

TRUTH

A REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALIST TROTSKYIST BULLETIN

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Solidarity with Michigan workers fighting for their jobs!

GM workers and State of Michigan workers are organizing demonstrations to defend their jobs on Monday, April 19, and Tuesday, April 27. Detroit city workers are pushing to get a referendum on the November ballot against the “privatization” of their jobs.

We urge all working women and working men to support and participate in these struggles.

Young people and working people can't rely on the owners of the giant banks and corporations, or on Clinton, to provide them with jobs. They have to *fight* for jobs.



Workers' unions in Europe organized strikes and demonstrations for jobs throughout Europe on Friday, April 2, in which over 1 million workers participated. U.S. workers' unions need to do the same!

Demonstrations!

GM workers' demonstration:
Monday, April 19,
GM headquarters,
12 noon to 2 p.m.
and 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.

State of Michigan workers' demonstration:
Tuesday, April 27,
Cobo Hall, 8 a.m.

Detroit city workers referendum: For petitions, call 863-0033

The fight for jobs ...

Some important fights for jobs are developing in the Detroit area.

New Directions, an opposition within the UAW, has initiated a coalition against GM's "downsizing," including UAW members from GM, Ford, and Chrysler plants, and representatives of various community organizations. This coalition is organizing a demonstration on Monday, April 19, against GM's "downsizing," as part of an on-going struggle.

Public employees unions in the city of Detroit are organizing a series of meetings and demonstrations against the privatization of public services in the city of Detroit, which will mean a loss of union jobs in Detroit.

UAW Local 6000, a state workers' union, is organizing a demonstration on Tuesday, April 27, at the UAW convention, against the privatization of public services on the state level, and the consequent loss of union jobs.

Truth urges all working people and their organizations to support these struggles and do everything in their power to make them as large as possible.

Some workers say no, it's not going to do any good, GM's going to do what it's going to do, the city's going to do what it's going to do, etc.

This isn't true!

The popular uprising in Los Angeles last year, against the acquittal of the racist cops who beat Rodney King, and what has happened since, show that mass, energetic actions that really frighten the ruling powers, force these powers to pay attention to the demands of the workers and oppressed and, in some cases, to make concessions to the workers and oppressed.

Thanks to the popular uprising in L.A., presidential candidates began to talk about health care, education, jobs, etc., and even to make some *concessions*. The racist cops are being tried again; some money is being devoted to jobs and reconstruction in South Central L.A.

If a spontaneous uprising without clear demands can accomplish this, imagine what a mass mobilization of millions of working people with clear demands can accomplish!

Others say workers shouldn't try to organize in a massive way against GM's

"downsizing" because GM *has* to "downsize" or GM has a right to "downsize." GM owns GM, so GM has a right to do whatever it wants with its own property.

First, who says that GM *has* to "downsize"? The owners and managers of GM, of course. But why should the workers believe them? There are millions of people who need cars throughout the world. Many workers ask, why doesn't GM lower the price of cars? And if GM does indeed have to "downsize," why doesn't it begin by "downsizing" the amount of money that it puts out for things that are totally *non-productive* — interest payments to banks, dividends to the richest stockholders, outrageous pensions to retired executives, outrageous bonuses to current executives, unreasonable salaries and perks for current executives, etc.

Should GM owners and managers have the right to do whatever they want to do with GM resources, regardless of the consequences? The vast majority of the people don't think so. A Washtenaw judge said no.

The wealth that GM represents is the product of two things — natural wealth (raw materials, water, air, etc.) and labor (including intellectual labor and manual labor). In other words, the wealth that GM represents is the product of natural wealth and the labor of millions of intellectual and manual laborers.

Why should a tiny number of people have legal ownership and control of something that is the product of natural wealth and the labor of millions of people?

The property laws in the U.S. are outmoded. No one should be able to own natural wealth, and the products of other peoples' labor, and deprive millions of people of the natural wealth and the tools that they need to be able to work, earn a living, and put food in their mouths.

Yet this is what GM is doing. We own the land, we own the factories, we don't want you to work here anymore. Goodbye. What are these workers and their families supposed to do?

They have no choice but to fight this decision, to fight for more control of GM.

Other workers say we shouldn't fight GM owners and managers because if we do

they'll close *all* their plants in Detroit, Michigan, the U.S., and move elsewhere. We should cooperate.

First, GM has a huge investment in this area and in the U.S. It probably can't afford to close all its plants in this area or this country. But, even if it could, can the workers afford to accept this kind of blackmail, "my way or the highway"? Where will this lead? Won't it lead right back to the poverty, slavery and dictatorial societies that workers who left other countries, or the southern part of the U.S., were trying to get away from?

