SOCIALISM!

CONTINUING NEW LIFE, A SOCIALIST BULLETIN FOR THE LABOR PARTY

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The UPS workers' strike and the UPS workers' contract are important victories for the working class. The 185,000 man/woman strike shows the kind of huge, massive, working class action necessary to push back the owners of giant multi-national corporations and the governments that they own.

Every worker should fight for his/her union to begin to prepare for this kind of huge working class action to fight for more jobs, higher minimum wages, more equal pay for equal work, and other demands essential to the working class. Workers also need to fight for union leaders prepared to organize and lead these kinds of actions, and get rid of the leaders who are servile to the owners and use the Labor Movement to enrich themselves at the expense of the workers.

These steps are very important. They are essential. But, by themselves, they won't solve the problems facing the working class and the organized Labor Movement.

The Labor Movement needs to make a united fight for laws favorable to the working class and for a Labor Government based on an independent mass mobilization to carry out and enforce these laws - like a shorter work week without cutting pay, a \$10/hour minimum wage, and the abolition of all anti-labor laws.

As long as the corporate bosses own all the property and as long as the government is a government of the corporate bosses, workers won't be able to make any big, lasting progress. They will always have to fight. They will never have peace.

With pro-labor laws and a Labor Government based on an independent mass mobilization to enforce them, workers will be able to make progress and have some peace.

The foundation of the Labor Party and its campaign for the 28th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution — "Every person shall have the right to a job and to receive a living wage for their work" - is an important step in this direction. Every worker, every unionist, every socialist, should support it, with enthusiasm and energy.

UPS workers, **Labor Party** show the way!



UPS workers went on strike for more full-time jobs and won.

Inside:

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The UPS workers' strike and the Labor Party

The UPS workers' strike and their contract are important steps forward for the working class and the organized Labor Movement.

Over 185,000 workers struck, including thousands of young, part-time, men and women workers of different ethnic groups. They stopped almost all distribution of packages by UPS and won wide-spread public support, in spite of the inconvenience that the strike caused.

After 15 days, they forced the owners to make important concessions — more full-time jobs, higher wages for part-timers, more restrictions on subcontracting to non-union firms. The union leadership also made some concessions according to some reports. It agreed that the owners don't have to hire more full-timers if there is a recession; it agreed to some changes in work rules that will mean that some UPS workers will be doing more work. But, at this moment, it looks like most UPS workers are convinced they got more than they gave.

There are lots of things that can be learned by the struggle of the UPS workers and their union, the International Brotherhood of Teamsters.

Lessons

The UPS workers' strike shows that Labor can organize a big strike and make important gains. It shows the kinds of issues that Labor needs to fight on, and the size and strength of actions necessary to win broad public support, that is, support from the working class and lower-middle class population. Many have pointed out that millions of working people sympathized with the struggle of the workers and their union for full-time jobs with living wages. There is no question about this. But it was also the size and the strength of the action that won support. The strike was so big, and in a sector that affected so many people, that it was impossible to ignore the issues and the strike. Business as usual was impossible. Working people, oppressed people, had to stop and think about the issues and where they stood.

This is an important lesson because it runs contrary to the policies of the majority of the leadership of the Labor Movement, which often tries to organize actions that are as small and unobtrusive as possible.

The UPS workers' strike was prepared by a struggle inside the Teamsters' union for



UPS workers stop trucks in Rhode Island with mass picketing.

many years. In the 1960s, working class and socialist militants who worked for UPS, and in other Teamster-organized workplaces, were fighting for the union to adopt more working class, militant and democratic policies and for a union leadership willing to fight for these policies. They formed a rankand-file caucus, Teamsters for a Democratic Union (TDU), which played a critical role in discrediting the old policies and leaders, ousting them, and replacing them with more working class, militant, democratic policies and leaders, like Ron Carey.

Workers who look at the UPS workers' strike and the Teamsters' union and say to themselves, "What we need are more big strikes, for the most important issues, and union leaders willing to prepare and organize these strikes," are absolutely right. Workers who say to themselves, "I am going to fight for my union to have policies and leaders more like the Teamsters, and form a caucus to promote this," are also absolutely right.

But it would be a mistake to think that this, by itself, can resolve the most serious problems facing the working class.

Laws

Labor needs to make a united fight for *laws* favorable to the working class — like a shorter work week without cutting pay, a \$10/hour minimum wage that goes up automatically with inflation, unlimited access to the best healthcare for all, unlimited access to the best education for all, abolishing laws that restrict labor, etc. Labor needs to fight for a Labor Government, based on an independent mass mobilization, to carry out and enforce these laws and crush the resistance of the rich bankers and businessmen.

As long as Labor keeps on limiting itself to taking on the rich corporate bosses, corporation by corporation, Labor is never going to make big, lasting progress in improving the conditions of all working people. Labor needs to take on the owners of the banks and corporations as a class, in the name of and in the interests of all working people, as a class.

As long as Labor continues to limit itself to take on the owners, corporation by corporation, then the owners are going to continue to succeed in playing off one sector of the working class against another. For example, it is clear that the owners have a policy of making certain concessions to workers and unions in the biggest corporations and the biggest unions — GM, Ford, Chrysler, UPS - at the same time that they have a policy of exploiting smaller groups of workers in smaller unions, and unorganized workers, as much as they possibly can. For example, autoworkers who don't work for the Big Three but for subsidiaries and suppliers, or Detroit newspaper workers.

At the very same time that the capitalists decided to make concessions to the UPS workers and to the Teamsters' union on the UPS workers' issues, they decided to strike a terrible blow against the Detroit newspaper workers and not give an inch to the Teamsters' and the Communications Workers of America (CWA) on the Detroit newspaper workers' issues.

Should Labor go along with this policy? Should we celebrate the UPS workers' victory and forget about the Detroit newspaper workers? Or should the biggest and most powerful groups of workers and their unions use their power to fight openly for all working people?

How can the biggest and strongest groups of workers and their unions use their power to fight for all working people? How can Labor unify all working people against the capitalists? How can Labor achieve fundamental, lasting changes in the conditions of all working people?

We are convinced that the best way to do this is to fight for *laws* in the interests of working people on the most important issues facing working people and for a Labor Government based on an independent mass mobilization to carry out and enforce these laws. The capitalists have their own security guards, trained in the most advanced methods and armed to the teeth, Vance, Huffmaster, etc. Labor needs its own security guards.

