

No to Reagan and Mondale!

Labor Candidates on the Ballot!

By DAVID MARK

The returns in the Democratic primaries have dominated the news for several months. But they are only a partial and distorted picture of the struggle that is going on in the 1984 elections.

Because few primaries allow for even the possibility of a Labor Party getting on the ballot, there are no returns on that score. And even if the results in New York and Philadelphia, where Jesse Jackson won large votes, can be taken as good coin, (representing a large participation of Blacks in the inner cities) they only express the political struggle of workers against Reagan in an unfinished form — as a failure of the trade union officialdom to rally Blacks and many other workers behind Mondale. The key to defeating Reagan and all that he stands for still remains the fight for the independence of the trade unions in the 1984 elections — for Labor Candidates on the ballot.

It is only because the American trade unions remain linked to the Democratic Party, through their misleaders, that the struggle of the working class does not take on a massive political expression. Yes, it is true, Black workers for lack of any powerful alternative are attracted to Jackson. But, by the same token, the real dynamic of their struggles is not toward the Democratic Party — the strike of 17,000 service workers in Las Vegas being the most recent example — but rather they continue to develop as sharp and bitter fights against the bosses and their government, the police being the most visible representatives of the government in every recent struggle.

The ground rules for the elections themselves show that the main purpose of nominating regulations, balloting requirements, and primaries is to stop the working class from challenging the two party (two capitalist parties) system. Michigan, for example, requires 20,000 signatures on nominating petitions to get on the November ballot as a party. California requires more than 100,000, and the trend in every election is to increase the requirement. Michigan is now reviewing legislation to raise the requirement to 100,000. And currently, it does not even allow for the possibility of independent candidates to run against the Democrats or Republicans. In more and more states, the primaries are being replaced with party caucuses that give their approval to the

dominant capitalist machine in power. And in the South, notorious for its racist voting laws, voters must often register in two places, an attempt to discourage Blacks from entering the political process. It is no small wonder then that the primaries attract a very small portion of the voting population, and tend to represent more the professional bourgeois politicians and their machines.

Election funding laws also work decidedly to the advantage of capitalist candidates. All states limit the amount of money that unions may spend, but they allow individuals to spend as much as they want. Leading candidates, by definition those who are already in power, are provided with matching funds from the Federal government so they can easily outspend minor parties, which are almost all working class parties. These rigged election laws are supplemented by open attacks on workers' parties. West Virginia is presently investigating the Socialist Workers Party for alleged false statements that they could not afford to pay the \$5,300 filing fee for ballot status.

But despite the reactionary nature of the election laws, the fact remains that the trade unions, mobilized to back Labor Candidates, could be the instrument of a break of the entire American working class with the Democratic and Republican parties and the construction of a Labor Party. In fact, being the only mass organizations of the workers the trade unions must and will be the foundation of the Labor Party. But it is equally clear, given the pro-

capitalist nature of the trade union bureaucracy, that such a movement must be built starting from the militancy of the ranks, and introduced by workers organizations and class conscious workers, at present a minority of the working class as a whole.

Labor Unity

The UAW is a perfect example of this. Not only because, despite the concessions engineered by trade union leaders, the UAW remains one of the strongest and most militant unions, but also because of the fact that the fight of auto workers against concessions is going to come to a head at about the time of the 1984 elections. The opposition of the ranks to concessions and their attempt to build a fighting union has already been shown by the results of elections in key locals. In UAW Local 174, Walter Reuther's old local, the incumbent "administration slate" representing the carry-over of the Fraser international leadership, has lost the presidency of the local.

As we reported in *Truth*, Bieber's speech at the UAW Special Bargaining Convention was mostly a speech tailor-made for a mini-Democratic Convention. But a strong fight even by a determined minority could have changed the character of the Convention completely. It would have had a hundred times the impact that the separate campaigns of so-called revolutionary organizations in the electoral arena — and through such a united struggle could lay

the basis for labor unity in the elections themselves.

Our Fight

The Trotskyist Organization is leading a fight for a Labor Party, which has been expressed in numerous ways, particularly the fight to put a Labor Party Coalition on the November ballot in Michigan. It is precisely to provide such an alternative, as powerful and as large as the working class is presently capable of making it, that we have fought for a united front of all working class organizations, in particular based on a struggle to win the unions to break with the Democratic Party, to put Labor Candidates on the ballot. In other words, a common struggle to fight for that alternative — the Labor Party — in the 1984 elections.

We will continue this struggle with all available means. Despite the deadline for signatures in Michigan being May 7, which will leave us short of the 20,000 requirement, there are other alternatives open to us that we will pursue — including a struggle for Labor Candidates under the status of "independents" and a struggle in local elections of the UAW for Labor Party slates.

Workers!

Break with the Democratic Party!
Labor Candidates! Labor Party!

Greensboro Verdict: Greenlight to Fascist Gangs

On November 3, 1979, five members of the ex-Maoist Communist Workers Party (CWP) were killed by Nazis and Klansmen in Greensboro, North Carolina. The capitalist media as well as the trade union bureaucrats, tried to present this slaughter as a shoot-out between rival "extremists."

In 1980, the Nazis and Klansmen literally got away with murder — they were acquitted on state charges. Now, on April 15, five of the same fascist elements were acquitted by an *all-white* Federal jury of violating the CWP members' civil rights.

Behind all this there is much more than a

case of "Southern justice." What is at stake is the involvement of US government agents in provoking the attack, and the Reagan regime's setting up a losing court case — all in order to give a green light to the fascists, to declare open season on revolutionaries, working class militants and union organizers.

Treasury Department agent Bernard Butkovich actually armed and instigated the fascists. Long-time FBI informant Edward Dawson was responsible for bringing the Klan into Greensboro.