As GM tries to withdraw assets and shut-down plants in Detroit, Michigan, and elsewhere, workers have to prepare to fight for legal ownership of these assets, for making them public enterprises run by workers in the interests of the people.

But wouldn't this be socialistic? — some might protest.

In one sense, yes. Turning abandoned private enterprises into public enterprises run by workers in the interests of the people would save jobs, enlarge the size of the working class, give workers an opportunity to exercise their abilities to control and manage enterprises, and put more property in the hands of the people. Anything that enlarges and strengthens the working class is a step toward socialism, because the working class tends toward socialism. That is, the conditions in which workers work tend to drive them to learn to work together, to be disciplined, and to fight the bosses, until they separate themselves from the bosses and overcome them.

In another sense, no. The fight for socialism is not simply a fight to turn private enterprises into public enterprises run by workers in the interests of the people. It is a conscious fight for the total *emancipation* of the working class, for overthrowing the power of the capitalist class, for establishing a government made up of the workers and oppressed in arms, and beginning to build a classless society.

In any event, we urge all working people and their organizations, regardless of their views on these questions, to join GM workers, city workers, state workers, and others, in a common fight for jobs.

The interests of the workers must come first! — M. Guttshall ■

What kind of change will Clinton lead?

After 12 years of layoffs, plant-closings, cuts in social services, and attacks on rights, the vast majority of people in the U.S. are looking for a *change*.

That's why the majority of people who voted, voted for Clinton, or, in other cases, Perot.

But what change will Clinton lead? Is it really the kind of change that the majority of people want?

Clinton is talking about providing free or low-cost vaccines for all children in the U.S., free or low-cost health care for all people in the U.S., and higher education for many people in the U.S., in exchange for working for the government in some capacity. These things are going to be paid by cutting spending in other areas and by increasing taxes on various sectors of the population.

Of course many workers support Clinton's proposals; many say they would be more than happy to pay higher taxes if it would mean that everybody would have *some* health care, or *some* higher education. Workers know very well that they and their children might easily be without jobs, without any kind of health care, etc. (Contrast this attitude with the attitude of the richest people in the population! They shout and scream as if they were being tortured if you talk about raising their taxes one penny; they have more money than they know what to do with, and they don't give a damn about people begging, starving, and freezing in the streets ...)

But, let's take a closer look at Clinton's proposals. What will they *really* mean?

First, it is necessary to say that the very fact that Clinton is proposing that the *government* intervene and take some responsibility for things like vaccines, health care, higher education, etc. shows that the so-called "*free enterprize*" system has failed.

According to the partisans of the "*free enterprize*" system — also known as the "*free market system*" or the capitalist system, after the capitalists always seeking to accumulate more capital and reinvest that capital — if you let bankers and businessmen do whatever they want to do with the aim of increasing their profits as much as possible, this will be best for everyone in the society, because they'll be initiating all sorts of projects, hiring people, paying them wages, etc.

This isn't happening. On the contrary: bankers, insurance companies, speculators, are making fantastic profits, cutting work forces, wages, benefits, etc., and more and more people are living in the streets in total poverty and misery.

So the very fact that Clinton is talking about intervening with various government projects shows that the "*free enterprize*," "*free market*," capitalist system, does not by lead to prosperity for all. There must be some government intervention, some government projects, some control over private enterprize.

What kind of government intervention, government projects, government control, is Clinton talking about?

So far, the only things that Clinton has been talking about have been: *increasing* taxes on individuals with incomes over \$250,000, on individuals with income over \$100,000 and on everyone else through taxes on energy which will raise the prices of everything (natural gas, electricity, gasoline, products, etc.); decreasing taxes on some corporate profits; changes in government spending (health care, education, etc.).

It is possible that under Clinton's plans that some of the richest will pay higher taxes and that some poor working people will get some things that they don't have now. But it's much more likely that the richest won't pay anymore, and that poor working people won't get anything more. (For example, the richest can easily move their wealth from the category of personal wealth, to the category of *corporate wealth*, and get a *tax break*, not a tax increase. If there is some form of universal health care, poor working people will most likely be standing in long lines, waiting for rude, abusive, and inferior doctors, who will eventually tell them that there is nothing wrong with them, or that nothing can be done to cure them, and then prescribe dangerous painkillers to keep them quiet. This is already happening and the push to cut health care costs hasn't even begun!)

In either event, the changes that Clinton is talking about leading will, *at best*, represent putting a band-aid on cancer.

