

THE WORKER

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Forward to the Founding Conference of the Workers Party!

The decisive task facing the working class is to found and build its own political party.

As the crisis of capitalism deepens, the working class and the broad masses of people are under attack from all sides.

- The economic rights of the people are being stripped away. Wages are being cut; tens of millions of workers are either unemployed or only able to find part-time work; federal, state and local governments keep cutting social services while raising taxes. More and more a situation is being created in which the masses must struggle for their economic rights just in order to survive.
- The political rights and democratic liberties of the people are also being taken away. More often than not strike struggles are declared illegal and unions are being broken up. New laws and court decisions give the police more arbitrary power to violate our basic democratic rights. The few gains achieved by the black masses, the other oppressed nationalities, the women, etc. are being destroyed. The government itself is imposing a reign of terror on the oppressed nationalities and strengthening the system of segregation and national oppression.
- A profound ideological, cultural and spiritual crisis has gripped our society. As capitalism decays and rots it imposes a culture of drugs and violence, racism and chauvinism on the working class, the youth and other sectors of the people.

And these are only a few of the problems faced by the people. There is also the danger of new imperialist wars being launched by the capitalist government; there is the problem of the human and natural environment which is being destroyed by the corporate polluters; etc., etc.

These problems can only be resolved through the struggle of the working class and the broad masses of people themselves. To advance their struggle, the workers must come out as an independent class force; they must come out with their own demands and program for resolving the crisis of our society; they must be joined together in a militant organization — they must build the Workers Party.

The Republican and Democratic parties, bought-and-paid-for by the billionaire capitalists, can never represent the working class. Rather these parties have been leading the offensive of the capitalists against the rights of the people. A fundamental problem facing the working class movement has been precisely the fact that for years, the labor aristocracy (trade union bosses) and other opportunist forces continually liquidate the struggles and independent class movement of the workers by keeping our movement under the control of the capitalist politicians.

Founding and building the **Workers Party** will tremen-

dously strengthen the partial struggles which we are forced to wage every day in defense of our rights; the **Workers Party** will provide consciousness, organization and militancy for these struggles.

Founding and building the **Workers Party** will enable the workers to come out as an independent class force. The program of the **Workers Party** will demand that the **rich be forced to pay** for the crisis of their capitalist system and that the first economic priority be to meet all the needs of the people. The program of the **Workers Party** will stand for full democratic rights for the masses — for an end to political repression and police violence, for a complete end to racist violence and segregation and for full equality and democratic rights for the black people, the other oppressed nationalities, etc. The program of the **Workers Party** will demand **Not One Cent, Not One Life for imperialist war**.

At all times the **Workers Party** will take care of the future of the movement, step by step accumulating the forces necessary to overthrow the capitalist system. To win this battle, the workers must win the battle for political power. A truly democratic society will be one in which the working class, the overwhelming majority of the population, is the ruling class. Once political power is in the hands of the people, the workers can build a genuine socialist society — a society without rich and poor, without the exploitation of man by man, a society where the interests of the people, not the private interests of the capitalist exploiters, always come first.

For a number of years, the Marxist-Leninist Workers Organization has been working to create conditions for founding the **Workers Party**.

During these years we have been in the thick of the working class and popular struggles. We have gained definite experience in organizing the political struggle of the workers as well as in many partial struggles of the masses. We have worked out, in general form, the theory and tactics for guiding the struggle of the working class in the concrete conditions prevailing in the U.S. We have built up a militant organization, an organization capable of independently working out the tactics of the struggle and capable of mobilizing the people. We have built up a national leadership and several basic units which are closely linked with the masses in definite areas. We have regularized the newspaper, **The Worker**, as the voice of the working class.

Of course we remain a very small organization but this should not deter anyone. On the contrary, it is precisely by joining together all the class conscious workers, by relying on each other and on the theory and experience already gained that we create the strength to meet the great challenges of the class struggle.

(Continued on Page 4)

Conditions of the Working Class

Growing Temporary Labor Force

The following letter was written by a team of supporters of the Marxist-Leninist Workers Organization.

