

TRUTH

ORGAN of the TROTSKYIST ORGANIZATION of the USA • SECTION (SYMPATHIZING) of the FOURTH INTERNATIONAL • No. 168 JULY 1, 1983 25¢

Union Fight Against US War on Nicaragua

The Supreme Court has just ruled that in order for Congress to veto presidential arms sales and even shipments of US troops to other countries, it must have a two-thirds majority, not a simple majority as in the past.

This decision demonstrates that the imperialists intend to pursue their war on the peoples of Central America and elsewhere, no matter what the results of the "democratic" or "electoral process" may be. Thus the only way to stop it is with an independent mobilization of the working class.

Naturally, the vast majority of American workers oppose US attacks on Nicaragua, El Salvador, etc. But the necessity of an *active union struggle against them*, with demonstrations, boycotts, aid to Nicaragua, etc., is not so clear. We have enough problems here at home it might seem. Why should we fight "other peoples" battles, as the saying goes.

The importance and urgency of such a struggle is two-fold. First, by waging an active union struggle against Reagan's attacks on Central America, especially Nicaragua — not only with demonstrations but also with a union boycott of supplies to the surrounding dictatorships and various forms of concrete aid to Nicaragua and others — the unions can all but insure Reagan's defeat and Nicaragua's victory.

In so doing, the Reagan regime and its ability to carry out its program of exploitation and terror against workers and oppressed peoples *in this country and elsewhere*, would be immeasurably weakened. On the other hand, workers and oppressed people in this country and elsewhere would be inspired and strengthened by Nicaragua's example, as they were by Vietnam or more recently Iran and Poland.

The relationship of forces between the working class and the capitalist class in the US is not determined simply by the struggle in the US over "domestic issues," jobs, inflation, etc. The most important factor in the relationship of forces between the workers and capitalists in the US, is the relationship of forces between the workers and capitalists on an international scale. By focusing on the struggle against Reagan in the US in a narrow sense, American workers can actually *miss* an opportunity to strike a terrible blow against him and tremendously strengthen their own position.

Secondly, no matter what the actual outcome of the conflict between the US and Nicaragua and other oppressed peoples in Central America, by actively opposing Reagan's attacks, the working class in this country can strengthen its political and practical independence from the Reagan regime and the class he represents and, in so doing, strengthen its own ability to defend itself against and finally overcome Reagan's attacks.

This means an all-out struggle against the union bureaucracy's policy of attempting to *pervert* workers' opposition to Reagan's attacks into a new form of nationalistic dependency upon it. It raises slogans like "We want our tax dollars spent here at home," or "money for jobs, not for war," that appeal to the workers' opposition to Reagan's attacks on Nicaragua, but can also be interpreted in the opposite sense. "Let's not bother with those foreigners, let's take care of ourselves." This cynical confusionism works against a union mobilization and can only pave the way for new wars.

US Out of Central America!
An Independent Union Struggle Now!
M.G.

A Lesson: Join Ranks of Trotskyists

By MARGARET GUTTSALL

On June 18, in Detroit, Michigan, 700 people, representing virtually every working class political organization in the city, marched against US intervention in Central America.

This march was one of the first to take place in the US since Reagan escalated his attacks on Central America and it was the largest in recent Detroit history. Moreover, it was a working class demonstration, in the sense that it was made up of working class militants who were not prepared to rally to the banner of the Democratic Party as the Democratic Party politicians and union bureaucrats who had initially endorsed the march intended.

The Trotskyist Organization was in the front ranks of the struggle to build this march and make it a real working class demonstration. Had our forces been larger, it would not have been limited to radical working class organizations and passive opposition to Reagan and the Democrats. It would have been a *mass union demonstration, of active opposition, with real power to begin to drive the US out of Central America.*

When the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and other tendencies initiated this demonstration and it was endorsed by Tom Turner, Detroit area AFL-CIO head, we said that this was a sign of tremendous working class opposition to Reagan's attacks. We said that Turner and others involved in the march would try to turn it into a platform for the Democratic Party, to pacify the working class; that revolutionaries must do everything in their power to make it into a mass demonstration to drive the US out; that the key to this was a mass working class turnout.

"All out June 18 must be our cry. Revolutionaries must fight for every union local to mobilize itself *en masse* for this demonstration. Every organization that claims to be revolutionary has a responsibility to insure that this happens." (*Truth*, May 6, 1983)

This was the basis upon which we fought at every point, in the coalition and in the working class.

Political Struggle

When we first entered the June 18 coalition we had to fight for the coalition to pursue the march as planned. The Workers World Party, with its usual wrecking tactics, had planned a demonstration for

another date and was trying to get the coalition to abandon the June 18 demonstration in favor of *its* demonstration. This is the same thing that it did with the initial mobilizations against US intervention (remember May 3 versus May 9, 1981!) and the SWP and other tendencies were once again adapting themselves to this pro-Democratic Party and pro-Stalinist organization. We also waged a struggle within the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES) to support and participate in the march against a tendency that saw it as premature.

