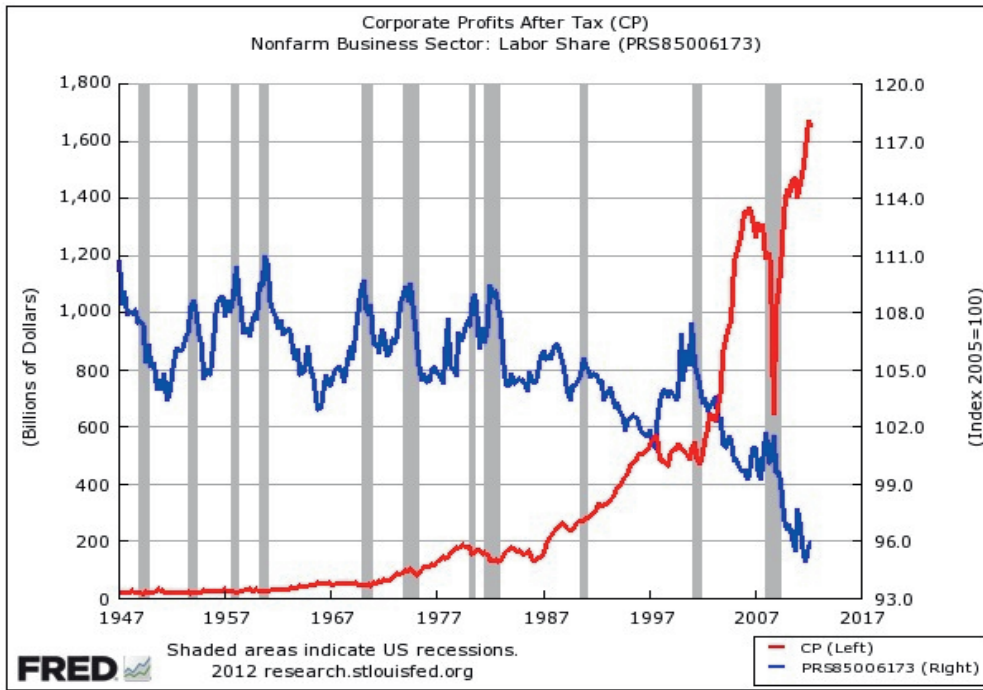


The graph at right shows how workers' share of the Gross Domestic Product (all the goods and services that our labor creates) has been driven down drastically since the late 90s while corporations kept more and more.



L.A. Workers Assembly Petitions for \$15/hr Minimum Wage in Los Angeles!

LOW WAGE WORKERS EVERYWHERE ARE STRIKING, MARCHING, PROTESTING, DEMANDING BETTER PAY, DEMANDING RESPECT!



MARTIN LUTHER KING CALLED FOR IT



In the early 1960's, Dr. King, A. Philip Randolph, and other civil rights heroes called for \$2 an hour minimum wage which is the same as \$15.57 in today's

dollars. But the bosses had different plans and instead, the real value of the minimum wage has been pushed backwards as giant corporations and banks have pocketed more profit. Corporate and banking profits have reached obscene levels, and millions of workers survive on pay that is lower than the federal poverty level.

A NEW WORKERS' MOVEMENT EMERGES

Corporate owners - drunk on profits - thought they could gorge forever. But the lowest paid section of the working class has reached its breaking point and workers are demanding an end to poverty wages!



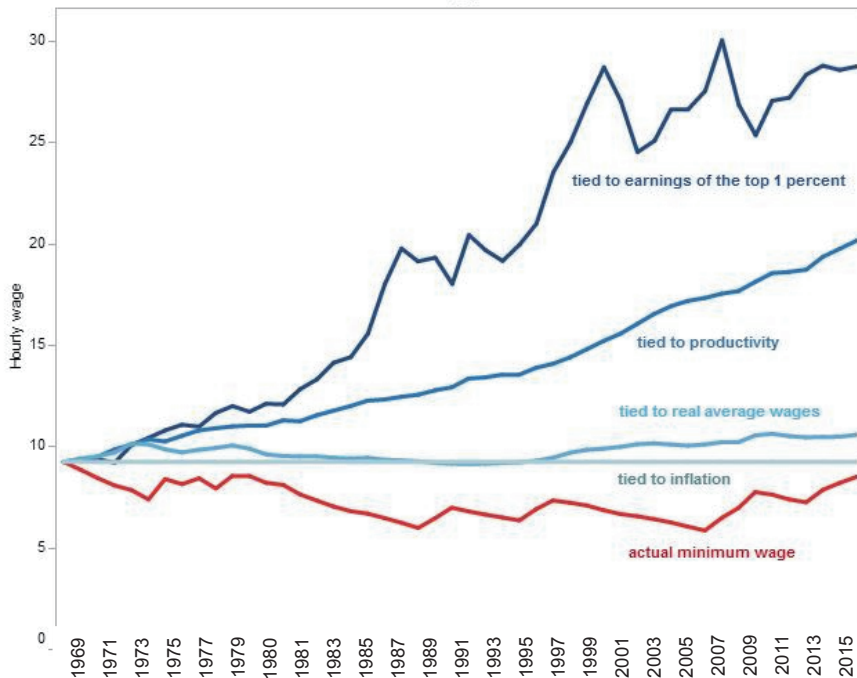
CRIES OF TERROR FROM THE BOSSES



When it was becoming clear that the income gap had reached never-seen-before levels, economists weren't tripping over themselves predicting doomsday over the rising poverty rate - that's not a crisis for them. But now, when a demand for a \$15 wage is being raised, suddenly they're concerned about layoffs and price-hikes. "You're better off without raises!" they're telling us.

