

TRUTH

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With Nicaragua Against Reagan!

By MARGARET GUTTSALL

On June 18 union workers in Detroit will be marching against US intervention in Central America. While we do not yet know exactly what the turn-out will be and exactly to what extent union workers will affect the character of the march, we can already say that this march will mark the beginning of a profound change in the character of the struggle against US intervention in Central America.

The working class is being mobilized against Reagan's attacks, by the situation itself and by the concerted efforts of Trotskyists and other class-conscious youth and workers.

Now it is time to go beyond the self-deluding policies of the past that continue to limit and disorient the struggle. We must face the facts. Not only is Reagan going to directly intervene in Central America, *full-scale warfare in Central America, especially Nicaragua, is inevitable*. Indeed, the opening rounds are already being fired. We, American youth and workers, must take sides.

Some people will argue that this is a pessimistic perspective, that with a large mobilization we can force the US to negotiate with the workers and peasants of Central America or even to eventually withdraw. But even if the US were forced to negotiate or restrict its activities or even withdraw, it would only be temporary and in order to prepare a new attack.

For what we have in Central America, in Nicaragua, is a fundamental conflict that is inherent in the present economic and social system. If the United States, the collection of financiers and industrialists that it represents, is to survive as a world power (and failure to do so can be very painful as one can see from the fate of the German or Japanese capitalists, not to mention the Russian ones), then it must protect its investments, at least one-third of which involve Latin American countries.

The overthrow of Anastasio Somoza, one of a number of men who have created favorable conditions in Latin America for the US, including terms of trade, laws and military-police dictatorships that "regulate the workforce," constitutes a fundamental threat to the US and to these investments. It does so not only because it has reversed the favorable conditions in which US financiers operated in Nicaragua and threatens to do so elsewhere, but also because it has opened up a process wherein the very economic foundations of the present social system — that is, private ownership of the banks, industry, etc., in short, capitalism — are being challenged.

Nicaraguan workers and peasants could not stop with simply overthrowing the agent of the US banks, like their predecessors in Cuba and elsewhere, they had to proceed to establish their own committees, to attempt to take over the factories and the land and to suppress native capitalist opposition to this, in short to begin to fight for socialism simply to survive.

The imperialist and the native capitalist cannot survive in a situation in which they cannot monopolize society's resources and exploit the worker. And the worker and peasant cannot survive in a situation in which they do.

This is the nature of the conflict de-

veloping in Nicaragua and throughout Central America. It will only end in a definitive victory for one side or the other. This is as much a law as is the law of gravity, as much rooted in the material world as is this same law. Pentagon Commander Gen. Wallace Nutting's statement to the effect that "the Sandinista example 'probably' will have to be removed if Marxist revolution in other Central American countries is to be definitively stamped out" is simply a reflection of this (cited from the *Washington Post* by the *Militant*). If he contradicted it only a week later, it is only because he would like to be able to catch American workers off guard.

Some might recognize that what we have in Central America is a fundamental conflict, that full-scale warfare is inevitable, that it can only end in victory and defeat, but think that temporary truces and negotiations are, even in the class war, both possible and desirable and thus that workers should continue to demand negotiations or limit themselves to demanding US withdrawal and take a neutral or at least passive position with respect to the actual war.

Certainly it is true that in the class war truces and negotiations are possible and can be desirable. But not in the present situation!

The workers and peasants of Nicaragua, El Salvador and elsewhere have the initiative. The US is losing the war in El Salvador. That is why it is replacing people left and right and fighting for massive doses of arms, aid and advisors. The US

has been unable to find any significant support for its policies in Nicaragua outside die-hard Somocistas. Pastora, Chamorro and Robelo get as much publicity as they do because there is hardly anybody but them. That is why US diplomats are engaged in desperate plots to assassinate Nicaraguan leaders as Nicaragua recently reported when it expelled them from the country. The US has no choice but to proceed to full-scale warfare or be overwhelmed itself.

To enter into a truce or negotiations with the enemy in a situation in which *you have the initiative* and the enemy is trying to regroup his forces is at best asking for trouble, at worst betrayal and suicide. It only gives the enemy time to prepare the counterattack. Isn't this the lesson to draw from the amnesty given to the Somocistas in the first days of the revolution? Or even, in a less advantageous situation, from the PLO's negotiations and agreement with the US that preceded the massacres at Shatila and Sabra?

Now is not the time for truces and negotiations. Now is the time to proceed, full steam ahead, and defeat the enemy.

*With Nicaragua, against Reagan!
All out for Nicaragua!*

Some might argue that the American working class cannot go all out for Nicaragua because Nicaragua is working with Cuba and the USSR to spread Marxist, Leninist, communist revolution that will take away the people's freedom. Or because the Sandinistas are as bad or worse than the Somocistas. Or because socialism

is as bad as capitalism.