They don't address the fundamental problems of the U.S. economy or the world economy.

In order to begin to solve the problems

facing millions of people in the U.S. and throughout the world — the lack of adequate jobs, health care, housing, education, in some cases; the lack of food, clothing, shelter, and freedom from violence in others — it is necessary to *expand production of basic goods and services, engage millions of laborers in producing the things that people need*.

Workers have to be engaged in producing useful things that improve working conditions, living conditions, the standard of living and the quality of life in general.

Increasing taxes on a small number of the richest, and on a large number of workers, in order to pay off the deficit, even if some of these taxes are returned in the form of various programs that some workers might benefit from, won't change the fundamental situation facing millions of working people. There won't be a qualitative increase in the goods and services available. There won't be a qualitative increase in the number of workers engaged in production. There will be a *slight shift* in the character of goods and services available; and a slight shift in what workers are doing.

Clinton's proposals amount, at best, to a face-lift for a person dying of cancer. The U.S. economy and the situation facing millions of working people might *look better* for a brief period, but, on the inside, it will still be rotting.

Our resources, the foundation of our economy — our natural wealth, our manual labor, our intellectual labor — are either not being used, or they are being criminally wasted and destroyed, by profit-hungry financiers and capitalists who don't care about anything but enriching themselves.

This is what has to change!

We need to begin to increase taxes on the profits of the banks, the insurance companies, the giant monopolies. We need to initiate a massive program of public works aimed at expanding the production of food, clothing, housing, transportation, health care, education, and engage millions in this work, people who are now idle, underemployed, or engaged in totally unproductive work, like filling out forms for banks and insurance companies, so that these loan sharks can get a bigger and bigger piece of the action without lifting

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Clinton . . .

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a finger.

But the Clinton administration isn't going to do anything like this because it was selected by and is owned by the very same rich owners of the banks, insurance companies, etc., who are enriching themselves at the expense of the people in the midst of more and more poverty and suffering.

These people don't want to expand the production of goods and services, they don't want to expand the number of workers engaged in production, because this is a threat to them. It increases the size, strength and combativity of the working class.

When the 1992 election campaigns first started, the people at the top didn't support Clinton. They supported Bush. Then came the popular opposition to Bush and Clinton and the popular support for Perot. Then came, *above all*, the popular uprising in Los Angeles. The men at the top saw that they were going to have to make a change, if they were going to hold on to their power and profits. They shifted support to Clinton after the popular uprising in L.A. in May and June. They thought that the kind of change that Clinton and Co. were talking about would let them keep their power and profits, and, at the same time, placate some sections of the working class, the poor, and the oppressed middle classes. In this way they would be able to gain time, strengthen their power, erode the power of the working class.

Workers can't afford to wait, they can't afford to give Clinton a chance. While workers wait, more and more working men and working women are losing their jobs, their homes, their families, their physical and mental health. More and more working class women and children are being physically and mentally abused and/or are turning to alcohol, drugs, semi-criminal and criminal activities.

Workers have to continue to fight for jobs and other demands with meetings, demonstrations, strikes.

Above all, workers need to fight for the unions to stop all union support to the Clinton administration and to the Democratic Party as a whole, and to begin to build a labor party that will make it possible to develop and carry out real solutions to real problems.

We need to cure the cancer, not try to cover it up. — M.G. ■

Solidarity with Cuba, Palestine, Bosnia! Aid the Russian people, not the privileged bureaucrats!

In the last months, there have been more and more articles in all sorts of publications on the increase in competition between the U.S., France, Germany, and Japan, in other words, between the big powers.

There is no question that this competition (for raw materials, favorable terms of trade, markets, etc.) has been growing and will continue to do so. It may even go as far as another world war.

But what characterizes the big powers, *at the present time*, is not so much the competition between them, but the *collaboration between them*, in trying to totally *subjugate* the smaller, weaker nations, and *strip* them of anything that they possess of value.

Cuba, Palestine, and Bosnia are some of the clearest examples of this today.

The U.S. government continues its policy of refusing to recognize the Cuban government, of opposing any form of trade or communication with Cuba, of maintaining an unwanted military base on Cuban land, and of supporting Cuban reactionaries, who want to overturn the current regime, and take Cuba back to the days when it was an entertainment center for gangsters, full of crime, gambling, prostitution, drugs. The Russian bureaucracy is no longer paying Cuba money it owes Cuba, it has cancelled orders for Cuban products, and it has cut-off aid to Cuba. Now the Cuban people are growing hungrier and hungrier, and are lacking many essential products.

