every day. We live in a society in which there is class conflict, and, inevitably, the continuation of the struggle for emancipation continues by other means.

In previous times and in a different class society, the American Revolution, the French Revolution, and the American Civil War, were all good wars.

These wars were good because they took humankind a step forward. They were the first military acts of a progressive class, the

middle class, determined to end its oppression by kings and the entire feudal system.

All Americans know the glorious stories of the American Revolution, the Civil War and the positive results — a new nation dedicated to more freedom and equality was born; the revolution was deepened through a civil war to end slavery.

In this century, there have been good wars, good revolutions. The Russian Revolutions of 1905 and 1917 and the Cuban Revolution.

In these, another, progressive class, the working class began to end the oppression of the rich owners of industry, the former middle classes, and place itself at the helm of society. Humankind progressed. The world is a better place because these wars and revolutions were fought and because our side won. In these wars, the bases were laid to create a world free from war.

These were good wars because the only way to end war is to remove the rich from power, the rich who will make war for their profits. It seems they really don't understand any language but the language of war.

Workers, socialists, always exhaust all other possibilities. No war or revolution from our side ever takes place without exhausting all possibilities. People who want peace, people who want a better life for themselves, their neighbors, their children, people who see a better world for all, do not go to war lightly. They go as a last resort, when it is a question of a better life for all measured against the likely death of a few rich people and their hired hands. And, only after the rich people have been given opportunity after opportunity to go quietly to their country houses, to leave quickly and peacefully.

War for socialists is an option not because we are war-mongering, but there is something that is more important to us even than being against war. We are for the liberation of the working class and the oppressed population, for the abolition of classes, for the full development of each human being, freed from a world of hunger and oppression, freed from a world of lies and half-truths, of slander against heroes and praise for traitors.

We are willing to devote our lives to organizing workers, to convincing them that they can rule the world, that it is their destiny to rule the world, by removing the rich from power. When they fulfill that destiny, the world will be safe from war forever. For this goal, we will go to war. — Fred Russo □

The degeneration of the Republicans and Democrats

The Republican Party was founded over a century ago. It was founded as a political representation of the Northern capitalists. They wanted to expand banking, industry, farming, transportation. They opposed the continued expansion of the Southern aristocracy and its way of life — including chattel slavery — which exhausted natural resources, including land and labor, and contributed nothing to developing the level of the productive forces.

The Republican Party

Thus, for a certain period of time, the Republican Party was quite popular, not only among Northern capitalists, but also among wage laborers and small farmers, and boasted of leaders like Abraham Lincoln.

Today the Republican Party isn't popular at all. It is still a representation of the capitalists. But instead of having a program of expanding a young and relatively healthy capitalism that was contributing to developing the productive forces to a certain extent, it has a program of looting the public treasury to sustain a dying capitalism.

The Republican Party basically has a three point program: tax cuts for the U.S. rich, public subsidies for the U.S. rich, and wars on other peoples in the interests of the U.S. rich at public expense.

Needless to say, there is absolutely no popular support for this program. So the Republican Party almost never tries to mobilize popular support to attain its goals.

Instead, it conducts extensive investigations into the political and private affairs of its enemies and tries to use the information that it gains into blackmailing its political opponents into supporting its policies.

This is what we have been treated to for the last six years. First the investigation into Clinton's financial affairs in Arkansas; then the investigation into Clinton's 1996 campaign financing; now the investigation into Clinton's relations with various women. And with every investigation, legal threats against Clinton and his associates.

The Republican Party is a living corpse, trying to reach out and strangle anyone within its grasp, trying to drag everybody else down with it.

The Democratic Party is no healthier.

The Democratic Party

The Democratic Party is actually older than the Republican Party. It was founded at the beginning of U.S. history as a repre-

sentation of Southern aristocrats like Thomas Jefferson and later populists like Andrew Jackson. It has gone through several mutations in an effort to retain some popular support, which it lost during the Civil War. The most recent mutations were during the 30s and 60s, first as the so-called "liberal-labor alliance," better known as Franklin D. Roosevelt's "New Deal" alliance, then as the "liberal-labor-civil rights alliance," with Kennedy and LBJ.

