

# TRUTH



WORKERS OF THE WORLD, UNITE!

ORGAN of the TROTSKYIST ORGANIZATION of the USA • SECTION (SYMPATHIZING) of the FOURTH INTERNATIONAL • No. 157 DECEMBER 24, 1982 25¢

## A United Workers Slate in the UAW!

By MARGARET GUTTSHALL

Since we published the initial results of the November elections, we learned that the Labor and Farm Party candidate for US Senator from Wisconsin, backed by an AFSCME and several other union locals, received 6-7% of the vote in Milwaukee and Madison and achieved the necessary 2% statewide to gain permanent ballot status.

This, and the rapid development of opposition to concessions and the leadership responsible for them in the United Mine Workers (UMW), the United Steel Workers (USW) and the UAW, affirm our analysis of the 1982 elections as a turning point in the class struggle.

These developments demonstrate the tremendous potential that exists for a massive and unified union break from the old imperialist parties and leaderships in the unions, for the construction of an independent party of the working masses to bring down this regime, take power and begin to build socialism.

They demonstrate the correctness of the Trotskyist Organization's struggle for union candidates in the 1982 elections as a means to organize this break and its leadership.

Thus, the Trotskyist Organization calls on all tendencies in the unions and workers movement that are for union independence, for an independent party of workers, to continue this struggle, to carry it forward, to join it in a common struggle for workers candidates in upcoming union and local city elections, in particular, in a fight for a united workers slate in the upcoming elections of delegates to the UAW convention.

The fight for a united workers slate in the UAW delegate elections is a way to carry forward the opposition to concessions and the leadership responsible for it, toward the foundation of the workers party, in a large and unified fashion. It is, at the same time, a way to forge the new, revolutionary leadership of the working class.

The fight for this slate demands a political struggle not only against Reagan and the Democratic Party politicians and union officials that support them, but also against the tendencies in the unions that claim to be against them, but carry on anti-political, trade unionist or sectarian policies, particularly LOC (Locals Opposed to Concessions), its supporters and the Socialist Workers Party (SWP).

The recent "Organizing Against Concessions" Conference, held immediately following the November elections and in the midst of the developments in the UMW, USW and UAW, was dramatic proof of the extent to which these tendencies are dragging down the workers mobilization.

This conference brought together representatives of LOC, formations like it in other unions, Labor Notes/International Socialists (IS), which functions as advisors and publicists for anti-political tendencies in the unions, and the Socialist Workers Party.

Almost everyone of the key speakers spoke out against the formation of an independent party of the working masses and, in particular, against running union candidates in elections, on the grounds that the current imperialist union leadership will not accept it (the more honest) or that the workers are not ready (the trickier).

They all claimed to reject such pipe dreams in favor of "immediate gains." Yet when it came to "immediate gains"

these tendencies also came up empty.

They were able to collect \$1,355 for the Canadian Chrysler workers, but were unable to take the slightest step in the direction of any mobilization of American workers in support of Canadian workers in their own strike, despite the fact that numerous UAW members were present.

In fact, the conference did not come up with one single proposal for a unified workers mobilization.

In reality, it is the inability of these tendencies to envision any sort of massive, unified, political and consequently revolutionary mobilization of the working class, leading to the transformation of society as an immediate alternative rather than as some far-off utopia, such as the struggle for union candidates or a workers party, that is behind their retreat on "immediate gains."

In a situation where even the defense of conquests and "immediate gains" increasingly means a confrontation with the

imperialist state and its agents in the unions, you have to be prepared to fight for power, in the unions and in society. If you are not, you can only retreat. Thus the policy of the anti-political/trade unionist opposition is not one of immediate gains vs. long range goals as they claim, but one of retreat and even capitulation all along the line.

The SWP pretends to counterpose itself to these tendencies in the unions, but in reality it is no different. It calls for a workers party but refuses to make any fight for it in the unions in a massive way. It refuses even to fight for its own candidates in the unions.

Thus in the recent elections its candidate for Michigan governor got only 1,000 votes in the Detroit area (Wayne County), less than the Trotskyist Organization, with much fewer resources, got in the Detroit Mayoral elections.

The fight for a united workers slate in the UAW delegate elections, as a step in

the struggle to build the workers party, is inseparable from the struggle against these tendencies, for a new, revolutionary leadership of the working class.

This is the principle lesson of the Trotskyists' struggle for union candidates in the 1982 elections. By concentrating our efforts on this struggle our results will be much larger than they were in the November elections. (Up until now the election commission has refused to count the write in vote for our candidate).

This political struggle between tendencies cannot stand in the way of a common struggle against the common enemy. This is why we are for a united workers slate. This is why we have responded positively to the Internationalist Workers Party's proposal for a united labor and socialist slate in the 1984 elections and await their reply.

We think all tendencies in the workers movement, regardless of their differences, have an obligation to act in this manner.