Once the preparations for the march were once again under way we fought for the coalition to concentrate its efforts on mobilizing working class youth and union workers. We argued that the union bureaucrats who had endorsed the march would never mobilize youth and workers.

At first, no one seemed to be concerned about this at all. Then the next week the SWP came into the meeting with a list of nearly every factory in town. We thought this was a good sign, but as it turned out, no one but us took this work seriously.

We organized a demonstration at a working class high school, a discussion in an English class inside a working class high school, and distributed over 1000 leaflets to workers in UAW Locals 7, 600 and 2071. When it was time to discuss the results of work at the coalition meeting, no one but us had anything to say. The contrast between our work and that of other tendencies even prompted someone in the coalition, not at all favorable to Trotskyists, to remark, "My, haven't you been busy."

Finally, when we learned that the Nazis were threatening to organize a counter-demonstration under the banner "USA First!" we fought for the coalition to make a political struggle, to mobilize workers against the Nazis and to make a special effort to maintain the discipline of the march. The SWP, on the other hand, just wanted to call the police, started talking about provocateurs *within* the demonstration and began to sow mistrust among the participants.

Results

Thus it was a result of the political struggle led by the Trotskyists that the turnout for the demonstration was as large as it was and that it was working class. Left to their own devices the SWP and

others would have simply dropped the demonstration or pursued it as a routine affair. Moreover, it was precisely as a result of this struggle that Turner and other union bureaucrats pulled out (they didn't even show up at the march).

The more and more it became apparent that this was going to be a working class demonstration, albeit of a very limited and passive character, that it was not going to be a rallying point for the Democratic Party, that an attempt to make it so would provoke a confrontation, the more and more it became useless to Turner and perhaps even a potential source of embarrassment.

The Trotskyist Organization was able to wage this fight because it has made a systematic struggle to rebuild the Trotskyist party in the US, to differentiate Trotskyism from centrist tendencies dependent on the union and Stalinist bureaucracies. The SWP was not because it has abandoned this struggle and is completely dependent on these bureaucracies.

This was manifest not only in its unwillingness to even try to mobilize unions for the demonstration, but also in its policy for the demonstration itself. The SWP claims to be against US imperialism and for Nicaragua, but it is perfectly happy with slogans like "Money for jobs, not for war," or "We want our tax dollars spent here at home." On the surface, who could oppose such slogans. The problem is that they do not really *mobilize* the working class *against* the US; imbue it with the sense of solidarity and self-sacrifice necessary for this struggle. Instead they tend to *pervert* workers opposition to US intervention into a sort of "me-firstism" which is *necessarily* corrupting and demobilizing. They also reinforce workers illusions that it is possible to change the US's priorities, through pressure.

An all-out struggle to mobilize the working class in its unions *en masse* against US attacks on Nicaragua, in a spirit of irreconcilable opposition and steadfast solidarity, is more urgent than ever. The Trotskyists will be in the front ranks of this struggle. But as the preparation of this demonstration shows, we need fresh forces in order to win. We cannot count on the old leaderships of the working class. Working class youth! Union workers! Take your places in the ranks of the Trotskyists.

Build the Labor Party in Chicago

Harold Washington's election as mayor of Chicago meant that he had to give up his seat in the US House of Representatives. Thus, there will be a special election in the First Congressional District (Illinois) on August 23.

Ed Warren, who ran for mayor as the candidate of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), will be on the ballot as an independent. The Trotskyist Organization urges every worker in the First District to vote for Warren. It urges every militant and organization in Chicago to support him. In our view, this is the way to continue to develop the fight for the labor party.

This election is of special interest because one of the candidates in the Democratic primary (July 26) is Charles Hayes,

international vice-president of the United Food and Commercial Workers seeking votes *as a black and a trade unionist.*

Hayes is also known for long-time support to the views of the Communist Party. This explains the contradiction inherent in his campaign; the CP is all for stopping the workers' break with the Democratic Party by running "labor" or "labor-endorsed" candidates within it.

Washington's election, Hayes' campaign and Jesse Jackson presidential candidacy express this maneuver to divert the struggle for class political independence back into the trap of the Democratic Party.

Hayes' blatant refusal (like Washington's) to run independently reveals the true nature of his campaign and offers a real

opportunity to build the labor party in conflict with the labor bureaucracy and all the forces supporting capitalism.

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 Solidarity,
Against the Stalinist Usurpation of Workers Power!

The Polish workers in Gdansk have shown the world that they are capable of a struggle for their own independence and for the independence of all workers. They have shown that they are capable of a struggle for their own independence and for the independence of all workers. They have shown that they are capable of a struggle for their own independence and for the independence of all workers.

