

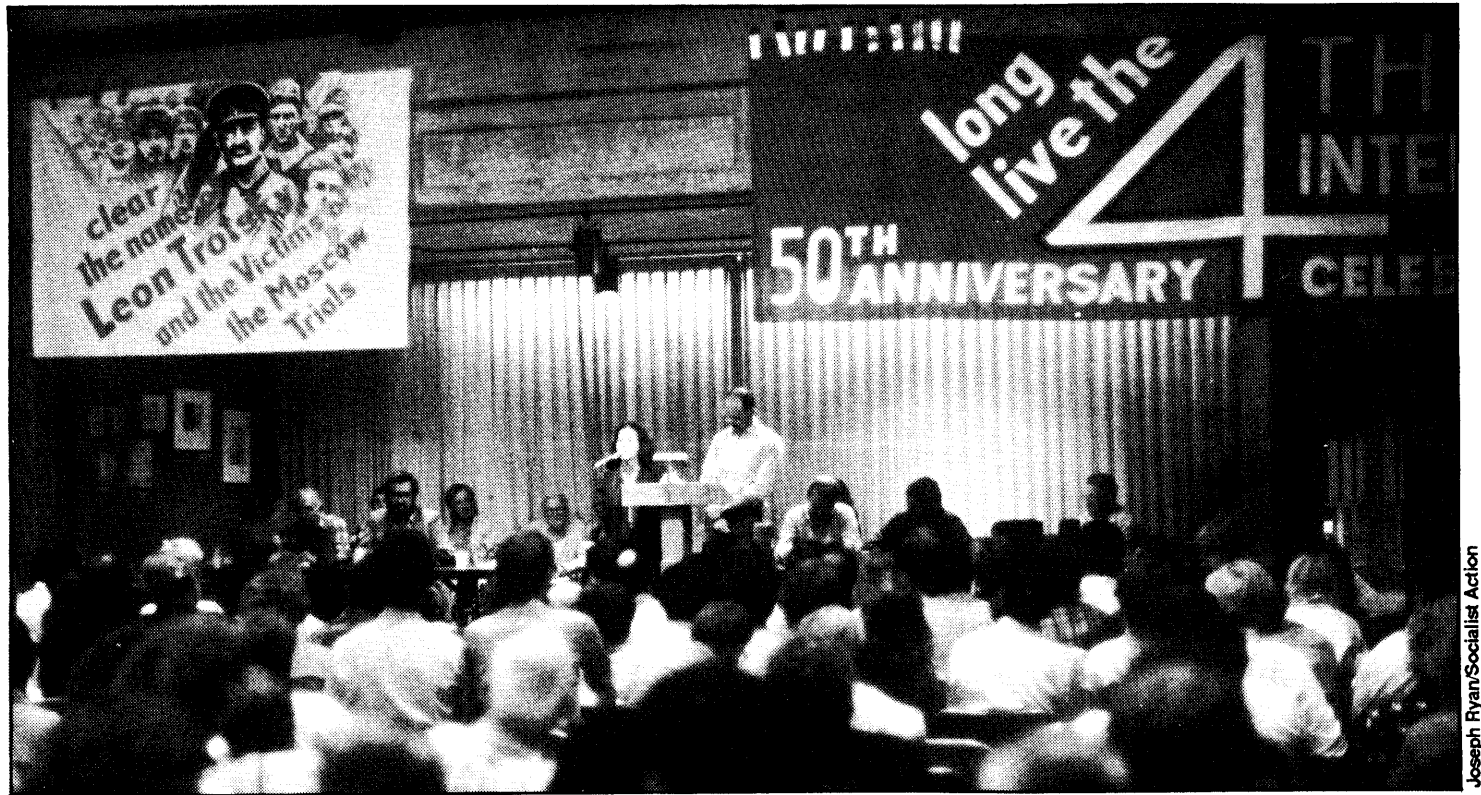
# Celebrating 50 years of the Fourth International

Fifty years ago, Leon Trotsky and a group of supporters founded the Fourth International, a revolutionary party committed to the establishment of an international socialist society.

On Aug. 6, 1988, over 300 people gathered at the First Unitarian Church in San Francisco to hear leaders of the Fourth International and representatives from revolutionary movements throughout the world salute the 50 years of the Fourth International.

In this special 8-page supplement we are reprinting excerpts from all the speeches and greetings presented at this Socialist Action rally. In some cases, for reasons of space, the speeches and greetings have been considerably abridged.

This supplement also includes excerpts from an international report adopted by the Third National Convention of Socialist Action, which took place Aug. 4-7.—The Editors



Over 300 people gathered at the Aug. 6 Socialist Action rally to commemorate 50 years of the Fourth International.

## Jeff Mackler: 'The masses will rule in their own name'

Jeff Mackler is co-National Secretary of Socialist Action.

Leon Trotsky was driven from the country where he led the most powerful explosion of working class solidarity the world has ever seen. He was hounded and driven from nation to nation and finally assassinated by Stalin's agent in Mexico with a pickax through his brain.

Trotsky's co-thinkers who led the Russian Revolution were slaughtered. This includes virtually every member of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party with the exception of Trotsky, who escaped and later was killed, and Stalin. Most of Trotsky's family was murdered.

And yet Trotsky's ideas survived. His



Jeff Mackler

ideas are embodied in the program of the Fourth International, and they are alive today on every continent of the globe.

What are these ideas? What are the central ideas that bind the Fourth International today, that give it life, that make it the expression of the best aspirations of humankind?

Trotsky's idea, Lenin's idea, Marx's ideas, Engels's idea, was very simple. There is no more simple idea. It was that only the working class and the oppressed masses could liberate themselves from the chains of capitalist exploitation, racism, and oppression. No other class is capable of the liberation of all humanity.

That is the fundamental difference between revolutionary socialists today, on the one hand, and Stalin and all those who have followed him, including Gorbachev, who continue to preach the need for the oppressed to look to sectors of the ruling class for their liberation. This road has only led working people to bloody defeats.

Gorbachev is now posturing about rehabilitating some of those who died at the hands of Stalin and his heirs. But rehabilitation by the Stalinists means nothing because what was destroyed in the Soviet Union was not just a few names but the concept that was the very basis of the Russian Revolution: the concept that the working class should rule society, democratically, through its own organizations. That was the meaning of the word "soviets." The soviets were the first form of workers' rule.

Every time the masses rise, they give the lie to Stalinism and all its ideologues. When a single child hurls a stone at an Israeli oppressor in Gaza, the power of the oppressed, of the Palestinian people, goes far beyond the entire power of the Zionist, racist, colonial state of Israel.

The Palestinian youth had no guns, no planes, no tanks. Their country had been robbed from them with the help of imperialism and the vote of the Soviet Union. And they stood up against the mightiest military power, and they demonstrated to every person who loves freedom on this planet that their cause was just. Their cause is our cause.

When they told us that the Shah of Iran had the seventh most powerful army in the world, and that 60,000 Iranians were in his jails, and that nothing could stop him, four million workers in Tehran toppled that

regime in a second.

No, it wasn't the masses who were at fault in Iran, it was their leaders. It has not been the masses, since the day the Russian masses took power, who have been at fault. In every case, the crisis in a particular country has been the crisis of leadership of the working class and the oppressed.

That's the function of the Fourth International: to help resolve the crisis of leadership; to give expression to the power of the masses; to put forward the simple idea that we, the overwhelming majority, can rule this world in our own interest—that we will not kill ourselves from the "greenhouse effect" by destroying the environment, that we will not blow up the people of the world with nuclear war, that we will only be able to live together in a world without exploitation, racism, sex-

ism, national oppression, and oppression of gay people.

That's the program of the Fourth International. But this program can only be won by the oppressed themselves—not by the Democratic Party, not by Gorbachev and the "reformers," not by paper reforms, not by substituting one great leader for another—but by organizing the workers to build a revolutionary party and take the future into their own hands.

Trotsky's ideas live because the masses realize there is no other way out. That's why you're here with us tonight. That's why 20 comrades, founding members of the Fourth International, stood up to be recognized. Together they represent 1000 years of struggle. And they still believe the simple idea that the masses will rule in their own name.

## Charlie Van Gelderen:

### 'I was proud to be at that historic moment'

The following letter by Charlie Van Gelderen, a veteran South African Trotskyist, was read at the Aug. 6 rally.

Dear comrades,

As perhaps the only person still active in the ranks of the Fourth International who was present at that historic founding conference of the Fourth International in 1938, I send you my warmest revolutionary greetings.

Throughout this half century, I have never doubted that, within the historical conjuncture of the time, we took the correct decision. The Third (Communist) International was dead—the victim of Stalin's policy of "socialism in one country."

In Germany, a heroic proletariat, betrayed by the leaderships of the Communist Party and the Social Democrats, was suffering under the jackboot of triumphant fascism. In Spain the civil war was drawing to an agonizing close, the sacrifices of the worker and peasant combatants not enough to overcome the misleadership of its traditional parties.

In the Soviet Union, scene of the first victorious proletarian revolution, the monstrous Moscow Trials were underway; the

leaders of October were being physically destroyed by the Stalinist bureaucracy.

It was in these conditions that, inspired by Leon Trotsky, the Fourth International once more unfurled the banner of revolutionary Marxism and proclaimed its faith in the ultimate victory of the international working class and announced a program which could meet the task of the day: the Transitional Program.

I was proud to be present on that historic occasion and I remain proud to still find myself in the ranks of the Fourth International.

Of those who were there with me, many are now dead; others proved too faint-hearted to withstand periods of retreat and defeat. Despite our still small numbers we can look back with pride on our achievements. The Fourth International and only the Fourth International has carried forward the red flag of revolutionary socialism unsullied to hand to the next generation who will surely carry it on to victory.

Long live the Fourth International, builder of the world party of the socialist revolution!

# SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

ANNIVERSARY SUPPLEMENT 1



Joseph Ryan/Socialist Action

# Rosario Ibarra: 'We are fighting for revolutionary socialism'

Rosario Ibarra, a renowned human rights leader in Mexico, was the presidential candidate of the PRT, Mexican section of the Fourth International, in 1982 and 1988.

I first met members of the Fourth International in 1976. They were members of the Mexican Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT). I met them in the hunger strikes that we waged along with the families of the disappeared and political prisoners. I met them in the militant actions that we led at the plant gates. In every realm of struggle, they were there.

Later, as part of the international campaign to expose the tremendous violations of human rights of our people, I met members of the Fourth International elsewhere—in Europe, in Latin America, and especially here, in the belly of the beast, where it really counts.

Hearing comrade Jeff [Mackler] speak, I

found myself in great agreement with the words he expressed.

For me, the defense of human rights is also the struggle for women's rights, for the emancipation of women from oppression—especially in Mexico, a country where machismo is so rampant.

The comrades in the PRT focused their attention not on a young woman, but on an old woman like myself, to be their candidate. My being the PRT's presidential candidate [in 1982] was an historic moment in Mexico. It was historic because it was a victory to have a woman candidate for the left, for the PRT, in Mexico.

We have many points of agreement. As many of you know, I am not a member of the PRT or of the Fourth International. But I think that as long as we are rooted in the struggles of the oppressed, we will continue fighting side by side.

A major point of agreement between the PRT and me is that we both do not want any alliance with the bourgeoisie. We want to struggle consistently for democracy, for the independence of the working class, for socialist democracy, and it is precisely because of our principled position that a lot of pressure was put on us to line up behind the [1988] presidential candidacy of Cuauhtemoc Cardenas.

But it was precisely because we maintained our independence from Cardenas that we represented the only revolutionary socialist pole in the Mexican elections. We want the people to take the reins of government in their own hands. We want

the workers and the peasants to rule. We want "los de abajo," the downtrodden, to be the new masters of society—not only in Mexico, but throughout the world.

We were the only ones in the recent Mexican elections to say this—to say, "Yes we want to fight for revolutionary socialism." I am proud that everywhere we went we said that we were fighting for revolutionary socialism.

I want to talk about the current situation in my country. Cardenas, who represents a split within the ruling-class apparatus in Mexico, won the recent elections. We are convinced that he won the elections.

Cardenas is not a socialist. He is a nationalist. We want socialism. And because we want to fight for socialism, we must consistently struggle for democracy. It is for this reason that we created a limited alliance with Cardenas and with the right-wing National Action Party (PAN) to defend the vote.

Our time will come. But today we believe it is essential to consistently fight for the defense of that vote today.

We are the only ones who are struggling against the current. Many have said, "Don't go against the current." But it is because we are doing this that we feel so optimistic. We are optimists, just like Leon Trotsky was an optimist. He was a man who even under the most adverse conditions remained optimistic not only about the present but about the future of humanity.

It is because I am optimistic that I feel

so inspired by the work of the young Trotsky, who wrote:

"As long as there is life, there is hope. If I were one of the celestial bodies, I would look with complete detachment upon this miserable ball of dust and dirt. I would shine upon the good and evil alike. But I am a man.

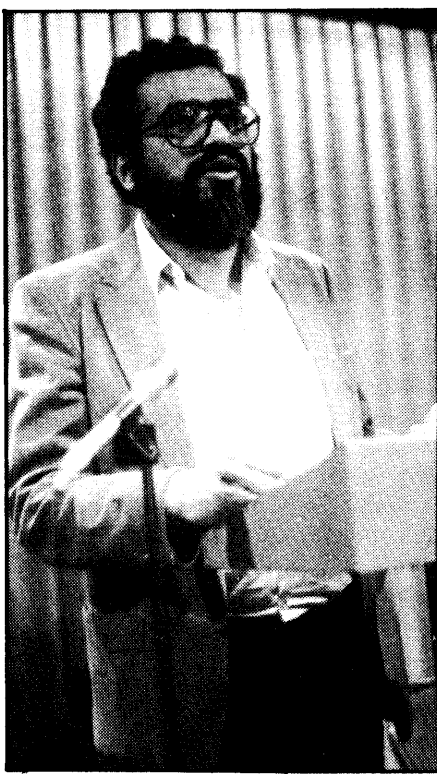
"World history, which to you, dispassionate gobble of science, to you, bookkeeper of eternity, seems only a negligible moment in the balance of time, is to me everything! As long as I breathe, I shall fight for the future, that radiant future in which humankind, strong and beautiful, will become the master of the drifting stream of history and will direct it toward the boundless horizon of beauty, joy, and happiness!"

These lines were written by the young Trotsky in 1901, when he was 22 years old. They remain a source of inspiration for us today. Just as Jeff said, the ideas of Trotsky have not only survived, but they will prevail.

Tonight, we have with us Trotsky's grandson. But even if Trotsky's grandson—or any other relative—were no longer with us, those very ideas would still prevail because they are right. They're the ideas of all those rebels who are struggling. They're the ideas of the Mexican revolutionary Ricardo Flores Magon, who died in jail in the United States.

As Jeff and the other comrades have said, the ideas of the Fourth International will prevail. Long live the Fourth International!

# Edgar Sanchez: 'The PRT actively opposes Mexico's Popular Front'



Joseph Ryan/Socialist Action

Edgar Sanchez is a member of the Political Committee of the Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT), Mexican section of the Fourth International.

Comrades, we are celebrating not only the founding of the Fourth International, but the continuity and legitimacy of the program and the principles of our world party. Let me tell you how I feel about this continuity today in Mexico and about our contribution to that continuity.

We should remember that 50 years ago, when the Fourth International was founded, comrade Trotsky was in Mexico. He was given asylum by the Lazaro Cardenas

government—a populist, bourgeois regime.

The old Mexican Communist Party, and particularly Lombardo Toledano [a Stalinist union bureaucrat], organized demonstrations to demand that Trotsky be expelled from the country. The CP and Toledano were also responsible for tying the working class and the peasant movement to the bourgeoisie. It was the period of the Popular Front.

Because of this line, because of this betrayal of the working class, the bourgeoisie and its party, the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), won its famous stability for 30 years.

In the 1930s, no one opposed this line successfully in the mass movement. Of course comrade Trotsky was there. And he struggled against this line together with a relatively small group of Mexican comrades. But they weren't strong enough in the working class to change the course of events.

This situation didn't change until the 1968 student movement. A new situation was created. The old reformist, Stalinist ideas were defeated by the upsurge of the new movement. New left-wing and socialist organizations were created. Revolutionary organizations like ours were revitalized.

The youth repudiated the Communist Party and especially the line of Lombardo Toledano. Toledano and his party said that the '68 student movement was a bluff created by the CIA or by the Trotskyists—it was the same for them.

But Toledano didn't get the answer he used to get in the '30s. He himself died at the end of '68. Twenty years later, however, it seems Toledano came back for his revenge against the '68 generation. In this election, the party of Toledano and the absolute majority of the Mexican left are repeating the experience of the Popular

Front—this time behind another Cardenas. Cuauhtemoc Cardenas, the son of the general [Lazaro Cardenas], is the new populist bourgeois leader.

But now comrades—and this is the point I want to make—we are in a different situation. This is our contribution to the

continuity of the Fourth International

We in the PRT are a small but very active political party in opposition to the line of the Popular Front in Mexico. This is the difference. The situation created at the end of the '30s will not be repeated in Mexico. We are sure we are not going to have another 30 years of stability from the bourgeois regime in Mexico.

All those old times have been ended, and now there are more revolutionary organizations charting a correct way forward thanks to Rosario, thanks to the militants in the PRT, and thanks, of course, to the older generation in our movement who not only maintained their ideas, but their militancy and their activities. Long live the Fourth International!

2 Briefing (Z-1) \*\*\* San Francisco Chronicle Tuesday, August 23, 1988

**SPECIAL REPORT/MEXICO'S NEW POLITICS**

## PRI Victory Still Disputed

Opposition party candidate vows not to recognize elected president

BY ELIZABETH KIRKENDALL  
Special to The Chronicle

The first woman presidential candidate in Mexico's history says that the momentum built up by the opposition parties in the July 8 election cannot be stopped.

Rosario Ibarra de Piedra, candidate of the leftist Unidad Popular (Popular Unity) coalition, human rights advocate, two-time Nobel Prize nominee and, until the election last month, a deputy in the Mexican Congress, says that if the opposition remains firmly united the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), which has ruled Mexico for almost 60 years, will have to deal with them.

Ibarra said that an official within the government told Cardenas that he won the election and that on July 16 at a "defend the vote" rally in the Zocalo (the main square in Mexico City) Cardenas had publicly announced that he "will make public the name of the person who informed him of this on December 1" when the congress convenes and the new president is officially received and delivers his traditional acceptance speech.

The opposition says it has documentation of election fraud from its own observers, who compiled data and tallied the vote.

The phenomenon of Cardenas is total by new and different in Mexico, Ibarra said.

"We are carrying out a number of joint activities to create a mass movement of the people to not recognize the government of Salinas de Gortari"

—Rosario Ibarra

at the polling places independently from the government, and of intimidation and ballot stuffing from the labor unions and other organizations.

Why has this year's election been so different from past elections? Why do I...

The people have followed him and lined up behind him because they think he represents change. I don't know if things will change or not. I am not a Cardenas; I would have preferred to win myself," she said, throwing up her hands and laughing.

the defense of democracy. I have told Cardenas that if and when he becomes president I will become the most intransigent oppositionist to him," she added with a sparkle in her eye.

Another reason for the opposition strength, according to Ibarra, is that "the people are tired, they are fed up with the fraud, the cheating and the enormous debt. Just payment on the interest on the debt takes 30 cents of every dollar of the federal budget. This has meant cutbacks on all the social budget—education, housing, health. People who need to go to the doctor cannot. Housing, there is none. And unemployment is enormous!"