## The Polish Revolution Lives!

By KEVIN FITZPATRICK

The professional mourners for the Polish Revolution have been extremely busy lately. *The New York Times* has been occupied writing the obituaries, and that old radical hack, Sidney Lens, has been hanging crepe in *The Nation*.

### Alive and Kicking

There's just one problem. To paraphrase Mark Twain, reports of Solidarnosc's death have been greatly exaggerated.

Now, if you remember that the same imperialist, Stalinist and opportunist forces also pronounced the Polish workers struggle deceased a full year ago, this second round of wakes just might lead you to think that what is going on here is not so much analysis as wishful thinking.

All these people want Solidarnosc dead. And if paying the Catholic Church to perform the funeral mass can help it on its way, so much the better.

But, despite everything, the Polish Revolution lives!

That is why Jaruzelski and his thugs did not dare actually end martial law, not even in name. They could only "suspend" it, while incorporating its provisions into law. The state of war against the Polish working class is now institutionalized.

The regime has so little confidence in its own security that it has tried (with the cooperation of the Catholic Church) to blackmail Lech Walesa, fabricate false versions of his statements and kidnap him to prevent his making a speech on December 16.

If he is only "the former head of former Solidarnosc," as the Stalinists say, what's the big problem?

Yes, the regime has received assistance from imperialism. The Church's role has been one of strike breaking in regard to the November 10 action, of fingering Frasiy-niuk and others, of opposition to resistance to the outlawing of Solidarnosc, etc. The recent statement of Reagan, calling on the junta to negotiate with representatives of the Polish people — who are not the leaders of Solidarnosc, but the hierarchy — in exchange for the ending of sanctions, forms part of this collaboration.

Nonetheless, despite the cancellation by the TKK (the underground leadership of

Solidarnosc) — under the pressure of the Church — of actions that it originally called for December 13, hundreds (at least) of workers and youth went into the streets during that whole week, especially during the December 16 commemorations, in (at least) Warsaw and Gdansk.

### Road to Victory

The Fourth International was there with them.

The whole purpose of the call made by the Trotskyists for an International Workers Demonstration in Gdansk was precisely to bring the support of the international working class to the struggle of the Polish working class as a revolutionary and working class struggle for socialism.

The Polish Revolution is in a decisive stage. In this crisis of the Polish Revolution, just as in that of the American Revolution two centuries ago, "the summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will shrink from" their duty.

"Tyranny," Thomas Paine continued, "like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph."

But who are those who will "stand it now"? Only the Fourth International has fought those shedding crocodile tears over

the Polish Revolution. And not only in Poland.

Thus, on December 13, the anniversary of the imposition of martial law, protests were held at Polish embassies and consulates in a number of Western countries. In the United States, at the demonstration called for the Polish consulate in Chicago, the only other organization present besides us was Chicago Workers Video.

But if we had not been present, the only force participating would have been the Polish-American Congress, which is fundamentally tied to American imperialism. This is what did happen in New York and Washington.

Is it an accident that all the forces that claim to be for the Polish Revolution — the Socialist Workers Party, Revolutionary Workers League and so on — but that do not differentiate themselves from those who want to see it dead, leave opposition to the Jaruzelski regime in the hands of the Polish-American Congress and similar groups? Is it an accident that they do not put forward a fight for its defense here, just as they do not put forward a policy for its victory there?

The Fourth International alone has built a section, a party, in Poland. The existence of the Revolutionary Workers League of Poland (RLRP) is the determining factor in the victory of the Polish Revolution. The will is there, but the policy and the leadership have been lacking. Our fight, in Poland and internationally, is to see that this problem is overcome.

Nor is this just a question of one country. The Stalinists are not against the revolution only in Poland. Reagan is not conspiring with them only in that country.

And the Catholic Church is cooperating globally with both these forces of the old order. Is it coincidental that the head of the Salvadoran hierarchy, an open anti-communist, is the intermediary in the "negotiations" proposals of the FDR-FLMN to the dictatorship? Is it coincidental that the US Catholic bishops are trying to present the peaceful disarmament ("nuclear freeze") of US imperialism as a possibility today?

*Freedom for Workers Poland!  
Build the Party of the Political Revolution!*

WORKERS OF THE WORLD, UNITE!

## THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

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Organ of the Executive Committee of the FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

### Demonstrate in the Streets of Gdansk!

December 13, with the Polish Workers, in the Name of Socialism,  
Against the Stalinist Usurpation of Workers Power

The Trotskyist Organization of the USA, in cooperation with the Polish Trotskyist Organization, is organizing a demonstration in Gdansk on December 13, 1982, in support of the Polish workers' struggle for socialism. The demonstration will be held in the streets of Gdansk, starting at 10:00 AM. The demonstration will be held in the streets of Gdansk, starting at 10:00 AM. The demonstration will be held in the streets of Gdansk, starting at 10:00 AM.



**JUST OUT — WRITE TRUTH!**

# Down With the Fraser Leadership!

UAW president Douglas Fraser has now been revealed as a blatant liar and traitor. The Chrysler contract — won by the action of the Canadian workers in striking Chrysler — fully demonstrates this.

