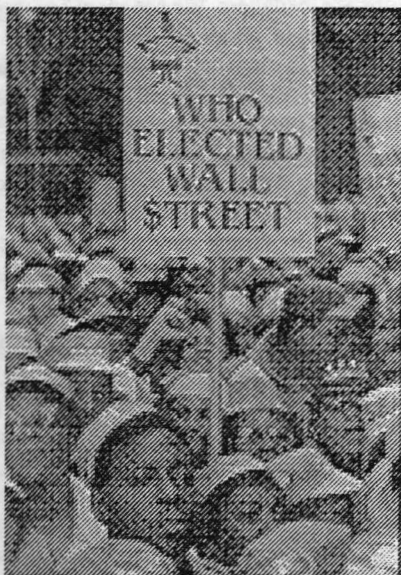

NEW LIFE

A SOCIALIST BULLETIN PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE LABOR PARTY MOVEMENT

NO. 27 • OCTOBER, 1996 • 50¢ • BOX 441283, DETROIT, MI 48244

For a \$10/hour minimum wage!



**Vote
for the
Labor Party
November 5!**

No more blood for oil! Hands off Iraq! — page 8

\$10/hour now!

Young workers, students, working people throughout the world, face similar problems: trying to find decent jobs, wages, healthcare, housing, education; discrimination against youth, women, peoples of color ...

The Labor Party and revolutionary socialist tendencies in it are convinced that there are no individual solutions to these problems.

The only way that the young generation of the working class and the working class as a whole are going to progress, is by making a common, united fight for working class solutions to these problems.

This is why we are fighting for:

— a \$10/hour minimum wage that goes up with prices by law;

— a shorter work week without cutting pay so that more can work by law;

— an end to discrimination against youth, women, and peoples of color,

and for other working class and popular demands.

The \$10/hour minimum wage is especially important. Thousands work forty hours a week and still don't make enough to pay for food, housing, transportation, and other basic necessities. They are forced to look for second and third jobs to make ends meet. They have no lives. Children are neglected. At least 15% of the population is forced to live on less than \$15,000 a year. The top 1% takes in, at an absolute minimum, \$200,000 a year. Some take in millions.

Why should we continue to accept a society like this?

We urge young workers, students, and working people who are for a \$10/hour minimum wage to vote for the Labor Party Nov. 5.

The Labor Party — backed by unions representing over one million workers — doesn't have its own candidates on the ballot.

But you can still cast a vote for the Labor Party by voting for working class candidates on the ballot that have been speaking out for working class demands and a workers party.

A vote for working class candidates is a vote for a big change in the interests of working people. A vote for Democrats and Republicans is a vote for the status quo!—*New Life*

How to vote for the Labor Party November 5 ...

The Labor Party was founded in Cleveland, Ohio in June of this year. It is backed by unions representing over one million workers, including the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers, the United Electrical workers, the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees, the International Longshoremen and Warehousemen, and the United Mine Workers.

The Labor Party convention decided *not* to endorse candidates or run its own candidates at this time.

But you can still vote for the Labor Party by voting for candidates that are speaking out for the Labor Party, like Ralph Nader, or by voting for working class candidates

on the ballot like the Workers World Party, the Socialist Workers Party, and Doug Young, the independent newspaper striker running for Michigan State Representative in Shelby Township.

The more workers vote for working class candidates, the better things will be for the working class. It will encourage working class candidates to keep on running for office, and to keep on speaking out against Democrats and Republicans in elections. It will encourage the least bourgeois union leaders to stop wasting union time and money on anti-labor candidates and to start pushing for the unions to run their own candidates. It will encourage the Labor Party to run candidates to promote this goal.— *New Life*

More on the minimum wage ...

Campaigning for Doug Young, the independent newspaper striker running for Michigan State Representative, we are talking to a lot of young people and workers about a \$10 an hour minimum wage. Of course, the most working class youth and workers are for it right away. But many others aren't.