But if this Marxist, Leninist, communist revolution is taking away the people's freedom, if the Sandinistas are as bad as the Somocistas, then why are the people rising up to defend them with little more than hand weapons against the greatest power on earth? If socialism is as bad as capitalism then why are the Polish workers rising up in the name of socialism against the bureaucratic dictatorship in Moscow and accusing it of aggrandizing itself at the expense of the people as the capitalists do? No doubt some people will tell us that the Central Americans are "duped." But what about the Polish and why can't Reagan "undupe" them?

No. The tenacity of the Nicaraguan, Central American and the Polish people shows that there is an alternative to imperialism, worth living for, fighting for, and, yes, even dying for.

All out for Nicaragua means defending them in words and deeds — building a boycott of all US supplies to the Somocista butchers and the dictatorships surrounding Nicaragua, organizing volunteers to aid Nicaragua in every possible way, and building an independent party of the American working class to confront Reagan.

This is where the Trotskyists stand in the current war.

American workers!

All out for Nicaragua!

Boycott Supplies to Somocista Butchers! Volunteers for Nicaragua!

The *Detroit Free Press* recently reported that militants organized a demonstration in boats outside a California naval base protesting arms shipment to El Salvador. And the Internationalist Workers Party just issued a statement calling for "internationalist combat brigades" to fight alongside Nicaraguans against the US's attempts to return the Somocistas to power.

We think these developments represent a very positive turn in the struggle against US imperialism in Central America, away from simple verbal protests against US attacks and verbal solidarity with Nicaragua and El Salvador toward an active struggle against it on behalf of the oppressed.

Reagan's slanders of Nicaragua and others in the US and Central America — in which he accuses the USSR of instigating and arming the rebellions, raises the specter of a Soviet-style takeover of this hemisphere that will create conditions for workers even worse than those under the imperialists, and charges the anti-war movement and Nicaragua with being simply tools of the Kremlin — are aimed not only at lining up the petty bourgeoisie and backward workers behind the Reagan regime, but also at putting opponents of imperialism, especially revolutionaries, on the defensive; at mitigating their struggle.

Now more than ever it is necessary to support the right of workers and militants

to struggle actively on behalf of Nicaragua and El Salvador. The United States does not own Central and South America. These bodies of land and the water surrounding them do not belong to the US. It has no right to say who comes and goes in these countries. On the contrary, the people of these countries do have that right and they have shown over and over again that they do not want the US and that they do want anyone who will help them rid themselves of this tyrant.

This is the significance of the struggle to boycott supplies to the Somocista butchers and dictatorships encircling Nicaragua and organize volunteers to help Nicaragua in every way possible, be it on the frontlines or in the rearguard, in hospitals or schools. It is a practical political struggle to assert

the right of these people to control their own destiny in opposition to the attempt of the US to say who comes and goes in this hemisphere.

Interestingly enough, while Reagan claims that the Kremlin is behind everything in Central America, in an effort to identify the struggle here with Stalinist dictatorship, it is the Stalinist Kremlin that precisely recognizes Reagan's rights in Central America, says that it is "outside its sphere of influence" (see *Truth* #166). And it is parties most influenced by the Kremlin, like the Communist Party, Workers World Party, and now the Socialist Workers Party, that have fought most actively within the anti-war movement to confine the struggle to the boundaries that Reagan has established and against any attempt to challenge them with struggles like a boycott or organizing volunteers. This shows that what they defend in Central America is not Nicaragua but the Kremlin and its relations with the US.

All those who want to carry forward the struggle against Reagan and the Kremlin, who support Nicaragua's rights and want to actively defend them, be it through a boycott, organizing volunteers, or some other means, must make a *common struggle* and carry it into the unions. In this way it will be possible to rally the forces and train the leadership that will decide who rules the Americas once and for all. M.G.

The Way Forward For The Anti-War Movement

Meeting
SATURDAY, JUNE 18, 3:00 PM
Wayne State University
MacGregor Memorial
Conference Center
Hall E, Second Floor
Detroit, Michigan

The Struggle for Trotskyism Against Barnes

By KEVIN FITZPATRICK

The crisis of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) is rapidly coming to a head. It is necessary now to draw the clearest possible conclusions and to act on them.

The most recent sign of the approaching showdown appears, in concealed form, in the June 3 issue of the SWP's paper, *The Militant*. A report on the May meeting of the SWP's National Committee mentions that this summer the SWP will hold another "Socialist Activists and Educational Conference."

What this really means is that there will be *no party convention*.

Into the Final Stage

The SWP's Constitution requires a convention at least once every two years — and the last one was held in 1981. Jack Barnes, National Secretary of the SWP, brazenly disregards the rules of his own organization whenever they get in his way.

Last New Year's Eve, at the convention of the Young Socialist Alliance, the SWP's youth group, Barnes delivered his oration on "Their Trotsky and Ours." This speech summed up and made official all the past work of the Barnes leadership in repudiating Trotskyism. But the speech was never published.