Aside from the question of how good the contract really is — and for our part, we think it shows how much more could have been won by a leadership that wanted to win — one single fact stands out.

Everything that Fraser, that Marc Stepp and all the rest of the UAW bureaucracy said for months and months has turned out to be a total lie.

“There is no money,” Fraser said. Then where did the wage increase come from — Santa Claus?

“If you strike, you’ll wreck the company and lose your jobs,” he said. So why is it that it was a strike alone that produced not ruin but gains?

“Wait until January,” he said. And of course anyone can see what a great idea that was.

Fraser is not a fool. So it is obvious that he said these things because he was not for the workers, but for their enemies. Not just for Chrysler (where he is back on the Board now), but for all of the capitalist class — headed by Reagan — that wants to crush the auto workers and all the workers.

That is why he was backed up by all the newspapers and TV stations — because they are capitalist operations themselves, whose “objectivity” is a screen for their class interests.

The question now is: where do we go from here? No one can be so naive as to

think Chrysler will passively accept this defeat. No one can be such a dreamer as to believe that Fraser will be OK from now on.

No, right now a new struggle is beginning. Chrysler will try to strip these limited gains of any meaning through layoffs, plant closings, and so on. And Fraser and the rest will be helping the company.

A struggle for *workers control* is now the answer to these attacks, not just to stopping them, but to turning the situation around, to taking the offensive. In particular, that means that in the coming months the question of *plant occupations* — sit-down strikes — will become a burning issue.

At the same time, the situation demands that the union become an organization that serves the workers instead of one run by enemy agents.

This crew of traitors headed by Douglas Fraser is preparing to pass on the leadership of the UAW — in a way that has as much to do with trade union or workers democracy as the coronation of a king does — to another member of the reactionary and class collaborationist “administration caucus.”

This clone of Fraser, a particularly drab character who calls himself Owen Bieber, is merely the front man for the continued domination of the UAW by pro-capitalist elements. That is what has to be ended.

Fraser intends to hand over the reins (the ones they use on you) to Bieber at the

UAW’s Constitutional Convention in May.

As readers of *Truth* know, we have consistently called for a *special convention of the UAW* as a way to carry out *workers democracy*, as a way to take the union away from the bureaucrats and make it an instrument of struggle.

We want to take the same idea today and apply it to the immediate situation. We want to wage a fight to make the UAW Convention into a special convention, one that will do the things that have to be done.

On this basis, the Trotskyist Organization/USA is fighting for a *united workers slate* in the elections for delegates to this Convention. The nominations for these elections are in February and the elections themselves are in March.

This slate would be open to all trade union and political groups that want to fight Fraser, on the basis of a clear and simple platform to be worked out among all those willing to take up this idea.

We put no conditions on this proposal. We do, however, want to put forward some points right now. First, that it call for the defeat of the “administration caucus,” and that it put forward a candidate for UAW president. It should be absolutely opposed to concessions. It should be for the formation of a labor or workers party now.

We are putting these few points forward as a way to begin the discussion. There is no time to be lost, there is everything to be won.

K.F.

## The Global Conflict

### Andropov's Record

When Leonid Brezhnev finally died, his immediate successor as Communist Party chairman (though not yet as head of state) was Yuri Andropov. Reflecting the hopes for a deal with the Kremlin expressed by their capitalist governments, the Western newspapers began to present Andropov as a liberal and reformer — in the Kremlin spectrum.

From a working class point of view, this is hardly the case. Andropov began his rise to power on the bones of the Hungarian workers. As USSR ambassador, he played a key role in the invasion by Kremlin forces that smashed that upsurge.

In turn, Andropov was named head of the Kremlin’s counterrevolutionary secret police agency, the KGB. In this position, Andropov was responsible for the smashing of the “dissident” opposition, for frame-ups and persecution, and, in particular, for the method of confining oppositionists to “special” psychiatric hospitals — where the KGB ministered to their “reformist delusions.”

One thing the Western experts look for from Andropov is support to “reforms” in the Soviet economy — the same kind of “reforms” that have led to massive attacks on the workers of Poland, Rumania and Yugoslavia. Based on his record, the imperialists’ hopes are well-placed.

### Crisis in Argentina

In the aftermath of the Malvinas War, the Argentine military dictatorship finds itself in greater and greater trouble.

On December 6, a nationwide general strike of twenty-four hours took place. It was the first such strike since the military took power, and it completely shut the country down.

On December 16, in turn, a massive demonstration for a return to civilian rule turned into clashes with the police, with demonstrators chanting: “The military to the firing squads!”

The bourgeois parties that organized this action doubtless want to preserve capitalist rule with a democratic face. Is that option really open? A similar change of government occurred recently in Bolivia. Just last month, the miners unleashed a general strike against the new civilian regime.

### Israeli “Inquiry”

Following the massacre in the Sabra and Shatila Palestinian refugee camps, the Israeli government was compelled by domestic and international pressure to set up an “inquiry commission” to investigate the affair.

