



SOCIALIST PARTY OF MICHIGAN MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

July 2023

Workers of Michigan Unite!

Hello Michigan socialists!

In July 2023 we experienced the hottest global temperatures in recorded history. While Michigan did not see the worst of it many parts of the state have been dealing with an unusually hot and dry summer. There are significant concerns that a version of Canada's unprecedented fire season could make its way down to Michigan as smoke from the fires already had last month.

It is easy to become cynical about the climate issue. There is not enough time, there are too many entrenched interests, the propaganda- particularly here in the imperial core of the U.S.- has been too potent for too long. The old chestnut "let this radicalize you rather than lead you to despair" becomes more difficult with each passing year as THE big disaster wrought by capitalism grows exponentially.

The responsibility to resist is paramount for Socialists all over the world but especially here in Michigan. With our robust natural resources, our northern latitude, and our geography scientists are predicting that our region will be a 'Goldilocks zone' for the climate crisis to come.* Not only should we organize and support efforts to disrupt the trajectory of apocalyptic fossil capitalism, but we should have an extra awareness of the responsibility we will hold in the decades to come of being stewards of a state that will become a life raft for parts of the world that will become uninhabitable.

As long as there is resistance there is hope. A generation of young workers, radicalized by late-stage capitalism and well aware of the existential stakes of the climate crisis, could very well hold the key to saving our biosphere for future generations. This has likewise been a hot summer for organized labor with key parts of the economy entering or considering strike actions. In this we may have a path forward.

Michigan socialists should be ready for the radical action and support networks necessary to maintain ambitious wide-scale tactics such as a general strike and prepare our communities to welcome the workers of the world seeking refuge from climate breakdown.

**Michigan will be the best place to live by 2050 because of climate change, new book says"

<https://www.mlive.com/public-interest/2021/11/michigan-will-be-the-best-place-to-live-by-2050-because-of-climate-change-new-book-says.html>

Sacrifice Zones and the Working Class in Michigan

From Detroit, to Flint, to Benton Harbor workers in Michigan have watched corporations callously turn our communities into sacrifice zones with their pollution. In smaller rural communities like Plainwell we have seen the proliferation of PFAS from industrial runoff. In Kalamazoo Graphic Packaging International has been allowed to actively toxify the air of the city's Northside neighborhood, which is predominately black and working class. The carelessness and cost-cutting of Enbridge lead to one of the greatest inland oil spills in U.S. History, and their pipeline in the Mackinac Straights is an ongoing ecological ticking time bomb. The people of Flint are still dealing with consequences from lead-lined pipes.

A common thread that we will need to pay close attention to are how communities mobilized and are mobilizing against these injustices. The people of Kalamazoo are moving forward with a suit against Graphic Packaging, Enbridge is on the legal defense after years of agitation, and at least some accountability and facts are emerging after tremendous citizen pressure. Michigan workers have proven they can organize and mobilize in the face of corporate behemoths poisoning the well for profit. It is these lessons we must take to heart as we maneuver the climate crisis.

Radical Recommendations

Climate Change as Class War

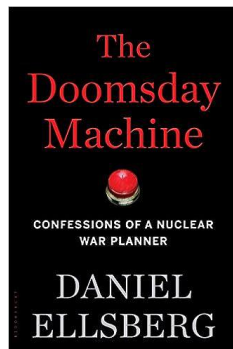
BUILDING
Socialism
ON
A WARMING
PLANET

Matthew T. Huber

Climate Change as Class War: Building Socialism on a Warming Planet
by Matthew T. Huber

Huber's book is a vital analysis of the need to reframe climate change as a class issue, and the urgency of centering the working class as the agent to bring about both justice and the necessary systemic change that will be needed to stop the most apocalyptic outcomes. From Verso Books.

The Doomsday Machine
Confessions of a
Nuclear War Planner
By Daniel Ellsberg



While not strictly speaking a Socialist text, this is vital reading at a time when nuclear weapons are getting a unique time in the spotlight. Ellsberg, recently deceased whistleblower responsible for the Pentagon Papers, details his experience in the U.S. Government planning for nuclear war. What is revealed is a terrifying first-hand account of the cavalier attitude the government has towards potential nuclear weapons use, how close we really came to annihilation, and a powerful case for why we must abolish these world ending weapons.

UPS Workers Mull Over New Contract- Is it a Victory or a Compromise?

The new contract offered from UPS to its workers has been largely hailed as a victory in progressive media and the labor press- and we should recognize that the concessions workers got are a direct result of the threat of strike action. While we should take stock of this as an expression of the power of workers when we unite, the new contract does not deliver on some key demands- wages are too low for part-time works, there is a lack of improvements in the grueling conditions of warehouse workers, and more.

The ball is in the court of rank-and-file UPS workers now to vote on it. If they should decide to press for further concessions we call for all workers to support. Check out this article from [LeftVoice*](https://www.leftvoice.org/vote-no-is-growing-among-the-ups-rank-and-file-we-must-support-them/) for a thorough breakdown.

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Events and Announcements

Kalamazoo Zine Fest will be August 5th from 12-6 PM at the Park Trades Center located at 326 W Kalamazoo Ave. Suite 209 M Please wear a mask.

The Socialist Party USA Labor Working Group Meeting is meeting on August 6th at 6:30 PM ET/ 3:30 PM PT more information can be found at [Socialistpartyusa.net](https://socialistpartyusa.net)

And lastly, EVERY SUNDAY our friends at Food Not Bombs provide hot meals to unhoused folks in so-called Kalamazoo; you can follow them on Instagram at [foodnotbombskzoo](https://www.instagram.com/foodnotbombskzoo).

Lights! Camera! Strike Action! The Importance of the WGA/ SAG- AFTRA Strike

In a historic move last month not seen in over sixty years America's unionized actors joined writers in a massive strike against the entertainment industry. This round of strikes focuses on a similar hoarding of the profits via streaming and decidedly 21st century existential threats to the profession.

The sharing of the pie from the ascendance of streaming as the primary vehicle for entertainment consumption has been outrageously pitiful. In addition, both writers and actors are facing possible replacement by AI technologies to write scripts and create performances from scratch- notoriously highlighted was an offer from the entertainment conglomerates to pay a one time fee for an actor's appearance, feed it into AI, and use their image in perpetuity.

While corporate media has painted these strikers as rich residents of the Hollywood hills, the vast majority of unionized workers are subsisting on poverty wages- only a small percentage reach the \$26, 470 a year needed for healthcare coverage.

When CEOs are threatening to "wait until they start losing their houses" rather than come to the table, we must necessarily exercise solidarity and support. You can donate to help striking writers and actors [here.*](https://entertainmentcommunity.org/)

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