Now Barnes has dropped the other shoe. No convention means no discussion period, no internal bulletin, no legal tendencies or factions — no nothing. In this way Barnes hopes to cripple the oppositions in the SWP in the final stage of his drive to liquidate the SWP as a Trotskyist organization in any sense.

Presumably, the upcoming world congress of the United Secretariat (USec), the chief pseudo-Trotskyist international center (with which the SWP is associated), is where Barnes intends to conclude his campaign. This will mean a split on the international level and a purge in the SWP.

Barnes will then be "free" to pursue his pipe dream of "fusion" with Castro, the Sandinistas, etc.

With this course in mind, Barnes doesn't *dare* to hold a convention, even one in which he holds all the cards. Barnes, far from being in control, is very much on the defensive in terms of the oppositions. And this is the case despite a whole series of expulsions, forced resignations and restrictions on political struggle imposed by his leadership.

At the moment when the development of the revolution in Central America poses the question of the Permanent Revolution in the sharpest way, at the moment when the development of the class struggle in the US poses the need for the proletarian party in the sharpest way — Barnes throws out these basic conquests of Trotskyism, American Trotskyism especially.

Barnes Serves Stalinism

This reality, and not whatever fantasies may be passing through the minds of the Barnesites, shows that the content of the anti-Trotskyist campaign is *capitulation to Stalinism* and, therefore, to imperialism. It means turning the history of American Trotskyism into a betrayal. It means the conscious dispersion of Trotskyist militants, especially as unorganized individuals.

We have spoken before of the *attack on consciousness* being carried out by the Kremlin and imperialism. There can be no clearer expression of this than Barnes' attempts to destroy Trotskyism, the party that is the highest expression of the consciousness of the working class.

The question of the *rebuilding of the US section of the Fourth International*, not only to defeat Barnes but to resolve the crisis of the SWP positively, now acquires its full and practical significance. In this situation, all political forces are put to the test.

The Kremlin stooges of "Spartacist" play their role to the hilt. Those in the SWP fighting Barnes are characterized as

— "right oppositions"! Why? Because they defend Solidarnosc and demand that the SWP take public action in support of the Polish workers. In this way, muddying the waters, confusing the issues, "Spartacist" does its bit for Barnes' pro-Stalinist activity.

In fact, the existence, in particular, of the oppositions in the SWP is a positive development, as are initiatives by other groups, such as the call by the Internationalist Workers Party (IWP) for an Emergency National Trotskyist Conference that we and others have supported.

An example of this (even if we do not agree with every point) can be seen in the 1982 declaration and platform of the Cannon-Trotsky Faction (expelled by Barnes that year) published in the latest issue of the IWP's paper, *Working Class Opposition*.

Among other things, the faction stated that the Barnes' leadership's "policies on Poland and Cuba are a tragic reversal of everything the Socialist Workers Party once stood for. The transitional program

and the fundamental theories of Lenin, Trotsky and Cannon are being abandoned."

Is this a "right opposition"?

Even more striking is the fact that this faction includes Harry DeBoer and Jake Cooper: leaders of the Minneapolis truck drivers, two of the eighteen Trotskyists imprisoned in World War II, members of the SWP for half a century. That Barnes had to expel such militants shows not only how sharply the lines are drawn in the SWP, but also how frenzied the leadership is.

The Tasks of Trotskyists

The oppositions still in the SWP now face a decisive test. The majority of the opposition leaders — George Breitman, Nat Weinstein, etc. — have drawn back from going to the end of the road with Barnes. But they want to stay on the same road, not seeing that this path must be rejected, that a *reorientation* is necessary to get back on course.

This position is expressed in the fact that

Support the Polish Trotskyists

We have recently received materials that concern the great fear of Trotskyism in the Polish Revolution that exists among the Stalinists, both inside and outside Poland.

We want to bring some of the most important elements of these materials to our readers, as another way to encourage them to *support the Polish Trotskyists*, by contributing to the International Workers Fund.

Stalinist Creativity

A publication (virtually a book) produced by the Stalinists in Luxemburg is the first of these materials. Entitled *Password: Poland* (for imperialist counterrevolution, no doubt) this work has a particularly significant chapter whose title — "Zionism and Trotskyism at Work" — sums up the flavor of the work: Stalinist slander with a liberal admixture of anti-Semitism.

Much of this chapter recapitulates the material contained in *Trybuna Ludu* (the Polish Stalinist newspaper), as well as other such sources (which we have reproduced in the brochure of the IWF), but there are some new wrinkles.

The discredited anti-Semitic campaign against the student rebels of 1968 instigated by the sinister Moczar is fully rehabilitated. This student movement, we are informed, was nothing but a result of the fact that: "At this time, international Zionism had mobilized all its adherents, including those who lived in the socialist countries, in order to celebrate the 'Israeli victory over the Arabs.'"

Proof? Look no further: Why the *real* name of Karol Modzelewski's father was . . . Fiszer! And things are no different with Adam Michnik, whose father's *real* name is . . . Szechter! You see, the real cause of the Polish Revolution is that its leading figures are "rootless, cosmopolitan" Jews.