Behind all the buck-passing and claims of ignorance, the complicity of the Zionists has become so clear that the commission notified a number of important figures, including Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Defense Minister Ariel Sharon, that it was liable to find them guilty of something, and that they should be guided in their actions by that knowledge.

As a result, Begin himself has decided to clam up.

This commission expresses the crisis of Zionism at the same time as it seeks to protect it with a veneer of “impartial justice.”

American workers have already seen during Watergate how such investigations not only protect the government as a whole, but do not even punish the chief criminals. Maybe Begin and Sharon can arrange to pardon each other.

it. And, in order to blind others, it is itself willing to play ostrich.

The situation is sharpening every day, with the steel contract, for example, expiring this spring. A revolutionary leadership has to be built now to meet these critical demands.

K.F.

# The Unions and the Leadership

In November, workers in two of the major unions in the United States took actions that showed both the massive resistance to Reagan’s attack on the working class, and the political inadequacy of the trade union opposition to the present bureaucratic leadership.

On November 19, presidents of locals of the United Steel Workers (USW) rejected a concessions package proposed by the steel corporations and by union president Lloyd McBride, and the USW’s entire International Executive Board.

Earlier, on November 9, Sam Church, the incumbent president of the United Mine Workers (UMW), was defeated (by a better than 2-to-1 margin) when miners voted in union elections for the top leadership of the UMW. Rich Trumka, Church’s challenger, was elected along with his whole slate.

In both cases, the unions were facing massive attacks from the corporations and their government, particularly in the form of massive unemployment. For instance, at US Steel’s South Works in Chicago, only 900-1,000 workers remain on the job out of a work force that only a few years ago numbered 6,000.

The votes in both unions give yet another blow to the treacherous policy of yielding to *more attacks* (concessions) in the name of fighting those that already have been made.

This is especially true in the UMW, where the vote shows the continuing determination of the coal miners to make their union into a fighting instrument. Trumka was not elected because of his *program*, but because of the miners’ desire to get rid of Church. They remember Sam Church did his best to put over a sell-out contract and, when they rejected it, put together the one under which the current attacks have been mounted.

Church is the third UMW president in a row to be driven from office. Church did not succeed in breaking the miners, and if Rich Trumka, college graduate and lawyer, thinks he will, he is in for a rude awakening.

Now the question of a revolutionary leadership is posed more sharply than ever. That is why Reaganite Utah Senator Orrin Hatch, chairman of the US Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee, announced just before the UMW elections that he was planning to investigate the activities of “radicals” in the unions.

The situation is similar in the USW. For example, at an August meeting of USW Local 65 (South Works) there was a huge turnout to protest a deal with US Steel that would mean more concessions in exchange for promises. The deal was eventually “carried” by means of a mail ballot.

But at the meeting itself, the bankruptcy of the old “Fight Back” opposition (Ed Sadlowski, Jim Balanoff, etc.) was demonstrated. Sadlowski himself spoke in favor of accepting the deal. And well he might, since he is now on McBride’s paid staff. Another member of the old opposi-

tion, Alice Peurala, spoke against the deal. But this was of no importance precisely because Peurala, ex-president of the local, after being elected as an oppositionist and opponent of layoffs, did *absolutely nothing* to fight them while she was in office (just like Sadlowski and former District Director Balanoff). As a result, she discredited herself and lost her bid for reelection.

The pseudo-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP), which reported on this meeting in the September 24, 1982, issue of its paper, *The Militant*, came out against concessions at South Works, just as it later hailed the anti-concessions vote by the local presidents, as well as Trumka’s election.

But, and this is a big one, the SWP does not offer a policy for defeating capitalist attacks. And it neglects to mention that in the past it backed Sadlowski and Company all the way, thus facilitating their betrayal.

So, its enthusiasm over the rejection of concessions has to be carefully examined. Isn’t this exactly the same policy of accepting the given leadership and the given level of mobilization — a *non-revolutionary policy* — that helped lead to the present situation? In this light, it is not so strange that *The Militant* (December 3, 1982) quotes, without at all condemning, a local president who stated: “If I’m going to go down on my knees, I want to go down on my knees in dignity. I don’t want to go down as a chump.”

Similarly, in the UMW, the SWP is playing *exactly* the same role that it played toward Arnold Miller and even Sam Church — defense to the bitter end, in *opposition* to the movement of the workers for their rights.

Thus, the SWP mentions that Church waved *The Militant* around at a campaign meeting, using its endorsement of Trumka in an attempt to red bait him. But the SWP merely links this with Hatch’s threats as a method that “backfired” (*The Militant*; November 26, 1982).

Is this for real? In fact, the SWP is out to blind workers to the critical situation and the drastic solutions necessary to answer

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# The Fight for the Workers Party Today

By DAVID HEFFELFINGER

When the October Revolution is once again renewing itself in Poland and Stalinism is experiencing the deepest crisis since World War II, when imperialism and the Kremlin are gearing up their machines of blood and war to meet the revolution in Europe, America and elsewhere, in short when the old order is in shambles — it is high time that Trotskyists declare themselves clearly and resolutely on the struggle for power and the party to lead it. This series in **Truth** is in-

tended to do just that.