The Labor Party

The foundation of the Labor Party and the Labor Party's campaign for the 28th Amendment — "Every person shall have the right to a job and to receive a living wage for their work" — are first steps in this direction. The Labor Party and its 28th Amendment Campaign deserve the enthusiastic and energetic support of every working class and socialist militant.

Unfortunately, too many working class and socialist militants are stuck in a very narrow, trade unionist way of looking at and trying to resolve problems. They don't see the future of the working class and their own place in it.

This is very unfortunate because the more clearly workers and working class militants can see and prepare the future, the more rapidly we will achieve it and leave the suffering and misery that characterize capitalist society behind.

Marxism

Another aspect of the problem is that most working class militants, including most trade union and socialist militants, are not educated as dialectical materialists, that is, revolutionary Marxists. Their thinking and their actions are very much influenced by the bourgeoisie and by bourgeois idealism. Dialectical materialists, revolutionary Marxists, look at what is happening in the world as a process of development and conflict. They try to see clearly what is taking place in different developments and conflicts and to see what is the class character of various tendencies involved in various developments and conflicts. They work to differentiate the more working class tendencies from the more bourgeois tendencies and to support the most working class tendencies against the more bourgeois tendencies. They do this because they are convinced that the more the working class separates itself from the capitalist class and develops itself as an independent force, the closer it comes to its own emancipation, to building a new, working class, revolutionary socialist society, in which those who produce the wealth will call the shots and be comfortable.

Bourgeois idealists on the other hand may look at things that are happening, decide they don't like the way they look, develop a different scheme, and then try to make reality correspond to their schemes. We see the influence of bourgeois idealism in the Labor Movement alot, even in the most radical wing of the Labor Movement. Lots of people are for a Labor Party, but they don't like the way this Labor Party looks, so they don't support it. Lots of people think the Labor Party ought to have some kind of national campaign, but they don't like this national campaign — the 28th Amendment campaign - so they don't support it, or they support it only in words.

They ignore the fact that a real conflict is going on in the real world between the Labor Party and its campaign for the 28th Amendment and the bourgeoisie, its Republican and Democratic Parties, its agents in the Labor Movement, and their campaign to convince workers that they don't have a basic right to a job and a living wage, they ought to be happy with whatever they can get.

In the conflicts between the classes, dialectical materialists, revolutionary Marxists, always strive to see and take the side of the working class and developments favorable to the working class, even when they are contradictory. Bourgeois idealists don't. They often end up being "neutral" or even on the wrong side.

The UPS workers' strike and their contract show the way forward for the working class. So also does the Labor Party and its campaign for the 28th Amendment. Support them both! — M. Guttshall \square

On the UPS picketline

I went out to walk the line with striking Teamsters at some local distribution centers this past week. At the Livonia center I found an interesting development. The pickets were camped at three points. One with mostly young part-timers; another with workers in their 30s and 40s; the last one with older workers and retirees. As I walked up to the first group, they were very energetic and vocal. They were trying to get passers-by to honk and pull over and join in. While talking to them, they said their big concerns were fulltime jobs, money and health coverage. Most were happy the union was making a stand and knew the only way they could get their concerns met was through being out. However, they were hoping for a short strike because they could not afford for it to last long.

As I worked my way to the second group, they were more orderly than the younger picketers, in a circle formation in the drive way and carrying on conversation. Talking to them, they were more worried about the pension than anything else. They were also worried that they might get caught in a power play between the

union and management over pension control, but they did feel that the union was in the right. They seemed to feel that the strike wouldn't last too long and they would be back to work soon. They were also very appreciative of all the support they were getting, especially the newspaper strikers who had come to walk with them.

The third group was a little more laid back in their strike tactics, joking that they'd let the youngsters do the picketing until a problem occurs and then they'd take care of business. They agreed that the pension was a big issue but not the only one. They felt that more jobs were needed. They said that they'd seen too many jobs lost over the years and replaced with part-time workers. One even said his son was 25 and still living at home because he couldn't find full-time work and that it's a shame young people can't make it, that the union needed to work on issues like that.

In all, every worker I talked to supported the union decision to strike. Solidarity with striking workers! — Tim James □

Detroit newspaper workers — what now?

On Thursday, August 14, Judge John Corbett O'Meara announced his decision *not* to order the owners of Gannett and Knight-Ridder to recall Detroit newspaper workers.

This decision is a serious blow to Detroit newspaper workers and to the whole labor movement in the Detroit area. Many newspaper workers have been counting on the Judge and his decision to force the owners to take them back.

But the biggest blow is not the Judge's decision. This decision was not a surprise to workers convinced that legal personnel are beholden to and/or owned and controlled by the same corporate bosses trying to destroy the unions.

The biggest blow

The biggest blow is the response of the leadership of the labor movement in the Detroit area to this decision.

The Detroit Sunday Journal, the publication of the leadership of the Detroit newspaper workers' unions, says that the union leadership is going to appeal the decision in the courts. Newspaper workers reported that the union leadership plans to pick about 50 strikers and send them "on the road" to organize demonstrations against the owners of Gannett and Knight-Ridder. Monday, August 18, a union staff person admitted that a boycott of USA Today isn't going to have much impact, because USA Today is read largely by older white businessmen and so many copies are given away free.

Leaders of the UAW and the Detroit AFL-CIO have denounced the decision, but have not announced any plans to mobilize labor against it.

The problem facing working people and organized labor in the Detroit area is not "on the road." Little positive for the working class will be gained by sending Detroit newspaper workers "on the road."

The problem facing working people and organized labor is right here — in downtown Detroit and Sterling Heights.

The institutions that were supposed to be the guardians and purveyors of truth and justice—the daily papers—have been transformed into centers of vicious anti-worker, anti-union lies and hatred, protected by equally vicious Vance Guards, Detroit po-

lice, the Detroit "gang squad," the Sterling Heights police, and others. Every day this institution sends out teams of scum in trucks and cars to spread their anti-union filth throughout the Detroit metro area and the State of Michigan.

There is no point in locking the gates. The enemy is inside the gates. How long is it going to be before totally anti-union forces and their hired guns take over every inch of the Detroit metro area?

Meanwhile, the leadership of the labor movement in the Detroit area sticks it collective head in the sand and encourages Detroit newspaper workers to "hit the road" and fight the enemy ... someplace else.

That over two years have passed and the leadership of the labor movement in the Detroit area — newspaper workers' unions, UAW, Detroit AFL-CIO — still haven't even attempted an all-out labor mobilization against the anti-union gestapo within our midst shows, once again, that the labor movement in the Detroit area needs a new policy and a new leadership.