The State of Israel, the U.S.'s junior partner in the Middle East, and the watchdog for U.S. oil corporations' interests, having stolen the land of the Palestinian people and driven them off their land, into smaller and smaller pieces of territory, is now trying to drive them out of the West Bank and the Golan Heights, and is establishing permanent settlements on this land. In the last weeks, they have locked Palestinians into these lands, refused to allow them to go to their jobs, and encouraged Israeli settlers to organize violent attacks against them. Palestinians fighting this are being arrested, tortured, or exiled into desolate areas, like the 415.

After a lot of fanfare about helping the Bosnian people — who declared themselves to be a separate nation about a year

ago and who have since been under constant attack from the privileged Serbian bureaucracy and its armed forces, which aim to *annihilate* them and which is backed by France and Russia — Clinton isn't even making pretenses. He doesn't want to do anything that will cause conflicts with Yeltsin, who is already in trouble.

The U.S., France, Germany, Japan, haven't given a single, solitary penny to the poor and oppressed of Cuba and Palestine. What they've given to Bosnia isn't worth talking about. But when Yeltsin, the representative of one of the factions of the privileged bureaucracy in Russia, comes whining and crying to Clinton, Clinton's ready to hand him \$1.6 billion! And where is this money going to go? Right into the pockets of the privileged bureaucrats, enriching themselves at the expense of the people, not into the pockets of the people of Russia or the oppressed republics.

U.S. workers need to fight for *aid to the oppressed, not the oppressor!*

This may mean different things in different situations. For example, the Cuban people *do* need food and other supplies, especially after the storm. The Russian people on the other hand, don't need this in the same way. They have an enormous working class with an enormous capacity produce. They need the privileged bureaucracy off their backs, which is disorganizing the production and distribution of basic necessities.

But, in all cases, the principle is the same. Aid the oppressed, not the oppressor! ■

**A Workers Candidate
for Detroit mayor!**

**Support the
Socialist Workers
Party candidate,
Rose Berbeo!**

**For further
information,
contact the SWP:
875-0100**

No to privatization of public services!

The Detroit chapter of Labor Party Advocates (LPA) sponsored a public meeting on March 26 at the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU) Hall in downtown Detroit.

The topic: "Privatization of Public Services." The speakers: Dorothy Mottley, an African-American registered nurse and president of AFSCME Local 273, registered nurses of Detroit; Diane Goldberg, secretary of AFSCME Local 457, health care workers of Detroit; Sheila Strunk, trustee of UAW Local 6000, workers of the state of Michigan and the largest UAW local in the country; and Alice Jennings, an African-American attorney and activist in the Coalition to Stop Privatizations. The meeting was chaired by Rick Massengill, a member of LPA and the OCAW staff.

About 45 people attended, including several city and state workers. One worker joined LPA at the meeting. Enough money was collected to pay for the use of the room.

The speakers and their unions are all involved in a struggle against the privatization of public services. Privatization means the terminating of a public service performed by workers that are employed directly by the government. This service is supposedly picked up by a for-profit business. Privatization is an attack on the workers who perform the services and on the workers who receive the services.

Thirty years ago, according to Dorothy Mottley, every baby born in Detroit was seen by a public nurse. Now, there are only 15 nurses left on the city payroll. Citizens are supposed to be able to go to various clinics, but these clinics are not prepared to handle the volume of people and their problems. She spoke of the shutdown of the only public hospital in Detroit and the problems that caused for the working class citizens of Detroit. In short, she said, "Over the last 30 years I have seen public health go down." Her knowledgeable insider's view of public health was a powerful indictment of the decay of modern capitalism in Detroit.

Sheila Strunk pointed out that the Defense Department is the longest running example of a government agency having its work done by private contractors. The pilfering of the public treasury; the cost overruns; the shoddy merchandise; the government by contract, out of the people's hands, are all legendary at the Pentagon. This is what workers can expect from privatizing public services.

Sheila had figures from independent consultants showing that most work that has been contracted out by Michigan Governor Engler could be done more cheaply by state workers.

She also had the suggested list of Engler's privatization plans which included nearly every public employee position in the state. Sheila's facts and figures, along with the 21st Century Plan for Detroit, made it abundantly clear that there is a conscious plan, a conspiracy by high government officials and businesses, to eliminate nearly all the public employees for the state of Michigan and the city of Detroit. All this information is available from UAW Local 6000.

Both of these speakers expressed, in a very cautious way, hope that Clinton would 1) do something positive about the health care crisis in the U.S. and 2) do something to stop privatization of public services.