Some say that a \$10/hour minimum wage will make it impossible for small businessmen to stay in business. Small businessmen are being driven out of business every day, but it's not because wages are too high. It's because the banks and monopolies work together against small business people. The solution to the problems of small business people is to fight for public ownership and union control of the banks so that they can provide cheap credit and subsidies to small businessmen. In this way, they can stay in business and pay workers decent wages, too.

Others tell us that most of the people working for minimum wage are teenagers, and they don't really need any more money. They are just working for a little extra spending money for clothes, movies, etc. First, it's not true that the majority in minimum wage

jobs are teenagers. We see plenty of women, older people, people of color, and now even older white men in minimum wage jobs. But even suppose this were true. Why shouldn't 16 year olds be able to make a living wage and move out on their own if they want to? Why should they be forced to be financially dependent on parents who often try to force them to do things they don't want to do? Why shouldn't there be equal rights for young people?

Finally, there are those who tell us that the people working for \$5/hour aren't doing much and don't deserve to make any more than they are making. Or that if they wanted to make more they could make more; they are just lazy and don't want to look for better jobs. When everyone who is working for minimum wage goes on strike, some of these people are going to see that they do quite a bit, and start singing a different tune.

Labor should be campaigning for a \$10/hour minimum wage instead of campaigning for Clinton and other Democrats and covering up their crimes against the working class. Then there will be some changes.— M.G. □

Solidarity with immigrant workers!

We cannot allow the Democrats and Republicans — on behalf of big business — to scape goat workers from other countries. They claim that immigrant workers are “taking our jobs,” when *they are the ones taking our jobs* — to increase their own profits. All workers have a right to make a decent living — in the U.S. and everywhere else. But the bosses are trying to pit us against each other — and get us all to work for less and less — by denying basic rights to immigrant workers. In addition to cutting welfare benefits to legal immigrants — who’ve contributed to those funds by paying taxes — U.S. bosses are trying to beef-up police patrols of the borders to prevent workers from Mexico from coming here to work. This is in spite of the fact that U.S. companies actively recruit immigrant workers, knowing that the devastation their countries have suffered from U.S. imperialism makes them desperate enough to work for slave wages.

On October 12th there will be a national march on Washington, D.C. against attacks on immigrants workers. All of us should attend, and demand that all U.S. residents be given the same rights. The same police attacking immigrant workers will attack us. The same rights denied immigrants and poor people will be denied us. We cannot allow ourselves to be divided any more.

For information on buses from Detroit to the march, call Latinos United in Labor at 313-836-3752.



Latino workers march in solidarity with newspaper strikers, September, 1996.

The UAW-Ford contract:

Vote “no” on selling out our children!

The United Auto Workers’ (UAW) contract with Ford has been negotiated and membership voting on ratification is happening at this writing. Rather than releasing the contract itself and allowing time for everyone to read it, UAW leaders have released “highlights” which gloss over the concessions being given to the company. Worse, if ratified, this contract is to be used as a pattern for bargaining with the other Big Three U.S. auto companies; the concessions given Ford will be the *starting point* for negotiations with GM and Chrysler.

Selling out young workers

The most destructive concessions in this contract involve two-tier wage structures. The 3-year, 70% rate of pay for new hires will continue. This has been a source of division among workers since it began. Of course newly hired, young workers resent being paid less than those who work next to them. By allowing a second tier, the UAW encourages division and resentment which undermines the basis of unionism.

Even worse, the new contract allows lower wages in parts operations that Ford may establish. In an apparent effort to stop outsourcing, the union has handed the company the same benefits they sought through outsourcing: lower wages. It’s clear that their goal was not to keep good wages for UAW members, but rather to ensure that their dues-paying membership roles weren’t further reduced.

False job guarantees

UAW leadership has touted this agreement as one that protects jobs. It doesn’t. It does set current employment rates as a standard, and indicates that 95% of that rate must be maintained. But it allows this provision to be suspended in times of “business downturn” experienced by the company. In other words, any time Ford claims they’re losing money, they’re free to cut workers. These are the claims companies always make when they want to make more profits through downsizing. And the UAW leadership has made it clear that they don’t want to strike over such things — saying it doesn’t benefit us to hurt the company. Even when they did strike in Dayton when GM did not maintain employment levels guaranteed in their last contract, they settled for more of the same “guarantees.”

