

## Chicago Workers Vs. Harold Washington

By MARGARET GUTTSALL

The Chicago public school employees' strike is not just another routine strike.

This strike involves eighteen unions representing more than 38,000 workers, including 27,000 teachers and at least 11,000 other workers — cafeteria workers, janitors, maintenance men and building engineers.

The workers have taken a determined stand, demanded a 10% wage increase, opposed concessions in any form and rejected the city school board's pleas of bankruptcy.

This is very important for the working class, for in the past the union bureaucrats and their concern for the bosses' purse have often prevailed.

What is more, the struggle has shown that even the Black wing of the Democratic Party, particularly Harold Washington and Jesse Jackson, do not really base themselves upon or represent Black working people and their quest for independence and freedom from the Democratic Party machine. Washington and Jackson are really bourgeois politicians and preachers who try to use the Black struggle to put down Black workers and maintain the power of the bourgeoisie and its political machine.

Thus Black working women and men and other oppressed and exploited workers must build their own political party to fight for political power. It must be one that corresponds to and expresses their class nature, interests and struggle. This should begin with building a Labor Party Coalition and a fight for an Independent Labor Candidate in the 1984 elections.

While Washington and Jackson's organization PUSH (Jackson is officially on a leave-of-absence to pursue his "presidential campaign") claim to be neutral, to support neither the city school board nor the union, both have fully collaborated in the bourgeoisie's campaign against the strike and the union.

Washington has criticized "the actions of Mayors Richard J. Daley and Jane Byrne for playing 'Big Fixer' and dipping into the city coffers to pay school bills," as if giving workers wage increases were responsible for the city's financial crisis (*Chicago Tribune*).

Jackson's organization has joined with the Urban League, the NAACP and others to form a "Coalition to Open Our Schools" and filed a suit demanding that the schools be reopened "on behalf of the children."

Neither has said a word about the city school board's vicious campaign against the strike. While the board's propaganda has changed from day to day, it has basically tried to imply that the strike is a racist strike and that the workers are linked to right wing racist forces around Ed Vrdolyak.

First the board said that the union wanted them to dip into funds for school desegregation and upgrading the poorest schools. Then it said the union wanted them to dip into other city funds and bankrupt the city. Now it is saying that the union's prolongation of the strike is ruining public education. And on this basis the board has tried to reopen the schools, get some employees to return to work and in this sense break the strike and the union.

## Bureaucrats Cover Up Role in El Salvador

By KEVIN FITZPATRICK

Much has been made in recent weeks of the report issued by the National Labor Committee in Support of Democracy and Human Rights in El Salvador. This report, the product of a visit to El Salvador in June by a number of major union officials, opposes the present policy of the US. It declares, among other things: "The government of the United States should end all military aid to the government of El Salvador."

*The Militant*, newspaper of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), reprinted the report in two issues, and carries regular follow-up stories. *Workers Viewpoint*, newspaper of the ex-Maoist Communist Workers Party (CWP), has discovered a new phenomenon: "Labor for Peace" — new frontier in labor movement."

*The Militant* (September 23, 1983) presents the situation this way: "Discussion in the labor movement about the US government's intervention in Central America and the Caribbean is deepening . . . The favorable initial response to the Labor Committee's report indicates that this is something that can be used by union activists."

What the board fails to mention is that at least 50% of the Chicago Teachers' Union is Black and a much larger percentage of the other unions involved are Black.

How can a Black workers' strike hurt Black people? How can it hurt Black children? This is sheer demagoguery designed to split Black workers.

This is what we mean when we say that Washington, Jackson and others like them use the Black struggle to try to put down Black workers.

A victory for the Chicago public school workers would be a tremendous victory for all workers. It would show that the capitalists' talk about bankruptcy is just a ploy to force the workers to take wage cuts so that the capitalists can enrich themselves, be it in the public or the private sector. It would open the road to more struggles in public and private industry that would even further shake the capitalist class and its political machine. This is why Wash-

ington, Jackson and others are *against* the strike. They are concerned with maintaining the capitalist system, its political machine, and their places in it.

This is why Black workers and other oppressed and exploited working people must build their own political party to carry forward the struggle that Blacks and others initiated when they fought for an independent Black candidate in the Chicago mayoral elections and the national presidential elections — a struggle that Washington and Jackson try to take advantage of, but do not really express.