"I think, too—and this is very important—that the mentality of the people has changed. In 1982 when she first ran for president, the thing people most asked me to do, the verb that was most used, was 'help me.' My answer was: 'I am not going to help you, you are going to help yourself along with me.' This year people say 'Rosario, we are going to do it together. You are on the right track Rosario.'"

All this has resulted in the growth of grassroots organizations to improve living conditions, in the growth of the opposition parties and smaller organizations and also in a greater participation of women in the political process.

Ibarra's own political career began after the kidnapping of her son, Jesus Piedra Ibarra, on April 18, 1975. She has had no word of him since and though it is...

In 1977, she founded the National Committee to Defend Political Prisoners, Fugitives, Exiles and Disappeared Persons, and in 1979 she was one of the leaders in the formation of the National Front Against Repression.

She is proud of the accomplishments of the committee for the "disappeared," but distressed that there is still much to do.

This month we commemorate the anniversary of our first hunger strike through that strike we forced the government to decree an amnesty and 1500 political prisoners were freed," she said. "In 10 years we have been able to free 148 disappeared. We know of 547 more who are still detained. The government had never recognized that they held these people. Many told us they were freed to roam around on their own, but were threatened with further punishment if they told their stories."

A number of political organizations took note of my work," and she was asked to be the presidential candidate of the Revolutionary Workers Party in the 1982 election. She received enough votes to become a deputy in the Chamber of Deputies.

"I don't want you to get the impression that I have become egotistical," Ibarra said. "But I think that my candidacy in '82 was an important signal, a catalyst for women to take a more active role because they saw that a woman just like them could become involved, could run for office. They asked themselves, 'if she can do it, what can I...'"

San Francisco Chronicle interview with Rosario Ibarra

Zbigniew Kowalewski is the author of "Give Us Back our Factories: Solidarnosc and the Struggle for Workers' Self-Management in Poland." He will be touring the United States this fall. See tour schedule on page 7.

I think it is necessary to remember that 50 years ago, at the very moment the Fourth International was being founded, thousands of partisans of revolutionary socialism and internationalism were being exterminated by the Stalinist terror apparatus in the concentration camps of Vorkuta.

I think it is useful to remember that 35 years ago, some months after the death of Stalin, in the camp of Vorkuta and in other concentration camps, tens of thousands of detainees waged a heroic strike that shook the Stalinist regime.

At about the same time, the working class of East Germany launched a general strike, a strike that was smashed by Soviet tanks.

Thirty-five years ago, the epoch of the anti-bureaucratic revolution began, as confirmed by the mass armed uprising of the Hungarian working class in 1956 and the Prague Spring in Czechoslovakia in 1968, both of which were suppressed militarily by the Soviet Union.

But you remember what happened in Poland in 1980-81: a powerful uprising of

## Zbigniew Kowalewski: 'Polish workers fight for workers' power'

10 million Polish workers, self-organized in Solidarnosc, the first free trade union in the Soviet bloc. This movement, which was followed by farmers, students, and intellectuals, was able to wage giant mass struggles and factory occupations, to build the power of the workers' councils in the factories.

They were fighting for what the First National Congress of Solidarnosc called a "Self-Managed Republic"—that is, a state based upon socialized property and managed by the workers themselves with the fullest workers' and people's democracy.

Last April and May, 20,000 steel workers of Nowa Huta, supported by student masses in the city of Cracow and followed by the youngest workers of the Lenin shipyards in Gdansk, raised the banner of the defense of the standard of living of the toilers, standards brutally attacked in the framework of the so-called

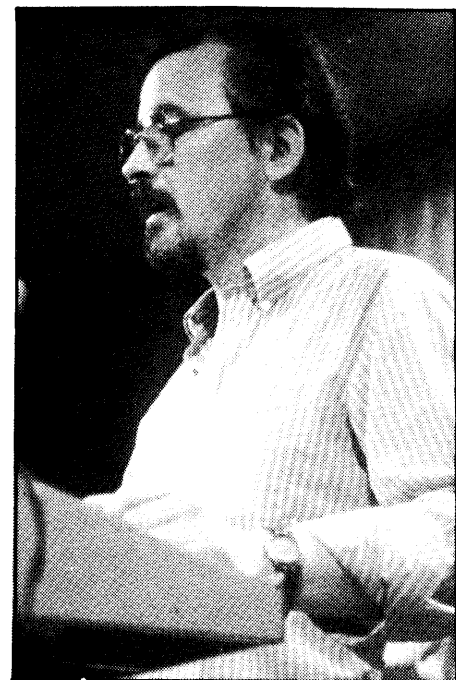
economic market reforms of the Jaruzelski regime.

A new generation of radical workers and students is emerging in Poland, struggling under the banner of Solidarnosc for bread, union freedom, and political democracy. On the basis of the radicalization of this young generation, a first independent class-struggle workers' party, the Polish Socialist Party (PSP), has been formed.

The PSP aspires to be a political party of free unionists, of Solidarnosc activists, who fight for socialism against the anti-working class, anti-socialist power of the bureaucracy.

Be confident in the Polish working class and youth! Today they are fighting for a sliding scale of wages and union freedom. Tomorrow they will be fighting for workers' and people's power!

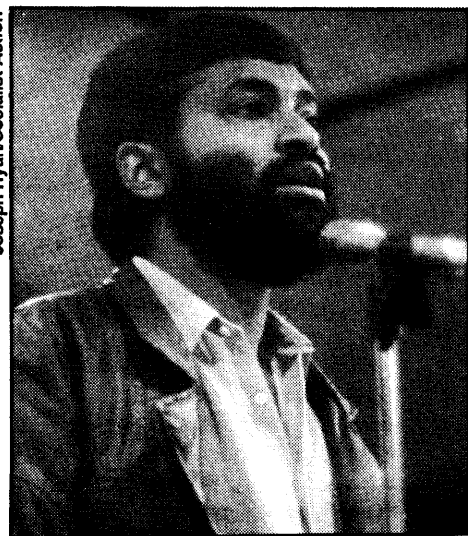
And they will be joined by the masses from other Eastern European countries and



Joseph Ryan/Socialist Action

from the Soviet Union itself. They will be joined by the people of Soviet Armenia, who are fighting for national freedom.

With international socialist support, the Polish, Eastern European, and Soviet workers will overthrow and destroy Stalinism. And be sure, this will occur long before the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Fourth International!



Joseph Ryan/Socialist Action

Saths Cooper is the former president of the Azanian People's Organization (AZAPO) and the current chairman of the National Forum of South Africa. He was a close associate of Steve Biko.

## Saths Cooper: 'We can't overcome apartheid alone'

I greet you in the name of our common struggle. The struggle that I come from is not restricted merely to what has become internationally notorious as apartheid. Apartheid is a local phenomenon.

The ongoing struggle in South Africa is a tribute to the remarkable resilience of the human spirit. It's a tribute to a people who, despite the obstacles, despite the repression, despite the exploitation, have persevered.

This people, often alone, often in the bleakest moments of struggle, often ask themselves, "If a Black president, a Nelson Mandela, were sitting in Pretoria, and

thousands of white young people were being killed, would the rest of the world stand by and make pious statements about the horror of apartheid but do little else beyond that?" The answer that comes back is a very resounding "No."

Because this peculiar feature of apartheid, this form of racism present in my country, is not a phenomenon restricted there. Racism is alive and well in many parts of the world—and particularly here in the good old USA.

That racism called apartheid in my country is fueled by the national bour-

geoisie with capitalist exploitation. It is maintained through the imperialist connections in Bonn, London, Paris, and Washington.

The greatest support that can be given to my people is to engage the imperialist beast where it exists—not merely by doing support work, which is important, but by going beyond. It is necessary to actually engage the imperialists in their own territory.

It is not good enough for us to merely continue being in struggles, to pass good revolutionary, solidarity resolutions, and to do back-up support work. There needs to be an integral involvement in our struggle because apartheid is not something we alone in South Africa have to overcome.

We will only be able to successfully overcome apartheid, its capitalist exploitation, when imperialism has been dealt a death blow. And that is the challenge for all of us who have come to be in struggle wherever we may be.

Claudio Mangani represented the United Secretariat of the Fourth International at the Aug. 6 rally.

Comrades, the Fourth International was founded 50 years ago. But the fight to build the Fourth International started even before, in the early 1930s.

Two dramatic events led Trotsky to conclude that it was necessary to launch the Fourth International. One was the victory of the bureaucracy in Soviet Russia; the

## Greetings from F.I.

other was the defeat of the German working class and the rise of Hitler's Nazi regime in 1933. The effects of these two big tragedies, of these two working-class defeats, have not yet been overcome.

Today what is happening in the Soviet Union is a complete vindication of the

ideas and struggle of the Trotskyist movement. Of course, the bureaucracy will try to maneuver. We have no illusion that the fight of the Russian proletariat will be an easy one.

Comrades have mentioned the recent struggle in Poland. But in Poland, the workers were unable to succeed in overthrowing the bureaucracy because they didn't build a revolutionary party. In the Soviet Union, as well, if the working class does not succeed in building a revolutionary

party in time, it will be impossible to carry out the political revolution.

Our movement exists in 50 countries of the world, and we are struggling. The parties of the Fourth International are combat parties. The Fourth International is a combat organization.

The Fourth International was founded by the generation of the 1930s. The struggle to build the Fourth International is being continued today by a new generation. Just last week 700 youth from around the world came together at the summer camp of the Fourth International in France. This is the new generation that will guarantee the continuity of the Fourth International.

## Evelyn Martinez: 'Thanks for your support'



Joseph Ryan/Socialist Action

Evelyn Martinez, an award-winning Nicaraguan actress who works for Radio Sandino and the Asociacion Sandinista de Trabajadores de la Cultura (ASTC), was the

West Coast coordinator of the National Network in Solidarity with Nicaragua before returning to her country.