Also, after having accepted bonuses instead of base wage increases (on which pensions and benefits are calculated) in two of the the last three years, in the new Ford contract employees are expected to go two more years without base wage increases. This gives the company more profits at a time when U.S. auto companies are already making record profits!

The Ford pattern contract is the opposite of what we need. Now — when auto companies are profitable — is the time to demand more from them — not to give them *more* concessions. — K. Morgan □

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OCTOBER 12, 1996
WASHINGTON, DC

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 2. Equal Opportunities and Affirmative Action
 3. Public Education for All Children
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Will stepping up the ad boycott and civil disobedience get the best settlement?

On Thursday, September 12, at least six months after striking newspaper workers passed motions in their unions for a mass meeting, the leadership of the striking unions finally organized a "mass meeting." The meeting was at the UAW Local 600 hall in Dearborn, an unfamiliar and out of the way hall for most strikers. About 500 to 700 out of a possible 2,000 strikers attended. But they weren't allowed to put forward motions or vote on strike strategy!

Instead, the leadership of the striking unions used the "mass meeting" to promote their "strategy": stepping up leafleting advertisers and a little civil disobedience on the side. Strikers barely even got the open mike that they had been promised. The union leaders and their spokesmen showed pictures or talked from 6:30 until nearly 10:00. Only then did a small number of strikers have a chance to speak. By then, many had left.

A number of strikers have pointed out that even if strikers succeeded in getting every single advertiser to pull out of the scab paper, it wouldn't necessarily force the owners of Gannett and Knight-Ridder to negotiate. These firms are doing very well; profits from the Detroit papers are only a small percentage of their total profits. They will take a loss in Detroit for quite some time, in order to achieve their long term goal, smashing the unions. Like all good capitalist businessmen, they know you sometimes have to run at a loss in certain areas for a certain period of time, in order to be able to put yourself in a position to maximize your profits in the long run.

What about massive civil disobedience? At least one of the speakers at the "mass meeting," a church leader, Ed Rowe, advocated massive civil disobedience — sitting down in front of the *News* and the *Free Press*, temporarily blocking scabs coming and going in this way, and sitting down in front of other targets.

Massive civil disobedience is appealing. You are blocking production and distribution to a certain extent. But you are doing it in such a non-threatening way it seems like it would be difficult for the private or the public police to physically attack you and bring serious charges against you. It would



Mass picketing stops a newspaper truck at a distribution center last fall.

be difficult to turn the public against you.

But the things that make mass civil disobedience appealing to strikers, are the things that make it appealing to the owners, too. The owners know that in order to resume production and distribution, all they have to do is get the private and/or the public police to remove those sitting down, and that those sitting down will offer little or no resistance. ThU.S. mass civil disobedience is not a way to force the owners to negotiate and stop them from producing and distributing if they refuse. Worse, it relies, at least to a certain extent, on the good will of the owners and the private and public police for the safety of those sitting down. No matter how passive those sitting down may be, they may still be beaten, arrested, and charged with serious crimes. (One P-9 leader who engaged in civil disobedience was charged with criminal syndicalism, a felony; Dave Watts, a leader of the Staley workers who engaged in civil disobedience, has received such high fines he may lose his house ...) So massive civil disobedience can mean sacrificing a whole lot for little or nothing!

As many strikers have said, privately and publicly — including printers, pressmen, mailers, and drivers — mass action aimed at stopping production and distribution, like the mass picketing that strikers organized last fall and bigger, is the best way to force the owners to negotiate and get the best settlement possible.

Different strikers have struggled in half-a-dozen different ways to continue this policy and to overcome the resistance and opposition of the current leadership of the striking unions and of other labor leaders, but, so far, strikers haven't been successful.

Is it possible to convince a majority of strikers who attend union meetings in any one of the striking unions to again take a stand in favor of mass action aimed at stopping production and distribution? Is it possible to convince them to elect a strike committee? Is there any way to recall and replace the union leaders who refuse to carry out the decisions of the striking workers? If the answer to these questions is yes, then it is still possible to progress along this road.