And the victims' attorney, Lewis Pitts,

pointed out that the civil rights charges were so narrowly drawn by the government that if the jury felt that the fascists were motivated *not by racial hatred but by political motives*, it would legally be unable to convict. The same Justice Department that prepared the charges and presented the case runs the FBI and, of course, works closely with Treasury cops.

The fascists naturally presented themselves as "patriots" and "anti-communists." So the result of the trial is that counter-revolutionary murder is OK with Reagan. TRUTH

Reagan's Act of War and the Democrats

By KEVIN FITZPATRICK

Reagan's mining of Nicaraguan harbors has been denounced even by Barry Goldwater as an act of war. But what is behind the hullabaloo around this action *now*, when it really began months ago?

Reagan is preparing war against the revolution in Central America. This war is going to take on an open form, a massive form, but it has to be prepared by all kinds of actions — political, economic *and* military — aimed at weakening his enemy in advance.

The financing of the Nicaraguan *contras* (counterrevolutionaries) is an open example of this preparation. The mining of the harbors carried out by these *contras* under CIA direction is a particularly graphic and crude sample of their work.

The Democrats, especially those on the House and Senate intelligence "oversight" (appropriate name) committees, were told long ago (Nicaragua announced it on January 3!) about the mining. But they arose in shock and indignation only when Nicaragua's Sandinista government said it was going to bring charges against the US in the World Court, and when Reagan announced that he would not recognize this international body's decisions on Central America for a period of two years.

The problem for the Democrats was not the *act of war*, but a sharp difference on how to best prepare the large-scale war. Reagan's tactic was too crude, too obvious. It said to everyone that the US was blatantly guilty and didn't stand a

chance in *any* objective forum.

But the tip-off on the nature of their opposition is that they did not take — in the midst of

all the righteous indignation — a single concrete step to impede Reagan's actions.

The Democrats in the Senate, with the cooperation of the majority Republicans, adopted a deliberately *non-binding* resolution (that is, one that is purely hot air) opposing the mining. But this was passed because that well-known "liberal" Ted Kennedy dropped his bill opposing Reagan's rejection of the world court. Even such a slap on the wrist was bargained away. The Democratic-majority house adopted a similar non-binding resolution.

Then the Democrats in the House prevented the adoption of the \$21 million package, for the *contras* (see last issue), and went home for Easter. But Reagan simply filled the gap with "emergency funds" already voted for by these same Democrats, who knew perfectly well what they were voting for when they did it. Their "opposition" is always *cosmetic*; it has never deprived Reagan of the power to act, it has always left him an out.

Their "opposition," again, is purely pressure tactics on Reagan, to get him to prepare the war that *both* capitalist parties support in a smoother and cooler way.

The mining of the harbors can serve as a sharp warning for American workers and militants — open war is coming and it is necessary to prepare for it. In that sense, the situation

emphasizes the need for practical measures in support of the revolution — boycott of supplies to the military dictatorships and the *contras*, arms for the Salvadoran guerrillas, volunteers for Nicaragua.

These goals can be achieved only through a political struggle to educate and organize the workers and youth of the US against their own imperialist government.

It is especially striking that — so far, at least — no existing anti-war organizations have called for any *action* against the recent developments. As we pointed out in our last issue, National CISPES (Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador) is supporting Jackson's candidacy inside the pro-war Democratic Party. This found a particularly confused expression in the newsletter of Detroit CISPES, which treated the question in this light-minded way: "How about a spring demo?" How 'bout that?

Likewise, only in a few localities has anything been done toward getting anti-war referendums on the ballot. Such initiatives can serve as educational devices for creating large-scale opposition to war, as well as for creating a really democratic expression of the people's will, which is not occurring through the two capitalist parties and their Congress, elections, programs.

The Trotskyist Organization poses these two goals — local and national demonstrations, referendums — to help prepare Reagan's defeat.

Workers Candidates

on the Ballot

in Michigan!

In our last issue, we proposed *independent candidates* as a way to build a Labor Party Coalition in Michigan, since this can no longer be achieved through state-wide ballot status due to the default of working class political and union organizations.

To take the steps necessary to achieve this precision in our plan, the Trotskyist Organization has decided to seek: first, the greatest possible number of signatures, particularly in the 13th and 14th Congressional Districts, in order to run candidates there; second, to press the SWP on a common fight in the courts; third, to explore the significance of a letter proposing a meeting on similar questions sent to us by the Revolutionary Workers League; finally, to investigate the possibilities in terms of attorneys and court relief.

A Labor Party Coalition, as we have stressed, is not a TO "front" but an objective necessity of the class struggle. In this sense, to achieve it may require new tactics at every stage, but at no point can it be written off as not having achieved some particular success. The elections are a battle ground on which the working class must fight. TRUTH

Support Auto-Wide Strike Slate in UAW Local 600!

The United Front Caucus in UAW Local 600 at the Ford River Rouge Plant in Detroit, a caucus initiated by Revolutionary Workers League members, is running a slate of candidates for offices in the Dearborn Assembly Plant (DAP) unit.

This slate calls, among other things, for an "auto-wide strike, democratically run by elected strike committees." Thus the Trotskyist Organization calls on all workers and working class organizations to back this slate and its candidate for president of the DAP, Judy Wraight, against the bureaucracy and its candidate.

A victory for this slate can open the road to a real struggle against the company, the government and their henchmen in the union. UAW President Owen Bieber, UAW Local President Bob King, and their friends in the DAP unit have already said that they want to avoid a strike and that even bargaining must be subordinated to the No. 1 task of electing Walter Mondale. And, according to the United Front Caucus, "Privately, UAW International reps say they won't strike GM because that would

hurt Mondale."

But a vote for this slate is just the first step in the preparation of a successful strike. The union must take the offensive against the company. It can't limit itself to demands for job security, even for dividing work among all workers with no cut in pay.

