

A program for labor

**The fight
against wage
controls and
inflation**

Wages under attack

The standard of living of the majority of Americans is under relentless attack. The price of food, medical care, housing and other necessities continues to skyrocket, despite the so-called "price controls." In 1972, prices have gone up even faster than in 1971, before Nixon's "New Economic Policy!"

The employers stubbornly refuse to grant workers adequate pay increases to keep their wages abreast of inflation. They are backed up in this by the decrees of the government Pay Board.

At the same time, speedups and layoffs are increasing. Unemployment rates have remained at a high 6 per cent since 1970, with over five million Americans presently out of work. The unemployment rates of women, youth, and of Blacks, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, and Native Americans are much higher. A recent study found the unemployment rates for all men aged 16 to 24 at 46 per cent in Watts. This is a typical situation in the Black communities.

Old people are also hard hit. The top Social Security payment for a retired couple of \$3,980 is obviously far below what is needed for a decent standard of living. According to Ralph Nader's "Action Committee," 40 per cent of the old people in this country are poor.

Moreover, the wage controls help to freeze the already existing inequalities in American society and

hamper the struggle of oppressed groups to win equality on the job. The U. S. Dept. of Labor reports, for example, that American women not only earn less than men, but the gap between the sexes has widened.

Wages & the war

The myth perpetrated by both the Republicans and Democrats is that "higher wages are the cause of inflation." This is a lie.

Inflation is primarily caused by deficit spending of the government to finance its multibillion-dollar war machine.

So long as the war in Southeast Asia continues and so long as the government encounters massive deficits to finance its military apparatus, the inflation will continue, no matter what the capitalist politicians promise.

The actual effect of the war on prices and wages can be seen from figures that are published every month in the government Monthly Labor Review.

These show that when the war was escalated in 1965 prices began to spiral upwards:

1959-60	up 1.6%	1966-67	up 2.9%
1961-62	up 1.1%	1967-68	up 4.2%
1963-64	up 1.3%	1968-69	up 5.4%
1964-65	up 1.7%	1969-70	up 5.9%
1965-66	up 2.9%	1970-71	up 4.3%

Between 1965 and 1971, prices rose more than 28 per cent!

The same government publication shows the impact of higher prices, along with higher taxes, on wages. Here's what the weekly actual purchasing power was of an average manufacturing worker with three dependents:

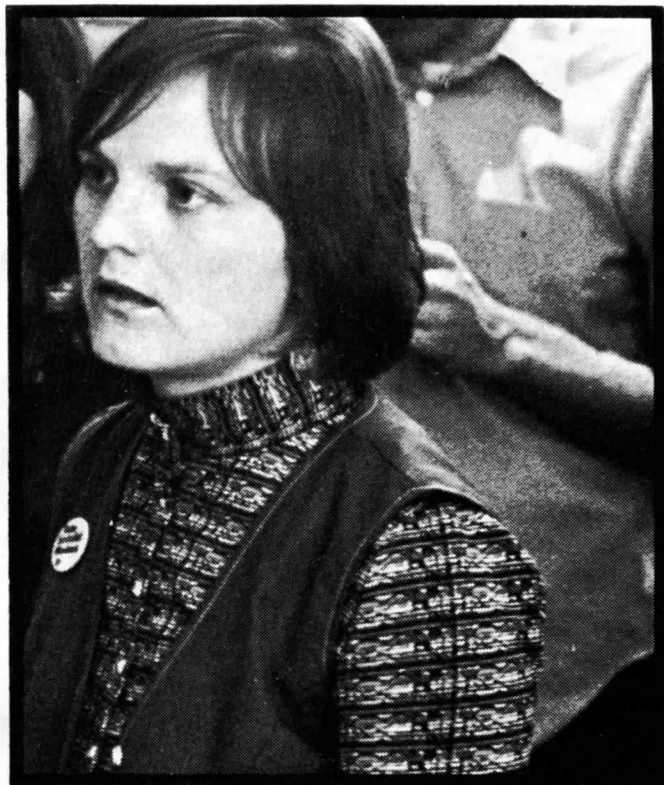
1965	\$102.41
1966	\$102.31
1967	\$101.26
1968	\$102.45
1969	\$101.49
1970	\$99.66
1971	\$102.78

The fact is that the real wages of American workers have already been frozen during the entire history of the Vietnam war.

Why don't they tell the truth?

The Democrats and Republicans, and the trade union bureaucrats who support them, don't bring these facts out because they try to conceal the real cause of inflation and the real reasons for the wage controls.