If the answer to these questions is no, then strikers and supporters who really care about strikers, need to fight for an orderly retreat. They need to fight for comparable union jobs for all striking workers, whether it's at the *News*, the *Free Press*, the *Journal*, a union, or some other unionized workplace, and in accord with seniority. It is especially important that unjustly fired strikers be included.

Strikers need to keep on fighting for "An injury to one is an injury to all" and "Solidarity," and for policies and leaders that are true to these principles, even if the struggle takes a different form. — M. Guttshall □

Douglas Young speaks to *Jam Rag*

Douglas Young is a Detroit newspaper striker running for Michigan State Representative in Shelby Township. Here are excerpts from an interview with Doug by Jam Rag, a popular publication in Southeast Michigan.—New Life □

Give us a rundown of your platform.

I am not a professional politician as to that I have no platform, let us call them principles. If I were to hold public office, I would still hold my principles first and foremost. I will not be bribed, I will not lie, nor will I pass any laws or legislation harmful to others as a matter of principle. I will legislate laws to stop scabs simply because the pitting of worker against worker by the rich must end. I am a firm believer in a living wage, not a minimum wage. I believe anyone who works for eight hours a day deserves to live off the fruit of their labor. Is one person's effort, time and commitment worth less than others? Currently there are too many "right to work" states — in truth, they are — "right to starve" states or "right to serf" states if you like historical humor. The rich use politically manipulated differences to divide us from the side of our fellow man. I am ashamed it works so well.

I will pass legislation to end consensual crimes. Consensual crimes, actions against the law, but directly harming no one's person or property. There are 350,000 people in jail, 1.5 million people on parole or probation with another 4 million arrested each year. What a waste of money. If we ended these senseless laws, we would save ... two hundred billion dollars, folks, per year. Think of the jobs, food, housing, education and better quality of life we could share. This in and of itself will reduce crime more than all the prisons or police we would care to have. I believe the fewer prisons, the fewer police, the better. We don't need more prisons. We need less prisoners.

We need shorter work hours and more workers. The Democrats and Republicans fail to understand what family values mean. I welcome this opportunity to enlighten them. Young's dictionary: family values: 1. allowing a parental unit to work less hours, 2. to make more money, 3. i.e. allowing parents to provide time, care, honesty, integrity, love and yes understanding to their children. To make it painfully clear, allowing them to raise and enjoy their children. I

would kindly ask them to stick to the real issues of their (two?) parties, i.e. corporate values. Again Young's dictionary: corporate values = 1. protect the top 1%, 2. allow tax abatements for the rich (or rather, with all due respect, filthy rich), 3. to hell with everyone else. Those are values I believe they respect most of all. If I seem to hold Democrats and Republicans with contempt, then we understand each other. They would be laughable if our situation were not so grim.

How did your decision to run come about?

My decision to run has been decided by the so-called two party system. Their disinterest in our plight is sad, their contempt is intolerable. Any excuse is an admittance of guilt. Clearly they are incapable of doing much of anything for 99% of the nation. They only seem capable of running for office again and again. The unions have spent seventy million on the Democrats. In gratitude Mr. Levin talks with scabs. It is shameless and self serving; I find it inexcusable....

We must all become involved; I have chosen this path. I encourage others to run or to help me win office. I have a responsibility to those who help me. This struggle is not mine alone. Like it or not, if we remain inactive we will lose everything we have to the one percent (and their puppets).

Can you win?

Can I win, can we win? We must act together. There are two forms of power — money and numbers. If I don't have the efforts of the common man and woman, people like myself, I cannot and if we don't act together neither can we. No single person can change the nation....