The union must make an all-out fight to get back concessions and recall laid off workers. It must put forward its own candidates for Congress in the First, Thirteenth, Sixteenth and Seventeenth Congressional Districts surrounding the Ford River Rouge Plant in order to fight for the union's demands and get the oppressed population behind them.

The company is still trying to blackmail workers into accepting layoffs, wage limitations and wage cuts by saying it must do these things to remain competitive — accept these cuts or you'll have no jobs at all is the line. A fight to get back concessions, to recall laid off workers, is a fight to confront this blackmail head on. It's a fight that can really unite employed and unemployed.

The Democrats will never support such a

struggle. Carter and Mondale were the ones that forced Chrysler workers to take concessions in the first place. The Democratic Party Congressmen will use their positions in Congress and in these Congressional Districts surrounding the Ford River Rouge Plant to turn the oppressed population against striking Rouge workers. That's why the union needs to put forward its own candidate for Congress to fight for its own demands and win the oppressed population to its side.

The fight for Labor Candidates for Congress in UAW Local 600 can be an important step in a fight for Labor Candidates throughout the UAW and in the construction of a Labor Party Caucus that will stop UAW support to the Democratic Party and lead the fight for a Labor Party.

The fight for a Labor Party is not a luxury for some distant future. It is an essential part of the preparation of an effective strike. Support the Auto-wide Strike Slate! Labor Candidates for Congress in the Rouge's Districts!
M.G.

Jackson and Anti-Semitism

A lot of attention has been given to the controversy started by Jesse Jackson's anti-Semitic remarks — calling Jews "Hymies" and New York "Hymietown" — and by the responses to it, ranging from Louis Farrakhan's defense to US Vice-President George Bush's denunciations.

The first thing that has to be said is that Jackson's remark doesn't show "Black Anti-Semitism," in the sense that the old Bebel, the leader of the German Social Democracy before World War I, said that anti-Semitism was "the socialism of fools." (That is, ignorantly blaming the lowest-ranking and least important, but most obvious representatives of capitalism for the crimes of the system.) This anti-Semitism does indeed exist, along with a distrust of foreigners, etc., among the oppressed.

No, what Jackson's remarks reflected was the widespread racism, bigotry and anti-Semitism that exists among the capitalist rulers in this country.

Jimmy Carter wanted to preserve the "ethnic purity" of white neighborhoods. James Watt had to be finally dumped by Reagan for making a "joke" about the racial and religious (not to mention his crack about "a cripple") make-up of a commission he headed. The late US Army Chief of Staff, General Brown, not once but twice insisted the Jews ran the press and media in this country. And Ford's vice-president Nelson Rockefeller (a *liberal* and a capitalist) and Speaker of the House Carl Albert laughed over the light complexion of Black ex-Senator Edward Brooke of Massachusetts — "... in Africa he'd be a slave." This is just touching the surface. The list could go on and on and on.

We have no illusions about the working class, the exploited and oppressed in the US. Unfortunately, they are loaded down with prejudices. But the source of these vicious barriers to their liberation is the rulers themselves, not just in the general sense of their trying to set one group against another, but in the very direct sense that beneath their gentlemanly and ladylike veneer lie the crudest racists and bigots in the world.

Even Lee Iacocca, the president of Chrysler Corporation, has had to complain that his employers, the Fords, thought they were "too good even for the WASPS" (White Anglo-Saxon Protestants), and that they had no social ties with him because he was of Italian descent. That is no surprise. Old Henry Ford got a medal from Hitler himself, helped finance American fascists and published the anti-Semitic fraud known as *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* (which claims that Jews sacrifice Christian babies).

No, without his meaning to, Jesse Jackson's remarks show that he belongs fully in the mainstream of capitalist politics in this country. Will the oppressed and persecuted stand together against their enemies, or will they try to gain the approval of their WASP rulers, mimicking their prejudices like a lackey adopts the attitudes of his master?

The attacks on Jackson by various Zionist groups in no way give him an excuse for his slurs. These Jews too have fallen into the attitude of bootlickers to the rich, adopting the attitude that they will show the upper classes how much they too can hate Blacks. No, if Jackson in any way represented a "rainbow coalition" of the poor and oppressed he would have tied Jews and Blacks and others together against the ruling class. But that is not the case; he is instead trying to make the *ruling class* Democratic Party into a trap once more for the workers and the poor. And he can't help but tip his hand by talking like a representative of that ruling class.

George Bush is a blatant hypocrite; the epitome of country club Republicans denouncing prejudice — that's like Al Capone coming out against organized crime!

But Louis Farrakhan (see "Black Nationalists in the Slaveholders' Party," *Truth* #180) is far more dangerous. In the name of defending Jackson, he is consciously sharpening hostilities between racial and religious groups, even to the point of threatening the Black reporter who published Jackson's words.

Remember, this is the man who helped to hound Malcolm X to his death. Today, he is carrying out the same kind of dirty job for the same masters.

Our paper carries a simple slogan: "Workers of the world, unite!" That is the road to freedom, not capitalist bigotry.
K.F.

Roybal and Simpson-Mazzoli

The capitalists have been trying to make so-called "illegal aliens" into the scapegoats for unemployment in the US. Not only does this serve to divide the working class, but it gives the government police-state powers to use against the oppressed.

Just a few days ago, the US Supreme Court (with only two justices dissenting) said it was constitutional for immigration cops to seal off workplaces and demand proof of citizenship from workers. A Gestapo raid against Jews is the pattern for such activities, set up by Democrat Jimmy Carter, not Reagan.

And not only is the viciously anti-immigrant Simpson-Mazzoli Bill, which was bottled up in Congress to cool off the opposition, being revived but the capitalists are creating a fake alternative to it, which will end up accomplishing the same goals. This is the Roybal Bill (*Democratic* Congressman Edward Roybal is himself a Mexican-American) that drops a few of the most unpopular parts of Simpson-Mazzoli, such as a national ID card that all workers would have to present to prove their citizen-

ship — a first step toward an internal passport system such as those existing in South Africa or the Soviet Union.