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Fourth International No. 104-105-106!

Young Fourth Internationalists' Conference

By KEVIN FITZPATRICK

A few weeks ago, the Detroit Local Committee (of the Trotskyist Organization which is responsible for organizing our specific work in Detroit) held its second conference. This conference, on the one hand, planned the work of the DLC for the coming period and, on the other hand, in order to do this planning, made an assessment of its development since its last conference (in September of last year).

In this conference, all the members of the cells that make up the DLC have a chance to collectively step back, evaluate the common work and develop the fight for the current and future situation. Likewise, the conference decides the organization and leadership of the cells and the DLC itself.

The DLC and Its Work

At the center of the DLC conference was the question of training young cadres of the party among the youth. In general, that is not surprising. The political questions connected with this have certainly been evident in *Truth* in recent months. But what is particularly important about the DLC is that it is confronted every day with the political and practical tasks of actually carrying out this work, of building circles of the youth around the party.

At the same time, the DLC has — for the same reason — a whole series of experiences to draw on in coming to terms with these questions today.

The last conference of the DLC took place in the period when the elections of 1982 were coming down to the final stage (Labor Day). Similarly, the DLC had the direct responsibility of organizing support for the intervention of the Fourth International in Gdansk last December. And the DLC, once again, was actively responsible for the work of the TO in the UAW, especially in the fight for a united slate for a labor party at the UAW Convention — a fight that led to an independent campaign in Local 7 at Chrysler's Jefferson Avenue plant.

All these experiences, plus the fact that the DLC was fully involved in the preparations of the June 18 demonstration in Detroit against US intervention in Central America, precisely as its own conference was taking place, laid the basis for a full and rich discussion and political struggle. In good measure, it is in this way that the Trotskyist Organization will be able to organize its participation in the Paris conference, later this summer, of youth of the Fourth International, as well as to carry out its plans for expansion to Chicago.

Training the Youth

The centrality of training youth cadres of the party was not at all an artificial question at the conference. Everyone was aware that one of the key problems in the election campaign last fall was that the gains we made in that campaign were not consolidated in terms of *organizing* the youth. This could also be said about the work in defense of the Polish Revolution.

In addition, the work at Jefferson, as well as work in the unions in general, tended to be *separated* from youth work, as if the two were on parallel tracks rather than being specifically organized on the same basis — the basis of building the labor party, and rebuilding the US section of the Fourth International as the key to that goal.

In the midst of its preparation for June 18, the DLC was faced with a real opportunity to pull together all the lessons of its past work and working out its future activity *consciously* on the basis of these lessons.

An important discussion took place on the question of the circles of the youth. In the past, for too long, there had been a narrowly organizational conception of building them, a conception which flowed from past misapprehensions on the nature today of the struggle for the Revolutionary Youth International. But even when this political conception was seen as inadequate, the *methods* connected with it tended to hang on.

In this way, for example, we saw the circles as a tightly-bound framework for those who "agreed" with us. The problem was that this deeply underestimated the attack on the consciousness of the youth (which goes on unceasingly) and the effects this had on them. It was not just that masses of youth will build the RYI only when the way is prepared for them by a more limited number of trained leaders, but even more that the "agreement" we found tended to be very shallow and without practical results.

The agreement that we needed to reach could be reached only in a patient and careful process of training and development of youth. In this sense, circles of the youth could not be the result of "agreement," but the basis on which real agreement could be reached. This meant two decisive changes.

Our Work and Methods

First, that the circles had to be "opened

up" to the youth who were willing to discuss with us, without any prior or definitive agreement. In this way, through political discussion and debate, through common political activity, the most advanced youth could be won to real agreement with us.

Second, that this agreement today had a different character than we had anticipated. It meant less a general agreement, as we could expect from broad layers of the youth in the times that are approaching, and more a clearcut lining up with the party itself. This means that our goal has to be to *recruit* these youth to the party itself. It is in this way, not through maintaining forms, that the Revolutionary Youth International is actually being built today.

In this framework, an important discussion took place on the precise nature of the work we carry out today, and the way in which we carry it out. That means not presenting political questions in long, ab-

stract terms, but asking precise — almost "leading" — questions, trying to lead youth and workers to the conclusions, not presenting them with them and seeking "agreement."

In turn, it means being willing to be systematic and patient. The importance not just of getting sales, but of getting subscriptions; of getting renewals; of getting pledges to the International Workers Fund: all these demand a willingness and an ability to persevere, and to do so on a basis of clear, open political discussion.

This is borne out by the fact that (just as the gains at Jefferson were prepared as far back as last fall's elections) the advances made at Kettering — directly following the DLC conference — that you can see on this page are the fruit of work dating from the time of the Gdansk rally.