In spite of the U.S.-financed war, our people are creating, our artists are entertaining our combatants. This has helped us to resist the incredible aggression by the United States.

And our art always has a political role. We want to keep people informed about what is happening and helping them clarify the issues—through humor and drama. This was done primarily until 1985 through Radio Sandino. We put on two plays about Eden Pastora, for example, and about the elections under the Somoza dictatorship.

This year we held the first national video festival. This is an important tool to counter the disinformation that is spread about Nicaragua in this country. I want to end by thanking Socialist Action for its support to our struggle. Together we will win.

## Greetings from Britain

David Hudson represented the International Socialist Group, British affiliate of the Fourth International, at the Aug. 6 rally.

I bring you greetings from the International Socialist Group of Britain. We are a small organization, but we are building an organization that is committed to the program of the Fourth International.

I think it is very fitting that this platform includes comrades from many key areas of the world revolution today. It is the method of the Fourth International to extend unconditional support and build active solidarity with all national-liberation, anti-imperialist, and anti-capitalist

struggles throughout the world.

But we are not just cheerleaders of the revolution as it develops in the different sectors of the world revolution. We also have a program, and as genuine internationalists we engage in dialogue and a discussion around this program with these forces in order to build a genuine, mass revolutionary international. That is our task.

Britain today is not the center of the international class struggle, but it is still a major imperialist power, and Trotskyists in Britain well understand the responsibility we have to the struggle of the comrades in South Africa. We also have a special responsibility to the nationalist struggle in Northern Ireland.

August 1988-89 is a year of action in Britain. It marks the 20th anniversary of the civil rights movement in Northern Ireland and of the sending in of the British troops. We are engaged in assembling a new withdrawal alliance based in the labor movement.

# 'Justice demands that Leon Trotsky be restored to his rightful place in the history of the Soviet Union'

By ESTEBAN VOLKOV

(The following speech was delivered at the Aug. 6 rally in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Fourth International. Esteban Volkov is Leon Trotsky's grandson.)

Human labor is the basis of our survival and progress. It produces almost all the goods that surround us. From very old times, it has been a cherished booty.

In almost all societies known by history, there have been individuals, groups, or parasitical classes that through strength, power, or cunning have been able to get hold of other people's labor. With the advent of capitalism and the growth of population, the appropriation of human labor in the form of surplus value became more sophisticated and widely extended.

In the present world, the development of

modern capitalism, with its ruthless financial imperialism, has widened the gap between the poorest, most vulnerable, larger sectors of population of the world and smaller groups of people who are accumulating inconceivable amounts of riches and power.

And we also have the development of the stratified societies of bureaucratic dictatorships, where on a lesser scale, you can still find great inequalities between the working classes and the power groups.

It is a universal law that every action provokes a reaction. The unfair and heartless exploitation of huge masses of people in the dreary and unhealthy factories of the rising capitalism of the last century gave birth to the response of Marxism. Capitalism, with its more sophisticated form of slavery—without lash or chain, but with the specter of hunger for the worker and his family—was nonetheless cruel.

Marxism, the human response to this cruelty, was undertaken by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, brilliant revolutionary thinkers with an inviolable sense of justice. They deciphered the dynamics of history, creating a rational and scientific methodology: historic materialism.

They thoroughly studied the capitalist system, discovering its laws and its unavoidable contradictions. They dedicated their lives to the goal of erradicating forever the exploitation of the working class by parasitic minorities holding power and capital.

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, creators of scientific socialism, or Marxist theory, provided the working class and other exploited classes with a powerful ideological weapon to struggle against all forms of exploitation, oppression, and alienation suffered in present society.

Marxism is not a crystal ball nor a magic

wand. We don't have any MacGraw Hill book on "How to Perform a Successful Revolution." Marxism constitutes an essential analytical method of economic, political, and social phenomena and a basic tool for any revolutionary process.

One doesn't need to be a great strategist to understand the reason for more than a century of constant attacks and distortions against the so-called obsolete ideology of Marxism and for the persecution and extermination of many of its defenders and revolutionary leaders.

The exploited masses, according to the ruling minorities, must be kept away from dangerous ideas and loyal guides. This seems to be the simplest way to try to preserve the happy world of the fortunate minorities at the top of the social pyramid.

## Enemies within own ranks

Those who have damaged Marxism most, however, those who have most hampered the struggle of the oppressed, have been the disguised enemies coming from its own ranks. They have been able to confuse, mislead, and distract the oppressed working classes from their revolutionary goals.

As the ship of socialism had in Karl Marx and Frederick Engels its two greatest designers and constructors, it also had two expert captains, V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky, to direct it across the foggy sea of conciliations, class collaboration, and reformism of the social democracy. They were able to direct the craft toward its true revolutionary road, arriving successfully at its port in October 1917 in Russia with its first triumphant revolution.

The revolutionary euphoria didn't last long. Ten years after the glorious October 1917, began the greatest betrayals and distortions of the Marxist principles of internationalism and proletarian dictatorship expressed in workers' democracy, disintegration of the oppressive state, and abolition of human exploitation.

These betrayals and distortions were brought about by the Stalinist counter-revolution, which consolidated itself during the lowering of the revolutionary tide of the exhausted and depoliticized masses in the context of the terrible scarcities and isolation of the Soviet Union. The cruel and bloody Czarist dictatorship of ancient Russia showed its repulsive face during the Stalinist dictatorship and its new court of ambitious mercenaries.



Leon Trotsky

bloody GPU [Stalin's secret police]. It constantly established treaties with the working-class enemies, aborting many revolutionary movements and facilitating the road for the triumph of Nazism and the Second World War.

The wounds bestowed upon the revolutionary Marxist Leninist vanguard and the exploited masses of mankind were too severe and painful. Because of this, many regimes of exploitation consolidated themselves for long periods of time, and the coming forth of a true socialism was postponed in the world.

The oppressed classes and their revolutionary vanguard had many ruthless visible enemies and others hiding inside their ranks. Fortunately, though, they also had men and women of great minds and of unusual heroism and dedication who gave their whole minds, their creative energy, and even their lives for the struggle for the abolition of exploitation.

## Indomitable revolutionary

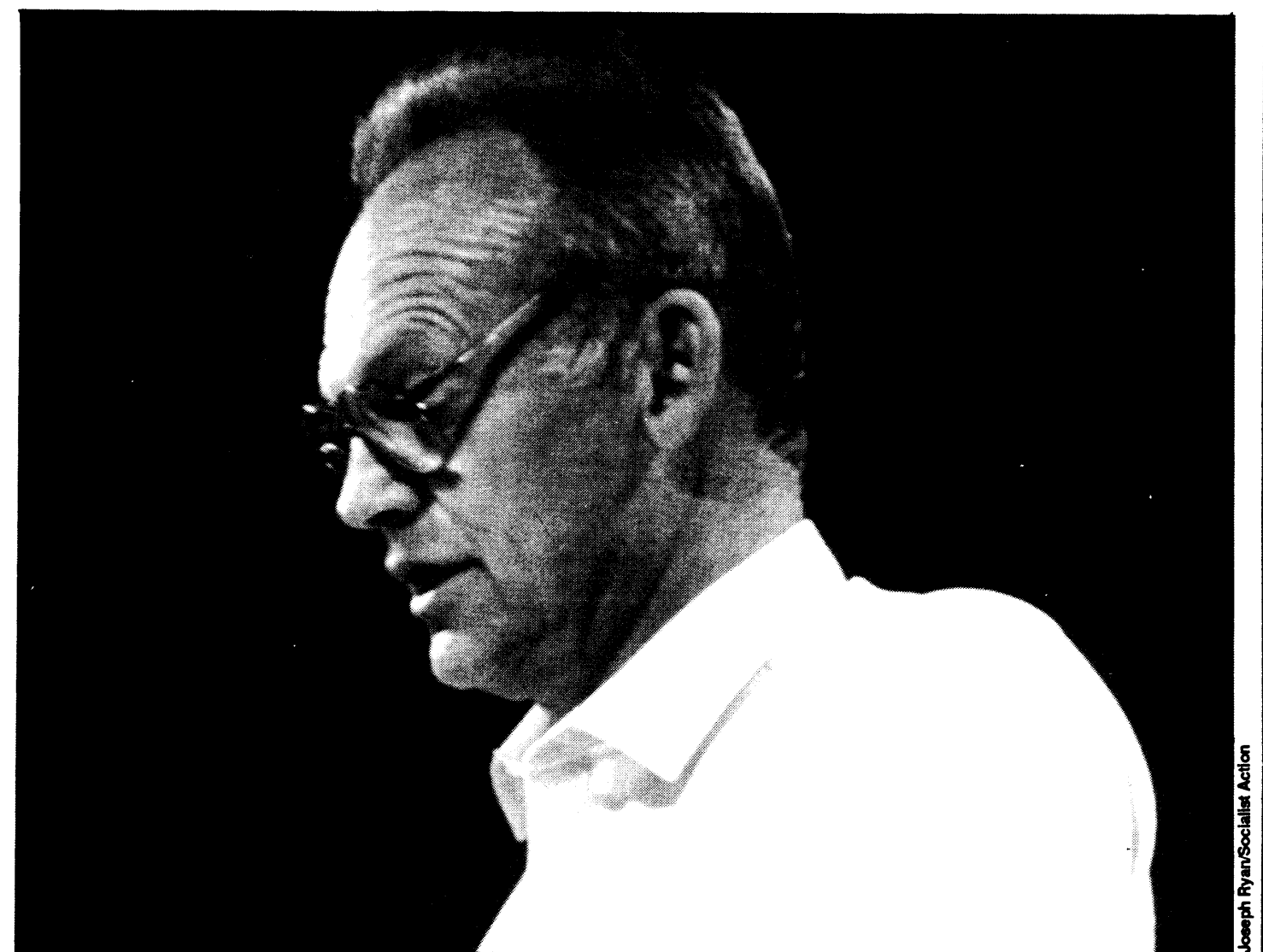
Leon Trotsky, indomitable revolutionary, great Marxist theoretician, close friend in struggle of Lenin and key element for the triumph of the Soviet Revolution, was one of these men.