Beginning from the demand for the Workers Party or Labor Party, which is becoming more popular every day in the American working class, we will show that the clarification of the program and the nature of a workers party necessitates a new revolutionary leadership against Stalinism and pseudo-Trotskyism. In particular, in the future parts of this series, we will take up the necessity, precisely in order to build a Workers Party, of

rebuilding the American section of the Fourth International in a Trotskyist Congress against the Barnes leadership of the SWP, which is today nothing better than a pro-Stalinist tendency masquerading as Trotskyist.

"We are for a party, for an independent party of the toiling masses who will take power in the state." (Trotsky, "Discussion in Mexico City," April 1938)

parliamentarism and trade union solutions, in the possibility of a certain space where reformism could flourish, and this goes completely against the fight for the construction of a revolutionary leadership.

This spontaneist conception rests on a profoundly narrow national outlook, and an attempt to transfer in a very mechanical way the specific application of the Labor Party slogan in 1938 to the period we are in today.

## Part I. A Party for Workers Power

No question is more important for the American Revolution than that of the party. The Democratic Party, a capitalist party, has served as the main vehicle through which the trade unions have been tied to the bourgeoisie, deviating the working class from a struggle for power into various schemes of class collaboration going under the general heading of "concessions" today.

Many currents in the American working class today call for the formation of an independent Labor Party or Workers Party, some more timidly than others.

But it is the Trotskyists, at least those who label themselves as such, who have been the main proponents of the fight for a Workers Party.

Does that mean that there is general agreement over the aims and the methods of the struggle to build a Workers Party?

Not in the least. In fact, confusion over the question reigns supreme, emanating from centers that maintain Trotskyism and Bolshevism in name only, and that pass off various "positions" counterfeited from Trotskyism as good coin on the working class.

The Fourth International was founded against the Stalinist degeneration of the Third International and the Communist Parties. One of the clearest symptoms of that degeneration was the collaboration of the CP's with the bourgeoisie in various popular fronts designed to prevent the working class, in a period of sharp confrontations, from taking power in its own name. This sickness was spread by the American CP, too, in the period of industrial unionism, in the form of support to Roosevelt and the Democratic Party immediately prior to World War II. The decision in 1938 of the Fourth International and its American section, the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), to fight for a Labor Party was directed, therefore, also against Stalinism.

Many times it seems history repeats itself. But when it does, as in 1982 when once again the American CP supported the Democratic Party, it always makes the first "tragedy" seem a "farce" the second time around.

Today's "tragedy" is that the Socialist Workers Party, which once represented the Trotskyist party in the United States, has gone over to the defense of Stalinism. This has had its expression not only in the timidity with which it fights for the Labor Party, but also in an all out attack on the revolutionary leadership and Trotskyism itself.

We are forced, then, to begin our defense of the Workers Party by defending Trotskyism. And if, because of the distortions and confusions that have become general and popular in relation to the fight for the Workers Party, we must first travel over old ground, it is only in order to prepare to conquer the new — the struggle for the Workers Party today.

### Labor Party

In fact, every attempt to form a Labor Party in the United States has had a two-sided character. In the period of the rise of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), two of the most important, the Minnesota Farmer Labor Party and Labor's Non-Partisan League, which were based on a powerful upsurge of the American working class, were not under the leadership of revolutionaries. The MFLP was a mixed bag expressing all the contradictions of American populism and heavily influenced by the CP, while the LNPL was in fact set up by the labor bureaucracy in order to derail the senti-

ment for an independent Workers Party into "non-partisan" support for Roosevelt and the Democratic Party. During World War II, the American Labor Party set up by two labor bureaucrats, Dubinsky, of the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union, and Hillman, of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, much to the surprise of its founders, and despite the fact its candidate, La Guardia, was a liberal Republican, received 18% of the vote.

Do Trotskyists see the construction of the party, then, as an objective, spontaneous development in the first stages — a reformist labor party first and only then after the ground is "fertile," so to speak, the differentiation of a revolutionary vanguard?

This, in essence, is the conception, draped in orthodoxy, of the SWP today. But in fact, the fight of the Trotskyists for the Labor Party was in 1938, and should be today, the means to reorganize the working class under a new revolutionary leadership, to organize a break with bourgeois parliamentarism and reformism in favor of a struggle for workers power.

When the Communist League of America, predecessor of the SWP, first considered the question of the Labor Party in 1931, it rejected the slogan in favor of concentrating its struggle against Stalinism and the degeneration of the Third International. And when in 1938, the question was reconsidered, it was precisely in order to forge a revolutionary leadership.

"When for the first time the League considered the question . . . then the prevailing sentiment was not to do it, and that was absolutely correct . . . On the other hand I believe no one foresaw during that period the appearance of the CIO with this rapidity and this power" ("Discussion in Mexico City," April 1938 — our emphasis).