But these minor changes are more than made up for by a provision for greatly increased funding for the racist Border Patrol. And, of course, the Roybal Bill is only a beginning; it can be easily added to until it is no different than the original Simpson-Mazzoli Bill.

Unfortunately, some opponents of Simpson-Mazzoli are supporting the Roybal Bill on the grounds of its being a "lesser evil," that old ruling class swindle.

The rulers of the United States have played off each new wave of immigrants against the previous one. This was necessary in a country whose working class was overwhelmingly made up of new immigrants or the children of older ones. From the time of "no Irish need apply" in the 1850s down through attacks on Mexican "wetbacks" in the 1950s to abuse against Arab "camel jockeys" today, this technique has been used. And, of course, each wave

of immigrants at least could adopt American racial attitudes and look down on Blacks.

But the source of unemployment is not foreign workers — with or without the right papers — but the fact that dying capitalism seeks to survive at the expense of the working class, driving down wages, eliminating whole layers of employment, etc. It is time for all workers and oppressed in the US to wake up and see that the enemy is not a worker of another race or nationality — but the capitalist — the boss — of any nationality, especially the most ruthless of all, the home-grown American capitalists.

We all have to fight for the total defeat of Simpson-Mazzoli and Roybal and any other such proposals. And we have to fight for full rights and freedoms for all workers, no matter where they came from.

On that road, the unity of the working class can be realized against its real enemies.

C.M.

Free Kathy Boudin!

Kathy Boudin is now on trial for the notorious Nyack Brink's robbery on October 20, 1981 — notorious because of its utilization by the Reagan regime for an "anti-terrorist" campaign of hysteria and frame-up. The defense of Kathy Boudin, as well as of militants already convicted or still being hunted, is an important part of workers' and young people's fight against Reagan.

To our knowledge, the Trotskyist Organization was the only working class group in the US to come to the defense of the accused militants. That can be checked out by anyone who wants to go over *Truth* for that period. While we opposed armed struggle by isolated individuals, we are always against the imperialist state, whatever our differences with other fighters.

As Kathy Boudin's trial gains attention — in large measure because she is wise enough to actually be putting up a legal defense — the role of other organizations, questions of political defense and solidarity, and exposing the *real terrorists* — the US imperialists and their hired guns — can be brought out in greater clarity.

First of all, there is the question of how the defendants from the old "Weather Under-

ground" and the Black Liberation Army handled themselves. They refused to offer a legal defense, not acknowledging the authority of the courts, and demanded prisoner-of-war status. In this way they handed the government a victory, ending up in their being sentenced to, variously, seventy-five years to life in prison.

Likewise, these individuals refused to organize a defense in common with other organizations, such as ours, that did not share their political views. They insisted on agreement with their views as a *condition* for activity, ignoring or rejecting the numerous offers we made. It can only be said that it is their defense policy, and not the action that they were charged with, that is *truly criminal*.

At the time, the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) was in the forefront of those denouncing the accused militants. When the government said defendant Judith Clark was an SWP member, the Barnesites did not expose this attempt to paint revolutionaries as terrorists, but *sued* to have the taint of Clark removed from their respectable image. Now George Novack (or somebody) says in the April 20 issue of the SWP's *Militant*, "It is disturbing to note that forces on the left have given so little attention to the trial of Kathy Boudin." This is crude hypocrisy, perhaps made all the more obvious by the fact that the SWP is concerned with protecting its lawyer, Leonard Boudin, who is Kathy's father.

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THE GLOBAL CONFLICT

Sell-Out in Southern Africa

In Southern Africa the star of the "national democratic revolution" has shone the longest, with the help of the Kremlin and the auxiliary efforts of enthusiasts for the Black bourgeois nationalist regimes in various countries.

Now, however, the two most important remaining "front line" states (in terms of facing racist and white supremacist South Africa) have made a deal with the racists.

On March 2, South Africa and Mozambique announced that a treaty had been signed that provides "that neither of the two countries will serve as a base for acts of aggression or violence against one another." It did not take long for it to become clear that this meant that the ANC (African National Congress — the chief Black nationalist group in South Africa) would no longer be welcome in Mozambique.

At the same time, South Africa was engaged in discussions with Angola over the question of the withdrawal (piecemeal and long-term) of South African forces from territory in southern Angola, which borders on Namibia (the former German colony of South-West Africa, illegally occupied by South Africa). This deal was conditional on the forces of SWAPO (South West Africa People's Organization, the chief Black nationalist group) being restrained by the Angolan regime. On February 21, the Angolan Interior Minister announced that his government would agree "to restrict the activities of SWAPO."

Once again, the thesis of the permanent revolution — that bourgeois and petty bourgeois forces cannot complete even the tasks of the democratic revolution in the backward countries — is being fully confirmed.

Brazil, Peru, Chile

Early and mid-April are showing the nature of the explosion that is germinating throughout Latin America.

On April 10, close to a million Brazilians demonstrated in Rio de Janeiro for direct presidential elections, opposed to maneuvers of the US-backed military dictatorship to try to maintain control while only changing forms. The dictatorship wants to have a hand-picked "civilian" selected by a 686-member Electoral College.

Later, a crowd of close to a million went into the streets in Sao Paulo, Brazil, shouting: "The dictatorship will end."

There were calls for a general strike on April 25, the day of the vote on direct elections.

In Chile, early April saw the most active yet of the Days of Action that are directed at the dictatorship in that country. On April 2, three-fourths of Chile was without electrical power after nine simultaneous blasts destroyed high tension towers.

In Peru, a series of strikes forced the resignation of Prime Minister Fernando Schwalb. Schwalb is for maintaining the policy of austerity (imposed by imperialism) that has led to the workers' response.