Diane Goldberg and Alice Jennings, on the other hand, did not support Clinton, and spoke against capitalism. They also spoke against the 21st Century Plan for Detroit. This plan, prepared with the help of Douglas Fraser, former president of the UAW, includes privatizing nearly all services and selling nearly everything that the city of Detroit owns — including Belle Isle!

The discussion that followed was open — no time limits and all who wanted to speak did

LPA policy should stay the same!

The recent letter requesting renewals of membership in LPA from the national office of Labor Party Advocates and signed by Tony Mazzocchi stated:

"... The answer depends on how quickly we can formulate a new labor party that would be a non-electoral expression of a new agenda created by and for working people.

"As you know, Labor Party Advocates is attempting to build such a non-electoral party that will forcefully develop and promote a new national agenda."

These remarks are not the same as those contained in the original "invitation."

"And it (LPA) will serve as an organizing committee for a new Labor Party."

And, "When will Labor Party Advocates actually start a labor party?"

"When there are thousands and thousands of Labor Party Advocates, a party can be organized with a platform developed by its own members. And when the Party has a realistic chance of winning an election, it can nominate candidates from its own ranks who can be truly accountable to working people."

The original invitation is clear: that by joining

speaking. This was in the best interest of workers — to explore questions and, unlike most union meetings, workers were able to speak without interruption or smart remarks.

Rick Massengill described the now-famous story of mice who continually elected cats rather than mice to run their city. They elected white cats, then black cats, then striped cats. The moral of the story is, if mice want to improve their lives, they had better elect mice, not cats!

However, there was an insufficient fight for a Labor Party from the floor, or to be more precise, there was an insufficient fight that linked up the problems of privatization with the need for a labor party.

It was not necessary to attack the speakers or their positions in order to raise the need for a labor party. It is a discussion that is already taking place throughout the working class. It is a discussion that must take place if we are ever to have a labor party.

By having a major union like the OCAW support the fight for a labor party by forming LPA, the ability to raise the need for a labor party is opened up in a way that we haven't seen in a long time. Let's use it. — J. Marlowe ■

LPA a person agrees only to support the idea of a labor party. Second, that decisions about the program of the party and elections will be made by the membership. This is the basis on which many agreed to join and support LPA. It was a correct and principled basis.

A non-electoral party is an oxymoron, a contradiction in terms, like "army intelligence." A party that does not participate in elections in a democracy will be nothing more than a pressure group on the parties that do participate. Without candidates in elections, the program of the labor party can never be truly supported by the workers, it can never be tested, it can never be proven correct. It is not possible to become a party of the working class in the U.S. by being non-electoral. All the possibilities of what a labor party can mean are rendered null and void by becoming a pressure group on the Democratic and Republican parties.

It is not clear if this letter represents a change in policy or not by the OCAW. If it is a mistake or poorly formulated remark, and further statements from the national office indicate this, fine. If not, then the active participation in LPA of those that are truly serious about building a real labor party, will end, at least for the moment. — J.M. ■

With the workers and the Russian Trotskyists

Support the Russian parliament against the dictatorial presidentialism of Yeltsin? Or support the president elected by the people against the parliament of the Stalinist bureaucrats? No. We, as Trotskyists, support the Trotskyists and the Russian working masses.

The Russian president Yeltsin and the parliament of the ex-Stalinist bureaucracy reached a compromise that somewhat delays a crisis. But the compromise of March 28 is still more fragile than all the previous ones: it is based solely on fear. The colliding factions delay their decisive confrontation in terror of a collapse of political power that might give an opening to the people to enter the political arena. Even Clinton lost sleep!

The 28th saw the first tens of thousands of demonstrators. Days before, the Siberian miners threatened an indefinite political strike. Yeltsin delayed his break with parliament, but he had to listen in the meeting of his "followers": "You must promise that there will be no more compromises with Khasbulatov, Zorkin and the other scoundrels." And Khasbulatov, who had agreed on the compromise with Yeltsin, was censured at the meeting of his supporters in parliament. It is not possible to give any strength to this compromise. They agreed to it *at the last moment because the ball was passing into the street.*

From these palace intrigues — whether they are compromises or splits — a powerful power in Moscow will not emerge. The political dictatorship of the Stalinist bureaucracy has fallen, but the bureaucracy still has its teeth and nails dug into the entire state apparatus. It is able to disorganize economic life, sabotage laws and regulations, and sink the country into chaos and hunger through robbing, setting up parasitic businesses and criminal cartels and trafficking in the influence from their positions. Nothing is so *vital* for the people as *sweeping away* this bureaucracy, finishing what it did not finish in August, 1991 when it broke up the military coup, overthrowing it and substituting for it the most complete and consistent *democracy* that will mobilize the great majority of the people. But Yeltsin cannot make this happen, with his petty bourgeois base and his pro-capitalist program. The Russian working class has to make this happen.