For the last few months, we have been distributing **The Worker** at "Handy Andy" and other day-labor outfits located in one working class neighborhood in Chicago.

By 5:00 AM each morning, some 100 workers are lined up on the street waiting for Handy Andy to open. Many wait for 3 or 4 hours before being sent home without work. Those who are picked to work that day generally do not get home until 6:00 or 7:00 pm. (although they are only paid for 8 hours). The workers told us that you are expected to diligently shape up every day for 3 months before even getting your first day's work. Those who do get work are paid no more than \$4.50 an hour (of course, the workers receive no benefits). In fact Handy Andy charges every worker a \$3/day "travel charge" to cover the cost of transporting the workers to various companies around Chicago.

Many of the workers told us that they used to have union jobs with pay scales between 8 and 10 dollars per hour. But since being laid-off, these workers have been unable to find permanent jobs. Some companies promise the Handy Andy workers that after 6 months of steady work they will be given permanent jobs. But invariably these workers are laid off just a few days short of six months and again find themselves shaping up at 5:00 AM. We talked with workers who have been returning to Handy Andy, on and off again, for 3 years and more.

Since there are at least 4 such day-labor offices in this one area alone, we estimate that every month, **thousands** of workers from this neighborhood are forced to shape up at day-labor offices in the hope of earning \$25/day. Across the country, **millions** of workers have been reduced to these desperate conditions.

Over the last several years, the capitalists have been relying more and more on temporary workers and day-laborers. This allows the

capitalists maximum flexibility to expand or reduce their workforce according to their production needs. In addition temporary workers are paid the lowest wages and denied all benefits. Since the make-up of the workforce at each company is constantly changing, it is extremely difficult for the workers to band together and struggle collectively for better wages and working conditions. Thus millions of workers cannot secure stable employment and are forced into a day-to-day struggle just in order to survive. For decades workers have fought to end such extreme forms of exploitation as the day-labor and shape-up systems. But today, as the crisis of capitalism deepens, the rich are savagely attacking the economic rights of the people and imposing super-exploitation on the workers. Naturally the existence of such a large pool of desperate workers, seeking a day's wage in order just to eat, is used by the capitalists as a lever against the wages and working conditions of all workers.

Gov't Board Rules Against Railroad Workers

On July 18 an emergency board, appointed by George Bush, issued its rulings on the contract dispute between the railroad capitalists and 235,000 railroad workers. The presidential board ruled in favor of the capitalists on all issues.

As a result of this ruling, the railroad workers are forced, by law, to accept a wage freeze (the workers have not had a raise in over 3 years) and to pay 20% of the cost of their medical insurance. New work rules will be imposed which will cut in half the number of workers on freight trains, thus eliminating tens of thousands of jobs. In addition the railroad freight workers will be forced to travel double the number of miles in order to earn a full day's pay.

The presidential board was set up under special emergency legislation passed by Congress on April 17. This legislation outlawed the strike struggle of the railroad workers less than 24 hours after it began. At that time, the capitalist politicians and mass media advertised the emergency board as a "neutral body," which would arbitrate the issues with "fairness to both sides."

But the decision of the emergency board proves for the millionth time that the government is neither "neutral" nor "fair." The government is literally treating the railroad workers like slaves who are forced, by threat of arms, to accept whatever wages and working conditions the capitalists offer. Under the provisions of the April 17 legislation the workers cannot strike or protest in any way against the decision of the emergency board.

The example of the railroad workers illustrates one of the key problems facing the workers' movement. Whenever the capitalists in a particular industry feel threatened by the struggle of the workers, the capitalists turn to the government and use it as a **political weapon** — an instrument serving the common interests of all the capitalists — to impose their will on the workers.

The workers must respond to this situation by building their own political weapons. The workers in each industry must extend their support and solidarity to the workers in other sectors; we must come out as a **class** against the class of capitalists; we must build our own political party and other class organizations in order to match the political strength of the capitalists, who are already organized in political parties and control the government. Then our strength will greatly outstrip the power of the capitalists and we will further advance our struggles against capitalist exploitation.