Common Market in Peril

For years, the European Common Market has been pointed to as the proof that capitalism can peacefully grow, that it is not tied to the framework of the nation state.

Recent events show once again that such assertions are pure frauds.

In September of last year and March of this year, conferences of the ten-nation EEC (European Economic Community, official name of the Common Market), have ended in total failure. In particular, Britain wants a refund on its contribution to the budget of the EEC. The Common Market is now near bankruptcy because of this.

Likewise, disputes over trade and import-export barriers have resulted in the confrontations over trucks at the borders of France.

The Fourth International, especially through the regional Catalan and Basque elections in Spain is fighting for the program of the revolutionaries, the Socialist United States of Europe — the line of Lenin and Trotsky.

It might be an educational experience for the members of Socialist Action, in the light of this situation, to look over Ernest Mandel's atrocious book, *Europe vs. America*, and see how far (then and now) the Pabloites are from Trotskyism.

An Open Trotskyist Congress to Rebuild the US Section of the 4th 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, Sec-

tion (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.

United Secretariat Tendencies Support Democrats

By DAVID MARK

Since the mass expulsion of opposition tendencies by the Barnes leadership of the Socialist Workers Party, no less than three tendencies have been formed by the expelled SWP members.

Socialist Action and the Fourth Internationalist Tendency differ according to their own characterizations only by the extent to which they maintain an organizational independence from the SWP. (Both are public factions of the SWP but the FIT believes that Socialist Action is going too far in the direction of an independent organization.) The North Star Network, formed at the initiative of Pedro Camejo, has already gone far afield of anything even remotely resembling Trotskyism, though he maintains his place on the International Executive Committee of the United Secretariat.

After the split, all of these tendencies have sought an alliance with the Mandel wing of the United Secretariat. At the same time, their initial positions around the questions of Poland, and Castroism, have been modified to a large extent in favor of the earlier positions of the SWP and the Barnes leadership itself, which, in fact, were the positions of Mandel more or less.

Up until recently, these tendencies have not taken up with any rigor the fundamental questions of the American Revolution, in particular, the historical task of breaking the American working class from the bourgeoisie through the construction of a Labor Party. That is certainly not due to any lack of opportunity or urgency, since the situation leading up to the 1984 elections demands such a response. But while formally adopting the position in favor of a Labor Party, these tendencies have abstained from any active struggle for a Labor Party or for Labor Candidates, other than supporting the candidates of the SWP.

In the beginning, the TO, which has made repeated attempts to form a common front with organizations that claim to be for a Labor Party, and make a common, practical fight for Labor Candidates in the 1984 elections, thought that this reluctance was a reflection of the milieu from which these tendencies emerged — the SWP. But two recent developments shed more light on the question.

In recent issues of the newspapers of the Mexican PRT and the Spanish LCT, sections affiliated with the United Secretariat and Mandel, these two parties come out in favor of Jackson and Hart respectively in the 1984 elections! The Labor Party is hardly even a footnote to their positions.

Hart or Jackson?

Enrique Hernandez of the Mexican PRT begins: "The US left . . . has traditionally chosen one of two paths: either support the more 'liberal' Democratic candidate as the 'lesser evil,' or else run their own candidates, winning extremely small numbers of votes." (*Bandera Socialista* February 27, 1984).

Are we then going to hear a defense of the Labor Party against class collaboration and support to the Democratic Party? Unfortunately not. Rather the author is engaging in a bit of confusionism to develop a position of support to Jesse Jackson, placing him in league with such US organizations as the New York based newspaper, *The Guardian*. Right away we ask, which traditions is the author referring to!

Hernandez continues, "Jackson is not going to form the workers party, but his program of 'us on this side' extends a bridge toward the possibility of breaking with the two-party system; despite the fact that he is in the Democratic Party . . ."

Our author is rapidly burning his bridges behind him, or he is walking backwards. Jackson is precisely a "bridge," that much is true, but he is a bridge that leads the masses back into the Democratic Party. This is indeed a well-known bridge in the American political situation, and one that leads only in one direction — into and not out of the Democratic Party.

But one can see that the issue of how to best support the Democratic Party is indeed a burn-

ing question inside the United Secretariat from the following passage (which we have thanks to our comrades of the Spanish POR), authored by the Mandelite Spanish LCR.

In an article entitled, "Hart the Young American" we are comforted by the statement that, ". . . it is possible that if Gary Hart beats Mondale, and, on the 6th of November, Ronald Reagan, we will all sleep better." (*Combate*, March 15).

Certainly, Gary Hart is going to sleep much better when he finds out that these renegades from Trotskyism have not only endorsed his candidacy, but also his campaign theme — the "young American" with "new ideas."

But our bald-faced Democratic cheerleaders do not stop at capitulation; we are even told by the Mexican PRT that this is a position that Trotsky himself would support. "Trotsky stated that the struggle was for a workers party, but they would have to go through various stages to achieve that."

But unfortunately our author neglects to proofread his own articles for political consistency. "Trotsky stated that the struggle was for a workers party." Has the Democratic Party changed its class character because Jackson (our author admits he is a "reformist") is running in it? Aren't we being served up the same old slop of the "lesser evil"? Our author's bridges have finally collapsed under the weight of their own confused arguments.

Trotsky

Trotsky did indeed discuss three possible avenues through which a Labor Party might develop. Unfortunately, for our authors, not one of them included the remotest possibilities that the Democratic Party, a capitalist party, would be a "bridge" to the Labor Party. Furthermore, the precise case of Jesse Jackson, a Black candidate running in the Democratic Party, was considered by Trotsky in his discussions on the Black question in the United States. His position was categorically opposed to ever supporting a Black Candidate running in the Democratic Party.

Not to mention the fact that the whole thrust of Trotsky's discussion on the Labor Party was for the purpose of supporting a strong fight by the SWP for a Labor Party in opposition to the pro-Roosevelt positions of the trade union bureaucracy and the Communist Party.