His dedication, absolute loyalty to the socialist cause, mixed with his lucid and deep Marxist appreciation of his historical milieu, made him one of the first to understand in its whole severity the Stalinist bureaucratic counterrevolution; that is, the gradual transformation of the true Bolshevik Party, creator of the revolution, into a gigantic and obedient bureaucratic apparatus unconditionally under the orders of Stalin.

In 1923, Trotsky organized the Left Opposition along with other loyal and vigorous revolutionaries. He started the heroic struggle inside the party to restore the true Marxism Leninism, which was the ideological basis for the October revolution, in defense of the exploited people.

Trotsky tried to save the Russian Revolution from its total distortion and deviation, but the counterrevolution was irresistible, and the Left Opposition, which wielded a difficult and heroic struggle, was ruthlessly repressed. It went underground, and its leaders were sent to Siberia in 1928 and expelled from Russia in 1929.

While Marx studied capitalism from all



Joseph Ryan/Socialist Action

**'The only other alternative before us is a socio-economic system in which humankind can master its own destiny...'**

—Esteban Volkov

its angles, disguises, and contradictions, Leon Trotsky studied the Stalinist bureaucracy exhaustively with a Marxist methodology in its morphology and physiology. Half a century later, it is almost impossible to modify his rigorous analysis and concepts of the Stalinist Bonapartism. Today Stalinism can hardly fool even a small child.

## Trotsky's most important task

In 1933, Trotsky considered it to be a lost cause to try to straighten the wayward roads of the Third International, which had definitively exchanged Marxism for pragmatism and opportunism and had totally abandoned and betrayed the working class.

Leon Trotsky gave himself to what he considered the most important task of his life: the creation of the Fourth International. This was a task which culminated in 1938, two years before he was assassinated.

Trotsky considered essential the creation of a new proletarian vanguard that could bravely wield the banner of Marxism Leninism and that could be prepared to take action in history. From the time of the Left Opposition, and then later in the Fourth International, Trotskyists have always been in the front lines of the fight against oppression.

Trotskyism is today the main crucible of Marxist thought and action in modern history.

I am moved by a deep emotion, by the fact that at this moment we have here

among us comrades, companions in struggle of Leon Trotsky and James P. Cannon, the pillars of the Trotskyist movement in the United States. They are for all of us and for the new generation a living example of courage, of full confidence in Marxism, and absolute loyalty to the working classes.

I want to convey my profound admiration and respect to all of them.

The duty of the new generation of revolutionary Marxists will be to retake the banner of the fallen in order to continue with the fight for socialism and reach it. In the words of Leon Trotsky: "Life is beautiful. Let the future generations cleanse it of all evil, oppression, and violence and enjoy it to the full."

## Clear Trotsky's name!

I would like to conclude my talk by taking up another subject: the question of the rehabilitations in the Soviet Union today.

If Gorbachev's *glasnost* [openness] is to have some credibility, it is vital that there should be no forbidden areas. Leon Trotsky must be now be rid of all the avalanche of false accusations, lies, slanders, and falsifications which have been leveled at him and his ideas in the Soviet Union and the other deformed workers' states for more than half a century.

Justice strictly demands that Trotsky be restored to his rightful place in the history of the Soviet Union. His works, writings, and political theses must be published,

freely discussed, and objectively evaluated, as must the writings of all the others who played a role in the Russian Revolution.

The analysis and basic ideas of Marxism have in no way lost their applicability. Capitalist society has been able to generate a wealth of knowledge and scientific development. Yet it has not found—nor will it ever find—a formula to eradicate hunger, misery, and injustice from our planet. On the contrary, it has placed the human race on the edge of an infernal atomic conflagration.

The only other alternative before us is a socio-economic system in which humankind can master its own destiny and is not just an object to be used and discarded.

Real socialism or barbarism, that is our dilemma.

I would like to end up with these words: I had a very difficult childhood, very lonely and full of suffering. But today, after more than half a century, I feel like a privileged human being. I had one of the most interesting and passionate lives to have been an actor and witness to one of the most important historical moments in contemporary history.

I feel that, in a way, I am a very lucky human being to be able to see, after these 50 years of absolute darkness, a change underway in history. I feel we are starting to see some light. Today I see closer the possibility of the advent of socialism. ■

A-2 Monday, August 8, 1988 ★★

## San Francisco Examiner

### Trotsky grandson watched history unfold

By Norman Melnick  
OF THE EXAMINER STAFF

The grandson of Leon Trotsky, in town to support efforts to clear Trotsky's name, was present for a momentous piece of history — his grandfather's assassination.

Vsevolod ("Seva" for short) Volkov said in an interview with The Examiner that as Trotsky's 14-year-old grandson he saw the scene on Aug. 20, 1940, through a crack in the dining room door. He was not permitted in the room.

"Keep Seva away. He shouldn't see this," said the dying Trotsky, lying on the dining room floor with an inch-deep head wound sustained when an assassin struck him with an ice ax.

There is revived interest now in Trotsky, a key figure in the Russian Revolution, an intellectual giant and a brilliant speaker and writer who was also the leader of the Red Army.

In Mikhail Gorbachev's Soviet Union, talk is rife that the Kremlin may "rehabilitate" Trotsky, cleanse his name of the evils charged to him by the tyrant Stalin, who forced him into exile in 1929 and then, as historians believe, had him murdered in Mexico.

The main newspaper of the Soviet Young Communists League has stated that Trotsky "was neither a spy nor a murderer" and was not guilty of any crimes. While his political views are still unacceptable, this important newspaper said, they should be published as part of the historical record.

Such comments are viewed as a possible signal that Trotsky's legal rehabilitation is forthcoming. Of those smeared by Stalin, the most prominent was Trotsky.

Already such stalwart Bolshevik figures as Nikolai Bukharin, Lev Kamenev and Grigory Zinoviev have been cleared of Stalinist crimes, though none has been restored to political grace.

But on that fateful day in 1940, the young Volkov had just returned from school to the guarded, fortress-like Trotsky home outside Mexico City.

"I knew something was wrong, so many policemen, so many people. My grandfather, on the floor, was surrounded by family and comrades. He was still able to talk. He said, 'Don't kill Jackson (the assassin). He has to talk,' and after that he told Natalia to keep me away. Then the ambulance came, he was taken away and the next day he died."

Volkov, whose unpronounceable Russian first name later was



VOLKOV LIVED WITH HIS GRANDFATHER IN MEXICO CITY. As a child, he saw aftermath of an assassin's attack on Trotsky

changed by his Mexican foster parents to Esteban (Steven), has matter-of-factly recalled that scene many times in recent months. As the most accessible of Trotsky's survivors, he has become a celebrity. He has spoken in New York, Mexico City, London (by telephone) and elsewhere, and he spoke Saturday night at a Socialist Action program in San Francisco. He has been pursued by the media, including Soviet correspondents.

In Mexico City, where he lives, Volkov is a chemist. Until recently he did not participate in politics. He honored the memory of his grandfather without the political trappings. At 82 he is a grandfather himself, lean and rawboned.

He came into prominence on a fabricated story, he said. A Paris magazine reported last November that he had been invited to Moscow for the 70th anniversary celebration of the Bolshevik Revolution.

The story produced calls from

correspondents all over the world, Volkov said. "I had to tell them there was no official confirmation ... that the story was invented."

But his quiet, uneventful life had been shattered. As his grandfather's chief defender — "a duty I feel deeply" — he appears at meetings and rallies, focusing on Trotsky but also asking "rehabilitation" for all of Stalin's victims.

"Now, after so many years of darkness, after so many lies, distortions and falsifications about my grandfather, finally it seems a window is opening," he said. "We are very expectant."

He called himself a non-practicing Socialist.

"I agree with the ideals of socialism and I think Marxism is the only rational and scientific method for social change. I would say there is no other social technology available," he said.

He shook his head in dispute with historical accounts that depict

Trotsky as harsh and authoritarian. "He was a very warm and friendly person," Volkov said. "Of course, in the field of politics, he was very tough, very demanding. He was one of the greatest Marxists, on the same level with Engels and Lenin."

To a 13-year-old boy, life in the high-walled Trotsky home was exciting. The visitors' list was long and impressive. Comrades came "from around the world," Volkov said.

But he valued most the trips he made with his grandfather to cactus fields outside Mexico City. Trotsky, the social activist, the visionary, loved cactus. Volkov recalled that his grandfather carried heavy loads of the plants back with him, refusing aid from younger men. He believed that all work had to be shared, Volkov said.

**'I think Marxism is the only rational and scientific method for social change'**

—Vsevolod Volkov

Volkov first lived with his grandfather in Turkey in 1931. The next year, when he was 6, he was declared a "stateless" person by the Stalin regime. His mother, suffering from tuberculosis and unstable emotionally, killed herself.

The young Volkov was packed off to Berlin, then Vienna and finally to Paris to live with Trotsky's son, Lev Sedov. When Sedov died mysteriously after an appendix operation, his young charge went to live with his grandfather in Mexico.

In that year, 1936, the Trotsky residence was attacked by would-be assassins attired in military uniforms. Volkov, hiding under his bed, suffered a superficial wound. Trotsky and his wife were unharmed. Afterward the old Bolshevik joked about getting up each day to find that he was still alive. A year later he was murdered.

In Isaac Deutscher's classic trilogy on Trotsky, there is a photograph of the 13-year-old Volkov with his grandfather and Natalia in their Mexican rock garden. Behind his tortoise-shell glasses, Trotsky appears lost in thought as befits a deep thinker.

But Volkov said his grandfather was not preoccupied and could be interrupted — but never when he was working. "He was very emphatic: you had to be respectful of his work."