Overall, the work of the DLC conference and what followed it are good signs for the future.

Debate on Central America

As part of the June 18 coalition that organized the demonstration against US intervention in Central America, we mobilized young people from Kettering and Cass High Schools in Detroit.

At Kettering a student interested in what we had to say about the war in Central America invited us to speak in his English class. Some interesting questions were raised by the students. One student, Joshua, asked: "What would happen if the Soviet Union was to force Communism on the people?" Another student asked if he demonstrated on June 18, would that get him a job? These questions start to get at what a lot of young people are thinking. In the class we explained that the Soviet Union through Castro was, at one time, arming the Nicaraguan Revolution. At a decisive point, when the revolution could win or be defeated, Castro cut off shipments of arms. Castro has taken the initiative in negotiating away the fate of the revolution. To answer the second question — no this demonstration won't get us jobs by itself, especially if its left on the level of pressuring the Democrats. The problem is

that the people that are waging war in Central America are leading this country. The discussion began to bring the reality of the war to the students. It also clearly

posed the solution of building an independent leadership that breaks the ties of the working class to the Democratic Party.

SUE FROSCHEISER

Youth Speaks

Antonio Carruth is a student at Kettering High School in Detroit who collaborated with the Trotskyist Organization in building the June 18 demonstration.

Q. What made you decide to start working with the Trotskyist Organization?

A. I felt that the organization wasn't pressuring me into politics. I could come with my own ideas. The organization is doing what I feel is right. There's good communication between people. I think the Trotskyist Organization is taking the right course, they're educating people to know what's going on in politics, not just taking advantage of people.

Q. What did you think of the discussion in your class?

A. The discussion was good. People got

involved. It made people think about what's happening in Central America. The teacher and class wanted to get involved in the fight against Reagan. It made the class start to analyze the situation.

Q. What was good, what was bad about the June 18 demonstration?

A. I thought it was alright. I saw a lot of organizations that oppose Reagan, but for different reasons. I expected more people from the unions, workers. You have to be able to see what the difference is in what people are saying. There was only members of organizations there, not any young people.

They were blind to the situation by saying money for jobs, not for war. It won't change things, there's still gonna be Reagan in power.

In Poland: the Pope or the Trotskyists

Since the Pope began his tour of Poland, the bourgeois press has gone overboard trying to paint the workers' movement in Poland as a Catholic religious movement; Catholicism as the defender of workers' rights, and the purpose of the Pope's visit as one of "solidarity with Solidarity."

They have even tried to claim that the Pope's visit to Poland was responsible for the foundation of Solidarnosc in August, 1980! And the Pope certainly has done his best to live up to this image.

These claims are in direct contradiction to Solidarnosc's interpretation of its own struggle, for Solidarnosc defends socialism and traces its roots to the working class uprisings in 1956, 1970 and 1976, even if the majority of its members continue to be Catholic and religious.

However, such claims do suit the bourgeoisie's and the Stalinists' real purpose in bringing the Pope to Poland. This is isolating the radical wing of Solidarnosc, forcing Solidarnosc to come to terms with Jaruzelski and, in so doing, pave the way for the Kremlin's tanks.

This purpose was crudely revealed when, following the Pope's interview with Walesa, the Vatican issues an editorial saying: "Officially Lech Walesa once more leaves the scene. We can say that he has lost his battle . . . Sometimes the sacrifice of uncomfortable people is necessary so a higher good can be born . . ."

Obviously, the Vatican aimed to get Walesa to step aside so he could be replaced by someone more moderate who would openly oppose workers' mobilizations and go along with the persecution of

radicals as the Church has done, especially since November 10, 1982.

If it quickly denied this, and even fired the author of the editorial, it was because it saw that its attempt was too crude, premature, and would not work. Walesa himself denied that he would "run like a rat," but said that he would step aside if someone more capable appeared.

All this shows the urgency of a break with the Catholic Church. As Marxists, we, of course, think that such a break must ultimately lead to a total break with religion. But we are ready to march with shoulder-to-shoulder with any Catholic worker who wants to fight for the independence of Solidarnosc, for a general strike to bring down the junta. Indeed the Polish Trotskyists have been in the front ranks of the struggle against a truce with the junta during the Pope's visit, for independent Solidarnosc demonstrations during the visit, for the systematic preparation of the strike.

And we can see from the reports on the demonstrations that so far this orientation

has been successful. But to win in the long run, the movement must present itself clearly as a working class, socialist movement aimed at establishing a Free Federation of Workers Republics in conjunction with the Soviet workers, and in so doing, prepare to unify workers in Poland and the USSR against the Kremlin's tanks.

This is our aim in building the Trotskyist party in Poland. If you want freedom for Workers Poland, support the Trotskyists. Contribute to the International Workers Fund.

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