To bring about the entrance of the working class into this fight is the historical mission of these intrigues and clashes between the different factions of the bureaucracy.

Unconditionally

The imperialist bourgeoisie supports Yeltsin, as before it supported Gorbachev and tomorrow whoever might, with certainty, have power. The capitalists of the world want *order* in the old USSR.

But, who should we support? Some communist workers have asked us. We support

the Russian *Trotskyists* and the Russian *workers*. That is our duty.

We do not *support* Yeltsin or Khasbulatov. The president does not represent workers democracy nor does Khasbulatov represent socialism. The Russian parliament does not defend the means of collective production, but rather *their private management* at the expense of the people. Yeltsin does not want to finish with the bureaucracy, but to create and group a new Russian bourgeois and raise it to power. That is why we ought to reject this choice and support the tactic that the Russian Trotskyists are deciding to follow, since, although they are still very few, the Trotskyists fight for a new socialist revolution, a *political* revolution, that saves the historic conquests of socialism and regenerates them, radically eradicating the bureaucratic cancer, installing the democratic power of the working class.

And we *support* the Russian workers in the steps that they decide to take in this crisis. But, can't the workers make mistakes?

Certainly. They can make mistakes. They are disoriented and divided because, after decades of police dictatorship, they have not succeeded in creating their own parties. A majority observes skeptically and indignantly the palace intrigues of the bureaucracy; another part follows one of the factions, but *in its own way*. The most instructive experience in the last 5 years in Russia says that the active working class masses, when they have participated widely in political struggle, have always shown a certain class *instinct*. They have known how to place themselves on this or that side, always in order to *better* their positions of combat, increase their freedom, weaken the repressive apparatus, acquire more control over the enterprises, etc.

Class instinct

It is no surprise then, that the crisis of the bureaucracy, serious and irreversible, comes marked with compromises in order to *avoid* the action of the working masses. Because, if they intervene, they will intervene *in their own way*; and their intervention will be a *determining* factor in the crisis, will change the boundaries and the outcome of the conflicts.

And it is no surprise that our support is for the position that, once more, the working masses *are following*. What is important is that they *intervene*, what is important is that the conscious workers of the world support their intervention.

The capitalist press, when it has no recourse but to acknowledge the intervention of the workers, hides that they make this *in their own way* and pretends that their support to the politicians of the bureaucracy is unconditional. For example, the press cited the Kusbas miners' threat to strike if Yeltsin is dismissed. But let us see what their position is, as it appears in the declaration of the Council of Workers Committees of Kusbas on January 11: "We have believed that it was the president who held power... If we review the actions of the government and the president, we are able to see that they do not make great advances and that they take many steps back... We miners have decided to continue to support the president and the government, but making note that the miners' organizations up to a certain point remain in opposition to all the structures of the state." (Digest of KAS-KOR, January 1993, translated from Russian to Spanish to English)

The "support" of the miners refers to the task of sweeping away the bureaucracy and its bureaucratic parliament. The workers do not feel themselves strong enough to do this alone. That is why they situate themselves "behind" Yeltsin, but "make note" of their opposition to all the institutions of the bureaucracy.

Opinion

We support and we explain the positions adopted by the workers. We support unconditionally the Russian Trotskyists in their effort to build a really Marxist workers party. But we have our opinion about how to advance in the preparation of a new workers revolution that saves and regenerates socialism. With the logical reserve of those who follow from afar the struggle of our Russian comrades, it is not incorrect to express our opinion.

The present crisis is a great opportunity to give well-aimed bruising blows at the power of the parasitic bureaucracy, and, for these to happen, it is necessary to agitate among the people in favor of the definitive dissolution of the bureaucratic parliament and its substitution by a true democratic assembly.

It is not a question of electing different parliamentary members under the same regime. Still less, of handing all power to Yeltsin.

The best road will be new elections very free and egalitarian, for a new democratic assembly endowed with all the powers of the state without exception, and in particular to elaborate a new Constitution. The most democratic form of political power is that most suitable to the workers that today want to free socialism from the parasitic bureaucracy and hope by this to give it a new historical impulse. — Anibal Ramos ■

Trotskyists and the Class Struggle

The Socialist Workers Party continues to support strikes, and it is running its own working class candidates for office in several places, including Detroit. However, it is still not supporting or promoting any form of *large* independent working class political struggle against the bosses and their policies, like the struggle against the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) or the struggle for a labor party based on the unions.