In other words the decision to put forward the slogan of the Labor Party did not "correct" a mistake, rather it was precisely a means to fight for the same end, the construction of the revolutionary leadership against Stalinism, albeit under different circumstances.

Today we often hear, supposedly in defense of Trotskyism, that any who would deny in advance the progressive character of a reformist party are sectarians.

In the first place, there is a revolutionary principle to be affirmed here. For even if we admit, and we do so with extreme reservations, that the spontaneous formation of a reformist Labor Party is today a possible development, revolutionaries would never favor such a development in advance under any circumstances.

Trotsky had to fight this very tendency in both the period when the CLA rejected the Labor Party slogan, and later, when it was adopted. In 1931, he wrote:

"One can say that under American conditions a labor party in the British sense would be a progressive step, and by recognizing this and stating so, we ourselves, even though indirectly, help to establish such a party. But that is precisely the reason I will never assume the responsibility to affirm abstractly and dogmatically that the creation of a labor party would be a 'progressive step' even in the United States, because I do not know under what circumstances, under what guidance, and for what purposes the party would be created." ("Letter from Prinkipo, Turkey" May 19, 1932)



And in a strikingly similar passage from an article which became the basis for a resolution on the Labor Party in 1938 in the SWP, Trotsky wrote:

" . . . In its very essence the labor party can preserve progressive significance only during a comparatively short transitional period. The further sharpening of the revolutionary situation will inevitably break the shell of the labor party and permit the Socialist Workers Party to rally around the banner of the Fourth International the revolutionary vanguard of the American proletariat." (our emphasis)

These two passages, one in 1931 and the other in 1938, are both directed against any idea that a reformist Labor Party ("on the model of Great Britain," as we often hear) constitutes either the aim of revolutionaries, or a solution for a certain stage of development of the American working class.

And yet this is the position which numerous tendencies today, including the SWP, maintain — cloaked in supposed orthodoxy, but in reality, completely unorthodox from the point of view of Leninism and Trotskyism. Because, going from analyzing the development of the party as an objective task, this false creation of a reformist Labor Party, this false position ends up favoring the worst illusions in

### World Situation

Today the dynamic of the situation is that the apparatus of the trade unions represents the greatest single weight on the backs of the American working class. What we are witnessing today is not a movement characterized by a massive trade union upsurge, but precisely an upsurge directed against the bankrupt leadership of the trade unions and their collaboration with the bourgeoisie. To the extent that this movement expresses its independence from the bourgeoisie it also expresses the need for a break with the trade union framework itself, to break from bourgeois parliamentarism and organize the struggle for power, and flowing from this, raises the need for a party — working class and revolutionary to lead such a struggle.

The opposition in the trade unions that has begun to develop against concessions in every major union is caught in the trap of trade unionism. In the 1982 elections this opposition, in particular in the UAW, was unable to offer even the slightest guidance for the ranks of the unions. And this necessarily acted as a brake, in particular on the struggle against concessions in auto, leaving the struggle once again on the level of a company vs. union fight and leaving the initiative in the hands of Fraser and the UAW bureaucracy.

Furthermore, the world situation today is characterized by an offensive of the working class. It is the revolution which is at the source of the crisis of imperialism and Stalinism. In 1938, the working class was coming off of successive defeats in Germany, China and Spain, entering directly into an imperialist war that came about precisely because of these defeats.

This offensive is developing through sharp confrontations between the working class and imperialism and Stalinism. Typical of opportunism, the Barnes leadership of the SWP hesitates before the revolution, seeing in every situation the fantasy of a democratic space — anything to avoid the revolutionary confrontations that must take place.

Even in Poland, the SWP sees a "trade union" struggle. This leadership is incapable of recognizing the revolution, and just as incapable of leading it.

But even in the United States, who can see a period for reformism to flourish? The whole meaning of Reagan's election was to sharpen the ax of counterrevolution, and was based on the complete bankruptcy and crisis of the Democratic Party.

Such a situation demands a revolutionary leadership!

True, we cannot expect the American working class to come to consciousness of its revolutionary tasks spontaneously. We can see that the growing demands for independence from the bourgeoisie and concessions, the demand for a Workers Party, brings with it illusions in bourgeois democracy. And we can say that every step forward toward a break from the Democratic Party and the trade union bureaucracy is a step forward in the struggle for workers power.

But that is also precisely the reason why revolutionaries must "speak the truth." Because the bottom line is that only a revolutionary leadership, forged against Stalinism and against pseudo-Trotskyism that has gone over to Stalinism, will be able to meet the tasks of the preparation of the American Revolution.

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## Defend the Central American Revolution . . .

# No Settlement with Imperialism!

On October 10, the Revolutionary Democratic Front/Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FDR-FMLN) of El Salvador launched its third military offensive of the year and the largest in its history.