And this is why Trotskyists are fighting for a coalition of Black and other workers and youth to build their own party and put forward their own candidate in the 1984 elections. We call this coalition a Labor Party Coalition and this candidate an Independent Labor Candidate because we want them to represent the laborer, the toiler, the working men and women, employed and unemployed. Join us!

## Democrats' Jobs Bill Fraud

The Democratic Party is now trying to pass a bill that will provide \$3.5 billion to state and cities for public service jobs. A number of Black and labor organizations are supporting this bill and using it as evidence that the Democratic Party, unlike the Republican Party, is the friend of Black and other workers and thus should be supported in the coming elections.

But this bill is a fraud. It doesn't deserve one iota of support from any oppressed or exploited youth or worker. First, this bill does not even begin to solve the problem of unemployment. On the surface of things, the bill will provide at best only several hundred thousand jobs and there are at least 11 million people unemployed.

What is worse, these funds will not be used to benefit the working class, they will be used to strengthen the bourgeois state apparatus that keeps down the working class youth, unem-

ployed workers and others. The last time that the Federal government provided money to Detroit to fund public service jobs, Democratic Party Mayor Young used them to hire more police! At best these funds will be used to line the pockets of the members of the Democratic Party regimes and their friends in the big cities, or to finance election year publicity stunts like Jane Byrne's jobs program prior to the Chicago mayoral elections.

A real fight for jobs for youth and other workers means a fight for public works controlled by unions, replacing every retiree with a working class youth, and hiring more workers and shortening the work week, especially in basic industry. And this struggle demands a Labor Party Coalition and an Independent Labor Candidate, not a bourgeois party and a bourgeois candidate, in 1984. M.G.

## Defend the Taylors

Several members of the Annie Bell Taylor family, including five members of the United Automobile Workers (UAW) from the GM Truck and Coach Plant in Michigan, were recently charged with murder, kidnapping and robbery by an Alabama Grand Jury.

These workers went to Alabama for their mother's funeral and were visiting their family home when two armed white men broke into the house and attacked them. The Taylors assumed that these men were some sort of Ku Klux Klansmen and defended themselves. However, they turned out to be plain clothes policemen who did not bother to identify themselves. Thus the Taylors were eventually arrested, imprisoned and indicted for a simple act of self-defense.

The Trotskyist Organization demands that

all charges against the Taylors be dropped and that the real criminals, the plain clothes policemen who attacked them, be punished. We call on all working class organizations to do the same.

If the UAW has not yet done anything about this it is not simply because its leadership is racist (although much of it is). It is above all because of its alliance with the Democratic Party that rules Alabama. A large mobilization in defense of the Taylors would expose the reactionary and racist character of the Democratic Party and make UAW support to it in the coming year most difficult.

Thus this struggle, like others, demands a fight for a Labor Party Coalition and an Independent Labor Candidate in the UAW. M.G.

## THE GLOBAL CONFLICT

### Walesa and the Peace Prize

On October 5, Lech Walesa, head of the banned free trade union Solidarnosc ("Solidarity"), was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

This award, which bears such a noble title, is in fact a recognition of efforts directed against the triumph of the working class. Winners in recent years include Begin and Sadat for the Camp David betrayal, Le Duc Tho and Henry Kissinger for the Paris treaty that aimed at selling out the Vietnamese Revolution, and so on.

Walesa has accepted the prize. Well, what did you expect? His policy throughout the Polish Revolution has been to seek "conciliation" — even today — at the expense of the workers' mobilization. And his giving the money itself to one of the funds maintained by the Catholic Church in Poland expresses the same position.

More interesting, however, is the fact that this award comes on the eve of the much-delayed opening of trials against the leaders of KOR (Jacek Kuron and others) and of Solidarnosc itself (Andrzej Gwiazda and others). While the Stalinists and their camp-followers howl that Walesa (and thus Solidarnosc) is being rewarded by imperialism, while the imperialists and their mouthpieces give endless praise to Walesa, *one thing is being obscured*.

The policy of both Stalinism and imperialism (the latter through the Catholic Church) is to destroy Solidarnosc by splitting it, especially its leadership. In this sense, the awarding of the Nobel Prize and all the responses fit into a pattern.