It is to these traditions that we adhere. The traditions of our United Secretariat authors are also easily characterized — pure opportunism in its most clear form.

What is at the basis not only of the positions expressed by the PRT and the LCR, but also of numerous other claimants to Trotskyism on the question of the Labor Party, is a completely spontaneist approach to the crisis of the Democratic Party, which, inevitably, gives way to the most opportunist positions.

This is true whether it concerns those who openly embrace the Democratic Party, or whether it be those who dissolve the task of forming a workers party into a half-way petty bourgeois formation such as the Peace and Freedom Party, or whether like the SWP it is those who maintain a purely formal adherence to the position in favor of a Labor Party — in practice, doing nothing to build it.

Barnes' Joke

One really cannot be too harsh in condemning such blatant opportunism as that of the LCR and PRT. The only advice that we can give them for all their tortured reasoning is to hang up their propaganda and watch the class struggle unfold on television.

But we have forgotten to inform our readers of the source of the PRT article. It appeared without comment in none other than Barnes' own *Intercontinental Press* (April 16, 1984). Perhaps the LCR's article will appear in the next issue. After all, what could make Barnes mass expulsions of his opposition look better than to reprint the scandalous positions of their allies in the United Secretariat.

The fact is that what we are seeing in the crisis of the American SWP is not only the organizational breakup of the oppositions,

their inability to find a common thread of opposition to Barnes' repudiation of Trotskyism, but also the rapid decomposition of the United Secretariat in face of the acceleration and deepening of the class struggle on a world scale.

The SWP oppositionists draw back from the conclusions of their Mandelian allies, but they share the same theoretical framework. Hence while they maintain in the joint platform of the opposition bloc that the Labor Party is a central objective, this assertion remains a formal one.

In this sense, it is becoming clearer and clearer that the SWP oppositions have passed the apogee of their orbit around the SWP. Either they must break with the United Secretariat or adapt to its crisis and decomposition.

Barnes, whatever else he might be, is an astute politician and has already begun to take the field against the oppositions. He reprints in the same issue of the *IP* an article by Mac Warren on the "principled" position of the SWP against the Democratic Party, alongside two articles on the National Conference of the Australian SWP which has gone even further than Barnes in their repudiation of Trotskyism. It is as if to say, "see my friends what a fine mess you've got yourself into by breaking with the SWP and allying yourself with Mandel."

This comes at a particularly embarrassing moment for Socialist Action which has been touting the virtues of the Mexican PRT in their press.

The Fourth International

The Trotskyist Organization has not and does not now take a neutral position in the struggle against Barnes. We characterized the SWP oppositions as being positive because they opened up the possibility of a re-examination of the roots of Barnes policy in the 1963 re-unification of the SWP with the Pabloites. But the struggle itself is developing with its own logic, the oppositionists are clearly trapped by their policy.

In this political framework, the struggle for a Labor Party is not just one question among others. Representing as it does a critical acquisition of American Trotskyism and its fight for today — to break the American working class from its bourgeoisie — the struggle for the Labor Party is a lifeline to a tendency that is floundering in the treacherous waters of centrism. What is called for now is not just a repudiation of the positions of the PRT and LCR (though that is indeed called for), but a complete break from Barnes and Mandel.

For what we see today is not just twin divergences of Barnes and Mandel on the question of the Labor Party, or any other point. What we see is that the most important historical acquisitions of American Trotskyism are being maintained only through the fight that was led to rebuild the Fourth International in 1976 against centrism. And that the fight to develop these acquisitions for today's struggle goes to those who continue this fight by rebuilding the US section of the Fourth International.

It is precisely a common struggle for the Labor Party that offers the opportunity to test out the validity of programs, of traditions, of critical junctures in the crisis of the Fourth International and their meaning for today.

It is in essence the struggle for the central question of the day — the Party. That, comrades, is the only reason for your or our existence.

Therefore, we call on the comrades of Socialist Action and the Fourth Internationalist Tendency to fight the opportunist and class collaborationist positions of the Mexican PRT and Spanish LCR, and to join us in a common struggle to defend the historic acquisitions of American Trotskyism by building a Trotskyist Congress — to rebuild the US section of the Fourth International. We call on them to join us in a common struggle for Labor Candidates and the Labor Party in the 1984 elections.

Workers Candidates on the Ballot in Illinois!

By RICHARD TETRAULT

Tuesday May 8 is the first day to collect signatures to place independent and new political party candidates on the November ballot in Illinois. Depending on the office, a minimum number of signatures are required and must be filed between July 30 and August 6.

There is only one way that workers and young people will have a clear opportunity to answer Reagan and the Democratic and Republican Parties: a Labor Party Coalition. We are fighting for Labor Candidates and to build a Labor Party. A crucial element of this fight is the battle which must take place in the unions and already this showdown is beginning to develop.

The Socialist Workers Party (SWP), the only other workers organization in Illinois to raise the idea of really independent class candidates, is proposing to run candidates for several offices besides president, the most important being the First Congressional District. This is the district that Harold Washington represented in Congress. The candidate he endorsed, Charles Hayes, easily won in the special election to fill the vacancy created when Washington became mayor. In that special election, the SWP ran Ed Warren, who had also been the SWP's candidate in the mayoral election. But it was unable to develop an independent working class policy that clearly differentiated its campaign from that of Charles Hayes, who is a prominent Black trade union leader.

In the first place, the SWP was befuddled during the Democratic primary. They seemed to expect Black nationalist Lu Palmer, who claimed to represent the Washington movement, to win. But Hayes had Washington's endorsement, using the same rhetoric of "independence" from the Machine to channel workers back in to the Democratic Party.

When Hayes won and became the Democratic candidate, the Warren campaign was unable to come up with any sharp way to differentiate a fight for a Labor Party from Hayes' talk about putting "our own" in office.