Yet this military offensive has not resulted in the victory of the revolution in El Salvador. Even more attacks on the revolution throughout Central America have taken place — the October kidnapping of FDR-FMLN leaders, the movement of counterrevolutionary bands camped in Honduras, to inside Nicaragua, and Reagan's support to the most reactionary dictators on his recent trip to Central America.

These attacks on the revolution are not the inevitable result of the military offensive. They are neither proof that the oppressed should not struggle because this will only provoke the oppressor to greater atrocities; nor are they the unavoidable consequences of the revolutionary struggle. "The more the proletariat fights, the more imperialism fights back."

No. These attacks on the revolution are the result of the political capitulation of the FDR-FMLN. For at the same time that the FDR-FMLN initiated a *military offensive* against imperialism, it initiated a *political capitulation* aimed at coming to an agreement with imperialism.

Ruben Zamora, leader of the FDR-FMLN spelled out the nature of this political capitulation in an interview published in *The Guardian*. He said that the FDR-FMLN aims at "converging" with all forces outside the most reactionary elements in El Salvador led by d'Aubuisson, including the US, elements of the Salvadoran military and the Church. He said they aim to reach a "political settlement" in which the guerrillas will lay down their arms.

It is this political policy of conciliation, compromise, retreat and even betrayal that is responsible for the dissipation of the military offensive that could have gone a long way to wiping out d'Aubuisson and Company.

For there can be no "political settlement" between diametrically opposed

forces. There can only be the victory of the workers and oppressed or the victory of d'Aubuisson and Company. Thus any efforts to reach such a settlement can only lead to the disarmament of the revolution and thus to the victory of d'Aubuisson.

The fundamental problem of the revolution in El Salvador and throughout Central America is that the more and more the masses orient toward a confrontation aimed at the destruction of imperialism and its agents, the more and more the leadership orients toward a settlement aimed at some illusory co-existence with them.

A new leadership of the revolution must be built — workers parties to lead the masses of North, Central and South America in boycotts aimed at bringing down the dictatorships, in general strikes in the Central American countries to bring down the dictatorships.

Neither the FDR-FMLN nor its component parts, in particular, the Salvadoran Communist Party, can be reformed. Nor can we expect the new leadership to evolve spontaneously from factions developing within the FDR-FMLN and its counterparts in Nicaragua and elsewhere.

Thus it is up to revolutionaries, Trotskyists, to build this new working class leadership of the revolution in Central America. The Trotskyist Organization calls on all groups and militants that want to do this to join it and the other sections of the Fourth International in the preparation of a Conference of Trotskyist Militants of the Americas.

The preparation of this conference passes through a struggle in the unions and solidarity and emigre movements for unconditional defense of the revolution in Central America, for the unity of all forces in defense of the revolution against a settlement with imperialism, for workers parties to lead this struggle.

This demands a struggle not only against the FDR-FMLN but also against the leadership of the solidarity movements in the US and especially against the Socialist Workers Party (SWP). Each acts simply as a spokesman for the FDR-FMLN and

the SWP plays a particularly pernicious role. At the same time that the FDR-FMLN is engaged in a concerted effort to reach an agreement with US imperialism, the SWP tries to "redwash" this formation, in particular its motor force, the Salvadoran Communist Party.

The SWP has just published a document in which the Salvadoran CP leader Schafik Jorge Handal pretends to draw a balance sheet of the CP's policy in Central America and to initiate a new course — carrying forward the socialist revolution, fighting for power through armed struggle, uniting revolutionaries, building a new Marxist-Leninist party, etc.

If the reader looks carefully he will see that in fact the CP has not changed at all. For all the talk about destroying the state and armed struggle there is not one word about mobilizing the working class and uniting it across national boundaries as is necessary to achieve this.

In reality, this document and its reproduction by the SWP are aimed at blocking a break from the CP and the FDR-FMLN at this crucial moment. The document is dated December 1981. Why did the SWP wait a year to publish it? Only because it did not find it useful at that time.

This is not the first time that the CP has pretended to defend a revolution in order to betray it, nor is it the first time that the SWP has covered for it. The CP and Castro played the same role in the Cuban revolution and so did the SWP.

Nor are these simply literary roles. All the militants who attempted to carry forward the revolution in Cuba were imprisoned and all the sections of the Fourth International in Central America and South America, except the Bolivian section, were eventually dissolved or reduced to total impotence.

Now more than ever it is necessary to defend the Central American revolution with a boycott of the dictatorships, with arms to the Salvadoran rebels, with irreconcilable opposition to a settlement with imperialism!

## Mobilization for Gdansk

The opening round of our struggle for the International Workers Demonstration in Gdansk, December 13, had its first success in an unlikely situation.

At the *Labor Notes* (otherwise known as the International Socialists or IS) Conference, which drew up to 750 unionists, mostly lower level members of the bureaucracy, we were able to win four supporters for the Motion of Support of the Gdansk demonstration, two UAW members and two steelworkers of the USWA. One autoworker from UAW Local 72 gave five dollars to the International Workers Fund and he and another worker from UAW Local 78 both subscribed to *Truth*.