The Democratic Party has always been a party of the ruling class, looking out for the interests of the ruling class. It made concessions to the working class and the oppressed population in the 30s and 60s because it was afraid, first of the Russian Revolution in 1917, then of the Cuban, Vietnamese, and other revolutions in the 1960s. But since that time — since thousands of young people were in the streets chanting, "Hey, hey LBJ, how many kids did you kill today!" and drove LBJ out of office — the Democratic Party has found it very difficult to make any substantial concessions.

The capitalists aren't as wealthy as they were in the 1930s or the 1960s. They find it very difficult to do what they did in the 30s, when they established public jobs programs, increased minimum wages, established unemployment compensation, social security and other concessions to workers.

Instead, the Democratic Party has become the party of broken promises. Carter came to power promising "human rights" and ordered the National Guard to break the miners' strike. Clinton came to power promising national healthcare, and abandoned it shortly after his administration began.

Liars

So what kind of men and women does a party of broken promises attract? Liars. Men and women who can say one thing one day and another the next and not blink an eye. Men who are inconsiderate, rude, even abusive, like Clinton. Are we really to believe that all these women are lying about every single thing? Even if they are, we know Clinton signed a bill cutting off the federal guarantee of aid to poor women and children while his own wife and daughter live in luxury. We don't need the testimony of Paula Jones, Monica Lewinsky, or Kathleen Willey to know that Clinton has no regard for women and children. If they are telling the truth, it will only tell us that he is not only callous toward poor women, he's also cal-

lous toward women of the middle and upper classes as well. This wouldn't be surprising.

That the Democratic Party can't keep its promises, that it can't find anybody to represent it but an oily hypocrite like Bill Clinton, is a sign that it too like the Republican Party, is a living corpse, rotting from the inside out, attracting all sorts of hustlers and speculators, trying to see if they can get a piece before it collapses completely.

The very fact that the Republican Party and the Democratic Party are so degenerate and corrupt makes them terrified of the labor movement and working class and popular struggles throughout the world. We have had only one big strike in the last years, the UPS strike. The ink wasn't dry on the contract before Republicans and Democrats began to threaten Ron Carey, Rich Trumka, and those in the top leadership of the labor movement closest to them.

To date, there hasn't been a single major leader of the labor movement who has said a single public word denouncing the Republican and Democratic Party officials as hypocrites for investigating corruption in the labor movement, while they are swimming in corruption, and telling them to get their hands off the labor movement.

We don't agree with what Carey's decision to give funds to the Democratic Party. But it is up to the labor movement to look into this, not the bosses and their agents.

That there has been no wide denunciation of the Republicans and Democrats as hypocrites, demands on them to get hands off the labor movement, or appeals to the masses of working people to make this happen, shows that, to one extent or another, large sections of the labor movement are still relying on elements in these rotting corpses to do something positive for the labor movement.

It's like grasping at scum floating on top of the water instead of going for the life preserver.

Enormous struggles are ahead, struggles that will present the working class with unprecedented opportunities to sweep away the old society and build a brand new working class society in which working people and their families will be comfortable.

It's time to turn our backs on these rotting corpses, tear ourselves away from them, focus all attention on building our own, independent working class political party, so the working class can fight for political power, win, and build a new society.—M.G. □

Young people and violence

If you turn on the television and watch the news any night of the week, you will probably hear stories of young people involved in acts of violence, crime, or gang activity. Why? Is the youth of today just more prone to violence than past generations? No. The problem is much deeper than that. Today's youth is confronted with the reality of a capitalist system that can provide nothing for them. With downsizing of auto plants, any hope of good-paying jobs went out the window. Education in working class areas is underfunded so students get an inferior education that hinders their chances of a college education. Even if they get accepted, the rising cost of education makes it almost impossible to attend. If you add to this problem the fact that young people have no where to meet and talk to one another, it makes a bad situation worse. Outside of school, there is nowhere for young people to spend time that is not controlled and dictated by adults, usually trying to force some kind of ideology or theology down their throats.