Lenin once said that the great revolutionaries, after death, are frequently transformed into harmless icons, canonized by the oppressors to cheat the oppressed masses, castrating their ideas and destroying their revolutionary cutting edge. This became especially true in his own case at the hands of the Stalinist counter-revolution. To the innumerable distortions and falsifications of the Marxist-Leninist ideals, one has to add the endless list of betrayals and crimes.

## No justification before history

The pain and suffering brought upon hundreds of millions of Soviet citizens by the backwardness in which they lived for more than half a century and by the stupid enclosure in a schizophrenic world of total misinformation, saturated with lies and monstrous repression brought about by the bloody bureaucratic dictatorship, cannot, nor will ever have a justification before history. Nor will the authors of such aberrations obtain forgiveness.

The Stalinist counterrevolution dedicated itself to the extermination of the revolutionary vanguard of the working classes mainly inside the Soviet Union, and on a smaller scale outside its borders through its satellite parties and the executioners and

# Stalinism yesterday and today: An agent for world imperialism

By ALAN BENJAMIN

(The following are excerpts from the international report adopted by the Third National Convention of Socialist Action on Aug. 4, 1988.)

Fifty years ago this month, in August 1938, Leon Trotsky and a small group of supporters founded the Fourth International.

There were many at the time who were members or partisans of Trotsky's international Left Opposition who opposed the launching of the Fourth International. Isaac Deutscher, Trotsky's biographer, was one of them.

Deutscher said it was folly for such a small group of cadre to take on such an immense task. He said the Fourth International would be born from the defeats of the

document of the Fourth International. It condenses the essence of the revolutionary socialist program in our epoch, the epoch of the death agony of capitalism.

The basic ideas and principles contained in the "Transitional Program" remain as timely and as essential to guide our political activity as they were when they were drafted 50 years ago.

Countless present-day examples could be given to demonstrate the relevance of our program today. I'd like to examine just one basic idea from our program—our historic position on the counterrevolutionary character of Stalinism—to demonstrate this point.

In the "Transitional Program," Trotsky wrote:

"The USSR thus embodies terrific contradictions. But it still remains a

traveled to Great Britain, where he openly expressed his admiration for the British prime minister's free-market orientation.

Numerous newspaper articles took advantage of Grosz's U.S. visit to hail the new innovative steps taken by the Hungarian bureaucracy in recent years. The reports reveal the following:

- "In September, Hungary will adopt a new 'law of associations' that will permit foreigners to buy shares in Hungarian businesses, or even whole companies. Next year, the Budapest stock exchange will reopen for the first time in more than 40 years. The Hungarian constitution is also undergoing extensive revision." (*New York Times*, July 31)

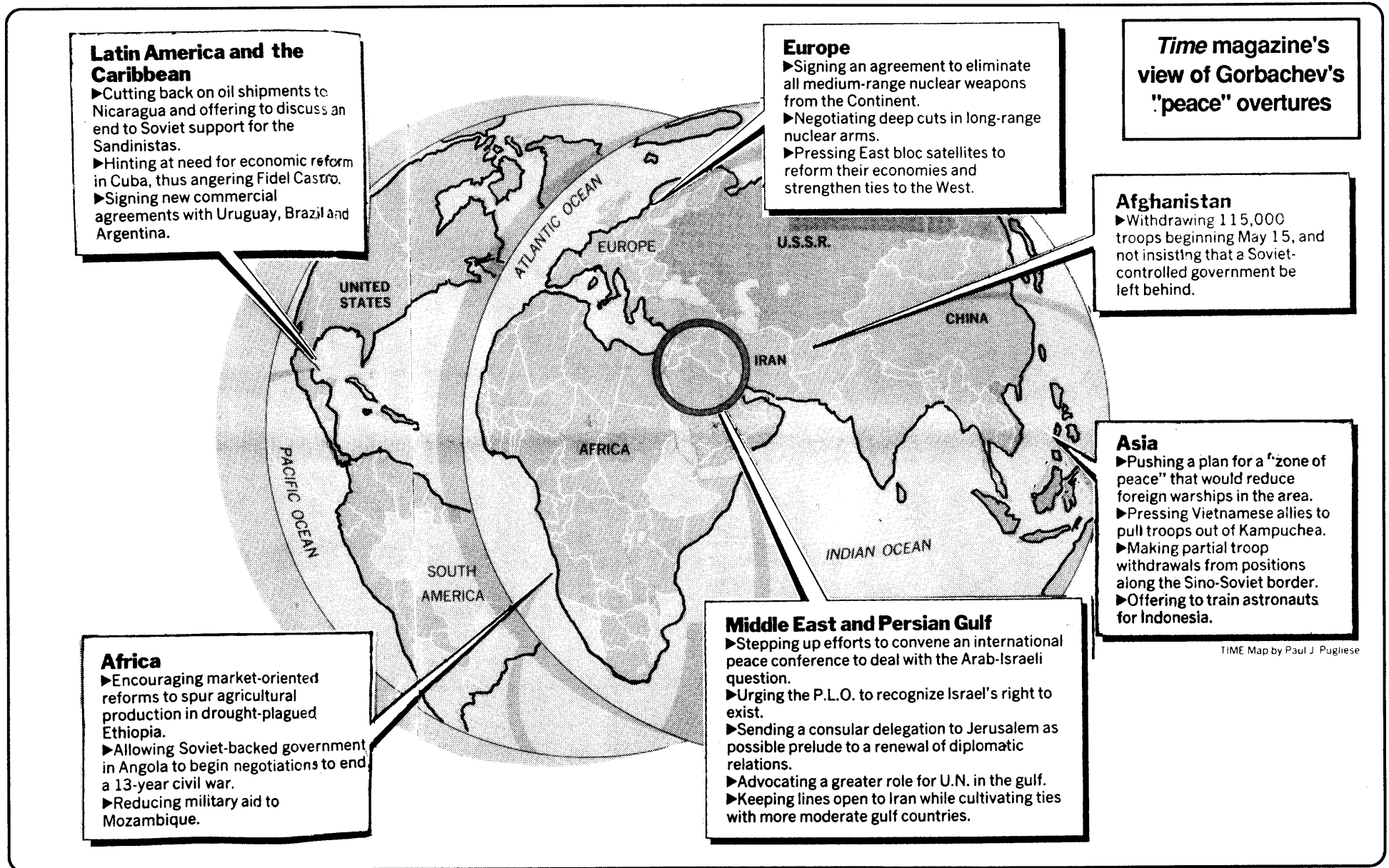
- "Hungary is already far ahead of the Communist Bloc in economic innovation. It has an actively functioning bankruptcy

garians are living beneath the subsistence level. Hungarian families cannot make ends meet with their dwindling incomes. Of the roughly 5 million wage earners, about 4 million have to work a second job. The average workday has been stretched to between 12 and 14 hours.

## Capitalist restoration?

Don't all these measures represent the gradual introduction of capitalist market mechanisms and forms? Of course they do. This does not mean, however, that quantity will gradually turn into quality—that is, the bureaucracy will continue its market reforms to the point where, one day, a new capitalist state will have been created.

To restore capitalism, and not just undermine the workers' state through capitalist mechanisms, the bureaucracy



revolutionary movements of the 1930s, and would therefore be unable to coalesce and inspire the new wave of radicalizing workers and youth.

Trotsky and his supporters—comrades like James P. Cannon, the founder of American Trotskyism—strongly disagreed with the faint-hearts.

Trotsky said the most important task of his entire political life—more important than leading the Russian workers to power in 1917, or building the Red Army, or founding the Third International—was transmitting the legacy of revolutionary Marxism that had been broken by the Stalinization of the communist movement.

Trotsky and the founders of the Fourth International firmly believed that the only hope for the future of humanity—the only hope that capitalist wars, exploitation, and barbarism could be stopped once and for all—was to build a new revolutionary international party to ensure the programmatic continuity of Marxism, of Leninism, of Bolshevism.

What is often referred to as "Trotskyism" is nothing other than the continuity of Marxism, of Leninism, today.

The "Transitional Program," drafted by Trotsky in 1938, is the basic programmatic

degenerated workers' state. Such is the social prognosis. The political prognosis has an alternative character: Either the bureaucracy, becoming ever more the organ of the world bourgeoisie in the workers' state, will overthrow the new forms of property and plunge the country back to capitalism; or the working class will crush the bureaucracy and open the way to socialism."

Trotsky here pointed to the role of the bureaucracy as the transmission belt of imperialism in the workers' state. He noted the bureaucracy's historic tendency to seek the restoration of capital as its solution to the economic crisis caused by its own bureaucratic mismanagement and despotism.

## The example of Hungary

Let us examine the most advanced model of *perestroika*, or economic restructuring, taking place in the Eastern European workers' states today—the case of Hungary. Gorbachev himself has pointed to Hungary as the model he hopes to emulate in the Soviet Union.

Hungary's new prime minister, Karoly Grosz, was in the United States in early August to learn about the so-called virtues of the free-enterprise system. He had earlier

law, established well ahead of its Communist neighbors. A banking system has been established to compete with what was once a state banking monopoly. A small bond market is flourishing." (*Los Angeles Times*, May 25)

- "In 1982, Hungary was the second Comecon [Soviet economic bloc] country to join the International Monetary Fund. In joining, it adopted one of its notorious adjustment programs, which was designed to reduce demand throughout the economy by restrictive tax, wage, and interest policy, and by further compressing state investment.

"Price reform was instituted to let world prices operate also in the domestic economy. In 1986, another law was passed that provided for closing plants and introducing unemployment." (*International Viewpoint*, July 25)

- "Within the next 18 months, 100,000 Hungarian workers, or 2 percent of the active population, will be officially unemployed." (*Libération*, July 14, 1988.) Other sources estimate the number of unemployed at 200,000.

