

# TRUTH

## VOTE WORKING CLASS NOVEMBER 6!

One thing rises above speculation over who is going to win the elections — it has become far more obvious that two classes whose interests are opposed one to the other are locked in struggle — one an underclass of workers, Blacks, youth, the poor — the other the ruling class of bankers, business interests, and the military. To advance the interests of the working class a line must be drawn between the working class and the bourgeoisie, between our politics and theirs, between our parties and theirs.

In the course of this election year, the bourgeoisie has dug in to strengthen its position and its institutions: the president's office broke international law by mining Nicaragua's harbors; the US military apparatus took over Grenada; the US Congress appropriated \$28 million to the *contras*, directed against the workers and peasants of Nicaragua and El

Salvador — US troops are placed at strategic points all over the world, Lebanon, Central America, the Caribbean, South Africa, preparing for and deepening war against the rising anti-colonial struggles, the working class and peasant revolutions, spreading on a global scale.

At home unemployment deepens, immeasurable in terms of human suffering. Black youth with no hope of a future under the system are crowded into jails and prisons, or herded into crumbling schools no better than prisons. Even Democratic Mayor Young of Detroit admits that rampant crime, the drug traffic "is a problem of no jobs" but can only offer more police as a solution.

Working class neighborhoods are destabilized by the unemployment, deterioration, crime. The unions, once strong working class institutions, are failing, losing members by the

thousands. The union leaders give in more and more to insatiable demands for working class concessions — the new pattern-setting concessionary contract of the auto workers being a prime example. Rents spiral upwards, the cost of living escalates.

It is the class struggle which escalates — who will rule is no longer an irrelevant question because the working class is fighting for its very life. If the working class is to live, the bourgeoisie must die. A great cry wells up in the heart of the working class — *leadership!*

In response to your need for leadership, we call on you, workers, youth, Blacks, all the oppressed, to vote for *your* class in the elections to lay the foundation for *your* party, a Labor Party.

Vote Mason and Gonzalez!  
Vote working class!

B.P.

## "A Ballot is Like a Bullet"

By BARBARA PUTNAM

Many parties claiming to be enemies of the bipartisan capitalist system, who have backpeddled on the Labor Party, or who have outright gotten down on their hands and knees hoping for Mondale's election, say the elections are nothing more than "Tweedle-Dum, Tweedle-Dee." Their advice is to stay home on election day. The Revolutionary Communist Party says it in a nutshell: "You won the right to vote, now have the political awareness and sophistication not to use it."

Anything short of an active political struggle for a Labor Party in the elections leads to doing nothing and leaving politics, who governs and to what end, up to the capitalist parties. It gives workers and Blacks no choice. It is not enough to denounce the Democrats and Reagan. There has to be a goal for the working class in the elections — a united vote for working class candidates to build a Labor Party.

Malcolm X once gave this advice to Blacks, "A ballot is like a bullet," he said. "You don't throw your ballots until you see a target..." One reason a good many Blacks are planning to abstain, or keep their ballots in their pockets on election day, is because they don't see a target.

It is not that there is no target — the target has been concealed. If the target is invisible, then political struggle, ballots, cannot be directed toward a meaningful goal. The target, a Labor Party, has been concealed not only by the Democrats, something to be expected, but far worse, by those who claim to be for a Labor Party. It is the working class parties who feel the most pressure to lead who are taking the course of least resistance and avoiding any confrontation with the Democrats in the political arena. They are for everything under the sun, even socialism, but for the elections? They leave that up to the Democrats and Republicans.

Mel Mason and Andrea Gonzalez of the Socialist Workers Party are running for president and vice president. These candidates "urge formation of a Labor Party." But they do not make that the goal in the elections and that is the problem. The closer it gets to election day, the more the SWP segregates urging "the formation of a labor party" from the elections. Instead, the SWP candidates say "working people need to march, rally, and actively protest the prowar, anti-labor, racist, and sexist policies of the employers and their government." We thought the working class was already doing these things. The problem is they do not have a way to fight the capitalist leaders politically.