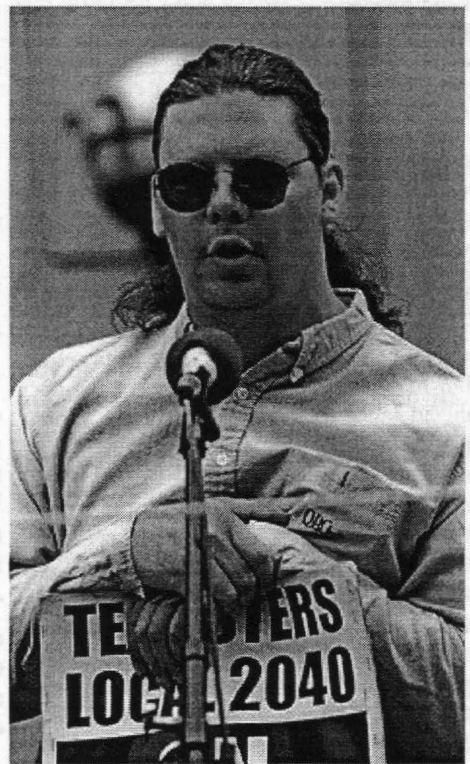
What are the most important issues today, globally and nationally?

Nationally, the most important issues are the demise of the middle class and the existence of a lower class. We all deserve to be able to live a decent life, to provide for all of our needs and also some of our desires. How can we in good conscience allow a lower class? We must not tolerate poverty. No one should have to beg or steal to survive The lower class, or rather the idea of one, belongs in the dark ages. Globally, the issues are ... poverty and war. I believe the first step

is to pull "Uncle Sam" and his influence from the backyards of our fellow man. To tend to our own garden instead of trampling theirs. To stop our interference in world politics would go further towards friendship than most would like to believe. Just ask South America, is our interference good or bad? ...

How would you describe the political landscape of today and how will it be different in 2001?

The modern political landscape has only one comparison — Death Valley where only vultures flock. Our reluctance to do what we must, to strive ever forward, to refuse to turn back, has given us the government we are presently under siege from. I think that currently we are beginning to abandon the two-party system. They will not give up power willingly. We must not backslide. What is the value of a party that is forced to do right? When they realize our seriousness, I hope we won't let them mislead us. When third parties gain prominence (they will), we must not let the parties of the rich win us back by pandering to us. They must go. If we don't give up we could be a big influence in 2001. It is time to move away from the influence of the 1 percent....



A step in a longer struggle

A number of Detroit newspaper strikers have been fighting for a working class and militant policy for over 15 months. They have been fighting for mass action aimed at stopping the production/distribution of the scab papers. But they haven't been able to overcome the combined opposition of the owners of the scab newspapers, their private police, the public police, and the leadership of the striking unions and other unions in Detroit and elsewhere.

First strikers fought for mass picketing aimed at stopping production/distribution at the scab plant in Sterling Heights. They achieved that. Then a judge issued an injunction against this mass picketing that the union leadership refused to defy. Then many strikers fought for the leadership to defy the injunction and once again organize mass picketing aimed at stopping production/distribution. When they didn't achieve this, many strikers began to fight for a mass meeting in which strikers could discuss and decide strike strategy. After 9 months of fighting for a mass meeting, they finally achieved a "mass meeting," but without the right to put forward motions or vote! Now many of the most working class and militant strikers have been arrested and convicted of various phony crimes. Many have been forced to look for one or more jobs to survive. It's difficult to gather together the forces necessary to wage a successful fight.

As a result of this experience, it's possible to lose confidence in the working class and in the organized labor movement.

Bourgeois labor leaders

Strikers are right to lose confidence in the top leaders of the organized labor movement in Detroit and their followers. The labor movement in Detroit is a very bourgeois labor movement. The top leaders of the organized labor movement think only about what is best for the owners of the giant corporations and for a small percentage of their own members. They don't think about what is best for the working class as a whole, in the U.S. and throughout the world. GM, Ford, and Chrysler closed many factories and laid-off thousands of workers. The leaders of the labor movement in Detroit never organized any kind of mass mobilization against this; autoworkers were forced to turn to welfare to survive. Now Clinton is abol-

ishing welfare and these same leaders are doing nothing. They've allowed U.S. corporations to organize one war after another against workers of other countries — Vietnam, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Iraq —, showing their complete indifference to the fate of workers of other nationalities. Most top leaders in other unions and cities and their followers are no different.

Workers

On the other hand, it would be a mistake for strikers to lose confidence in the working class and in the entirety of the rank-and-file of the organized labor movement.