These results were a direct consequence of the methods we used to reach militants. While they stood in groups, we began agitation for defense of Workers Poland and came into conflict with the IS and the Socialist Workers Party pretending "there ain't nobody here but us rank and filers."

Because the IS is *opposed* to revolution and revolutionary methods of struggle such as those used by Solidarnosc, they tried to prevent us from speaking to the workers. At one point a black woman steelworker came forward to sign the Motion and to take one to use in her local. Two bullies (real vulgar types!) dragged her away by the arm for a briefing. But she pulled away from them and came back to sign the Motion and gave us her name for future work together.

We had just been discussing with her the need to fight for the rights of the Polish workers, for the freedom of all parties in Poland to be heard by the workers so they can choose their leadership. The actions of the IS guards showed louder than words where the IS really stands on this issue.

Several workers were standing in a group with a member of the SWP. We addressed all of them to see if they would support the Motion. The SWP'er did not want to talk about it. We drew out this silence as a false "neutrality" regarding the Polish Revolution. The SWP fears that the victory of the Polish Revolution means the restoration of imperialism! One of the autoworkers came back, bought a subscription to *Truth* and signed the Motion because, he said, "I am a socialist." The SWP'er disappeared.

The very essence of the *Labor Notes* Conference was opposed to workers establishing real ties with the revolution in Poland and, consequently, for reducing the confrontation with concessions (a code word for counterrevolution in America) to shop floor amateurism, with the excuse that the workers are not ready. But the support we gained from the four workers organized by forces in and around the IS itself shows that even in those hostile waters, a fight for a clear policy — defense of socialism, for its leadership — can win allies.

In all, sixty-five workers and youth signed the Motion and pledged over \$225.00 to the success of and in defense of the Polish Trotskyists fighting for the overthrow of Jaruzelski. Twenty-three, the largest grouping, were young black youth from Kettering High School in Detroit.

Some of them expressed a certain hesitancy toward active participation in the Revolutionary Youth International through the Malcolm X Circle. They expressed fears that Reagan is "too strong" for a struggle like the Polish workers. This idea is directly coming from forces such as the IS and the SWP who rest on the idea that this period is one of "reforms at best."

Only a clear political battle to unmask opportunism with the youth and to involve them in the struggle in the unions can result in their joining the Revolutionary Youth International at the side of the Trotskyists.

BARBARA PUTNAM

## The Spanish Elections and Trotskyism

Virtually everyone is aware that the PSOE (Partido Socialista Obrero de Espana/Socialist Workers Party of Spain), a Social Democratic party, won a clear majority in the Spanish elections on October 28.

In the eyes of the bourgeois press, this represents a triumph for democracy over the heirs of Francoist fascism (all the more so since Felipe Gonzales, head of the PSOE and new prime minister, is so extremely moderate). In a sort of shadow version of this analysis, much of the centrist press has presented this election as the herald of a deepening radicalization of the workers, which will proceed along this path for an indeterminate period.

Thus, *The Militant* (November 12, 1982), newspaper of the pseudo-Trotskyist US Socialist Workers Party (SWP), wrote: "The PSOE electoral sweep has put Spanish workers in a stronger position to fight."

In contrast to such pleasant visions, the Fourth International sees in the Spanish elections the herald of the coming clash between the Spanish workers and the fascists, the confrontation between the revolution and a coup.

The election of Gonzales is far from serving as a barrier to a fascist coup. "What characterizes Gonzales" — says Anibal Ramos, leader of the PORE (Partido Obrero Revolucionario de Espana/Revolutionary Workers Party of Spain), section of the Fourth International, in an interview with *La Verite*, the French Trotskyist newspaper — "is a complete prostration before the military and their government; instead of being a barrier to the putschists, he is the cover for their conspiracies."

the slogan: "No confidence in the PSOE government!"

A closer look at the election results will both confirm this analysis and demonstrate how the PORE has already made this fight in the elections themselves.

Besides the obvious pre-eminence of the PSOE in the election results, there was another result of at least equal importance. The "centrist" party of the bourgeoisie that arose after the death of Franco, the UCD, was virtually wiped out. In its place grew the Alianza Popular (Popular Alliance) of Manuel Fraga Iribarne (an open Francoist), which, despite its democratic pretenses, in fact has become the legal organizing center of the fascists.

At the same time, in face of the Stalinist and centrist formations that are in the same disarray as the Sacred Union — for "democracy" around the king — that they supported, the PORE was able to participate in the slate of the PST (Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores/Workers Socialist Party), the Morenoite group in Spain, an openly Trotskyist slate.

While the PCE, the Stalinist party

headed by Santiago Carrillo, fell drastically to 700,000 votes, while the United Secretariat's LCR (in coalition with Maoists and nationalists) got only 30,000, the PST slate got 110,000 votes!

As Anibal Ramos put it: "The most important thing is that there are more than 100,000 potential Trotskyists" and that this "has opened the road to tens of thousands of workers." Now the task is to organize this potential for the coming battles.

K.F.

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On this basis, the PORE puts forward