Blacks see the lack of political leadership as a crucial problem. That is why they got out the vote for Washington in Chicago — they thought it would be a way to tear up the Democratic Party. They have been utilizing political means to deal with the problems they see but they do not have their own leadership — yet. They have been trying to see if the Democratic Party could be fixed up enough to serve their interests but more and more they see it cannot. For the millions of Blacks and workers who have been engaged in political struggle, the

SWP only repeats what is already known or trails miserably after whatever moves in the working class and can only advise to go out and protest, picket, march and rally, some more. But all actions such as these also have to have a goal and the SWP gives no more direction for these actions than it does for what to do in the elections.

Abstention is a real mistake because what happens in the elections will decide the entire

course of the class struggle in a certain way. We agree that voting by itself will not change which class rules, but voting for working class candidates will change the direction of the working class toward class independence, toward a Labor Party. The real reason the SWP, Socialist Action, the Internationalist Workers Party, the Revolutionary Workers League are saying the elections are only "business as usual" and playing down a fight for a Labor Party in the elections is because they do not want to lead the fight for a Labor Party after the elections. To lead instead of follow would mean a drastic change of political line and that is why they refused an electoral alliance for a Labor Party. Once the processes are set in motion toward a Labor Party the struggle can only go in one direction — a united and active struggle that looks for every opportunity to build the Labor Party. And that requires leadership.



Building a labor party is key to Black struggle in the US.

Some may wonder now why we say they should vote for Mel Mason and Andrea Gonzalez since these candidates are weak on the Labor Party question and misdirecting Blacks and workers in the elections. We say vote for them and other working class candidates not because we agree with their policies but because it draws a class line with the Democratic Party and prepares Blacks and workers for the inevitable split with the Democratic Party. It trains them how to build their own party, a Labor Party and puts the demands and inter-

ests of Blacks and workers in the forefront as something real to fight for, not as empty slogans.

Working class ballots should be aimed at the target of a Labor Party by voting for working class candidates. At this late hour we once again repeat our call to the other parties and organizations who say they are for the working class to work together for a united vote for a Labor Party in these elections. The stake is the organization of the working class for a Labor Party or demoralization and disorganization following the elections. Vote for Mel Mason and Andrea Gonzalez and other working class candidates — each ballot is ammunition against the Democrats and Republicans.

### HELP CAMPAIGN! Distribute leaflets to working class voters!

**DETROIT:** District 5, Precinct 28 (Eastside)  
Saturday, November 3, 12 - 3 pm.  
Meet at Lesson Drugs, Hayes & Houston-Whittier  
Election Day, Tuesday, November 6, 3 - 6 pm.  
Meet at polls: Robinson School, 12700 Grove St.  
Call 313-582-9812 for further information.

**CHICAGO:** Ward 34, Precinct 39 (Southside)  
Saturday, November 3  
and Election Day, November 6.  
Call 312-276-9357 for exact times and places.

**TROTSKYIST ORGANIZATION OF THE USA**  
National Office: P.O. Box 32546, Detroit, MI 48232  
Chicago: P.O. Box 388334, Chicago, IL 60638  
Detroit: P.O. Box 32546, Detroit, MI 48232  
Truth: Published by the Trotskyist Organization/USA  
Address: P.O. Box 32546, Detroit, MI 48232  
Subscription Rates: North America: Introductory  
— 6 issues for \$1; Regular — 24 issues for \$6;  
Supporting — 24 issues for \$15. Inquire for other  
rates, including institutional rates.  
Editorial Board: Barbara Putnam, Editor; Margaret  
Guttschall; David Mark.

## Nicaraguan Elections

As we go to press, the Nicaraguan government will hold elections on November 4. These elections have been pressured for by sections of the US ruling class because they offer a way for the bourgeois parties to steal back into the government. The problem is the bourgeoisie was never expropriated in Nicaragua and now, along with the Church, acts as a fifth column aligned with the *contras* seeking to overturn everything gained by the revolution of workers and peasants.

The working class needs a platform and leadership to rally its forces. A platform for the workers and peasants would have to include their active mobilization to expropriate the bourgeoisie and the banks, a Congress of committees of the masses, support for volunteers and other forms of material aid from workers around the world, no exclusion of working class parties in the elections, and most importantly, a fight for the formation of a working class party.

The workers and oppressed are already in a state-of war mobilization. According to sympathizers of the revolution returning from Nicaragua, there is little food with extensive rationing; a military draft is in effect; the *contras* may have succeeded in actually taking some territory for the first time in five years; a US invasion is inevitable and appears imminent.