Our response must be to defend the unity of Solidarnosc, to actively defend the accused leaders, and to take up a struggle for a policy that can lead the Polish workers to victory.

### Turmoil in the Philippines

The assassination of Benigno Aquino (see *Truth* #171) has backfired on its instigator, Philippines "president" (dictator) Ferdinand Marcos. Recent weeks have seen massive demonstrations involving virtually every layer of society, with the cry "Revolution!" being openly raised. Even Reagan has had to back off and cancel his visit.

At the same time, Marcos' own "investigatory" commission resigned *en masse*, its fake character all too obvious. Likewise, the latest news is that paraffin tests on the supposedly unarmed escort Marcos sent for Aquino revealed traces of gunpowder!

In this crisis, the gravest danger comes from the forces seeking "national conciliation," centered around the Catholic Church and the aptly named Cardinal Sin. Not conciliation but the overthrow of the dictatorship is the road forward for the oppressed masses!

### General Strike in Argentina

October 4 saw a massive, nation-wide general strike in Argentina. This is the latest development in the steps toward a revolution and the overthrow of the military dictatorship.

This kind of massive action is the necessary working class response to the dictatorship's attempts to ease itself out of office with "democratic elections" scheduled for October 30. This would merely change some faces, while capitalism continues to rule.

That this is the whole problem is expressed by the fact that the strike was particularly directed against the economic measures of the dictatorship, which are in turn a function of its subordination to imperialism, especially US imperialism.

Argentina owes *thirty-nine billion dollars* to the international bankers, and they want their blood money. The crisis inside the country has reached such proportions that one demagogic judge ordered the arrest of the president of the Central Bank of Argentina for *treason* in capitulating to the banks.

In fact, a repudiation of or default on this debt by Argentina, the fruit of the revolutionary upsurge, would mean an immediate crisis in the United States itself. Now more than ever the revolutions in the Americas are linked.

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## FOR AN OPEN TROTSKYIST CONGRESS TO REBUILD THE US SECTION OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

A significant number of young people have begun to turn to Trotskyism as the only tendency capable of guiding the working and oppressed masses.

Yet there are several organizations that claim to be Trotskyist. Each has its own policy that it calls Trotskyist. And the largest of these, the Socialist Workers Party, appears to be the farthest from basic Trotskyist principles.

The Trotskyist Organization of the USA, Section

(Sympathizing) of the Fourth International, was founded in 1975 to overcome this problem; to lead a struggle to clearly differentiate Trotskyism from various centrist or intermediary tendencies that masquerade under its name; to train a new generation of revolutionaries capable of guiding the American working class in the foundation of its own party and the fight for power; in other words, to rebuild the US Section of the Fourth International.

We call on youth turning toward Trotskyism, as well as youth and workers fighting for a Labor Party, to join us in this struggle, in particular, in preparing and building an open Trotskyist Congress to bring the struggle to a successful conclusion. This page is especially dedicated to this struggle. It is open to any militant or tendency that wants to contribute to it.

# The Youth of the Sixties and Today's Youth

In a new movie, "The Big Chill," young students from the Sixties, now grown up and burnt out, relive their early experiences on the occasion of the suicide of one of them. If you haven't seen the movie, don't bother, it's extremely boring. But the movie does show the degree to which a misconception about the youth of today has become accepted. That is, the idea that today's youth are either interested only in getting into the mainstream, what was called "the establishment" in the Sixties, or else they are hopeless criminals.

This idea has gained acceptance not only among the ruling class, but also among the petty bourgeoisie, particularly that section of it which traces itself to the Sixties, like the characters in "The Big Chill." At the same time, the revolutionary values and morals of those years have become distorted and twisted into the plots of nostalgic movies and TV commercials.

In an indirect manner, this same process has gone on among many of the organizations that claim to be revolutionary. Not that they openly proclaim the bankruptcy of the new generation of the youth, that would be too honest and too difficult to defend. Rather, they imply such a position by basing their efforts to rebuild the revolutionary party on regroupments of old cadre, cadre that were formed in the Sixties, writing off the new generation of the working class.