And then we have these Kremlin mouthpieces of "Spartacist" who tell us it is Solidarnosc that is anti-Semitic!

Having established these dazzling facts, our Stalinist authors develop their arguments. Marta Petrusiewicz-Mittau, "a friend of Michnik's of long standing," emigrated to Italy in 1969. And here the plot grows thicker: she became associated there with professor Francesco Piperno, accused of being an inspirer of the Italian terrorists. This led her to return to Poland in 1978, where (so we are told) she met with leaders of the KOR to discuss "how to utilize urban guerrilla warfare and other forms of Italian terrorism in Polish conditions!"

Innocent us! We had no idea that the strikes and demonstrations of the Polish

workers were all fake, and that everything had really occurred through street fighting by small armed bands. Nor did we realize that the Polish police could have sat on this information for five years. And we are astounded to learn that the Italian terrorists were working with imperialism; we thought they were being used by the KGB to kill the pope. One illusion after another shattered!

Trotskyism

Into this vast conspiracy enters the activity of our section, including not only the resolution of the Third Conference of the RLRP — "Karol Modzelewski quoted whole passages from this document as his own ideas" — but also the trip into Poland by our comrade Stefan Bekier, using a Spanish passport, who "from the first hours of his stay in Poland developed an enormous activity."

What ties all this together, why do the Stalinists find this activity so dangerous? The "links" between Zionism, terrorism and Trotskyism are drawn out: "denigrating the communist party and the socialist countries, reproached for supposedly having lost revolutionary inspiration and the capacity to effectively fight capitalism."

Even worse, the program (conscious) and the direction (unconscious) of the Polish Revolution coincide: "general strike"; "the 'free' organization of the producers (unions, self-administered enterprises), which will direct production and consumption"; "replacing the regular army with 'workers militias.'"

This leads us to the fearful conclusion: "Under the influence of its advisers, Solidarnosc followed to the letter the program of the Trotskyist grouplets."

Unfortunately, that was not the case. If it were, the Polish Revolution might well have already triumphed. What we are doing now, through building the Trotskyist party in Poland, is to insure that this time it will happen. That is why we seek your assistance in the form of contributions to the IWF.

Hunt of Trotskyists

Passing from literary to physical slander and provocation, the Stalinists are organizing a vast hunt after Trotskyists in Silesia, one of the strongholds of Solidarnosc. This is reported on in the second of our materials, a report published in the Spanish newspaper, *La Vanguardia* (March 17, 1983), by the paper's correspondent, Ricardo Estarriol.

There has been a series of round-ups of workers and militants over a period of

— in one way or another — these leaders are in a bloc with the forces in the USec led by Ernest Mandel. The consequences of this are very dangerous. Even short of a repetition of the miserable fate of the Internationalist Tendency, which remains highly possible, the best that could emerge from such a bloc would be a mini-version of the SWP of a few years ago — with the road still open to Barnes' conclusions.

The cancellation of the SWP's convention is an alarm signal. There will be no gradual, spontaneous development of larger opposition as Barnes proceeds; there will only be more expulsions.

The traditions of the SWP, of American Trotskyism, lie in the fight for Marxism made against centrist forces ranging from Shachtman to Pablo. They lie in the struggle for the proletarian party. The fight to rebuild the Trotskyist party in America today means assuming and developing these tasks that the SWP once took up: a struggle *to the end* against Barnes, the fight to implant Trotskyism in the working class.

*trotskyism
organizes
what happens*

months, with the actual charges — surprise, "terrorism"! — only having been announced in March. The reporter emphasizes this: "The detained are not accused of having carried out banned trade union activities, nor of having organized strikes." The cops accuse them "not only of having distributed anti-state literature, but of having prepared acts of terrorism."

Shades of the Moscow Trials! And, consequently: "The authorities are in the process of seeking indications of a Trotskyist conspiracy, and concretely alleged contacts by the detained with the socialist Fourth International in Paris and other Western capitals."

One miner told the reporter: "I's obviously a frame-up, since the majority of those detained are workers and miners who are working, and not clandestine activists. Only three or four were working in clandestinity."

What Estarriol rightly calls the "grotesque character of this activity" is shown by the questioning of a parish priest in Jastrzebie, Father Czarnecki, in regard to "Trotskyist connections" that he might have.

Another blow to "Spartacist" — is "Pope Wojtyla" a Trotskyist agent?

Such paranoid behavior reflects the real fear that Trotskyism inspires in the Kremlin and its agents.

To confront the Stalinists attempt to crush the revolution beginning with its most conscious activists, support the struggle of the Polish Trotskyists. *Contribute to the International Workers Fund!*

K F

**To Support
the Polish
Trotskyists...**

walka klas

organ Rewolucyjnej Ligi Robotniczej Polski
sekcji Czwartej Międzyzmar d. w. k. i.
Polski Partii Rewolucji Politycznej
29 październik 1980 Nr. 19 5 zł.