New policies

1. The UPS workers' strike and their contract show that it is possible to make progress against the owners with big, massive strikes. Detroit workers and their local unions should initiate a campaign for a oneday citywide strike against unionbusting, with mass picketing aimed at stopping production and distribution of the scab papers. This campaign for a one-day citywide strike can be a first step toward mobilizing labor against the enemy. The tour that Detroit newspaper workers ought to be on is not a tour of owners, scabs and their hangouts, it is a tour of Detroit area UAW locals with the goal of convincing them to commit to a one-day citywide strike. There are over 350,000 union members in the Detroit area. A one-day strike of over 350,000 unionists, family and friends would be a step forward.

2. Detroit workers and their unions should initiate a campaign for public ownership and union control of the Detroit papers. City officials have used the laws of eminent domain — confiscation of private property in the public interest — to confiscate workers' homes so that the auto bosses could build factories where they wanted. Why can't the laws of eminent domain be used to confis-

cate the Detroit papers so that Detroit area residents can have a daily paper not full of lies and Detroit newspaper workers can have jobs. Workers could circulate petitions and put this question on the ballot. Circulating a petition and putting the question on the ballot wouldn't be enough to accomplish the goal. But it is a way to reach the population in Detroit and convince them that this is the only way forward.

3. Labor unions in the Detroit area need to stop all forms of support to Republicans and Democrats and join the Labor Party, with the goal of fighting for political power, for a labor government based on an independent mass mobilization to carry out policies in the interests of working people. As long as the rich corporate bosses continue to own all the government officials, the armed forces, and the property, and labor has little or no government, armed forces, or property of its own, working people are going to continue to suffer.

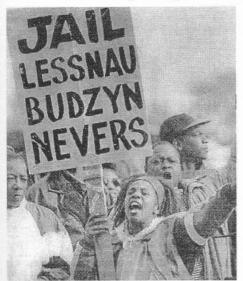
Jobs

Detroit newspaper workers and their families are worn out. They have been fighting for over two years - on picketlines, facing Vance Guards, dealing with defections and divisions in their midst, trying to figure out how to pay bills, care for children, etc. If the current leadership of the labor movement cannot guarantee that every worker will be back on the job by January 1, 1998, then they should find all newspaper workers decent union jobs somewhere else. All union funds should be devoted to this task. Money now earmarked for Democrats and Republicans in 1998 should be set aside for this task. All union officials' salaries and benefits should be cut to the level of the average worker that they represent and the extra funds should be set aside for this task and other tasks in the interests of rank-and-file workers.

Workers in the labor movement should be fighting for this kind of policy. Leaders who oppose this struggle should be replaced. Workers who lead this struggle should be advanced.

This is what revolutionary Trotskyists stand for. This is why we are hated, by the corporate bosses and the comfortable, self-satisfied union officials .— M.G. □

Solidarity against discrimination!



Killer cop released

Late last month, convicted murderer Walter Budzyn was released on bond. Budzyn was one of the police officers who beat to death laid-off steelworker Malice Green in November, 1992. His conviction was overturned by the State of Michigan Supreme Court. They said the jury that convicted him was unduly influenced by watching the film Malcolm X during their deliberations. This is a blatant miscarriage of justice which points once again to the preference the injustice system shows toward the police. At the same time that hundreds of black and poor men in Michigan are denied appeals of their illegal Felony Murder convictions and/or sentences, a white cop who killed a black man is released and his conviction overturned.

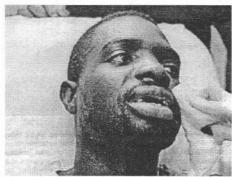
There were no matters of law in dispute. The prosecution did not use an FBI informant paid to lie, as in Geronimo Pratt's case. There wasn't even any new evidence or testimony suggesting Budzyn wasn't guilty as has been disallowed in Mumia Abu Jamal's case. Instead, the court chose to second-guess the jury's verdict because of things incidental to the case. The scene in the movie of Rodney King's beating by police was not news to any of the jurors. And the atmosphere of potential riot in the city did not affect Budzyn's jury any more than Larry Never's jury - whose conviction was not overturned. Yet it was Walter Budzyn who started beating Malice Green - who four witnesses testified was on top of him and hitting him with a flashlight hard enough that they could hear the victim's skull crack. It was Budzyn who responded with deadly force when the only resistance

Malice Green offered was to ask, "Why are you doing this to me?"

Walter Budzyn was finally caught and convicted after many years of complaints about his brutal treatment of black people in Detroit's 3rd precinct. He has no right to freely walk the streets. He must be punished. As it says at the sight of Malice Green's murder, "If you take someone else's life, you forfeit your own." This should apply to cops at least as much as to everyone else.

Thousands protest police brutality

One week after Abner Louima was brutally beaten and tortured there, 5,000 demonstrators gathered outside the 70th precinct in Brooklyn, NY, to protest its history of violence against African Americans and immigrants. Neighborhood residents say that the community feels "occupied by the police."



Abner Louima in the hospital.

Many say the case of Abner Louima is just the latest, most horrific example of systematic police abuse. On April 9th, Abner Louima, an immigrant from Haiti who works as a security guard, was arrested during his attempts to break up a fight outside a nightclub. Abner was beaten and then sodomized with the handle of a toilet plunger. During the assault officers shouted racial slurs at him and threatened to kill him if he filed a complaint. His intestine was punctured and his bladder was damaged.

Four cops who were directly involved were arrested and charged in the case. The precinct commanders were reassigned to other positions — not charged or fired. And no charges have been made against the other cops — including supervisors — who were at the precinct but did nothing to stop Abner Louima's torture.

New York City Mayor Guiliani has created a task force to "improve the relationship between the police and the community." Clearly this is his attempt to control damage to his reputation and that of the police department. After all, Guiliani — who based his election on "fighting crime" — has fought independent policing of the police, including cutting funding from the Civilian Complaint Review Board.

We must not be satisfied with Guiliani's (or any other bourgeois politician's) claims to clean up police departments. They seek to maintain the status quo; they don't challenge the *role* of the police — which is to enforce the interests of the ruling class on the working class, especially the most oppressed layers of the working class. The police themselves must be eliminated, along with their privileges. We can organize our own community patrols for our own protection.

Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!