States Raise Taxes and Cut Services

The capitalist program of attacking the basic economic rights of the people is sharply reflected in the 1992 budgets recently adopted by state and local governments across the country. The main features of these budgets include higher taxes, cutbacks in social services and large-scale lay-offs of state and local government workers.

- California's fiscal 1992 budget will increase taxes by \$7.7 billion while cutting social services by \$5.1 billion. The budget includes a 1.25% increase in the sales tax; a 4.4% cut in welfare grants and the elimination of cost-of-living increases for 5 years; a reduction of state contributions to state workers' retirement funds and a 20% increase in fees for the California State University system.
- After failing to pay state workers for 3 straight weeks, Maine's legislature and governor finally

settled on a budget which will increase taxes by \$300 million and drastically cut funding for workers' compensation which provides income support for workers injured on the job (Maine's largest industry is the high-injury lumber industry).

- In New York City, the budget for 1992 was recently balanced by laying off 10,000 city workers, making \$1.5 billion in service cuts and imposing large tax increases. Yet already the government is talking of more severe measures in the years to come. A \$4.3 billion shortfall over the next three years is expected to be covered by \$500 million annual property tax increases, by more cuts in the city's work force and by sharply decreasing the wages of the remaining workers.
- The 1992 Illinois budget imposes a permanent 10% increase in the state income tax and an addi-

tional 10% increase for the next two years. Still, social services, including general assistance payments to the poor, will be cut by \$800 million and as many as 7,000 state workers will be laid off. These cutbacks are one source of the massive budget deficit (\$316 million) facing the Chicago public school system. The School Board's plan for eliminating this deficit calls for freezing the wages of more than 30,000 teachers and other employees, closing down several elementary and high schools, eliminating the purchasing of school supplies, cutting back on busing programs, art and music classes, etc.

The questions on the minds of workers everywhere are; 1) with taxes continually going up and social services being cut, where is all the money going? and 2) what is to be done to protect our economic rights and our survival. The answer is that the government, as always, is using its powers to tax and spend, **not in order to meet the needs of the masses** but in one way or another to further enrich the big capitalists. The only way for the workers to defend their economic rights is to join together in various struggles which aim at **making the rich pay** for the crisis of their capitalist system.

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Chicago, IL 60625

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US-USSR Summit Meeting

During the last days of May, George Bush and Mikhail Gorbachev met in Moscow. This summit was advertised as the "formal end to the cold war" and the beginning of a "new era of peace and friendship." Bush and Gorbachev signed a "Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty" (START), discussed the further transition of the USSR into a market economy and made plans for convening a Middle East "peace conference," under the tutelage of the U.S. and USSR. Do the promises of Bush and Gorbachev about "peace" and "security" for the peoples correspond to reality?

The START treaty is a product of 9 years of negotiations. According to the terms of the treaty, during the next 7 years, the U.S. and USSR will each dismantle enough of their nuclear warheads to bring their total arsenals down to their 1982 levels (the year the negotiations started). In other words: the mountain labored and brought forth a mouse. Even if the terms of the new treaty are fully adhered to, the U.S. will retain 9,000 nuclear warheads and the USSR will retain 7,500. Each will be able to continue its policy of nuclear blackmail and intimidation against the world's peoples. So much for the propaganda about "world peace." Yet more, even as Bush and Gorbachev were pledging to reduce their nuclear arsenals, the U.S. Senate was preparing legislation to deploy a new ground-based anti-

missile defense system which will break the terms of the 1972 U.S.-USSR ABM treaty. The Soviet Union has already announced that if the ABM treaty is broken, it will break the new START treaty. So much for the propaganda about "ending the arms race."

The end of the cold war has not made the world a safer place. During the last 18 months George Bush and U.S. imperialism have wantonly carried out the invasion of Panama as well as the savage war against Iraq. Today, U.S. troops are maintaining a permanent occupation of Panama and the Middle East.