Many, perhaps even most, workers in the U.S. have been able to enjoy relatively decent working and living conditions without having to fight for them for many years. This is a result of three things: the relatively high productivity of labor in the U.S.; the massive and often violent struggles that workers were forced to wage in an earlier period; U.S. imperialism, which has made it possible for U.S. corporations to make superprofits at the expense of workers in other countries and use these superprofits to buy-off a relatively large section of U.S. workers.

Because of this, many, if not most, workers in the U.S. have little or no experience in massive working class struggle against the corporations. The first national Teamsters' strikes in about 20 years took place just 2 or 3 years ago. There hasn't been a national auto strike since 1976!

Even with this lack of experience, at the beginning of the strike, hundreds of strikers fought instinctively for mass picketing aimed at stopping production/distribution.

The problem

What strikers have found difficult to overcome, have been the anti-labor laws, the police violence, and the combined opposition of almost the entire leadership of the U.S. labor movement to any kind of all-out mobilization of the U.S. labor movement to stop these scab papers.

The problem hasn't been just the local leaders of the striking unions. The national leadership of the CWA and the national leadership of the Teamsters haven't taken any kind of stand in favor of mass action aimed at

stopping production and distribution. One newspaper striker talked to Ron Carey, president of the Teamsters, at a rally for Carey in Detroit. Carey said that he had *not* been in favor of a national labor march on Detroit; that one big action was not enough. (One big action isn't enough, so let's not do any big actions?) In the fall of 1995, when mass picketing at distribution centers was getting bigger and more militant, the UAW suddenly said that UAW halls could no longer be used as gathering places. Rumors went around that UAW leaders thought pickets were being too violent; they hadn't touched a single scab, but they had smashed up some empty scab cars. Recent events confirmed these rumors. AFL-CIO aids recently organized picketing at a *U.S.A Today* plant in Port Huron, in collaboration with UAW leaders from Region 1A. These leaders said if there were any "violence" that the UAW would pull out. When police came to break up the picket line, picketers were instructed to simply "sit-down" and practice "non-violent civil disobedience." What's the point in organizing a picket line, if you aren't going to make it big enough and firm enough to be effective?

The new leaders of the AFL-CIO have been no better. After stalling for months on whether they would organize a national labor march on Detroit in solidarity with strikers, they finally said: no. They said there is a plan to "settle" the strike that doesn't include a national labor march. Needless to say, none of the strikers have been able to see or vote on this "plan."

A bourgeois labor machine

So the problem facing strikers isn't just corporations and private and public police who want to destroy their unions. It's also a huge bourgeois labor machine using its authority and its resources to stop workers from organizing and mobilizing themselves in the biggest way possible against their enemies.

Naturally, even the most working class, thoughtful and devoted workers can't learn how to overcome problems like these overnight. It's going to take more big struggles, and probably more defeats, before thousands of workers learn to overcome the combined opposition of the corporations, the police, and the bourgeois labor machine to their struggles.

This process of learning is already under way with the struggles at P-9, Staley, Caterpillar, Bridgestone-Firestone, the *Detroit News* and *Free Press*, and the formation of the Labor Party. Hundreds of workers see much more clearly what kind of society this is and what kinds of struggles are going to be necessary to change it.

Tasks

What can Detroit newspaper strikers and their supporters do to help this process along, to make it go as quickly and painlessly as possible?

1. Stick to your principles. An injury to one is an injury to all. Solidarity. Take a stand against any settlement that doesn't provide for all striking workers. For example, if the union leadership says it's not possible to get back all jobs at the *News* and the *Free Press* with union rights, demand that the union leadership find comparable union jobs for all striking workers in accord with seniority, through expanding the *Journal*, through different unions, the auto industry, or some other unionized workplace. The AFL-CIO is a huge, wealthy organization. Funds to the Democrats could be cut and used to establish a special fund to hire strikers as union organizers. Union officials' salaries could be cut to the level of the average unionized worker and the funds could be used to hire strikers as union organizers.