There is a lot more to be said about these organizations and their politics, but first we want to make it clear that the idea that today's youth are disinterested, apolitical, or hopelessly confused is completely and utterly false. In fact, this narrow-minded outlook is completely refuted by the concrete development of the class struggle in the United States, not to mention Europe and Latin America.

Overwhelmingly, the new young cadres that come forward in today's revolutionary struggles will be from the working class, and, if anything, even younger than their college-age counterparts in the Sixties. The August 27 march on Washington, DC, already shows this development. Many of the participants in this march were high-school-aged Blacks. Of course it is impossible to take an exact poll, but this demonstration, and its success, contrasted sharply with the Labor Day marches, and the July 10 march against US intervention in Central America organized by the Peoples Anti-War Mobilization (PAM).

From our direct experience, we know that PAM, CISPES, and other organizations against US intervention still stubbornly refuse to base their work on the mobilization of working class youth. It is therefore not surprising that the size of national demonstrations against Reagan's war in Central America has declined for a period of time. The Labor Day demonstrations were practically devoid of youth. The misleaders of the trade unions have done so little to fight the recession that there are now hardly any youth in the unions. Not to mention the fact that the labor bureaucracy really opposed August 27 because it wasn't strictly under their control.

Young workers, high school students in the central cities, and young working women — these sections of the American working class will fuel any revolutionary upheaval in this country. Capitalism has no place for these working class youth. It cannot accommodate them with jobs, with goals, or with a future. If the construction of the revolutionary party cannot base itself on these sectors, then it has no future either.

Leon Trotsky once said, "Unless it can find its way to the great masses of the underprivileged . . . the broad perspectives of the permanent revolution will remain only a fiction and the party is bound to degenerate." In a negative sense, the truth of this statement is borne out today by the development of the Socialist Workers Party, or rather its lack of development of an orientation toward the working class youth. Its dependence on the petty bourgeoisie is in large measure responsible for its degeneration today into an apologist for Stalinism.

It is true that in 1976 the SWP made a "turn to industrialization." But two things undermined this turn. First, is the fact that the basic cadre of the SWP, those who lead today, were formed and trained during the period when the SWP rejected the working class as a vehicle for the revolution. And secondly, the SWP never allowed its youth organization, the Young

Socialist Alliance, to develop among working class youth. This effectively cut the SWP off from the young generation of today after a period (during the Seventies) of a relative retard of the revolution.

In the case of the Stalinists themselves, the attack on the independent organization of working class youth is completely open. In Poland, these so-called "Communists," (nothing could be farther from the truth) attack the Polish youth with clubs, tear gas and water cannon. In the US, the Communist Party/USA dissolved its youth organization, the Young Workers Liberation League, in April of 1983, and formed a new organization, the Young Communist League, which, despite the name, is both less "Young" and even much less "Communist."

In his keynote address to the founding convention of the YCL, James Steele, National Chairman of the new organization, said "The decision to found a new Communist youth organization was reached by the . . . turnout of Chicago's young people — especially the

Black youth, helping to assure the electoral victory of Harold Washington over Reaganism, racism and the reactionary two-party system . . ."

Thus from the beginning, the YCL will not represent an independent organization of the working class youth, rather it will be tied completely to the capitalist Democratic Party.

This type of double talk is to be expected from the gangsters who attack the Polish workers. But it is quite another thing for a Trotskyist, who carried the continuity of revolutionary Marxism with them, to forget the instrumental role of the young generation in the construction of the revolutionary party.

The Fourth International was founded on the basis of a turn of the International Left Opposition against Stalinism toward the revolutionary youth. The formation of a revolutionary and independent organization of working class youth has been a central goal of the Fourth International since before 1938.

Only if Trotskyists can reach and train the next generation of revolutionary Marxists and

working class fighters among the youth will the Fourth International be the party of the socialist revolution.

That is the goal that the Trotskyists are taking up today by building the clubs of the Revolutionary Youth International. We call on the new generation to take up where the old has left off and build the new revolutionary leadership of the working class.

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## Union Militant Endorses Labor Party Coalition

In this issue of *Truth*, we are publishing another endorsement, by a trade union and working class militant, of the Labor Party Coalition.

My name is Barbara Putnam, and I am endorsing — and calling on others to endorse and fight for — the Labor Party Coalition.