As a result of these *perestroika* reforms, the standard of living of the Hungarian workers has nosedived. A million Hun-

must defeat the working class in major class battles. At the same time, not all wings of the bureaucracy are willing to go as far down the path of capitalist restoration as others. Their own material interests are attached to the preservation of the bureaucratized workers' states.

At this level, we can expect more rifts and conflicts within the Stalinist bureaucracies. The path to capitalist restoration is therefore not automatic or without contradictions.

## Hungarian workers resist

The Hungarian workers, for their part, are not taking these attacks lying down.

On March 15, 1987, over 3000 people marched in the streets of Budapest in a commemoration of the defeated Hungarian revolution of 1848. This is how a Hungarian dissident described the march in an open letter published in France:

"Dear friends,  
"This year's March 15 commemoration represents an event of great significance. This year, the workers who have been laid off as a result of the economic reforms of the past five years, the youth, and all layers of the population who have been hard hit

(continued on next page)

(continued from previous page)

by the increased cost of living, protested openly in the streets for four days. They carried with them the ideals of 1848 and of the revolution of the workers' councils of 1956."

This reference to the "soviet" forms of organization—the workers' councils which sprang up throughout Hungary in 1956—is a sign that the workers in these states are renewing the traditions of the October revolution of 1917 in their struggle against the entrenched bureaucracies.

In Poland, the failure of the Jaruzelski bureaucracy to win popular support for its economic "reforms" and its failure to crush Solidarity is another indication of the depth of the movement for political revolution.

The struggle for political revolution is the struggle to defend the gains of the October revolution: nationalized property and the planned economy. It is the struggle to sweep away the rotten bureaucracy and revive the soviets as the fundamental decision-making bodies of the workers' state.

### The Soviet Union today

Let us now look at what has been going on in the Soviet Union in recent months.

Take the recent 19th special conference of the Soviet Communist Party. Here it was made clear that what the Soviet masses mean by *glasnost* (or openness) is not the same thing as what the Gorbachev reformers mean.

Leading up to the conference, during the weeks of electing delegates, many Gorbachev reformers were kept off the lists by the so-called hardliners. In various cities, these reformers appealed to the masses to put pressure on the party officials to allow them to be delegates to the conference.

In the cities of Omsk, Sakhalin, Kuybyshev, and Yaroslavl, mass demonstrations of up to 10,000 people took place. But in most cases, these protests demanded more than the annulment of the mandates of the "hardline" delegates. They also called for the removal of despised party officials, the legalization of independent unions and political organizations, and an end to the monopoly on political power by the ruling bureaucracy.

On June 25, on the eve of the party conference, 1000 people held an authorized rally to demand a memorial monument in honor of the victims of Stalinist repression. The group which called the demonstration, Dynamo, had gathered 43,000 signatures on their petition. [This demand was ultimately met by the party conference.]

The following resolution was adopted by acclamation by the rally participants:

"The participants at this meeting address themselves to the Soviet Supreme Court to ask for the rehabilitation of all those who were persecuted for the political views, regardless of when they were convicted."

The resolution went on to call for the release of political prisoners under Gorbachev: "We also call for the release of all current political prisoners, that is, of all those who were convicted for expressing their political beliefs without committing acts of violence or calling on others to commit them."

Many of the rally speakers, such as writer Oleg Volkov, in line with the resolution, stated, "We should not limit our discussion to the repression under Stalin."

These demands, which hit at the very heart of bureaucratic rule, went far beyond the limits set by the Gorbachev wing of the bureaucracy. The specter of these movements moving in an increasingly independent direction is constantly raised by the party hardliners to warn Gorbachev against offering too many democratic openings.

And the hardliners and the Gorbachev reformers have reason to fear that the openings will be broken wide open by the Soviet masses. Over the past three years there has been a proliferation of independent socialist clubs and movements, some of which have actually called for the legalization of all socialist parties and formations, a demand which has been categorically rejected by both wings of the bureaucracy.

At the same time, the bureaucracy is becoming acutely aware of the fact that the Soviet workers are not going along with the economic reforms. There have been strikes against wage cuts and the



Gorbachev's foreign policy is in continuity with that pursued by Josef Stalin, shown here with Churchill and Roosevelt in 1945 at signing of Yalta agreements.

introduction of unemployment. There is grumbling. And more dangerous yet, there is motion for the creation of independent unions.

In 1977, the Ukrainian miner Vladimir Khlebanov founded the Association of Free Unions and then the Free Interprofessional Association of Workers (SMOT). Khlebanov was jailed in 1978 and has been there ever since.

There have been numerous reports in the last three years of unionists demanding Khlebanov's release and the legalization of the SMOT and other independent unions.

### Soviet policy in South Africa

Another aspect of the current world situation which confirms Trotsky's characterization of the Stalinist bureaucracy as a counterrevolutionary force throughout the world is Gorbachev's foreign policy.

Gorbachev has taken the traditional Stalinist policy of "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism to new levels. Gorbachev wants stability and imperialist credits to attempt to resolve the political and economic crisis of the bureaucracy—within the boundaries of one country. This goal, of course, is impossible.

In exchange for the decreased military pressure from imperialism (which is a false and dangerous illusion) and for its increased economic collaboration, Gorbachev is fully ready to sacrifice revolutionary struggles throughout the world.

Dozens of articles in the mainstream media have pointed to the "positive" and "constructive" influence the Soviet leadership has had in settling "regional conflicts" around the world.

An article in *The San Francisco Chronicle* (June 7), for example, states:

"The Soviet view of South Africa, like its view of Israel, is changing. Over the past two years the Soviet Union has been broadening its contacts with Israel... Now they have started low-level contacts with South Africa's ruling whites...."

"In 1986, a member of the Soviet Union's Africa Institute, Gleb Starushenko, proposed the idea of 'comprehensive guarantees for the white population' and special constitutional arrangements calculated to allay white fears.

"The Russians are holding out to both Israel and South Africa a tantalizing possibility of what the Americans once called 'constructive engagement.'"

You have here in a nutshell the terms of a political settlement in South Africa that would end the excesses of apartheid while retaining and reaffirming the capitalist system of exploitation, something like that which occurred in Zimbabwe.

The new "constitutional guidelines for a multiparty democracy and a mixed economy," presented by the leadership of the African National Congress (ANC) on July 28 should be understood in this light. They represent a signal that the ANC's top leadership is willing to accommodate to the

white liberal wing of the South African ruling class. The ANC is highly influenced by the pro-Moscow South African Communist Party.

The new ANC guidelines, according to *The New York Times* (July 29), "are far more specific than the Congress' 1955 blueprint for South Africa, a document known as the Freedom Charter."

*The Times* continues: "The guidelines come in response to criticism by some Western leaders and white liberals in South Africa that the Congress' platform is too vague." The guidelines announced by the ANC include "specific guarantees for the preservation of a strong private sector in the economy."

### Settling other "conflicts"

In an editorial dated July 31, *The New York Times* hails what the editors call the "Stirrings of Peace" throughout the world. "What is the reason for these stirrings?" the writers ask. They answer: "The Soviet Union's new foreign policy. Mikhail Gorbachev has ceased issuing blank checks to revolutionary regimes."

"In Nicaragua," the *Times* states, "a peace process has begun on terms close to those that Washington has long sought."

An article reprinted in *The World Press Review* (August 1988) makes the same point:

"Nicaragua's Sandinista government has been prompted by its 'natural ally' [i.e., the Soviet Union] to negotiate directly with opponents, the contras, in compliance with the peace plan of Costa Rican President Oscar Arias. And the Soviets have asked Yassir Arafat, the head of the Palestine Liberation Organization, to recognize not only Israel's right to exist but also its security interests."

An article from the July 29 *San Francisco Chronicle* reports on the visit by an Israeli delegation to the Soviet Union, the first of its kind in nearly three decades:

"Until recently, Moscow demanded that

Israel had to leave all Arab territories it seized in the 1967 war before it would consider a restoration of diplomatic relations.

"Western diplomats also say that Moscow appears to have dropped its insistence on the creation of an independent Palestinian state as part of a settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict and may be open to other proposals. Israeli officials acknowledge a more conciliatory approach."

Already the Hungarian and Polish bureaucracies have renewed diplomatic relations with Israel, and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, the butcher of the Palestinian people, has met with Soviet officials to discuss doing the same.

Amazingly, this is taking place at a time when the Zionist state of Israel is being condemned worldwide for its brutal repression of the Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza.

[Elsewhere, in Angola, the Soviet bureaucracy has urged the MPLA government to "open negotiations and start a dialogue on the country's future" with the CIA-financed UNITA mercenary forces. An article in the Aug. 11 *Los Angeles Times* noted that "Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Anatoly Adamishin's position appeared to be closer to that of UNITA than to that of the government that Moscow has supported for nearly 13 years."]

Can there be any doubt in anyone's mind about the counterrevolutionary character of the Stalinist bureaucracy? Hardly. Theirs is a counterrevolutionary policy—not just in a few countries of the world, but everywhere. That's what Trotsky concluded after Stalin permitted the rise of Hitler in Germany in 1933. That is what we believe today.

This assessment was the principal factor that led Trotsky to the decision to form the Fourth International. It is one of the principal justifications for the existence of the Fourth International today. ■

## 'Join Socialist Action!'

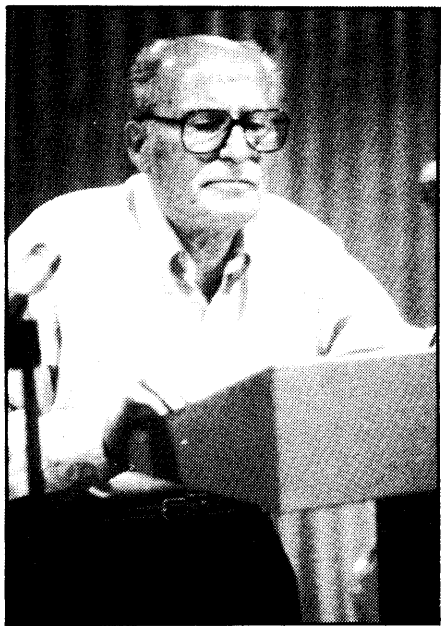
The following are excerpts from Jake Cooper's speech to the Aug. 6 rally. Cooper is a veteran of the 1934 Minneapolis Teamsters strikes. He was a guard to Leon Trotsky in Coyoacan, Mexico, in 1939, and was imprisoned in 1944 under the Smith Act.