2. Continue to speak in favor of mass action aimed at stopping production/distribution as the way to get the best settlement and for union democracy, including the right to make motions and vote on all issues, the right to elect strike committees to lead the strike, and the right to recall and replace leaders who don't carry out the decisions of the majority. Just because rank-and-file workers may not have the forces necessary to organize these kinds of actions at this time, doesn't mean that they shouldn't continue to push for the unions to go in this

direction.

3. Join the labor party; build the labor party. Turn the labor party into a school where the most advanced working class fighters from different unions and struggles can learn everything possible from each other.

4. Campaign for Doug Young and other independent working class candidates in the '96 elections. Campaigning for workers' candidates is a way to build support for workers and their struggles and draw more workers into the struggle. Democrats and Republicans aren't campaigning for workers!

5. Study Marxism. Marxism is the struggle to see what is going on in this society as clearly as possible, to see how the working class, the capitalist class, and the other classes are developing, to see how the working class can best emancipate itself from the oppression and exploitation of the capitalist class and build a new society in which the working class can be comfortable, a socialist society. The more workers study Marxism, the more they will be able to apply the lessons of 150 years of working class struggle throughout the world to today's struggles. The bosses hire specialists to study the labor movement and the oppressed population and to figure out how to keep them down. Workers have to study, too. — M. Guttshall □

New Life is a socialist bulletin published in the interests of the labor party movement. New Life is a supporter of International Workers Unity, a tendency of the Fourth International, the world party of the socialist revolution, founded by Leon Trotsky and his co-thinkers. Signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of New Life. These are expressed in editorials. Editorial Board: Margaret Guttshall, Tim James, Kim Morgan, Fred Russo.

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Why young people need to study Marx

As young people we often find ourselves looking around at our world without a clear understanding of what we are seeing. We see injustice, a lack of equality, poverty, etc. But we are not given any basis for understanding the cause of these problems facing our world. Many of us spend most of our lives thinking these things are just part of life we must accept. Others try to rally to causes to end these, but because of the lack of a real perspective become overwhelmed and burn out before long. Young people have the energy and strength to combat these and many more problems. However, most lack the perspective that they need to address them in a correct way. That perspective is Marxism.

Marxism provides us with a perspective that most of us were not taught in school — a working class perspective. It also provides us with a history that schools don't teach — the history of the class struggle. It gives an outlook to the world around us that newspapers, textbooks, and TV won't. Using the tools that Marxism provides can answer many questions facing young people. Marxism provides a much needed foundation for us to understand our world and shows us a correct course in dealing with situations in the world as they arise, and helps in making correct decisions in this situation.

Organizations that develop from Marxism also provided much for young people. They give young people a role in building a movement that will shape the future. Youth play a decisive role in a movement, allowing young people to direct their energy in a positive and revolutionary direction, provide us with a way to develop our abilities, to have ourselves heard, and work with like-minded people. It provides us with education and training we could never be given in any current university or school.

Marxism shows the only way forward for the working class and because of this it is extremely important for all young people to study the works of Karl Marx. Without the proper understanding that Marxism provides, many young people will find themselves unable to correctly deal with the world around them in the coming years.—Tim James □

No more blood for oil! Hands off Iraq!

The U.S. has bombed Iraq once again. It continues to maintain the economic sanctions which prevent Iraq from selling oil.

It is trying to control the Middle East, where the largest reservoirs of available oil in the world are.

The U.S. wants governments that will do what it wants. Governments of warlords and clan leaders (the so-called kings of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, etc.) suit it fine.

Saddam Hussein, the president of Iraq, reflects, in a distorted way, the Iraqi people. Just like most people in the U.S., the Iraqis want to control their natural resources and their country. They resent the attacks of the U.S. inside their country. That is why Saddam Hussein is still in power.

The U.S. is attacking the Iraqi people in trying to overthrow Saddam Hussein. The U.S. bombed Iraq in September after plans to overthrow Saddam Hussein failed in June and July.

Early this year, Clinton signed a secret directive authorizing \$20 million for a Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) operation to overthrow Saddam Hussein. This was the largest CIA operation since Afghanistan in the 1980s.