The SWP is not supporting either the Yeltsin faction of the privileged bureaucracy in Russia, or the faction headed by Khasbulatov and centered around the Russian parliament. It says that they are making little progress in restoring capitalism in Russia. But, it also says: "There are no short-term solutions to the political crisis wracking Russia." And: "As Russia's rulers continue along this path of implementing more drastic austerity measures, working people will be drawn into the fight as they resist unemployment, inflation, and further cuts in their social wage. (*The Militant*, April 12, 1993, p. 3.)

This perspective is not working class and revolutionary. Working class economic struggles are very important and they will take place. But workers can't confine themselves to economic struggles. They have to make independent political struggles. They can't leave the political struggle against U.S. imperialism or against the privileged Russian bureaucracy, in the hands of other classes.

The *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism*, the publication around which the largest number of Trotskyists in the U.S. are now gathered, recently published an article against Clinton's economic program by Tom Barrett. Barrett denounces Clinton's program and says it has nothing to offer working people, but he doesn't put forward a clear way for working people to fight this program, or a clear alternative to it. He says: "Taxing working people to pay interest on the federal debt is nothing more nor less than outright theft. However, the continued existence of the capitalist economic order requires that debt obligations — including interest — be met and met on time. If not, the obligations will be in default, and the agency which issued the debt instrument will be required to bor-

row at much higher rates of interest or will be unable to borrow money at all. So this is one spending item which absolutely cannot be cut. Though working people did not incur the debt, though in general we did not benefit from the money, and though our signatures certainly do not appear at the bottom of the contracts, we nevertheless have to pay it back. Within the context of capitalist politics there is absolutely nothing we or anyone can do about it. The only fair solution is to repudiate the government debt, and that can only be done when the government has become *ours*. The simple idea that we should not have to pay the bills for government deficit spending leads inexorably to one conclusion: there must be a transfer of state power from the bankers and businessmen who hold power now to those who must work for a wage and pay the taxes... Putting an end to the war budget — and, more importantly, to war itself — requires a social transformation, the overthrow of the capitalist class and its state, and its replacement by a government of, by, and for the working people. When Clinton's economic proposals fail to deliver what he has promised, as they inevitably must, revolutionists, trade-union militants, African-American nationalists, and feminists will have an enhanced opportunity to organize politically in their own interests. The Democrats — like the Republicans — have nothing to offer." (*Bulletin in Defense of Marxism*, April, 1993, p. 32.)

There is no question that a socialist revolution is necessary to begin to build socialism, communism, a classless society, and that this is the only lasting solution to the various problems facing working people. Readers of *Truth* know that we have been fighting for this for many years in many different ways. But it is *not* true that it isn't possible for workers to make any *progress* in fighting for their interests on the question of the debt, short of a socialist revolution. This is why some tendencies are fighting for cutting or cancelling payments on the debt, or for taxing bank and corporate profits to pay for the debt. This is why the program of the Fourth International calls for *nationalizing the banks* and combining them all into a single, public, state bank. Others are fighting

for a labor party. Trotskyists should not only support these struggles, they should be in the front ranks of them, at the same time that they push for socialist revolution and building the party of the socialist revolution. It is not correct to *counterpose* the struggle for socialist revolution, to the struggles of working people today. Socialist revolution emerges out of the class struggle, not in opposition to it.

Socialist Action and *Socialist Organizer* printed articles in the most recent issues of their publications on a letter by Tony Mazzocchi, head of Labor Party Advocates, in which he starts talking about a "non-electoral labor party." We reprinted some lines from the *Socialist Action* article in the last issue of *Truth* and commented on them. At the time, we did not know that Mazzocchi had written this letter as head of LPA, on official LPA stationery, and as an appeal to members to *renew their membership* in LPA. As we say elsewhere in this issue, this statement is not consistent with the initial appeal to join LPA and the initial form that members sign. An alliance for a labor party is one thing; an alliance for a "non-electoral labor party" is another. We are *for* the first and *against* the second.

While votes for the reformist socialist party in France fell during the recent elections, votes for the most left-wing socialists in France, including "renovators," ex-Stalinists, and Trotskyists, *rose*. Our comrades in Spain, organized in the *Revolutionary Workers Party*, are pushing for Trotskyists to put forward a common slate in the coming elections.