Whenever a place for young people opens, it is usually attacked by city governments and police. An example of this is the Zone Coffee House. After three years of the police and City Council trying, unsuccessfully, to harass the owner into closing, the Dearborn Police raided it for drugs and closed it as a public nuisance. Why was the Zone targeted when most of the bars in the area are known for the drug activity on their premises? The police and the city didn't want an establishment that allowed young people to socialize in the city. Why is there a fear of allowing the youth to come together? For the same reason that there is a fear of workers coming together. If they do, they'll see what's going on and realize they can change it together. Capitalists fear every kind of unity among those they oppress and will do all they can to stop it from threatening their way of life. Young people need to unite to find the answers to their problems. Only by acting together can they have a voice in the future of their world.—Tim James □

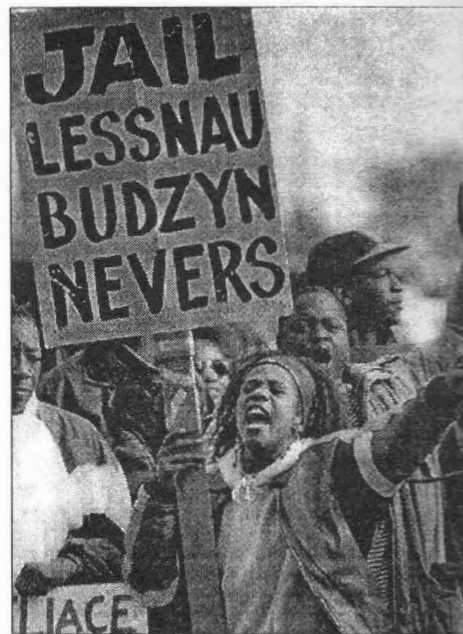
Labor Party forum against police brutality

On March 13th, during the recent retrial of Walter Budzen, one of the cops convicted of murdering Malice Green, the Detroit chapter of the Labor Party sponsored a "Solidarity Against Police Brutality" forum at the UNITE union hall.

Locked-out Detroit newspaper worker Gary Rusnell brought a slide show from the history of the strike which featured photos of confrontations with police on picket lines. Though they were familiar, the brutality in many of the scenes was shocking — cops spraying pepper gas directly into strikers eyes, six officers kicking a single, fallen picketer, military formations of police attacking unarmed pickets with clubs.

The second speaker was Ben Soloman, another former striker who is a member of the Labor Party. He suffered particularly brutal attacks by police on picket lines — causing permanent damage to his eyes, and requiring multiple surgeries to his shoulder. Though he was strongly affected by seeing the slides of himself being attacked by police, he said that he still felt the fight had been necessary. Ben noted that everyone who had been involved in the strike knew that they were right and the company and police were wrong. Later, he added that what was most important was that we must all join together to fight injustice — that with all of us united we would eventually win our struggles.

The next member of the Labor Party who spoke was John Williams, a long-time Detroit activist. He pointed out that having grown up Black in Detroit, he had a great deal of experience with the brutality of police. Even though the police had traditionally focused their attacks on Black people, enforcing segregation in the ghettos, he believes that ultimately police brutality is not about race. Instead, he said the role of the police is to enforce laws which enhance the private property of the rich — the ruling class. As evidence of this, John noted that though we now have more Black police officers and city officials, we still have many people brutalized and killed by police. At a time of massive layoffs and downsizing, he believes that, more than ever, the role of the police is to protect the profits and private property of the class in power. As white people are also being attacked by police, it's an opportunity to organize on the basis of class. This is why he feels we must break with the Democrats and Republicans and support the Labor Party, because the Labor Party can organize all working class people



to fight the rich. John noted that we all have the same cause: the rich are attacking our standard of living. At the same time, the working class also has a vision: that we don't have to have a society based on exploitation.

Members of the *Detroit Coalition Against Police Brutality, Repression and the Criminalization of a Generation* also attended the Labor Party forum. They spoke of their sons, one who was killed by police and the other who was framed by police and unjustly jailed. They are contributing to efforts of a national coalition to document police brutality in a publication entitled *Stolen Lives*. They asked for Labor Party support in building the struggle against police brutality. Labor Party members were enthusiastic in supporting their work, and welcomed them to participate in further Labor Party events and to tell us what events they organize which we could support.

In spite of sadness about victimization by police, overall the forum succeeded in bringing together everyone's resolve to continue to fight. Though we've had significant losses, everyone recognized that we'd also had important victories. The 1993 convictions of Larry Nevers and Walter Budzen were the result of struggles for justice — and the first time white cops were convicted of killing a Black man in Detroit. The recently-granted retrials, as well as the legal decisions won by the owners of the *Detroit News* and *Free Press*, demonstrate that we cannot rely on the legal system for justice. If we want justice, we must continue to fight. — K. M. □

Questions and answers about *Socialism!*

Question: Socialism sounds like a good idea, but is it really possible?