Yet, the Sandinistas (FSLN), the leading political force in the government, want to hold elections for a *bourgeois* parliament. The Sandinistas want to reach an agreement with the Nicaraguan bourgeoisie and US imperialism not to return Nicaragua to the days of Somoza. But their wishes are in vain. The imperialists cannot tolerate the revolution and its gains.

The Nicaraguan workers and peasants support the elections. They see them as an opportunity — most have never voted. They see the refusal of the bourgeois parties (called "sofa" parties because if they held a convention all the supporters could fit on a sofa) to participate in the elections as an attempt to sabotage and discredit the elections.

Unlike the Sandinistas, the workers and peasants see the elections as a means to *strike a blow to the bourgeoisie* — to take control of their lives, to take complete control of their country from the bourgeoisie, in short, to advance and defend their revolution.

But their sentiments about the elections do not change the reality of the elections. Only the further struggle of the workers to be the *ruling class* can provide the solution to the democratic demand of the workers and peasants for elections — this is the meaning of the struggle for a *Congress of committees of the masses*. The Congress of Solidarnosc in Poland was such a congress. This is what the permanent revolution means in Nicaragua.

It is these workers and peasants that we call to support a platform in the elections: *Defend and Advance the Revolution!*

1) A Congress of committees of the masses — delegates elected from the unions, factory committees, neighborhood militias, campesino organizations, etc., and assembled in their own Congress to decide the course for their country;

2) Expropriation of the bourgeoisie — confiscation of all large landed estates and distribution of the land to the peasants; banks expropriated and placed under workers and peasants control; factories placed under workers control;

3) Volunteers to Nicaragua — a fight to bring support from workers and peasants around the world to defend Nicaragua;

4) A working class party — this platform requires a party of the working class to carry it out; a party *politically independent* of the bourgeoisie.

The best way to advance this platform in these elections is to vote for or write-in working class candidates, that is, candidates from working class parties. The Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (PRT) of Nicaragua of the International Workers League (IWL), one such party, has only recently been legalized by the government, even though it fought to bring down Somoza. It is still excluded from the elections while the parties of the *contras* are encouraged to participate.

This platform and struggle should be supported by every militant and organized that wants to defend the Nicaraguan Revolution.

TRUTH

**November 6: Draw the Class Line!**

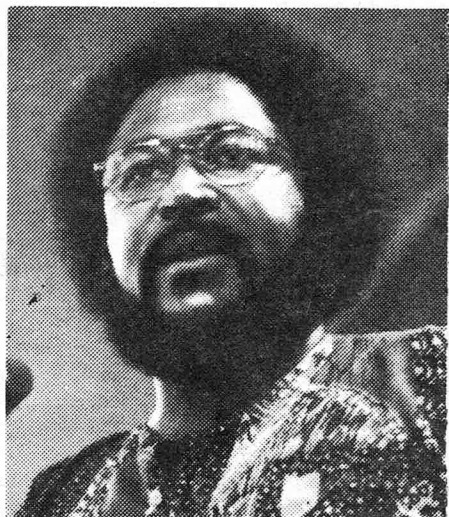
# **VOTE FOR A LABOR PARTY!**

To show your support for a Labor Party, a party of working people,  
the Trotskyist Organization calls on you to vote for:

**MEL MASON FOR PRESIDENT!**

**ANDREA GONZALEZ FOR VICE PRESIDENT!**

**SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY CANDIDATES**\_\_\_\_\_



**In Michigan ...**

Helen Myers, Socialist Workers Party, for U.S. Senate  
Andrew Pulley, Socialist Workers Party, for U.S. Congress, 1st District  
Peggy Goldman Frankie, Communist Party, State Board of Education  
Cheryl LaBash, Workers World Party, for State Senate, 12th District

**In Illinois ...**

Nelson Gonzalez, Socialist Workers Party, for U.S. Senate  
Ed Warren, Socialist Workers Party, for U.S. Congress, 1st District  
Holly Harkness, Rita Lee, Socialist Workers Party  
University of Illinois Board of Trustees

**TROTSKYIST ORGANIZATION**  
P.O. Box 32546, Detroit, MI 48232 • 313-582-9812