Truth sold 12 copies of the last issue at a meat-packing plant and an auto plant. We distributed several hundred leaflets for the coming GM workers demonstration in English and in Spanish. We also distributed several hundred leaflets for the recent LPA forum. Workers were very enthusiastic about the coming demonstration at the GM headquarters. Many used to work for GM, or have friends who still work for GM. They want to strike a blow against the bosses. ■

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

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The fight for jobs and socialism

One of the biggest and most important fights going on by U.S. workers is the fight for jobs. It is a battle that is fought daily by individual workers trying to keep the job they have by every method imaginable. Workers file grievances, they try to maintain previous workload assignments. There are slowdowns, by individuals and groups, there are strikes, demonstrations, and so on.

It was at the heart of the rejection of George Bush; it is at the heart of the fight against the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). It is the deepest fear of U.S. workers — that there will be very few good jobs for their children.

The two most recent actions — the Day of Action on April 2 by European trade unions and the upcoming demonstration at GM World Headquarters — only underline the importance of the fight for jobs by workers worldwide. It is literally a life or death question for workers. In the U.S., to be without a job, is to be without everything.

At the same time, for U.S. workers, this fight is a comparatively new fight. From the end of World War II up to the early 1980s, it seemed to be relatively easy for many workers to find jobs, to keep those jobs, and to have a relatively secure future.

Those days are gone forever and most workers realize that.

And, at the same time, there is developing the idea among workers that, in some way, workers have a “right” to a job, a good-paying job.

How can workers secure this “right”? Is there a permanent solution to the problem of jobs?

The nationalization of all of the basic means of production — the banks, the large corporations, the huge farms is the only way to secure this “right.” This means that all of these things would be publicly owned. And, coupled with this, a government controlled by the workers.

This is simply the first stage of socialism.

What about Russia? Didn't socialism fail in Russia?

Socialism did not fail in Russia. The efforts to return Russia to capitalism are failing.

The Russian bureaucracy leaders like Boris Yeltsin and the Russian parliament want to bring capitalism to Russia. The Russian workers want an end to the dictatorship that they lived under. The destruction of the dictatorship achieved over the last three years is an important step forward for the Russian people, and for socialism. Socialism cannot exist with a dictatorship over the workers.

“Socialism did not fail in Russia. . . The destruction of the dictatorship achieved over the last three years is an important step forward for the Russian people, and for socialism. Socialism cannot exist with a dictatorship over the workers.”

It is the state ownership of the means of production that has lifted Russia — the equivalent of India in 1917 — to a relatively advanced economy. It is the state ownership of the means of production that the bureaucracy wishes to end. They want to privatize public industry and give it to the big capitalists from the U.S. and Europe. The workers are resisting.

The improvements in the lives of workers in Russia rest on the state ownership of the means of production. Capitalism is failing in Russia because it is not possible to introduce capitalism into Russia without attacking the gains of the workers.

The first stage of socialism still exists there and it is what the people are trying to defend while trying to get rid of the dictatorial bureaucracy.

So, even if socialism hasn't failed in Russia, why will socialism change things here? Why will there be any more jobs, or why will the jobs be any more secure, with state ownership and a workers government?

The lack of jobs is not due to the lack of work. There is plenty of work to go around. The cities of the U.S. need to be rebuilt. There are new technologies that can be developed. Any picture of the future clearly shows the amount of work that

needs to be done. No, there is plenty of work to be done, therefore, plenty of jobs.

The lack of jobs is not due to the lack of capital to create the actual conditions for work — there is more than enough capital. This is why the current owners of capital look everywhere to make investments — to other countries, real estate, swamp land, savings and loans, etc. There is an over-production of capital. This over-production is a result of the power to produce of the workers who are working. There is not a lack of capital for investment.

The lack of jobs is due to the need of the current owners of the means of production — the capitalists — to create a profit for themselves. And not only the need, but it is the reason why they do anything — they do not invest to create jobs to solve problems, they invest to create jobs to make profits.

This profit does not serve to increase production or research. Profits are tabulated after the costs of new machinery and research. Profits are purely for the personal use of the owners of industry. Profits do not serve any use by society.

The need for profits is what is destroying the jobs of workers. The need for profits is what is preventing the economy from growing.

The real growth in the economy is what took place in U.S. a long time ago, and attracted our parents, grandparents and great grandparents to come here. But the profit system that created that growth has run its course. The time has come for a change.

The majority of workers need to be convinced that what has failed in Russia is the Russian bureaucracy trying to mix socialism with a dictatorship over the workers. The majority need to be convinced that the Russian workers are defending what is socialist in Russia and getting rid of the dictatorship.

The majority of workers need to be convinced that the need for jobs is more important than the need of a tiny few to have profits.

Once the majority are convinced, then the workers will build their party, create a workers government and nationalize the means of production — the first stage of socialism. — Jack Marlowe ■