

... PETITION... PETITION... PETITION...

# Money for Waitresses is money for all women!

The tourist industry claims to be in a crisis of declining profits. What are they proposing as a solution? That the government increase the difference between the standard minimum wage and that of workers earning tips in hotels and restaurants. They are suggesting 50¢ an hour less for us because they claim waitresses and waiters make "huge amounts" in tips and can well afford a cut in wages.

But who are they talking about? The majority (80%) of tipped workers in hotels and restaurants are women. Because we do the same kind of work for free in our homes, we are forced to accept bargain-basement wages when we get jobs outside. Most waitresses make only the minimum wage and many of us work part-time. As a result, we are forced to depend on tips to make ends meet.

The system of tipping makes us dependent on the goodwill of the individual customer. Like all other women, we resent being forced to hustle for our money, because often it amounts to a form of prostitution. We want it directly through higher wages. In fact, tipping subsidizes the industry and keeps everyone's wages low -- both waitresses and other employees who regularly receive a cut of the tips.

But we aren't going to give up our tips until we are assured of a decent wage in return. And we object to paying taxes on our tips as long as our wages are so low and benefits (such as unemployment insurance) are calculated on the wages alone and not on our tips.

As with the cuts in the family allowance and unemployment insurance, tightening up of welfare, and soaring prices, the government and industry are once again going after those with the least power -- women. The full-time housewife, the secretary, or the nurse of today is the waitress of yesterday or tomorrow. We are all feeling the

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