The campaign included a plot by a few bribed members of Hussein's Revolutionary Guard to kill Hussein. The plot yielded one little bomb exploding in a building several minutes after Hussein left.

Another plot included trying to use the struggle of the Kurdish people for independence to overthrow Hussein.

The Kurds

For many years, the Kurds have been waging an almost constant war in the region for a country of their own. They have been fighting with Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Syria. These countries have been, for many years, more or less pawns of the big powers, the U.S., Britain and France.

Differences between different clans of the Kurds have been exaggerated and intensified by the big powers with money, false promises, etc. In this way they have weakened the unity of the Kurdish people and prevented them from achieving independence.

In all the treaties and diplomatic discussions, the U.S. has opposed an independent Kurdistan. An independent Kurdistan would weaken U.S. control of the region.

The CIA supplied weapons to different groups of Kurds. In particular, they tried to use one faction to go after Saddam Hussein. But this plot failed in late July.

"All these efforts and plots are best summed up as pathetic," grumbled one U.S. official.

Some Kurdish factions turned to Iran and Iraq for support.

Turkish soldiers have been crossing the border into Iraq attacking the Kurds before and after the Gulf War. But the Turkish government does what the U.S. wants it to. Iranian troops have crossed into Iraq in clashes with some Kurds.

However, when Iraqi troops were invited into Kurdistan by a leading Kurdish organization, and no one has denied that they were, then the U.S. decides this is an attack on the Kurds, a violation of UN resolutions and orders the bombing. What hypocrisy!

Did the U.S. bomb Iraqi positions near Kurdistan? No. They bombed targets near Kuwait, in the south where the oil is.

Secretary of Defense Perry said: "The clear and present danger that Saddam Hussein poses to ... the flow of oil to the world" is the reason for the military action.

The action was so outrageous that out of all the big powers of Europe only Britain supported the bombing. Out of all the Arab states, only Turkey supported it.

War hurts U.S. workers

The failed CIA plot and the bombing are a sign of the weakness of the U.S. Since the Vietnam War, the U.S. has not been able to control natural resources of other countries through puppet regimes as it had before. More and more it must use brute force — bombs and invasions.

But, brute force cost lots of money and lots of lives of U.S. workers. Thousands of U.S. service people are suffering from the Gulf War.

The Pentagon is trying to blame this suffering on Iraq. In early August, the Pentagon made public a report that there were "chemical weapons" used in the 1991 Gulf War. On

August 28, the Pentagon again released information saying that a specific Iraqi arms depot, destroyed in 1991, held chemical weapons. U.S. soldiers who destroyed this arms depot have a high rate of problems resulting from chemical exposures. This is the first admission by the U.S. government that they knew, as far back as 1991, that U.S. soldiers were exposed to life-threatening chemicals. So much for the "smart war."

No independent reputable source has ever verified the presence of chemical weapons in Iraq. It is most likely that the soldiers are suffering from exposure to the burning oil fields, which released toxic chemicals by the ton.

One of the reasons the CIA operations were launched is because the military presence in the Gulf has cost billions of dollars. By overthrowing Hussein, the U.S. hoped to remove the ships, planes and troops from the Gulf region.

But, even if the plots had succeeded, the ships, planes and troops would be back soon. The people of the Middle East, and of the world, will not allow the big powers to control their resources any more.

At the same time that the U.S. bombed Iraq, the Mexican revolutionaries organized raids against police and military installations. The Mexican people are suffering. Their government is paying back loans from U.S. banks by giving them all the profits from the sale of oil.

There was also a general strike by Palestinians in Israel who are fighting for their own country.

Both these mobilizations show the future: as long as the U.S. tries to control other people's resources and prevent other peoples from controlling their own destiny, there will be uprisings and wars.

U.S. workers should oppose the bombing of Iraq and the continued economic sanctions. The U.S. is not fighting for Kurdish rights. It wants to control somebody else's oil and country.

In many ways the Iraqi people are just like U.S. workers. Many of them are workers. They want to live comfortably in peace. U.S. workers have a lot more in common with these people than they do with the rich owners of the oil companies. — Fred Russo □