Answer: People ask this question a lot in the U.S. because capitalism seems so natural, so "normal," here. In many other countries, there are thousands of socialist workers — France, Spain, Italy, Germany, India, South Africa, Argentina. Socialism is a society in which there are no rich or poor and everyone has what they need. Today, our planet is in the transition between capitalism and socialism.

The recent struggles by the workers in the U.S. point to socialism. Workers have fought corporate greed from Caterpillar to the Detroit newspaper workers. The UPS workers fought for better jobs, wages and earned the support of the majority of the society. Unions have founded the Labor Party expressly to lead the working class to political power. What will the program of the workers in power be? Sooner or later, it will have to be socialism.

For many older workers, socialism meant the governments, the system, that existed in the former USSR, China, Eastern Europe. There were no capitalists there, and that was an important, fundamental step toward socialism. But these regimes degenerated, some were born deformed. They oppressed the workers and prevented the workers from running society. The vast majority of these "communists" have openly embraced capitalism. These leaders never had anything to do with supporting socialism.

Q: What is the Fourth International?

A: The Fourth International is an international workers' organization that was founded in 1938. It was founded to lead and coordinate the struggle to build workers revolutionary parties in each country to lead the working class to power, overthrow the power of the capitalists, establish workers' revolutionary democracies and build socialist societies.

Leon Trotsky, his co-thinkers, and the working class parties in various countries who founded the Fourth International, decided to call it the Fourth International because they saw their struggle as the continuation of the struggle of the First, Second, and Third Internationals.

It wasn't possible for them to continue the struggle for workers' revolutionary democracy, for working class and socialist revolution, within the framework of the Third International, because it had been completely taken over by Stalin and his support-



Argentinian Trotskyists demonstrate against the killing of workers by the military.

ers in different countries. Stalin and his supporters were working with the capitalists against the workers and persecuting all the revolutionary socialists and communists who opposed this.

Stalin dissolved and disbanded the Third International in the 1940s in order to make it clear to the capitalists that he wasn't a threat.

Q: What happened to the Fourth International? Why are you working to rebuild it?

A: The Fourth International brought together the most revolutionary elements throughout the world on the eve of World War II. They continued the great tradition of the First, Second, and Third Internationals: "Workers of the world, unite!" They refused to promote the lies and hatred spread by the U.S., Britain and France on the one side and by Germany, Italy and Spain on the other. They said that the war was not a "war for democracy against facism" or a war for national freedom against the biggest and richest powers. They argued that it was an inter-imperialist war in which the capitalists of various countries were fighting for material conquests and to destroy each other as competitors. Fourth Internationalists were found in different armies and worked to do their best as soldiers, as they had on the job. They saw participation in the army as an opportunity to talk to and work with other workers in uniform, to help them see the true nature of the war, to encourage them to fraternize with the workers in uniform "on the other side," and to look for the moment in which workers might fight successfully for power and do away with the capitalists.

World War II was followed by massive working class and popular struggles throughout the world, as the Fourth International had predicted. The property of the big landowners and capitalists in Eastern Europe and China was confiscated; workers'

states were established in Eastern Europe and China, albeit dominated from the very beginning by privileged labor bureaucracies led by the Communist Parties. Workers in Europe and the U.S. made enormous gains in jobs, wages, working conditions, unemployment compensation, healthcare, education, vacations, and other benefits. But the Fourth International did not succeed in spreading the working class and socialist revolution to the most advanced capitalist countries in Europe and the U.S. As a consequence, some leaders and members of the Fourth International began to lose confidence in the Fourth International's perspective and to fall under the influence of the Stalinist Communist Parties or the Social Democratic Parties. In some cases they broke away from the Fourth International; in other cases they began to try to transform organizations affiliated with the Fourth International into mouthpieces for the Stalinist Communist Parties or the Social Democratic Parties.

As a consequence of the pressure on the Fourth International and the persecution of the Fourth International (Trotsky and other leaders of the Fourth International, Leon Sedov, Rudolph Klement and others, were assassinated; other members and leaders of the Fourth International in the U.S. and Europe were imprisoned during WWII or placed in concentration camps and died; Trotskyists were often attacked by Stalinists when they tried to distribute their literature or speak ...), the Fourth International began to break into pieces. Today, it is still divided into different tendencies and factions, some closer to the Social Democrats, others closer to Stalinists, others more independent.