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Workers Fund!**

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FOR MORE INFORMATION TO TRUTH**

1971-1972: Crisis and Continuity

By DAVID HEFFELFINGER

Through more than a hundred years of the class struggle between bourgeois and proletarians, Marxism has proven itself a dynamic and living force. At every decisive historical juncture its fundamental principles have been reaffirmed and renewed. A tendency has always come forward to continue Marxism against those who would revise it, so as to gut its revolutionary essence. Such a revolutionary tendency was Lenin and Bolshevism, which carried through the October Revolution and provided the theoretical and militant capital for the foundation of the Third Communist International.

With the degeneration of the Russian Revolution and the liquidation of the leading cadres of Bolshevism by Stalin, Trotskyism became the means both for upholding and continuing the traditions of Leninism and Bolshevism, and for proclaiming, with the foundation of the Fourth International in 1938, an irreversible break with Stalinism. This is what defined Trotskyism once and for all as a distinct historical current maintaining and continuing Marxism.

So it was that the crisis of the Fourth International, rooted in the annihilation of its leading cadres during World War II and the exhaustion of the fighting forces of the proletariat after the war, permitted the development of a new type of centrism that based itself on Stalinism, that is, Pabloism. As a new centrist current, it shared, however, the fundamental characteristic of the old ones before it — a hesitant, vacillating stance, half way between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.

The rebuilding of the Fourth International in 1976, and hence the foundation of the Trotskyist Organization was a struggle for the implantation of Trotskyism in the working class through a delineation of Trotskyism and Bolshevism against centrism.

United Secretariat

The formal reunification of the Socialist Workers Party with the Pabloites in 1963, forming the United Secretariat, took place, it is true, in a period horrendously unfavorable to the development of the Fourth International. In this sense, it was not accidental that the losses in the crisis of the Fourth International tended to accentuate the petty bourgeois composition of the SWP and its isolation from the proletariat. The Cochran-Clarke tendency, which allied itself with Pablo in 1953, was of largely proletarian composition containing, in particular, a great portion of the SWP's automobile fraction. Soon after the 1953 split it became an historical non-entity.

And after the reunification in 1963, the Ceylonese section of the Fourth International, one of the most important in terms of its proletarian composition and implantation, was completely lost.

But the formation of the United Secretariat, far from being an attempt to overcome these losses, was a capitulation on the theoretical plane that reinforced in practice the isolation of the SWP from the working class.

It meant an adaptation to Pablo's conception of "global camps," codified in the theory of "world blocs," which subordinated the interests of the working class to the relations between Stalinism and imperialism — first around the Cuban Revolution, and later around the Chinese Cultural Revolution. And together with this there was the adaptation to guerrillism declaring the impotence of the working class both in the metropolitan and backward countries. Finally, there was the theory of a "new radicalization" whereby a turn toward student youth was blatantly proclaimed on the basis of the rejection of the working class



as the locomotive of the revolution.

The entire perspective laid out by the reunification Congress was an adaptation to those who the SWP had fought in 1953. It was the brutal logic of the class struggle that demanded that Trotskyists either fight Pabloism, a pro-Stalinist tendency in the working class, or give in to it. No less so, the Barnes leadership of the SWP today, which adapts itself to present relations between Stalinism and imperialism, feels the imperative necessity of liquidating all the Trotskyist traditions of this party as a direct consequence of 1963.

International Committee

On the other hand, the forces which maintained the International Committee of the Fourth International set out on a different road. In 1963, the IC, whose leading organizations were the Socialist Labor League of Great Britain (now the Workers Revolutionary Party), and the Internationalist Communist Organization of France (OCI, now the Internationalist Communist Party), opposed the reunification of the SWP and the Pabloites. In the years afterward, this opposition became the basis for an energetic struggle to rebuild the Fourth International. This process of the rebuilding of the Fourth International was able to base itself on the rising of the class struggle, marked by a mobilization of the youth in the major capitalist countries and, as well, in Eastern Europe, culminating in the historic days of the year 1968 — the May-June days in France and the Prague Spring. This period was also expressed by the anti-war and black liberation movements in the US. The process of rebuilding the Fourth International was a clarification of the program and tasks of Trotskyism in the rising struggle of the international proletariat against Stalinism and centrism of the Pabloites.

By 1966, the rebuilding of the Fourth International was a conscious, central objective of the International Committee.

The 1966 Conference of the IC adopted in all its fundamental texts this perspective of rebuilding. The Resolution on the Reconstruction of the Fourth International, adopted unanimously, stated in part:

"The international conference declares that the Trotskyist movement, in the struggle for the reconstruction of the Fourth International, must build the centralized leadership of the world party of the socialist revolution in a fight organically linked to the fight in each country for the construction of the revolutionary parties leading the revolutionary struggles of the masses. The construction of these parties and

of the International must be conducted on the basis of the experience and the pursuit of an incessant battle against revisionism."