Only after the election did the SWP's paper, *The Militant* (September 9, 1983) run an editorial entitled "A missed opportunity for labor" in which it finally posed: "The fact is, another alternative would have been possible... Imagine if Hayes had run, not as a Democrat, but as an independent labor candidate."

In contrast, *Truth* #169 (July 22, 1983) was much clearer: "It would have been extremely useful to demand that Charles Hayes run as an independent labor candidate! Demand that he break from the Democratic Party!"

This tactical sharpness is what is needed today. Make the Labor Party concrete, don't make abstract "socialist propaganda." This is the sense in which we have written to and talked with the SWP campaign in Chicago.

The working class response to trade union traitors and capitalist politicians is caucuses in the unions for a Labor Party to fight for, especially today, Labor Candidates on the ballot. This proposal can begin to take shape: right

now as the SWP has put forward Ed Warren for Congress in the First District — against Charles Hayes! The Chicago Local Committee of the Trotskyist Organization not only supports Warren, but we see a clear opportunity to wage a broad and open struggle to build the Labor Party in these elections.

Many organizations, many in the trade unions have claimed that they are for a Labor Party. Let them prove it now, not only with words but with their financial, militant and political support. And not only in the First District, but everywhere that it is in any way possible to have Labor Candidates on the ballot. The Trotskyist Organization, as part of our fight to build the Labor Party Coalition, is considering campaigns in the Second and Fifth Congressional Districts.

USWA President Has No Mandate

By SUSAN FROSCHHEISER

Lynn Williams, acting president of the United Steel Workers of America (USWA), won the March 29 special elections for president of the union.

Williams said that his victory was a "mandate" and that his first priority as a union leader is to campaign "hard" for Walter Mondale. Yet only 30% of the union membership actually voted in these elections.

This shows in fact that *Williams has no mandate*. Now is the time to build a massive opposition to this leadership beginning with a fight to stop all union support to the Democrats; for a Labor Candidate and a Labor Party in the 1984 elections; to defend Phelps Dodge workers, to keep the steel plants open.

The elections were held to elect a president to fill the spot of Lloyd McBride who died November 6, 1983. The main contenders for the position were Lynn Williams, acting president, and Frank McKee, international treasurer.

Williams campaigned for support of such things as worker-management participation teams and political lobbying. Not one mention of support to Phelps Dodge workers or the latest steel-oil mergers and plant shutdowns. Only tactics to keep the workers dependent on the bosses.

One of Frank McKee's campaign organizers, Frank Valenta, director of the USWA district 28 in Cleveland, Ohio, put forward the idea that Canadian members should split off and form their own union.

According to the Socialist Workers Party, "Ron Weisen, president of Local 1397 in Homestead, Pennsylvania, tried to present an alternative to the politics-as-usual Williams and McKee." But, "Williams and McKee used their hold on the union apparatus to insure that Weisen was denied ballot status."

But if Weisen really was an alternative, why didn't he get the support he needed to overcome the bureaucracy's maneuvers? Even if they did keep him off the ballot, why didn't he

The very best way to carry this struggle forward is by a common fight in the unions and in the neighborhoods with a common slate of candidates. Already this possibility exists with Warren's campaign in the First District and a candidate of the TO in the Second District. This can be the way to build the Labor Party Coalition in Illinois, a spark for the construction of a mass Labor Party based on the unions. This is the road to break from the labor-fakers and Democratic politicians of every type.

In the April 6, 1984 issue of *The Militant*, Ed Warren says, "We've said that it's not enough to elect a Black or a unionist to office if their party is a party of and defends the interests of the rich."

"Working people need independent political

parties to oppose the bipartisan policies of the Democrats and Republicans, and around a program that defends our interests.

"But, my opponent in this congressional race, Charles Hayes, has forgotten his working class roots. Yes, we want workers in office, but workers who have a correct program, a program that puts our interests first."

The key question in the elections is that of a working class party to lead this struggle. Workers don't come to a program spontaneously but must be organized. Quite clearly the labor hierarchy will not build a Labor Party. It must be built from the rank and file.

We call on trade union militants, revolutionaries, and working class youth to join us in a struggle to build the Labor Party now!

continue the fight in the elections, with a write-in or an active boycott? Even more important, why isn't he mobilizing against Williams and McKee today?

The fact is he doesn't constitute such an alternative. He's a Democrat and a supporter of divisive anti-import campaigns like Williams and McKee. How can Weisen oppose Williams' devotion of union resources to the Democrats when he said the same thing in his own campaign — Mondale "is the only game in town" (*The Militant*, February 3, 1984).

Steel workers watch the union membership

cut in half; plant closures become more common (Youngstown, Wisconsin Steel and now Chicago's South Works is next in line); the union leadership does nothing. It's not surprising to see such abstention in the elections. Workers are tired of voting for the lesser of two evils.

Now is the time to fight for a Labor Candidate and a Labor Party in the USWA and open the road to a massive struggle in defense of Phelps Dodge workers and against the shutdowns. This is a real alternative.

Las Vegas Strike

Over 17,000 service employees in the gambling and vacation mecca Las Vegas, Nevada, have been on strike since April 2.

Here is another battle in which the corporations and their government try to organize a defeat of an unlikely and isolated union (PATCO, teachers, etc.) in order to create a steam-roller effect for future use against more powerful unions.

Everyone who doesn't still believe in Santa Claus knows that the Mafia is involved in Las Vegas up to its shoulder holsters. Thus, it is not surprising that the strikers have been met with violence by police and strike-breakers. Ordinary waitresses, room maids and bartenders are finding themselves involved in brutal clashes.