Reprinted from FREEDOM NOW!, a newsletter from the Detroit Coalition to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal, July, 1997

The latest round in the legal battle for a new trial for Mumia Abu-Jamal saw a new witness, Pamela Jenkins, testify that Philadelphia police had approached her to testify against Mumia even though she was not at the scene of the shooting. She also revealed that the prosecution's key witness, Cynthia White, had been a police informant and is still being hidden by the police from Mumia's legal team. This is crucial because White's role as a police informant was hidden from the defense and is grounds for a new trial.

Stung by the new revelations, the D.A.'s office suddenly claimed that Cynthia White was dead. The only evidence they could produce was a death certificate for a Cynthia Williams, whose fingerprint code was different from the fingerprint code listed for Cynthia White.

Judge Sabo refused to hear any further witnesses who had seen Cynthia White alive recently and declared, "As far as I'm concerned, she's dead. I'm making a ruling. We're finished."

The findings of these hearings will be sent to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, as they will rule whether or not Mumia Abu-Jamal will get a new trial.

To call the Pennsylvania Supreme Court to support a new trial for Mumia: 215-560-1808. For further information, call 313-568-9870. — K. Morgan □

Support Socialist Workers candidates in Detroit

The Socialist Workers Party (SWP) is running three candidates for office in the Detroit city elections. While they do not support the Labor Party itself, they fight for many issues the Labor Party stands for. Until we build the base necessary for the Labor Party to run serious candidates for political office, we can support these working class candidates against the capitalist candidates. They have taken stands in solidarity with workers' struggles and against union busting; for jobs for all and against corporate welfare; for affirmative action and against attacks on immigrants; for public works programs and against police brutality. They oppose the parties of the rich, and offer an alternative, pro-worker agenda.

Democrats

Though workers in general — organized labor and African Americans in particular - have traditionally supported Democratic Party candidates, they have habitually betrayed us. This has been demonstrated very clearly during the last two years of the Detroit newspaper workers' strike. While trying to appear objective, Mayor Dennis Archer has done nothing to help the newspaper strikers. He has gained support from some strikers by occasional innuendoes that suggested he might support them. But the result of his inaction has been to assist the DNA's assault on the strikers and their unions. He could have refused to send police to defend scabs and attack strikers on picket lines. Instead, Detroit police defended the company and frequently arrested picketers. (Just because the Detroit police weren't as consistently brutal as the Sterling Heights police doesn't mean we should applaud them.) Together with the City Council, it was Archer's responsibility to stop the assaults by Vance guards (and police) and pass a resolution against scab labor in the city of Detroit. This would have been *real* support for the striking newspaper workers.

Workers' interests

Candidates who support workers' interests do not kow-tow to corporations, as Archer has to General Motors, for example, in their attempts to dump their old building on the city workers. Candidates who support workers' interests demand that corporations stop their devastation of our city — and pay for its renovation. Working class candidates don't talk about giving tax breaks to corporations in the hopes that they might provide jobs — they talk about mandating a 30-hour week for 40 hours pay to create more jobs. Here are some of the things SWP candidates say:

*Jobs for all: We demand: Shorten the work week with no cut in pay!

*For a massive public works program: We demand federal funds to create jobs at a living wage — \$12/hour — to rebuild roads, repair street lights, build new schools, hospitals, child care centers and libraries, provide new and expanded recreational areas and build the best quality housing at rents working people can afford.

*Stop attacks on the social wage: Welfare

payments, Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid and subsidized housing must be defended and extended as long as workers are paid low wages and face unemployment.

*Defend and extend affirmative action: Preferential hiring for workers who are Black, Latino and women are crucial [...to] unite working people in a fight-back against the bosses' attacks and their never-ending drive to use racism and sexism to pit us against each other.

*Solidarity with workers' struggles: We stand in solidarity with the Teamsters against United Parcel Service. We support the fight of the locked-out Detroit newspaper workers to win back their jobs. We stand behind the struggles of autoworkers to create more jobs at Big Three auto plants.

*Defend immigrant rights. Stop deportations: Immigrant workers, driven by economic devastation in their countries of origin, should not be forced to give up their human rights when they come across the border seeking employment. They are entitled to all of the protections guaranteed native born workers. Their presence in the U.S. strengthens the labor movement.

*Stop police brutality: Arrest, convict and jail killer cops. We demand that Walter Budzyn be immediately retried for the murder of Malice Green.

These positions are true to the interests of all workers. They are worthy of our support and our votes. —K. Morgan □

Rosa Garmendia



Rosa is the SWP candidate for Mayor of Detroit. She is a meat packer at Thorn Apple Valley and a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union.

Willie M. Reid



Willie is an SWP candidate for Detroit City Council. She is a machine operator at American Axle Manufacturing and a member of the United Auto Workers Union.

John Sarge



John is an SWP candidate for Detroit City Council. He is an assembly worker at the Ford Michigan Truck Assembly Plant and a member of the United Auto Workers Union.

Why the Labor Party needs the Trotskyists

The Labor Party is a little over a year old and some elements within it have already started to talk against the "Trotskyists" or the "Trots." Anti-Trotskyist elements say that the Trotskyists are "splitters" or "wreckers." Some even go so far as to suggest that some Trotskyists are agents of the bosses and/or the police. "In whose interest is it," they ask, with knowing looks on their faces, "to impede the Labor Party?"

There is no question that there are some elements and tendencies that claim to be Trotskyists that have played a destructive role in the Labor Movement. Both the Workers League and the Spartacist League are very middle class and sectarian. They are very hostile to the Labor Party. They say that it is little or nothing but opportunist trade union bureaucrats. Worst of all, they have a history of accusing tendencies that they disagree with of being police agents.

The Revolutionary Workers League is also a very middle class, sectarian group. During the Detroit newspaper workers' strike, they put out pages and pages of literature saying that their group was the only group fighting for mass picketing to stop production and distribution of the scab papers. In fact, 2,000 newspaper workers voted for and fought for mass picketing. This literature, and their refusal to accept the decisions of picket captains, made it easier for the backward and timid leadership of the strike to isolate workers and militants that continued to fight for mass picketing after the injunction banning mass picketing.

The Socialist Workers Party, which is the largest group that has come out of the Trotskyist tradition, although it no longer calls itself Trotskyist and exaggerates the differences between Lenin and Trotsky, can also be quite sectarian. The SWP did not support the struggle to recall the racist L.A. police chief, the head of the police at the time they beat Rodney King. Nor did the SWP support the struggle against NAFTA, the Labor Party, or the Detroit newspaper workers' fight for a national labor march on Detroit.