In the period after 1966, the IC succeeded in regrouping young cadres around the task of the rebuilding. There were important gains in Eastern Europe and Latin America with the winning of the League of Revolutionary Socialists of Hungary and the Revolutionary Workers Party of Bolivia (Lora), as well as the development of the sections in Great Britain and France. The acquisitions of this period were plainly apparent in the 1971 Conference of Youth in Essen, Germany, which adopted a resolution calling for the building of an autonomous Revolutionary Youth International.

Breakup of the IC

In the period 1971-1972, the other two "historic chiefs" of the Fourth International, Healy of Great Britain and Lambert of France, abandoned the struggle of the IC to rebuild the Fourth International, taking with them the two largest sections of the IC. Despite the attempts to overcome its federative character and implant itself in the working class, the IC still functioned as an assemblage of national sections and was influenced, indirectly or directly, by the petty bourgeois milieu.

Healy never really saw the IC as much beyond an appendage of his own party. He proclaimed the split, along with the American section of the IC, the Workers League and others, in 1971, publicly denouncing the Bolivian section to cover a profoundly national adaptation.

Those who were to continue the fight to rebuild the Fourth International, forming the International League — Rebuilder of the Fourth International (ILRFI), which included the League of Revolutionary Socialists of Hungary, would oppose Healy's rump IC together with Lambert and the French OCI, as well as the Bolivian POR (Lora).

Then in 1972, Lambert, adapting himself to the pressures of the centrists and not wanting to be left outside of a new reunification, dissolved the IC into an "Organizing Committee." As part of this process, he launched a vicious attack of Stalinist slander and goon squads against the forces in the IC who continued the fight to rebuild the Fourth International by forming the ILRFI.

Because of the abandonment of the struggle to rebuild the Fourth International by Healy and Lambert, the oppositions within and outside of the SWP who were trying to build a proletarian party against the collaboration of Stalinism and imperialism were isolated.

Even the American section of the IC, the Workers League, which had split from the SWP during the 1963 reunification with the Pabloites, and made extremely important advances in the years afterward in the trade unions and among black youth, would eventually be led into a dead end by Healy. While the OCI had always considered the SWP as the Trotskyist Organization in the US which had to be rebuilt, for Healy the existence of the WL solved the problem of the SWP. Thus, the WL never succeeded in recognizing the necessary task was to rebuild the US section of the Fourth International on the basis of the Trotskyist acquisitions and traditions of the SWP, against the centrism of Hansen and Barnes.

For the oppositions which developed within the SWP in the period of the early and mid-Seventies, the Communist Tendency, the Proletarian Orientation, and finally the Internationalist Tendency, the abandonment of the IC by Healy and Lambert meant searching for an alternative to Barnes and Hansen on a road lit-

tered with the national wreckage of deserters from Trotskyism.

In particular, the IT would find itself completely isolated and left to rot by Mandel, and would end up being dispersed or having to rejoin the SWP on the most bureaucratic and servile bases.

On the other hand, there was a whole current of young militants who began to define themselves in the student movement on the basis of a proletarian orientation. The International Socialists, who traced their roots to the 1940 split with the SWP (Shachtman), was able to win many of these youth precisely because of the purely student orientation of the SWP and the lack of any clear alternative to Pabloism in the US. The roots of the founding members of the Trotskyist Organization were in this current in the working class youth together with the Communist Tendency from the SWP.

Originally formed around the journal *Truth*, which sought to implant Trotskyism in the working class, the founders of the TO/USA at first saw the crisis of the Fourth International within a more or less national perspective of opposition to the Pabloism of the SWP.

In about the same period, however, 1973-1974, the International League — Rebuilder of the Fourth International, which had taken up the fight of the IC after Healy's and Lambert's retreat, had regrouped most of the East European militants won by the IC earlier, together with the Trotskyist Organization of Spain (now the PORE), and a fraction from the OCI of France itself. It had already conquered one of the central weaknesses of the IC, its national federative character, and set up an international center based on democratic centralism. It now took up the preparation of the Fourth Open Conference Rebuilding the Fourth International, an objective designated by the IC, on the basis of a delineation against centrism and the renewal of the cadres of the Fourth International through the winning of the working class youth.

It was the fight of the ILRFI that the *Truth* group joined in February 1975. We have taken the following lines from a statement of the TO explaining its adherence to the ILRFI:

When our organization emerged as an independent group, we had already completely fought through the Russian Question. But we were immediately faced with a question even more fundamental . . . a correct understanding of the question of the Fourth International.

The period following the great class upheavals of 1968 . . . impelled the IC to either finally make a decisive step towards establishing itself as the Fourth International . . . or to turn decisively backwards and fall victim to its crisis instead of resolving it in a healthy way.

But, just as twenty years before, the International found its defenders from within itself. This historic truth was expressed by James P. Cannon (even if he wrote better than he knew): "The ideas of Marxism, which create revolutionary parties, are stronger than the parties they create, and never fail to survive their downfall. They never fail to find representatives in the old organizations to lead the work of reconstruction." (*The First Ten Years of American Communism*, pp.30-31).