The Democratic Party, which claims to represent



Linda Jenness, Socialist Workers Party candidate for President



the interests of working people, is equally responsible with the Republicans for this situation. The Economic Stabilization Act of 1970, which gave Nixon the authority to set up the wage control machinery, was supported by both capitalist parties, and by all of the presidential candidates of those parties.

The central concern of the monopolists who rule this country, and the driving force behind the attack on wages, is the declining competitive position of U. S. capitalism in world trade and finance.

The industrialists want to drive back the wage levels of American working people in order to gain a better position in world competition. The speedup that millions of workers are experiencing, the layoffs of hundreds of thousands of workers, the permanent closing of "obsolete" plants, and the attack on wages embodied in Nixon's "New Economic Policy" all flow from the profit needs of the American ruling class.

This is why we can be certain that the next administration will carry out these policies whether it is Republican or Democrat. Both parties are beholden to the capitalist rulers of this country, who buy and boss them. The capitalist politicians place the profits of the ruling class before the economic needs of American families. That is why, even in the richest country in the world, the basic needs of the people for adequate housing, nutrition, a clean environment, medical care and education are not being met.

A campaign to fight back

The candidates of the Socialist Workers Party are campaigning for a program to meet the needs of working people.

Linda Jenness and Andrew Pulley, the SWP candidates for President and Vice-President, call for a united mobilization of the entire labor movement to defend itself against the government's assault on wages, infringements on the right to strike, and the continued threat of inflation, speedup, layoffs and unemployment.

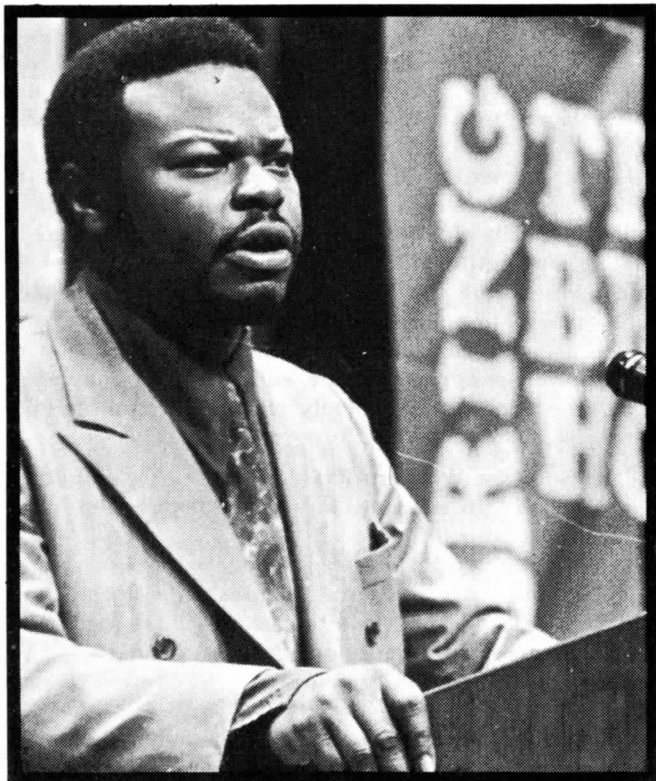
The socialist candidates propose the convocation of a national congress of the entire labor movement, with delegates democratically elected by rank-and-file workers.

The Socialist Workers Party proposes the following program for an effective, united challenge to the capitalists' antilabor policies:

Opposition to all wage controls.

Cost-of-living escalator clauses in all contracts and in Social Security payments in order to protect wage earners from inflation. For committees of the unions and consumer groups with the power to regulate prices.

To fight unemployment, the workweek should be progressively shortened with no reduction in pay, in order to spread the available work to all who need a job. As an immediate step, the workweek should



Andrew Pulley, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Vice-President

be shortened to 30 hours.

The right to strike is an unconditional right of working people. No government interference with the right to strike or in any other affairs of the unions. All antilabor legislation, such as the Taft-Hartley Act, and the Kennedy-Landrum-Griffin Act, should be repealed.

For equal rights in the unions and on the job for Black and Raza workers, and for women, and full union support to their struggles.

Immediate, unconditional withdrawal of all U. S. troops and war materiel from Southeast Asia.

For an independent labor party based on the trade unions to defend the rights and standard of living of working people against the parties of the bosses, and to fight for a workers government.

The socialist candidates believe that the current rulers of this society, in both the Democratic and Republican parties, are the ones who are unfit to run this society. A party of the working people is needed to reverse the priorities of this country and to place the interests of the working majority over the few who own banks and industry.

The candidates of the Socialist Workers Party are dedicated to ending the capitalist system of war and inequality—a system that degrades human life, warps cultural values, and prevents the masses of people from controlling the institutions that affect their lives.

Vote Socialist Workers