The cause of tension and war in the modern world is the imperialist system — a system based on the domination and enslavement of whole nations by the big imperialist powers, a system characterized by a permanent rivalry amongst these big imperialist powers, each of which strives to gain control of sources of raw materials, spheres of influence, colonial and neo-colonial territories, etc. The collapse of the Soviet Union as a superpower has not brought about an end of the imperialist system. In fact, the present period is marked, **not by a lessening of tensions**, but by a ferocious counter-revolutionary offensive by U.S. imperialism which is openly relying on its military power to assert its hegemony and domination, its status as the sole superpower. At

the same new imperialist blocs and rivalries are emerging. The contradictions between U.S. and Japanese imperialism are intensifying as are the contradictions between U.S. imperialism and European monopoly capitalism. Great dangers confront the peoples. U.S. imperialism — always the sworn enemy of the freedom and independence of the peoples — is preparing new wars in Latin America, the Middle East and the world in order to thwart the drive of the peoples for national liberation and emancipation. At the same time, new inter-imperialist rivalries are developing which can also lead to war.

Is Capitalism Benefitting the People in the USSR?

Bush and Gorbachev also dealt with the question of further speeding up the complete transformation of the Soviet Union into a market economy and its full integration into the world capitalist system. Bush promised to extend "Most Favored Nation" trading status to the Soviet Union as a reward for the "progress" made so far.

Many contradictions continue to exist on this question. But in general, Gorbachev continues to grovel before all the big capitalist powers, begging them for loans and putting his country up for auction, while the U.S. capitalists, arrogant and boastful of their victory, insist on greater and greater guarantees for any and all investments in the Soviet Union.

Meanwhile the working class and broad masses of people in the Soviet Union and throughout Eastern Europe are experiencing the effects of the all-around transition to the market economy. The Soviet economy has contracted by more than 10% during the last year. Unemployment has become widespread. While prices skyrocket, shortages of food and other vital goods keep increasing. Real hunger stalks millions. The situation is the same or worse in Poland, East Germany, Romania, etc. The real content of the "market reforms" in Eastern Europe is to strip away any economic rights gained by the

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Chicago Police Superintendent Emulates Hitler

In mid-July Leroy Martin, Superintendent of the Chicago Police Department, returned from a trip to China. Although characterizing China as a totalitarian system, Martin was eager to apply the lessons of the Chinese penal system to the U.S. Martin was filled with pleasure at the sight of "sanitary facilities [which] are a bucket. The prisoners are given a bowl of rice and a Thermos bottle of tea. And then they're locked down." Martin also applauded the practice of sentencing drug dealers to execution by a firing squad. (Chicago Tribune, 7/12).

In a taped radio interview, Martin went on to say that the U.S. Constitution must be changed in order to "curtail some of those rights" and give the police more power to "fight crime."

When a journalist commented that Martin's ideas brought to mind images of Nazi Germany, the head of the Chicago police replied, "And they had a very low crime rate then."

Rather than being fired from his

job or, better yet, put in jail, Martin has received high praise from various capitalist politicians and the mass media who are now suggesting that he would make a good candidate for Congress.

Thus Leroy Martin has blurted out in public the real aims of the government's so-called "war on crime and drugs." In fact, every day as the courts and Congress implement new laws giving the police more arbitrary powers and suppressing the basic democratic liberties of the people, every day as the police step up their reign of terror in the national minority and working class communities, the capitalist government is marching along the road to fascism in the U.S. Leroy Martin and the capitalist government indeed wish to emulate Hitler's third reich, a regime under which crime was raised to the level of highly organized state activity, a regime where the rights of the people were trampled underfoot and the capitalists ruled by unrestrained violence.

Read

El Obrero

Bi-weekly Spanish-language supplement of the Worker, organ of the Marxist-Leninist organization

Founding Conference of the Workers Party (Continued from Page 1)

The National Executive Committee of the Marxist-Leninist Workers Organization calls on all its comrades and friends, on all the genuine Marxist-Leninists, on all the class conscious workers, on all the sincere political activists who devote themselves to the interests of the people, to work together with us to prepare for the **Founding Conference of the WORKERS PARTY, U.S.A.**

The work of preparing for the Founding Conference will itself be a great school for the workers. Through this work we can all sum up our experiences and further clarify the tasks facing us. Through this work we will cement our organizational unity. Through this work we will popularize far and wide the demands of the workers, increase our participation in the class struggle, and explain the necessity for founding and building the Workers Party.