Comrades and friends, all of you here tonight who are struggling against the oppression of the workers: We welcome you. And not only do we welcome you, but we want you to join us.

I see a lot of eager fighters out

there who are looking at this crazy system, a system which is ruining our world, a system which in this last period of our lives, from the time I was born till now, has killed off millions upon millions of people in the interest of profits.

We're asking you to join us. If you want to stop the destruction of this world by the capitalist class, the place to be is with us, in Socialist Action, because this is the most noble struggle you could possibly become involved in. We want you with us. We need soldiers in this fight.



Joseph Ryan/Socialist Action

Paul Siegel is the co-chair of the U.S. Moscow Trials Campaign Committee.

With the juridical rehabilitation of Zinoviev, Kamenev, Pyatakov, and Radek,

## Paul Siegel: 'Support Moscow Trials Campaign!'

all of the defendants of the Moscow Trials have finally been exonerated—all, that is, except the chief defendant, Leon Trotsky, and his son and co-worker, Leon Sedov, who, although not physically present at the trials, were declared guilty *in absentia*.

Trotsky was described in the trials as the mastermind of a criminal conspiracy. This conspiracy has now been officially declared to have been non-existent, but his name remains uncleared. It is as if the foundation of a building were to have been demolished with the building continuing to float in mid-air in defiance of the law of gravity.

The exonerations, nevertheless, are a great victory for Trotskyism, vindicating

the struggle against all odds of the Trotskyists in the Soviet Union in the darkest days of Stalinist terror and the certainty of Trotsky that history would overturn the verdict of the trials.

While the main impetus toward exoneration undoubtedly came from internal developments in the Soviet Union, pressure from abroad, it should be noted, helped. The international campaign for rehabilitation led by the Moscow Trials Campaign Committee obtained the endorsement of 97 representatives of socialist, labor, and radical parties in the parliaments of 19 countries and of leaders in the trade union, cultural, academic, and civil libertarian

fields in these and 17 other countries.

In the United States, the Committee's petition was endorsed by over 100 persons prominent in various fields, including Ed Asner, Philip Berrigan, Noam Chomsky, Norman Mailer, Michael Meerpol, Pete Seeger, Studs Terkel, and George Wald.

Now the U.S. Moscow Trials Campaign Committee is calling for the rehabilitation of Trotsky and the publication of the writings of the defendants. The writing of Trotsky, in particular, is feared by the Soviet bureaucracy, for it is at odds with its policy of solving the problems of the Soviet Union at the expense of the workers and of continuing the Stalinist policy of making deals with imperialism at the expense of revolutionary struggles abroad.

However, some intellectuals have already called for the exoneration and publication of Trotsky.

The U.S. Moscow Trials Campaign Committee urges all of you to join them in the struggle for that objective. If you'd like to add your name to the appeal or assist the campaign in any other way, please contact the Campaign c/o P.O. Box No. 318, Gracie Station, New York, N.Y. 10028.

## Greetings from France

Mathieu Thierry represented the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR), French section of the Fourth International, at the Aug. 6 rally.

I bring you greetings from the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR). This meeting today is one of the better examples of the determination of revolutionary socialists. It is a sign of our optimism and our confidence about the

strength of the working class.

Twenty years ago, in May '68, the working class in France, in a general strike of 11 million workers, showed us that revolution was possible in the developed capitalist countries. All the pessimistic theories about the integration of the working class into capitalist society were defeated.

At the same time, the Tet Offensive in Vietnam and the upsurge in Czechoslovakia in 1968 confirmed the new period of class struggle in all the sectors of the world. This was—and remains—a new period for the development of the LCR and the Fourth International.

racism directed against immigrants and refugees—was successful too, in spite of the fact that the 500 people in attendance had to leave the hall for a while because of a bomb threat.

Some racist elements have been doing wall paintings with slogans such as "White power—kill SAP." During the week following the rally, an attempt was made to set our party headquarters on fire.

We wish for you a successful rally and look forward to collaboration with you in our common struggle to build strong sections of the Fourth International and a strong International. Long live the Fourth International.

Fraternally, for the Political Bureau of SAP,  
Mogens Pedersen.

## Greetings from Canada

Susan Caldwell represented Gauche Socialiste/Socialist Challenge at the Aug. 6 rally.

I bring you greetings from Gauche Socialiste/Socialist Challenge, a sympathizing organization of the Fourth International in the Canadian state. We are a new organization which resulted from the fusion between Gauche Socialiste in Quebec and the Alliance for Socialist Action groups in English Canada.

At our congress in May, we also commemorated the 50th anniversary of the

founding of the Fourth International. We also proudly claim as our heritage one of the founding members of the Fourth International, Maurice Spector.

We see our organization as the continuation and the putting into action of their ideas. To give some specific examples from our work: We struggle for the self-determination of the oppressed minorities in the Canadian state, including Quebec and the native peoples. And our organization is actively building opposition to the imposition of a new law that would recriminalize abortion after the Canadian Supreme Court knocked down the old law.

Fundamentally, we feel the need for a revolutionary international and we believe it is both our responsibility and our privilege to be part of the Fourth International.

## Denmark

The following letter was read at the Aug. 6 rally.

Dear comrades,

We send revolutionary greetings to you from SAP (Socialistisk Arbejderparti), Danish section of the Fourth International. We ourselves celebrated the 50th anniversary of the FI in Copenhagen on May 14 at a rally followed by an anti-racist party sponsored by the Danish and Swedish sections of the International.

The rally gathered some 400 people. The anti-racist event—aimed at opposing the growing

## Letter from Trotsky's grandson and family to Soviet Supreme Court

His Excellency Mr. Vladimir Ivanovich Terebilov  
President of the Supreme Court  
of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics  
VL. Vorovskogo 15  
Moscow, USSR

We the undersigned—Vsievolod Volkow Bronstein, Veronica Volkow Fernandez, Nora Dolores Volkow Fernandez, Patricia Volkow Fernandez, and Natalia Volkow Fernandez, grandson and great-granddaughters of Lev Davidovich Bronstein, better known as Leon Trotsky—appeal to the Supreme Court of the Soviet Union, rightfully and with all due respect, to definitively grant juridical rehabilitation and restore his honorable name to our grandfather and great-grandfather, Leon Trotsky, declaring all the accusations and slanders made by the Stalin regime against him, against his sons, Leon Sedov and Serge Sedov, and against other relatives to be totally false.

Even though these accusations, among which the most blatant, unbelievable, and inconsistent are that he was an agent at the service of various foreign powers or that he attempted to restore capitalism in the Soviet Union, were always rejected and even considered to be ridiculous by all independent-minded individuals, it is nonetheless necessary that they be declared without foundation by the highest court of law in the Soviet Union. It is necessary in the interest of historical truth, of Soviet legality, and of the deep respect that is due to one of the principal and most untarnished heroes of the October Revolution.

For these reasons, and in light of the ample proof that exists to refute the calumnies against Trotsky—calumnies which were part of a political persecution that led to his assassination—we are confident that our appeal will be well received and resolved with justice by the highest tribunal which you preside over.

Sincerely,  
Mexico, June 13, 1988

*Vsievolod Volkow Bronstein*  
Veronica Volkow Fernandez  
*Nora Dolores Volkow Fernandez*  
*Patricia Volkow Fernandez*  
*Natalia Volkow Fernandez*

(The letter above was translated from the Spanish by  
Socialist Action.)

## R. Bullock

The following letter was read at the Aug. 6 rally.

Dear comrades and friends,

I am an old comrade from North Vancouver, B.C., Canada, who has been associated with the Fourth International since 1945 and involved in all the struggles and some victories. So when I wish you well and express my pride in what has been achieved, you will understand I speak from the heart.

There is an expanding time ahead for the International and with it an awareness and appreciation of Leon Trotsky and those asso-

ciated with his struggle against the counter-revolutionary bureaucracy.

Thank you for your fine contribution to continuing the struggle for the Workers Revolution. Dedicate your lives to it and you will not regret it.

Ruth Bullock,  
Vancouver, B.C.

## Australia

The following letter was read at the Aug. 6 rally.

Dear comrades,

Best wishes to your Third National Convention and for the Fourth International Rally. In Australia and in the United States many sectors of the left are in retreat from class-struggle politics. The work of regrouping revolutionary Marxists can sometimes be daunting.

Our forces here are small but we are inspired by recent mobilizations of Aborigines, teachers, high-school students, lesbians and gay men, pro-abortion forces, and trade unionists—all of whom have decided to come out fighting against the new right-wing government in New South Wales.

We are inspired, too, by the example set by the comrades of the Fourth International in the United States and around the world. The political and organizational contributions made by the Fourth International remain indispensably valuable in the class struggle in so many countries around the world.

Warmest greetings to you all in celebrating 50 years of proud and principled struggle. Long live the Fourth International.

Ken Davis,  
Sydney, Australia

## Rally honors 20 veteran socialists

On the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the Fourth International, the following founding members of the Fourth International were recognized by those present at the Aug. 6 rally:

Milt Alvin, Henry Austin, Vicente Colay, Dave Cooper, Jake Cooper, Bertha Dertz, Ada Farrell, Asher Harer, Ruth Harer, Syed Kadri, Tiby Martin, Phyllis Miller, Esther Perry, Hayden Perry, Dot Selander, Ted Selander, Paul Siegel, Don Simpson, Henry Snipper, Augusta Trainor.

They have prevailed.