I am currently a member of UAW Local 2071 at Wayne State University. I have been active in the past in a number of unions, especially in UAW Local 235, Chevrolet Gear and Axle in Detroit.

Even more important, I am a member of the Trotskyist Organization/USA, the sympathizing section in this country of the Fourth International. The TO has put forward the proposal for a Labor Party Coalition, and it is precisely because I belong to it that I can see, more easily than the ordinary militant, the need for this Coalition.

"American workers need their own party" is very old statement. But it is not only still true, it is more true than ever.

For over fifty years, since Roosevelt's first election, the overwhelming majority of American workers have supported the Democratic Party. What we got for it was war and racism and, today, open collaboration with Reagan on new wars, as well as attacks on even the small social gains we have made in that half-century.

Out in Arizona, a Democratic governor is eagerly trying to break the strike of Phelps Dodge copper workers, many of whom are members of minorities. Right here in Detroit, city workers are repudiating more concessions demanded by Democratic mayor Coleman Young. In Chicago, teachers and other school workers are confronting the whole Democratic Party regime, including Harold Washington.

Many workers have seen and felt, over the years, that the Democratic Party is really not on their side. For a number of years, many of them abstained from voting. Well, they could see that this led nowhere, so they started to register to vote in large numbers and to try to find another solution.

This was what was behind the enthusiasm for Harold Washington in Chicago, and even more for Jesse Jackson's promised — but invisible — campaign for president. Maybe it was possi-

ble to change the Democratic Party.

But in even a few months, it is becoming clearer and clearer that this is impossible, a waste of time. Washington himself is attacking black workers, and Jackson is unusually quiet.

The Trotskyist Organization has always called for breaking with the Democrats and building an independent working class party.

In 1981, for example, we ran a candidate in the Detroit mayoral primary election, to show the road to the unions and workers for running a workers candidate. Those same unions, the city workers, are now faced with the fact that not breaking with the Democratic Party has helped to land them where they are today — lied to, abused and even more under attack.

I myself ran for Congress in 1982 in the 13th District against "left" liberal George Crockett, who serves as a cover and excuse for the whole

## TO Expands to Chicago

At its Eighth National Conference, the Trotskyist Organization decided to expand to Chicago, setting the goal of establishing our presence there.

This goal has been met. The first intervention of the Chicago Organizing Committee (that is, a body to establish cells and a fully functioning local committee) took place in the Labor Day demonstration in that city.

Since then, a large amount of work has been accomplished.

Specifically, the COC has so far won four youth subscriptions, as well as twenty-one introductory subs, to *Truth*. In addition, the COC has carried out work around Central America (CISPES) and the unions, especially the Chicago Teachers' strike. It has also carried our influence to other cities in the area.

We selected Chicago for many reasons. But the most important was that the struggle for political independence of the American working class was at its sharpest point in that city. The fight for a Labor Party Coalition, the only road forward for this struggle, has been the foundation for the advances we have made.

A perspective counterposed to this one was presented at an initial meeting of the Chicago Committee for the Peace and Freedom Party.

Democratic Party.

Right now, today, when the 1984 elections are only a little more than a year away, this fight for a working class party, a *Labor Party*, is the question of the day. The need is there; the desire is certainly there. The whole fight is to organize it.

That is what the Labor Party Coalition is about. A coalition of workers, of youth, of trade unionists and militants, of any and all working class organizations willing to fight — that is what can make a real advance.

We are already planning how to get on the ballot as a *new party* in Michigan, as well as taking similar steps in other states. This is going to be a real fight, and there is plenty for you to do.

Build the Labor Party Coalition!  
BARBARA PUTNAM

## Working Class Youth: Subscribe to Truth!

Six more working class youth decided to subscribe to *Truth* in the last two weeks.

These new readers are a result of an energetic political struggle to convince youth that the Labor Party is the only real alternative to the present situation and that it can radically transform the world.

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how to fight for a Labor Party, keeps them informed of all developments in the Labor Party fight and what they can do. It's not enough to get a single issue and "think about it." Without receiving and reading *Truth* regularly, youth will inevitably get caught up in all the false, bourgeois solutions to the present situation. It's not possible to maintain an independent position alone.

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