



# Speak Out Now

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mail@speakoutsocialists.org

speakoutsocialists.org

(510) 343-9105

## A System That Works Against Us!

Recently, Hollywood studio executives were asked about their strategy in the ongoing writers strike, speaking just days before screen actors announced their plans to join the writers on strike. One executive said, "The endgame is to allow things to drag on until union members start losing their apartments and losing their houses."

This studio executive, whose sentiment was repeated by many other bigwigs, is just saying openly what workers already know just from living in this society. There is a war going on, and it is a war between two classes: one tiny class of super rich owners; and one enormous class of regular working people who do all the work to make society run.

We don't have to look very far to see all the ways this system works to protect the interests of the corporations at the expense of workers.

We see it clearly when we look at CEO pay compared to workers. On average, CEOs of major corporations make in one year around 400 times what the average worker makes. It would take over two lifetimes for a worker to make what a typical CEO makes in one year.

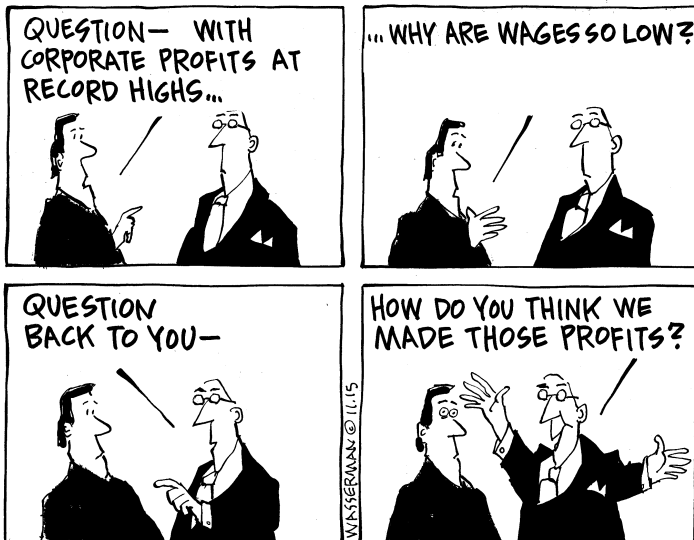
After making \$13.1 billion last year, UPS executives claim they don't have enough money to increase workers wages to even keep up with inflation. Airline companies, who saw record profits last year, have been singing the same tune, saying they can't afford significant wage increases for pilots or flight attendants. Last winter we saw the same thing with the rail companies, which made record profits only to cry poverty and refuse to give workers a real increase in much-needed days off per year.

Last year, corporate executives even admitted to posting fake job listings — for jobs they had no intention to ever fill — just to appease workers angry at the chronic understaffing in so many industries.

It doesn't matter which company we might work for. It is the whole system that is stacked against us, and this includes the government and the politicians who work as the servants of this system.

This is how this system works. Profits are pursued at all costs, and always on the backs of workers. This feature of the system will never change.

But what can change is how long workers are willing to accept this situation...



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## How to Get Rich? Be Born that Way!

Many of us have thought at some point about what we could do to get rich. Go to school? Start a small business? Well, it turns out the main thing that you need to do to get rich is to be born rich. Several studies, including a 2023 study from the University of Chicago, have shown that the best predictor of wealth is having wealthy parents. Even when a child from a wealthy family performs worse than half of their peers in school, they still have a 7 in 10 chance of becoming well-off. But if a child from a poor family performs better than half their peers, they only have a 3 in 10 chance of becoming well-off.

So if your mentality is to get rich or die trying, the latter is more likely to happen. The problem isn't that we haven't figured out how to play the game right — it's that the game was rigged against us from the start.

## Nahel – Murdered by the Same System

On June 27, 17-year-old Nahel Merzouk was killed by police during a traffic stop in Nanterre, France. In response to Nahel's murder, riots erupted across the country, but the police continued their attacks. In Marseille, Mohamed B. was killed by a flash-ball while riding his scooter. In another city, on June 29, Aimène Bahouh was shot with a "bean bag" filled with lead pellets while driving, and has been in a coma ever since.

This pattern of racist police violence is not foreign. Those who took to the streets in France were revolting against the same system that people in this country protest against whenever there are similar racist murders by police here. Capitalism creates the same forces around the world, from racial caste systems that work to keep us divided, and allow for the hyper-exploitation of people of color, to police forces that terrorize working and poor people to try to "keep us in our place." From France to the U.S. and beyond — we stand together in solidarity against the same system!

*We live in the wealthiest country in the world and it is our labor that has created all of this wealth. But we aren't the ones who benefit from this. The super rich – the bosses of the big corporations and banks – keep the wealth and make all the decisions. But working people do the work that makes society run, and we can organize to unite our forces. And when we do, we have enormous power to change things and make a better world.*

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## UPS Workers: Their Fight is our Fight!

The contract between UPS and workers in the International Brotherhood of Teamsters expires on July 31. It covers more than 340,000 workers. Even though UPS is swimming in profits, the company broke off bargaining on July 5 over the Union's demands for increased wages, claiming that UPS didn't have enough money. Union leaders say they will call a strike on August 1 if there is no new agreement by then.

UPS wants to limit wage increases for full-time workers to a 6% raise over the life of a 5-year contract, far less than the rate of inflation, especially in areas with higher housing costs like the Bay Area.

For most part-time workers, the starting pay is \$16 per hour, topping out at \$20, with hard working conditions, especially in the summer heat when temperatures in the poorly ventilated warehouses and trucks can reach 100 degrees or more. They are not guaranteed more than 3.5 hours of work a day, but with little or no advance notice management can hold them on the job for hours more. Part-timers are demanding a host of improvements, including starting pay of \$25/hr, better schedules, and more.

UPS says it won't increase its offer to the workers, even with its \$13.1 billion in profits from last year.

UPS workers have a lot of power if they are able to use it. A strike could cost UPS hundreds of millions of dollars per week. Workers are asking for public support and we all have a stake in how the conflict at UPS turns out. If UPS workers make real gains, it will be a signal to all workers in every part of the economy that it's possible to stand up to profit-obsessed corporations and fight for what we and our families need.