With the ILRFI and the foundation of the TO, the ideas of Marxism and the acquisitions of the battle of the IC against Pabloism found a continuation in the American working class.

We do not lay exclusive claim to this historic goal, but we do lay claim to it.

Implantation in the working class. Trotskyism against Pabloite centrism. This was the method we pursued to rebuild the Fourth International, and that we pursue today in order to rebuild its American section.

Working Class Political Independence in '84

By MARGARET GUTTSHALL

The California Peace and Freedom Party State Central Committee just issued a call for a "united left and labor electoral slate in 1984" and says that it would like to see "an independent political campaign for a Socialist America." The Internationalist Workers' Party (Fourth International) (IWP) is now appealing to working class organizations to support this call.

The Trotskyist Organization supports this initiative as we supported the IWP's initial proposal for a "united socialist and labor slate" issued last fall (See *Truth* #167). It offers an opportunity to mobilize the working class in a massive fashion against Reagan and the Democratic Party.

We think that this slate and campaign must be centered around the struggle for an independent labor candidate for US president and an independent labor party, and that it must be built in the working class, above all in the unions, in the largest and, consequently, *most open* fashion possible.

Some socialists might see it as a compromise to center a political struggle and slate around a fight for a labor candidate and party. Why not talk to workers about socialism, even socialist revolution and what it would be like, they might think. Some might even think that because the current leadership of the labor movement is pro-imperialist that fighting for a labor candidate and party might mean fighting for a bad candidate and party.

As socialists, we are certainly in favor of talking to workers about socialism and we are certainly opposed to the labor bureaucracy. But as *revolutionaries*, that is, people dedicated to preparing the working class for power and overthrowing the old order, we also know that it is necessary to be *concrete*.

The fight for socialism today is above all a fight for the independence of the working class, a fight to separate the working class from the old order and mobilize it in a massive fashion against it. The future of socialism depends on the independence of the working class, for the working class is the only class capable of bringing about socialism. At the same time, it is only in a massive struggle against the old order that the masses of American workers, *who are not now socialist*, can arrive at the conclusion that they should be so. It is a very small number of people who actually come to socialism simply through hearing or reading about it and most of *them* do not stick to it anyway.

The fight for an independent labor candidate for US president and an independent labor party puts the most fundamental question — political independence or political dependence on the Democratic Party? — squarely before the American working class in the simplest possible way and thus enables socialists, class-conscious workers, to mobilize the working class against the capitalist parties in the largest possible fashion. By fighting for this policy in general in union locals and for union locals to put forward their own candidates for office wherever possible, socialists can wage a *real material* struggle, not simply a literary one, against the union bureaucracy's subordination of the workers to the Democrats. Such a campaign also enables revolutionaries to actually train working class fighters in the

battlefield, in the unions, and, in this sense, to actually begin to forge the independent party within the working class.

In this way, we can actually *lead* the workers to socialism, not simply propose, cajole, argue or demand that they be so. Or, still worse, reduce socialism to a series of slogans acceptable to everyone in order to make it more palatable to the working class.

It was this kind of clear, large and open struggle for a labor candidate and party that Trotsky, drawing on the experiences of the Bolsheviks who led the first socialist revolution, proposed to the American Trotskyists in 1938 and 1939. And with this approach the Socialist Workers Party was able to build unprecedented opposition to Roosevelt and the Democrats during and after World War II and to implant itself firmly in the working class.

Precisely because we are for such an approach, which we think means concen-

trating on winning union locals to the struggle, we think the platform for the slate should be *very short*. Indeed, it would be adequate if it said nothing but labor candidate, labor party.

We also think that participation by unions and other working class organizations that are for the slate and the platform (hence the necessity for brevity), *whether they want to join and build the Peace and Freedom Party or not*, should not only be permitted but also welcomed and encouraged. Very few unions outside California know much about the Peace and Freedom Party and even those who do might not agree with it. In the last election the Labor Farm Party in Wisconsin fielded candidates supported by local unions that got 7-8% of the vote in some sections and unionists in Minnesota recently met to discuss the imperative necessity of forming a labor party prior to the 1984 elections. We think to expect such forces to immediately

join and build the Peace and Freedom Party will only limit the struggle.

Finally, why not simply call the slate a labor slate. Why distinguish left from labor? Why *separate* left from labor? Why *attach* labor to left? We think calling the slate a labor slate and fighting to really make it a labor slate will encourage American labor to make this slate its own and not simply regard it passively as something to which it might attach itself. And isn't this what the struggle is all about — for the independence of the American working class as a first giant step toward socialism.

These are some of the questions that we would like to discuss with other participants in the struggle. We would have liked to have done so at the planning meeting that was held June 12 in California but did not have sufficient resources. We look forward to doing so at the summer conference.