There are also Trotskyists within the Labor Party who can be quite sectarian. They don't spend nearly as much time working to recruit workers to the Labor Party, as they do explaining to those who are already members what they think is wrong with the Labor Party. It never occurs to them that a massive influx of young workers and a good working class education program would go a long

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way to solving problems confronting the Labor Party.

As followers of the great Marxists, including Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky, and as Trotskyists, we would be the last to say that there are no bad elements who call themselves Trotskyists or that the Trotskyist movement has no problems.

But, with all their problems, Trotskyists have something to offer that no other tendency in the U.S. can offer.

Trotskyists have made a more consistent struggle for the *political independence* of the U.S. working class and for workers' democracy than any other tendency.

In the 1930s, when the Social Democrats, Stalinists and centrists were urging workers to look to Roosevelt and the Democratic Party to solve their problems, or were trying to avoid politics, Trotskyists argued that workers could not rely on Republicans or Democrats, that they needed their own political party.

Trotskyists led the famous Minneapolis Teamsters' strike that paved the way for the growth of the Teamsters' union as an industrial union, one of the most powerful unions in the U.S., and for the growth of the CIO. Trotskyists led the famous women's defense brigade during the Flint sit-down strike. Trotskyists led the struggle against U.S. participation in World War II and the fight against the union leadership's no-strike pledge. They argued that workers had nothing to gain by fighting workers of other nations, that the U.S. wasn't entering the War to fight fascism, but to gain raw materials and markets, which was shown by the U.S.'s refusal to give guns to the forces against fascism in Spain and France. When it did give guns, it did so with the goal of trying to take over movements and subordinate them to the capitalist war powers.

Trotskyists also led the post-WWII movement to "Bring the boys home now!" when the U.S. tried to keep U.S. troops in foreign countries to grab more for U.S. corporations. The Trotskyists were in the front ranks of the post-WWII strikewave, the movement for the Labor Party, and the struggle against McCarthyism.

Trotskyists were also the most consistent defenders of Malcolm X and the Black nationalist movement that began to emerge in the late 50s and early 60s. They defended the right of Black people to establish their own nation on U.S. soil and Malcolm X's right to speak his mind against opportunists.

Trotskyists led the giant movement against U.S. intervention in Vietnam, for immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. forces. They fought for a united front for immediate and unconditional withdrawal against opportunists in the Labor Movement who saw the struggle against U.S. imperialism in Vietnam as simply one struggle among others.

Throughout the 60s, 70s, 80s, and 90s, Trotskyists continued to speak out against Republicans and Democrats more consistently than any other tendency. They always argued that workers need their own political party and their own candidates. Trotskyists have never accepted the argument that workers can't do any better than the Republicans and Democrats. On many occasions, Trotskyists have run their own, working class candidates for public office.

Trotskyists have also consistently spoken out against the union leaderships' policies of collaboration with the bosses and the bosses parties and have fought for workers' democracy in the unions and working class organizations.

So, with this history, it should not be surprising that many Trotskyists are among the most devoted builders of the Labor Party and the strongest partisans within the Labor Party of devoting all labor resources to building the Labor Movement and the Labor Party, of cutting every single penny to the Republicans and Democrats, including Democrats that seem to be friends of Labor. A real friend to Labor will quit the Democratic Party and not leave it with anyone that it can use to disguise its real nature.

With all their problems — and these are a

Continued on page 11

Lift the blockade against Cuba!

Cuba is a nation of 11 million people 90 miles from the Florida coast. Cuba is beautiful. It has white sandy beaches, tall palms that sway in the ocean breezes, banana trees growing wild, brightly colored parrots.

Like the other islands of the Caribbean, it was, until the 1959 revolution, a playground for rich Americans. Verdadero Beach, considered to be one of the finest beaches in the world, was owned by the DuPonts and other rich Americans. No one of color could swim on that beach.

It once had a self-sufficient economy, supplying enough food for inhabitants. But the Spanish lords changed that. They killed the native peoples and imported African slaves to work on the plantations. By the 1860s, Cuba produced 1/3 of the world's sugar and had the latest in sugar manufacturing technology, largely from U.S. investments.

The Cuban people made several attempts to throw out the Spanish. A successful revolt in 1895 led by Jose Marti caused the U.S. army to intervene in 1898, claiming to support the revolution. But the U.S.'s goal was not independence for Cuba. The owners of the sugar plantations wanted to control Cuba for themselves.

The governments the U.S. installed ruled by assassination and repression and were linked to mobsters and senators in the U.S.

In 1958, Cuba had one of the highest per capita incomes in Latin America, \$358, but unemployment and underemployment were rampant, with sugar cane workers earning about \$90 a year. Foreign investors owned 75% of the land, 90% of the essential services, and 40% of the sugar production.

The 1959 revolution overthrew the Batista government, a puppet regime for U.S. corporations. The Cuban revolution was one of many revolutions for independence in the 60s (like Vietnam, the Belgian Congo, and so on). But, unlike many others, the Cubans were forced to nationalize U.S. property, establishing ties with the Soviet Union, to prevent the overthrow of the revolution.

Cuban revolution

The U.S. was so close, its influence in the area was so pervasive, and the influence of the Cuban capitalists in the U.S. government was so strong, that they forced the Cuban revolution to go much further down the revolutionary road than the leaders had originally planned. The Cuban leadership



A U.S. unionist and Cuban workers.

was forced to confiscate the property of U.S. and Cuban capitalists in order to take care of the elementary needs of the Cuban people. Cuba became a workers' state; it started on the road to socialism.

The U.S. cut off all trade with Cuba. Before, the U.S. had forced itself on Cuba. Through its puppet governments and its nearly complete ownership of the Cuban economy, the owners of U.S. corporations had become Cuba's main trading partners, with thousands of economic threads that interwove Cuba's economy with the U.S. Then, it cut off trade completely. The trade blockade had a devastating effect on Cuba. To prevent the collapse of the Cuban economy, the Soviet Union began to subsidize it, purchasing sugar at above market prices and supplying Cuba with oil, technical advice, etc.

With these measures, the Cuban people made significant advances in problems that plagued and continue to plague the rest of Latin America and all ex-colonies. They launched a campaign to eliminate illiteracy and created one of the most literate populations in the world, when 1/2 of Latin America remained illiterate. Starting from only 3,000 doctors in 1960 (3,000 fled after the revolution), the Cubans now have 55,000 doctors or one for every 200 people. They created a school system with compulsory, free education through the 9th grade.