At the same time, it is no accident that right wingers like US Senator (and former governor) Paul Laxalt, who is Reagan's campaign manager, are known to have violated the "gaming laws" by owning casinos in the state, by cooperating with "organized

crime," etc. So it is no surprise that these reactionary forces look on this attempt at union-busting with more than their usual enthusiasm.

The courage and militancy of the workers has the casinos on the defensive. But the union bureaucrats, as usual, have nothing to offer but a "consumer boycott" (and that was such a great help to PATCO!) of the concerned hotel chains. Not the slightest attempt to involve other unions in the state! And this means that their future position is likewise in danger.

The unions need to organize sympathetic strike activity. They need to be prepared to enforce mass picketing in face of court injunctions. Occupations of the casinos and hotels would be far better than being on the outside. And, finally, the unions need to organize their own political expression, a Labor Party, to fight the reactionary capitalist parties.

TRUTH

Why the UAW Opposition Collapsed

By KEVIN FITZPATRICK

The capitulation of what could be called the "local presidents' opposition" in the United Auto Workers (UAW) shows that the Labor Party is not an abstract or distant question in the unions, but is totally linked to any real fight there today.

LOC And Others

As a result of the concessions drive at General Motors in 1982, an opposition arose in the UAW that took the form of presidents of certain key locals banding together against the company and the union leadership — the old "Reuther caucus" then headed by UAW president Douglas Fraser.

One of the clearest examples of this was the May 24, 1982, run-off election victory of Rudy Gasperek in Local 1112 at the well-known Lordstown, Ohio, plant of GM. It was this grouping that was behind what Fraser called "illegal" sub-council meetings that led to the formation of LOC (Locals Opposed to Concessions).

It was this at this same time that Gasperek announced: "Either we get people back on their feet, or we're buried. If it brings a convulsion in this country, fine." But within a few months of making this bold statement, Gasperek himself was organizing concessions in the plant, saying: "We've got a close working relationship with management now. We know that if we keep the adversarial relationship, we're all going to be out of business" (*The Progressive*, August 1983).

What intervened and turned the situation around? On the surface, GM's policy of "whip-sawing," that is, of playing off one local against

another — getting each one to agree to more company demands for the sake of production (jobs) at a given plant. But this really explains nothing, because it does not explain why GM could get away with it, why this old tactic not only was not met with labor solidarity, but why Lordstown in particular took the lead.

What really intervened, chronologically and politically, was the 1982 elections.

At that time, the Trotskyist Organization put forward a call for *union candidates* in the elections. We said that the fight in the UAW, because the demand for concessions was linked to the whole policy of the capitalist class, because the leaders of the unions were tied hand and foot to the Democratic Party, had to find a *political expression*. It had to, in other words, be organized and centralized in the arena where all these questions were coming to a head, where the whole working class could be involved — the elections.

LOC did not intervene in the elections on this line. Its leaders either supported the bureaucracy's policy of voting for Democrats ("Solidarity Day II") or chose to make no fight at all.

You either advance or you retreat. Without a way to develop the fight beyond the local union level, the presidents fell back on the narrow policy of "defending" their "own" members. And then GM and Fraser moved in and defeated them one by one.

If Lordstown was the muscles of LOC, Pete Kelly and his associates were its brains. As we pointed out in our last issue, Kelly has been the leading oppositionist in the UAW since the demise of DRUM and its related formations. Kelly and his group (including people like Al

Gardner, head of the Tool and Die Unit at Ford River Rouge Local 600) considered themselves socialists and were for a Labor Party. But this never went beyond their personal opinions. The groups that they built did not fight for a Labor Party and really (outside of abstract calls for a general strike) never went beyond calling for a vote against the contracts the bureaucrats signed.

RAM and Capitulation

It was the *failure* of LOC that resulted in the creation (at the last UAW Constitutional Convention — May 1983) of "Restore and More in '84" (RAM). This was smaller than LOC, and far less active and militant. It had virtually no existence outside the union papers of the presidents involved.

It is no coincidence that the GM and Ford concessions contracts expire September 14, just as the 1984 presidential election goes into its final stage. The role the labor bureaucrats of the AFL-CIO (including the UAW) have played in picking and backing Mondale is directly connected to the fact that they are fully aware of the drive for class independence, for a Labor Party, that exists in the unions, and that finds expression in many (but unclear) ways. What the contracts express on the economic level, the Democratic Party expresses on the political level — the workers' organizations are in the grip of the class enemy.

It is at this point that Kelly himself capitulates. As we pointed out in *Truth*, the speech by Owen Bieber (the new UAW president elected at the same convention where RAM was formed) at the Special Bargaining Convention in March of this year expresses a conscious

adaptation to the companies demands; it goes *against* getting back concessions and making new gains.

Kelly himself is now president of Local 160 at the GM Tech Center in Warren, Michigan. He is likewise head of the UAW GM's Bargaining Committee. And it was in his paper that the infamous GM document on wage cuts and workforce reductions first appeared.

Kelly had all the authority and position needed. But in the very next issue of his paper (*Tech Engineer*, March 1984) he reprinted Bieber's speech as if it were holy writ and had the editor of the paper (Kelly is hedging his bets) write such statements as: "... contrary to Mr. Fraser, Mr. Bieber is more purely a labor populist"; "... our gray-haired union leader will go along with the rank and file demands"; "... Mr. Bieber will be forced to lead the union away from the conciliation attitude and back to the *normal* confrontation stance" (original emphasis).

These statements are not only silly, they are blatantly dishonest.

Kelly is shedding all his opposition right now because the question of the contract and the elections are not separate, not in the eyes of the companies, not in the eyes of the bureaucrats... and certainly not in the eyes of the workers.

A fight against concessions is either a fight against the capitalists or it is no fight at all. It is impossible to wage this fight today without waging it in the upcoming elections.

Labor candidates in the elections, together with Labor Party caucuses in the unions, are the right and left hands of a true, fighting policy for the workers and their organizations. There is no other alternative.