Political Independence and the UAW

Last fall we initiated a campaign for a labor party in the UAW, in particular for a labor party slate in the delegate elections for the UAW convention. On the basis of this struggle an independent candidate for a labor party was established in UAW Local 7 at the Detroit Chrysler Jefferson Avenue Plant, Fox Davis, who won 89 votes or 4.4% of the vote.

In order to carry forward the struggle for a labor party in the UAW, we initiated a fight for the UAW convention to put up an independent labor candidate for US president in 1984. While we did not receive enough support for this struggle to actually send a delegation to the convention (held in Dallas, Texas) to pursue it, we are firmly convinced that it is necessary to renew this struggle and everything that we have learned about the UAW reinforces this assessment.

What Kind of Struggle

The fight for an independent labor candidate and a labor party is not simply an "electoral tactic," far from the daily concerns of the worker, aimed at giving him someone to vote for besides Democrats and Republicans on the first Tuesday in November of 1984. Nor is it simply a supplement to the struggle in the "bargaining arena," an additional means through which to pressure the capitalists to modify the workers' situation.

The fight for an independent labor candidate for US president and for a labor party, is above all a fight for the political independence of the worker. It is a fight for the worker to *defend his own interests* in every situation and not to depend on the bosses. In this sense it is a fight to truly *free* the worker, to see that he is his own man and not simply a tool of other classes.

Putting forward an independent labor candidate for US president and beginning to build a labor party will simply be first steps in a process in which workers will decide what they want for the society and begin to prepare themselves to make this happen.

This is what we mean when we talk about political independence.

It is precisely the lack of this struggle within the UAW that is calling into question the very foundations of the union itself.

Outgoing president Doug Fraser said, in response to GM Fremont workers who might be replaced by non-union workers and others demanding that the UAW organize the unorganized: "People say, 'Well, you haven't got those workers organized.' First of all, the top priority is to create jobs for Americans, and then we have the obligation to organize those plants."

This was precisely the mentality on the basis of which workers remained completely dependent on the boss, indeed, virtually *enslaved*, for years, and, in opposition to which, the UAW was built.

Doug Fraser refuses to wage a political struggle for the independence of the work-

ing class from the bosses and, willy nilly, he winds up pushing their positions. Politics, like nature, abhors a vacuum.

Similarly, Owen Bieber said, in reference to the same question: "Realistically, starting up a plant, you can't call people back by seniority . . ."

He also said that American workers have to show themselves to be competitive with Japanese workers and that they must take a responsible position on relief time.

As if to underline the pro-capitalist orientation advanced by the bureaucracy, Fraser, Bieber and Co. advanced a resolution attempting to give to the Executive Board the right to merge regions, which probably would have led to the destruction of whole sections of the UAW had it not been defeated. They also advanced, and unfortunately passed, a motion transferring dues money from the strike fund to the bureaucracy. In this way they are attempting to actually destroy the *material foundations* of the workers independence and reduce the UAW to an office on Jefferson Avenue in Detroit that pushes capitalist propaganda like the unions in Chile or Poland.

Oppositions

The fundamental problem for the working class at the convention was that the oppositions to the pro-capitalist bureaucracy that base themselves on the working class, which of course, as Trotskyists, we support against the bureaucracy, were unprepared to wage a fundamental political struggle against the bureaucracy.

We tried to involve the oppositions, particularly Locals Opposed to Concessions (LOC), in the struggle for the labor party and the independent candidate as a means to prepare the struggle at the convention.

They, however, refused to take part in the struggle. Instead they centered the fight at the convention around the question of establishing a union-wide referendum on who will be president of the union (now the convention delegates select the president). While we support this demand, centering the fight at the convention on this made it look as though they thought the problem with the union was the president and not the politics of the union itself. Thus it appears that Fraser and Bieber were once again able to isolate the opposi-

tion with their usual slanders — troublemakers, gripers, makers of personal attacks, etc.

The GM Fremont Local was ruled out of order on the grounds that their demands for their jobs were "bargaining issues" (everything with these sellouts is becoming a bargaining issue, even the UAW itself). This and other locals with grievances were reduced to circulating resolutions and buttons on the outskirts. Of 3,000 delegates only 50 came to a LOC meeting, which decided to form RAM — "Restore and More in '84."

Other tendencies that claim to be for a labor party but refused to join in a struggle with the TO in the UAW made no political struggle at the convention at all. In an article on the convention, Elizabeth Ziers, UAW Local 600 militant, says not one word about what she and her comrades (in the Socialist Workers Party) tried to do at the convention to prepare the workers struggle.

With a struggle for a labor candidate and party we can rid the union of a conciliatory spirit and dependency upon the capitalists and train working class fighters in political struggle.

We think that the best way to carry this struggle forward today now that the convention is over and that the Executive Board has decided that it will decide who the union endorses, is to build support in union locals for an independent candidate and demand a union-wide referendum on the question as other unions, like the Communication Workers of America (CWA), have been forced to do.

We call on all tendencies that want to renovate the UAW to draw a balance sheet of the struggle at the convention and join us on this road.

M.G.

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