For its part the National Executive Committee will help prepare for the Founding Conference by publishing a draft political report, which will serve as the basis for discussion in the Conference. Through the pages of **The Worker** and other means we will vigorously popularize the work of preparing for the Founding Conference and the general line of the Workers Party. We will work, in the factories, communities and schools, to set up Committees in Sup-

port of the Workers Party.

Grave problems and dangers face the people. The capitalists are trying to force the workers to give way in the face of the present conditions; the capitalists are trying to disperse the forces of the working class, further split up our ranks and liquidate our struggles.

But at the same time, the masses are burning with the desire to change the situation, are looking for the way forward. **The future does not belong to the capitalist exploiters but to the working class and the broad masses of people who will surely rise in a storm of struggle to defend their rights and win their emancipation.** Now is the time to resolutely look to the present and future needs of our class, the working class. Now is the time to muster the forces for the inevitable battles which lie ahead. To face the capitalist onslaught we need the collective, organized strength of the entire working class. Devoting ourselves solely to the interests of the working class movement for emancipation, let us join ever more tightly together to take up the tasks of the day. Let us march forward together to the **Founding Conference of the Workers Party.**

US-USSR Summit (Continued from Page 3)

the system of exploitation.

Imperialism's Plan for "Peace" in the Middle East

At the end of their summit, Bush and Gorbachev announced plans to organize a Middle East "peace conference" which they advertise as a means to bring a "comprehensive settlement and peace to the region." In fact for several months now, U.S. Secretary of State, James Baker, has been shuttling throughout this region trying to prepare conditions for such a conference.

If and when such a conference takes place, it will **not** be the product of a striving for peace on the part of U.S. imperialism or the other powers involved. Rather such a conference will aim at legalizing the new status quo created as a result of imperialism's barbaric war against Iraq.

The U.S., having established its permanent military presence in the region, now aims at rewarding its allies and punishing its enemies. Syria, for example, will attend the conference because U.S. imperialism — in return for Syria's support of the war against Iraq — recognized Syria's "special interests" in Lebanon, allowed it to carry out the military occupation of the country and to throttle the forces of the Palestinian national liberation movement there.

The main enemy to be punished

at the conference is the Palestinian people. While the conference advertises itself as a means to bring about "a permanent solution to the Palestinian question," this solution will be based on denying the Palestinians their sacred rights to an independent state in their historic homeland. At most, the Palestinians will be offered some type of "autonomy" or "confederation" under the military, political and economic domination of both Israel and Jordan. Baker has repeatedly stated his opposition to a Palestinian state and demanded that, first and foremost, it is the Palestinians who must compromise, telling them that "you are the weak link." (Chicago Tribune 8/1) The Palestinians will not even be allowed their own representatives at the "peace conference" but will form a joint delegation under King Hussein of Jordan.

At the same time, for all the media hype about the U.S. "pressuring Israel," Baker has guaranteed the Israelis veto power over any Palestinian delegate. Every day the Israeli government, financed with U.S. dollars, pushes ahead with its program of settling tens of thousands of immigrants in the occupied West Bank and Gaza and re-iterates its intention of maintaining Jerusalem as its "eternal capital."

No, the Middle East "peace conference," being cooked up by Bush and Gorbachev does not aim at a genuine and democratic peace; it

does not aim at guaranteeing the independence and rights of nations. Rather it will be a conference to legalize annexation, to formally carve up new spheres of influence. Through such a conference the imperialists hope to give the "kiss of death" to the Palestinian people, by having their lackeys and allies amongst the reactionary Arab regimes sign away the national rights of the Palestinian people and

erase the Palestinian "problem" from the world map.

Rather than feeling more "secure" as a result of the Bush-Gorbachev summit, the peoples must heighten their vigilance and prepare for the inevitable struggles against the imperialist powers who are stepping up their exploitation of the working class and launching new plots against the freedom and independence of the peoples.

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