We don't agree that workers have to live in poverty just so less than 1% of the population can be multi-billionaires. Let's get the truth out and put it to a vote in Los Angeles.

What would the minimum wage be if it had been tied to an economic index in 1968?



The graph at left shows what the minimum wage would be if it had grown at the same rates as:

**To donate to the \$15/hr Min Wage Campaign make checks to:
L.A. Workers Assembly
5278 W Pico Blvd
Los Angeles CA 90019**

**Interested in volunteering?
Call 323 306-6240**

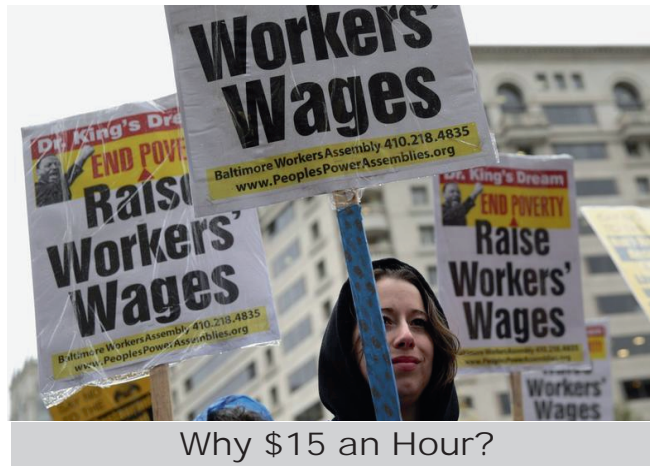
Wages and the Economy in L.A.

The following facts are from a study on the need for a \$15 minimum wage in Los Angeles by the Economic Roundtable sponsored by the AFL CIO and published in 2013.

- **Since a decline in industry in the early 1990s, L.A. has been referred to as the 'Capital of Low Wage Work.'**
- **From 1979 to 2011, inflation-adjusted pay of the bottom quarter of income earners in L.A. dropped 26%.**
- **More than 800,000 city residents — 46% of workers in Los Angeles - make less than \$15 an hour.**
- **It would take more than 3 full-time incomes at the current California minimum wage to afford the \$1,523 average rent for a 2 bdrm apt in L.A.**
- **The economic boost from a \$15 minimum wage in L.A. would create 64,700 jobs.**

A national minimum wage of \$15 per hour would bring economic stability to ten million workers in the U.S., many of whom earn less than the federal poverty standard. A disproportionate number of those workers are people of color or women, working at McDonalds or Burger King, WalMart, Target or other retail businesses.

For the last 40 years, the value of the minimum wage has declined, and in the last ten years the decline has accelerated. Even worse, since 2008 thousands of good paying jobs that disappeared in the economic melt-down have been replaced by jobs that pay much less, so the overall wage scale has also been driven down significantly. And, to top it all off, during roughly the same time period we've seen attacks on the right of workers across the country to organize unions and bargain collectively. Unions are the most effective way that workers can protect their wages and working conditions. And it's no coincidence that while all this was going on, corporate profits skyrocketed.



Why \$15 an Hour?

The proposal to gradually increase the federal minimum to \$10.10 an hour would barely lift people above the government's unrealistically low poverty standard. That's why low wage workers have been pushing a \$15 minimum. The AFL/CIO sponsored report, referred to earlier, demonstrates in detail that \$15 per hour is what it would take to bring stability to thousands of L.A. families. But \$15 only means stability and is far from excessive.

However, even the proposal of a federal \$10.10 minimum is fiercely opposed by the National Restaurant Association, lobbyists for the giant retail stores like Walmart, Target, and others who are spending millions to defeat it and are spreading scare stories about layoffs and price hikes if wages go up.

Raising Wages Won't Kill Jobs

Historically, the unemployment rate goes up and down unaffected by minimum wage increases. This is a known fact, and has been attested to by studies using data going back to the 1930s and available from the likes of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and the U.S. Congressional Budget Office. More recent and closer to home; a study of the period since San Jose, CA raised their minimum wage to \$10 in March of 2013 shows that one year later there are 19% more registered businesses in retail and restaurants and that unemployment has dropped more than one percent.

Prices Won't Shoot Up

The idea that wage hikes are the primary cause of price hikes is also being promoted. Of course prices go up all the time while wages are going down - this is especially true since the 2008 'Great Recession.' That fact is completely ignored in the corporate narrative.

But the important point is that wages and profits are not frozen at a certain percent of the total value of goods and services produced. One of the graphs on the back of this brochure shows wages compared to profits since 1947. We workers use to get a much larger share - after all we are 99% of the population! Recently as overall wages have been driven down - corporations made more profit. So when we succeed in winning higher wages, they simply live with less profit. It doesn't mean there won't be any price increases, but they can't just raise all prices at will because the market won't allow it. The economists trotted out on CNN, quoted in the NY Times or Wall Street Journal don't even mention the possibility of corporations making lower profits. It is as if the words don't exist! The only effects that these expensive, highly trained experts can imagine are price hikes and layoffs. If profits get reduced to what they made five years ago or ten years ago we are supposed to believe the economy will fall off a cliff.

Take a look at the 2nd graph on the back to get an idea of how much the ratio has shifted in favor of the corporations. It shows that if the minimum wage had gone up as much as the earnings of the top one percent it would now be about \$28 per hour!

For millions of workers the economy already has fallen off a cliff! But we can strike a blow against poverty wages by putting it to a vote in this huge city! Sign the petition to put a \$15 city-wide minimum wage on the ballot in Los Angeles!