Most of the workers work in state-owned industries; 3.8 million versus 800,000 who are either self-employed or work in the private sector. The wage differential between the lowest and highest paid in Cuban society is quite low compared to the U.S. where the bosses often make more than 300 times what

a worker makes!

One of the downsides of the political revolution that has begun in the Soviet Union is the end to subsidies for Cuba in 1989. This was a second blow to the Cuban economy. Even with nationalization of property and subsidies from the Soviet Union, the Cuban economy had not been able to make the transition to a fully developed industrial economy. Socialism anywhere requires support from the most advanced economies and biggest working classes.

Most of the buses in Cuba, for example, were made in the former Soviet Union or Eastern Europe. Now it is impossible to get parts. This holds true for much industry in Cuba. So, for a second time, the Cuban economy had been struck a powerful blow.

As a response to this economic crisis, the Cuban government began to ration food, oil and other essential commodities. There are blackouts because of fuel shortages.

In order to obtain hard currency to buy goods in the world market, the Cubans have been forced to allow large increases in tourism, in private enterprise in the tourist industry. It is now commonplace in Cuba to hear that waiters in the tourist hotels make more money than doctors.

In 1993, there were 310 Cuban pesos to the dollar. Now there are 22. The increase in the value of the Cuban peso came at the price of more capitalism in Cuba. The Cubans have made the dollar a legal currency in order to try to control black market trading in dollars. There is also a "convertible" Cuban peso, equivalent to a dollar, as well as the "nonconvertible" peso, which Cuban workers are paid in. It is not accepted in lots of shops.

Cuba remains a poor country. It does not have natural resources for industry like iron, coal or oil. It still relies on the sugar crop. The U.S. blockade hurts Cuba very much, now more than ever.

The recently passed Helm-Burton law attempts to punish any corporation owner that trades with Cuba. It even attempts to seize their assets to "recuperate losses" for U.S. corporations from the revolution 37 years ago. This law has not been implemented completely because of complaints from Canada, Europe, etc., that this is an attempt to control their trade. The U.S. government passed this bill in an attempt to crush Cuba at a vulnerable moment. But it has not suc-

ceeded. The Cuban people support their revolution too much to allow it to be over-thrown in this way.

The Cubans are forced to pay two or three times the world market price for everything they buy. Everything. Because, instead of buying it from across the street (the U.S.), they have to go half way around the world and pay whatever the others are asking.

It's analogous to being forced to shop at an expensive grocery store in another city. You can't shop at the K-Mart across the street; the grocery store owner knows it and sets his prices accordingly.

Cuba today

I just visited Cuba. All the things I saw showed me, whatever internal problems Cuba has and it has them, that lifting the U.S. blockade of Cuba is the most important thing U.S. workers and socialists can do for Cuba. It is the most important thing we can do to strengthen socialism in Cuba.

In the city, there are houses where people keep cows. Lots of people ride bicycles. The cars are either U.S. pre-1960 or more recent Soviet/East European models. Nearly all looked old and in bad shape. On workdays, the bus stops are full of people and all the buses are completely full. There are few restaurants or bars in the neighborhoods. The are few lights at night, except in the tourist areas.

Homes and apartment buildings need painting. Many also need maintenance.

As a sign of solidarity, the group I went with began painting the facade of the Havana metro local of the metalworkers' union.

As we painted, Cubans stopped to watch. After completing my turn, I started a conversation with two of them. One, a light-skinned man in his 30s, was a veteran of Angola and now worked for the government in building restoration. That was why he stopped. The other, his friend, was Black, a veteran of the 1959 revolution, and now

retired. He wore an official pin stating that he was a veteran of the revolution. Both spoke highly of the accomplishments of Cuban society — of health care for everyone, free education and full employment. They told us how much the blockade hurt Cuba.

Across the street, in the Ramblas, I talked to a young Black man, 25 years old. He showed me his ID card. He worked in Public Health as a mosquito fumigator. He said that if the festival were not on (he was referring to the World Youth Festival finishing that week). that he couldn't talk to us. He would be stopped by the police and possibly detained for speaking with foreigners. He said dollars were the currency that counted, and he was not paid in dollars. He said that he couldn't go to a disco without dollars. I asked if he had ever left the country, and he said he would never be able to, because it is too expensive. "I have never been to the U.S. or Jamaica." (Jamaica is only 48 miles away.) I asked him what the revolution of 1959 meant for him. He said it had pluses and minuses; it seemed mostly minuses.

It was Sunday, market day in Cuba. Down the street, farmers set up a scale. I saw three different open, flatbed trucks pull up. One had oranges of poor quality, later, one had onions, and still later, one with yams. People came out of the houses with shopping bags, stood in line, and bought these staples.

As people waited, the local office of the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution (CDRs) had entertainment. There were drummers and a dance/singing troupe entertained with native dances. The words were not Spanish. People gathered in the street and seemed to enjoy the show.

After painting, we had lunch — chicken with rice. We ate outside the office, across the street, on the steps of an old house. An elderly woman came by and began to scold us, saying, "You can have chicken because you have dollars, no?"

Later, I had a discussion with a Cuban Com-



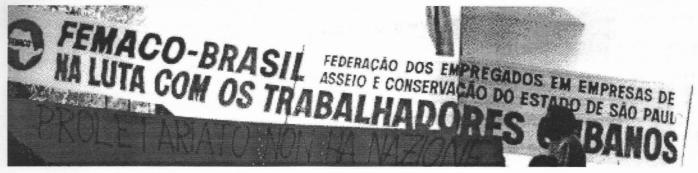
munist Party liaison to the union local we had painted. She confirmed that there are laws or rules that say that to talk to foreigners you must have a permit. The reasoning is that many Cubans will approach tourists and try to obtain hard foreign currency through selling them services or goods. This may drive tourists away so it is forbidden.

When we visited the national newspapers of Cuba, *Granma*, *Los Trabajadores* and *Juventud Rebelde*, we learned that all were once daily newspapers. Now, *Granma* is published 5 days a week and the others on the remaining days. The same cuts in publishing hold for regional newspapers throughout Cuba.

In Cuba, people often don't start working until they are 24 years old, after completing school. Men may retire at 60 and women at 55. With free health care and education, the editorial director said, "We have services like a developed country, but we are not that developed." Although he had worked 24 years for the paper, he thought that he would not be able to retire at 60. He thought that Cuba would soon have to change these policies because it could not afford them.