In order to rebuild the Fourth International, the most working class and independent tendencies, need to come together. This in turn will have an impact on the others. — M.G. □

For a united political fight against the rich bosses! ...

Continued from front page

and prohibiting Carey from running for president of the union. Government officials are also threatening others close to Carey, like Rich Trumka, with prosecution for alleged corruption.

Government officials have done this because they are *scared to death* of the labor movement in the U.S. The UPS workers' strike frightened them. They don't want anything like this to happen again.

The top leadership of the labor movement has done nothing to continue the offensive begun by the UPS workers, to counter the employers' counteroffensive, to defend the unions' rights to conduct business without government interference.

This needs to change now.

Labor needs to make a united political fight for laws favorable to working people:

— for a 35-hour work week without cutting pay by law so more can work, like the European labor movement;

— for a \$10/hour minimum wage and automatic wage increases in accord with price increases by law;

— for the abolition of Taft-Hartley and all laws that restrict labor's rights, including labor's right to contribute to political parties and candidates, without any laws restricting it and labor's right to accept funds from any sources without laws restricting it ...



French unemployed demand jobs or income for all.

Labor needs to fight for a workers' or labor government, based on an independent mass mobilization, to enforce these laws.

Labor needs to join the Labor Party, devote its resources to building the labor movement and the Labor Party into movements of millions capable of challenging and overcoming the power of the richest corporate families. It needs to stop wasting time and money on the Republicans and Democrats, degenerate and corrupt parties of the ruling families.

The more the Labor Party grows, the more youth and workers will see that they

have the power, that the richest families can and will be swept away. The more the Labor Party grows, the more youth and workers in the U.S. will be open to and interested in joining forces with workers throughout the world in building a new society — a workers' revolutionary democracy, socialism.

It's impossible to rely on top leaders of the labor movement to wage this fight. Youth, workers, socialists and communists devoted to the working class, are the forces that can take the struggle forward.

For a united political fight against the rich bosses! Join the Labor Party! □

More socialist unity!

Socialism! is not only working to rebuild the Fourth International, an international organization for working class and socialist revolution. *Socialism!* is also fighting for more socialist and communist unity in general.

We know that it is not possible or desirable for all organizations that call themselves socialist or communist to unite. Some, like the Democratic Socialist of America and the Communist Party, devote a very high percentage of their time and money to building support for the Democratic Party, which is a capitalist political party. They also make a very bad impression of socialism and communism by identifying the working class and revolutionary socialism and communism that Marx, Engels, and Lenin fought for with the very bourgeois, bureaucratic and statist forms of socialism that we have seen in Western Europe and in the old USSR, in which capitalists and the top layers of the working class live very well and others have little or nothing.

But the most working class and revolu-

tionary socialist and communist tendencies can and should work together much more closely than they do: in building working class and popular struggles, in fighting for aspects of the socialist program, in spreading the truth about socialism and communism in opposition to the lies of the capitalists and the privileged labor bureaucrats, in exploring the possibility of building larger socialist and communist associations or organizations.

The more the most working class and revolutionary socialists and communist work together, the more youth and workers will have confidence in the future of socialism.

As a step toward more socialist unity, we have been urging socialists and communists in the Detroit area to prepare a common commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the *Communist Manifesto*. We ask our readers to urge groups that they are working with to respond positively to this proposal. — *Socialism!* □

Please send me more information about *Socialism!*
Here is \$1 to cover the cost of copying and postage.

I want to subscribe to *Socialism!*

Five issues: \$7.50; Regular: Ten issues: \$15.00; Supporting: Ten issues: \$30.00

Name _____

Address _____

Send check or money order payable to M. Guttshall to *Socialism!*, Box 441723, Detroit, MI 48244

Socialism! is a bulletin for the Labor Party, socialism, and rebuilding the Fourth International published in Detroit. We support International Workers Unity (Fourth International), an international workers revolutionary socialist tendency making an important contribution to rebuilding the Fourth International. Signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of *Socialism!* These are expressed in editorials. Editorial Board: Margaret Guttshall, Tim James, Kim Morgan, Fred Russo.