Some of the delegation visited a state-owned engine factory, which manufactures 400 engines a year for Cuban buses. This is a very low production rate, equivalent to pre-assembly line rates in the U.S. The lack of

Brazilian union expresses solidarity with Cuban workers.



efficiency is due to the old equipment.

The Cubans have ended illiteracy, but they can't publish many books or newspapers because ink and paper are so expensive. They have many doctors, but not much medicine, because they must pay premium rates for medicines imported from Europe. They have state-owned industry, but it remains inefficient. It is difficult to advance it technologically without the ability to buy new technology in the open market. State planning of the economy helps, but planning cannot create resources that the country does not have.

U.S. workers, U.S. unions, need to support the struggle to end the blockade, normalize relations with Cuba. U.S. workers can't make any big progress against the owners of U.S. banks and corporations who are making workers suffer here, if U.S. workers don't support the struggles of all workers against these same banks and corporations. The U.S. tries to justify the blockade against Cuba on the grounds that Castro and the Cuban Communist Party are undemocratic. But the U.S. isn't concerned about democracy for workers in Cuba. It's only concerned about democracy for the rich owners of U.S. banks and corporations.

There are powerful forces in the U.S. who want to punish Cuba. They want to make an example of Cuba. These rich people and the politicians that support them don't want working people in other countries to try to free themselves from the grip of the U.S. banks and corporations.

The recently passed Helms-Burton law is an extension of NAFTA. NAFTA allows U.S. banks and corporations to go wherever they want and do whatever they want, regardless of the interests of the people in the U.S. and elsewhere. Helms-Burton says that the U.S. can punish any bank, corporation or country that trades with Cuba, precisely because Cuba won't allow U.S. banks and corporations to do whatever they want, regardless of the consequences.

Ending the blockade and normalizing relations with Cuba will mean that a people can stand up to corporate greed, stand up to the demands of U.S. corporations and force the U.S. government to recognize its rights as a nation; that a nation can seize the property of U.S. corporations, if that is what it takes to take care of its people. Ending the blockade will be a victory for all workers fighting corporate greed, fighting to stop the complete domination of working people by the

rich owners of the giant corporations.

Many polls indicate that a very large percentage of people are for lifting the blockade and normalizing relations. But that's not enough to get it. Workers should support resolutions in the unions demanding the end to the blockade and normal relations with Cuba. In this effort, they will be joining with other international unions, including the Canadian Labour Congress, the British Trade Union Councils, and other major unions of Europe.

There needs to be a united front of all workers, all socialists who want to end the U.S. blockade of Cuba, repeal Helms-Burton, and establish normal relations with Cuba, without regard to other factional considerations.

In Cuba, the first nation to start on the road to socialism in our hemisphere, there is great hope and great possibilities for the future. We need to get the U.S. government off its back. — Fred Russo □

Defending Cuba

In order to defend Cuban working people against U.S. banks and corporations and their attempts to starve the Cuban people, the most important task in the U.S. is to fight for lifting the U.S. blockade, for repealing the Helms-Burton Law and all laws that restrict trade and communication with Cuba, and for withdrawal of all U.S. troops from Cuba now stationed in Guantanamo. The Labor Movement and the Labor Party need to take a stand against these laws and push for their repeal, as an elementary act of solidarity with working people of another country.

But this is not the only task that is necessary to defend Cuba and the gains of the workers' revolution in Cuba.

It is important to support and promote all working class and popular struggles against U.S. banks and corporations. The more U.S. capitalists find themselves confronted on all sides by working class and popular struggles, the more difficult it will be for them to persecute Cuba.

It is important to build support for working class socialism and communism. Much of U.S. workers' prejudices against Cuba are a result of their prejudices against socialism. They don't see that socialism is the only way that poor workers have been able to make any substantial progress. They don't see that socialism is the only way that U.S. workers are going to make any big progress. They think that working class socialist revolution inevitably leads to a privileged dictatorial bureaucracy like the ones seen in Russia and China. They don't realize that these are extremely serious but temporary problems that have arisen in the struggle for workers revolutionary democracy, socialism, and, eventually a classless society in which everyone has what he or she needs.

Finally, in order to best defend Cuba against U.S. imperialism, it is important to defend working class tendencies that arise that defend the conquests of the socialist revolution in Cuba (state ownership of property, the state monopoly on foreign trade, and the gains of the workers based on them) and that are fighting for more equality in jobs and wages for Cuban workers, for more freedom for Cuban workers, for more direct workers' control of the economy and the society, and for a more working class government, against the privileges and power of the bureaucracy in and around the Cuban Communist Party.

The failure of the Cuban leadership to support working class and popular struggles in other countries, to encourage them to go as far as possible in their struggles against the capitalists, their policy of relying on the Soviet Union to defend Cuba, their tolerance of the continued development of a privileged strata in and around the Cuban Communist Party, which lives better than the majority of Cuban working people, and their failure to allow Cuban workers to form working class parties different from the Communist Party, has made it more difficult to defend Cuba in the U.S. and elsewhere. The special privileges of Cuban Communist Party members, even if they are small, and their ban on the formation of other working class parties, reminds one of the policies of the Russian and Chinese Communist Parties and undermines confidence in socialism and communism.

A more vigorous struggle inside Cuba itself for more working class, revolutionary, and democratic policies and leaders will strengthen confidence in the socialist future and promote the development of working class socialist revolution in the U.S. and Cuba.—F.R. \square

The Labor Party and the Trotskyists ...

Continued from page 7

result of the long period in which the working class was in retreat and the Trotskyists were viciously persecuted, leaving Trotskyists with few opportunities to play a leading role in mass working class organizations -Trotskyists are absolutely indispensable to the Labor Party. There is no other tendency in the U.S. that workers and the Labor Party can rely upon to be absolutely irreconcilable in their opposition to the bosses, the bosses' parties, and the bosses' candidates. This is essential for the working class and the Labor Party because the bourgeoisie in the United States is always trying to come up with bourgeois policies and politicians who look working class, but whose real aim is divide and destroy promising working class movements and parties so that workers never go very far in building their own political party, in fighting for political power, and in building a new society in which there will be no place for rich bosses, only workers.

What is the origin of the hostility to the Trotskyists? Why are there elements in the Labor Party already trying to single out and discredit Trotskyists?

Leon Trotsky was a leader of the Russian workers' revolution alongside Lenin. After the Russian workers overthrew the Czarist dictatorship, took power, and began to try to build a workers' revolutionary democracy and socialism, a privileged labor bureaucracy, led by Stalin, began to arise within the Russian workers' state. This privileged labor bureaucracy did not want to work to spread the revolution; they wanted to take a disproportionate share of the benefits of the revolution for themselves and to crush everyone who opposed them. Lenin and Trotsky fought the rise of this privileged bureaucracy and its policies of "peaceful coexistence" with the capitalists and trying to build "socialism in one country." Trotsky continued this fight after Lenin died. The conflict between the privileged bureaucracy, led by Stalin, and the most consistent revolutionary workers in Russia, led by Trotsky, spread throughout the socialist and communist movement and socialists and communists throughout the world took a stand, on the side of the privileged bureaucracy and Stalin, or on the side of revolutionary workers in Russia and Trotsky.

As the first wave of the workers' revolution receded, and the most conservative and opportunistic elements in the Labor Movement began to regain their places, Trotsky



Trotskyists led the 1934 ground-breaking Teamsters' strike.

and his followers were persecuted, imprisoned, and in many cases even tortured and assassinated. To justify this, Stalin and his followers made up lies about the Trotskyists, said they were "splitters," "wreckers," agents of the bourgeoisie, Nazis, police, etc.

Many honest workers were taken in by this; they believed this and continued to follow Stalin.

But there is absolutely no excuse for this today. The evolution of Stalin's followers in the Soviet Union shows that it is this tendency that has spawned the most reactionary elements, Great Russian chauvinists, partisans of restoring capitalism, bureaucratic dictators ready to slander and persecute anyone who questions them.

Trying to sow prejudice against Trotsky and Trotskyists in the Labor Party is very divisive and destructive. Workers should read Trotsky and his followers and find the truth for themselves before they believe these stories.

Trotskyists can facilitate spreading the truth about Trotsky and their struggles by making a united fight to build the Labor Party and build support for the most important working class and Trotskyist principles within the Labor Party movement. After years in which there has been no mass working class movement, especially among the most working class sections of the working class, such a movement is once again on the rise. Trotskyists can sink roots in the most working class sections of the working class. This in turn can be a step toward unifying working class Trotskyist forces and a common Trotskyist publication.

Working class and revolutionary Trotskyists have a long and proud tradition in the United States. It's a tradition of irreconcilable opposition to the bosses and their parties. It's a tradition that any worker in the Labor Party can rely on.—M. Guttshall □

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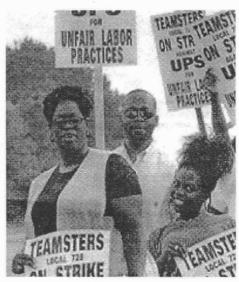
Working class women and socialism

One of the most serious problems in capitalist society is discrimination and oppression against working class women. It is difficult for them to find jobs where they can make enough to support themselves and their children. Many times they face discrimination and sexual harassment on the job. When they come home, they have a second job, taking care of kids and housework. Medical care for women is inadequate. The medical problems facing womening are inadequately researched and treated. Even if they have enough time to get additional education, they face discrimination and sexual harassment in the class room. Sometimes women face abuse and violence at home from male companions. In many cases, working class mothers are blamed for the problems of children and teenagers. Discrimination and oppression against women is very real. It is expressed very concretely in the higher incidence of depression and attempted suicide among women.

Working class women have made a certain amount of progress in fighting the superexploitation and oppression that they face. There are now more jobs for women, more equal wages, legislation against discrimination and sexual harassment. There is some childcare, some technical advances that lighten women's workload at home, and legislation against violence against women. Working class women can and will continue to fight the discrimination and oppression they face in capitalist society.

But, in order to make any really big progress, we need socialism. We need to overthrow the power of the capitalists, establish a workers' revolutionary democracy, and begin to build a socialist society in which workers own and control the most important resouces and plan the economy.

A tremendous amount of material resources are necessary to totally overcome the oppression of working class women. Every woman must have a good job, with reasonable hours, no more than 30 a week, absolute maximum, that pays enough for her to take care of herself and her children. Every woman must have unlimited access to the best possible medical care, education, and housing. There must be public dining rooms, public laundry services, and public house cleaning services so that women don't have to do two jobs. Above all, there must be inexpensive, 24-hour, high quality, professional childcare, so that women don't have



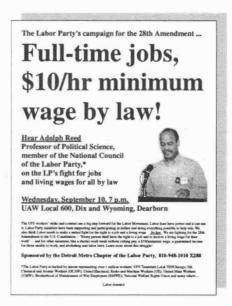
Women UPS strikers

to chose between working with others, pursuing their education, and seeing that their children are well-cared for. Workplaces, public buildings, housing, and neighborhoods need to be redesigned so that they are more in tune with the needs of women and children. We need places for nursing mothers and their children. We need to organize housing, play areas, and transportation so

that women don't worry about their children running into the street and being hit by cars. We need a massive program of public reeducation for both males and females, beginning at a very young age, teaching both to respect the female sex, and to encourage young girls and women to develop themselves to their full potential in all areas.

Obviously, the capitalists are never going to make these kinds of changes, so imperative for working class women and all women of the oppressed classes. The capitalists are interested only in making a profit, in enriching themselves and the women and children associated with them, at the expense of the majority of women and their children.

Socialism by itself will not bring an end to the oppression of women. It will take many years of struggle to overcome the legacy of thousands of years of exploitation and oppression. But socialism will liberate the material resources necessary to overcome that oppression. After that, it will be up to the women themselves. To paraphrase Trotsky, each woman will rise to the heights of a Harriet Tubman, a Sojourner Truth, an Amelia Earheart, or a Madame Curie, and beyond these new peaks will rise ...— M.G.



Labor Party Forum
Wednesday, September 10
7 p.m.
UAW Local 600
Dix and Wyoming, Dearborn
810-948-1010 X288

Reminders

Week of Action for the 28th Amendment: August 30 - September 7

Labor Party Forum: Wednesday, September 10, 7 p.m., UAW Local 600

Meeting of the Editorial Board of Socialism!: Saturday, September 27, 2 p.m., Cass Cafe, Cass and Forest

Labor Party Business Meeting: Wednesday, October 8, 7 p.m., UAW Local 417

Meeting of the Editorial Board of Socialism!: Saturday, October 25, 2 p.m., Cass Cafe

Week of Action for the 28th Amendment: November 1 to November 9

Labor Party Forum: Wednesday, November 12, 7 p.m., UAW Local 600

Meeting of the Editorial Board of Socialism!: Saturday, November 29, 2 p.m., Cass Cafe