

US OUT NOW! Solidarity with Nicaragua!

By DAVID MARK

There are clear signs that the movement against US intervention in Central America and the Caribbean is at the dawn of a new stage of mobilization. The deepening military engagement of the US in Central America is going to pit the interests of the working class against those of the capitalists and their imperialist policies. Many questions — the morality of the US's bloody policies against the people of Central America, the allocation of social resources to military adventure, the attacks on minorities and immigrants in the US and, most importantly, the need for a new working class leadership — are going to be raised in this struggle.

On June 7, more than three hundred demonstrators in New York were arrested for blockading the federal building to protest US intervention. Two days later, ten thousand marched in Manhattan and held a mock trial of the US government for its crimes in Central America.

Several other regional demonstrations have taken place and there are plans for demonstrations in Detroit on July 21 and in Boston and Chicago in the fall. Demonstrations are also being planned for the Republican and Democratic national conventions. An Emergency National Conference to Plan United Action Against US Military Intervention in Central America and the Caribbean has been called for September in Cleveland and is being backed by several trade unionists including Pete Kelly of the UAW and Ron Weisen of the USW. In addition, there is a referendum against the US war planned for the November ballot in Boston and Detroit.

These actions are the first in many months — hopefully leading to larger mass actions in the fall.

Divisions

In addition, several recent developments reveal that there are divisions within the US ruling class over how to confront the revolution in Central America:

- While the Democrats have in the past, and no doubt will in the future, remain supporters of military intervention, they have recoiled at the international outcry over the mining of Nicaraguan ports and have cut off aid to the "contras."
- A former CIA analyst who had reviewed CIA reports from 1981 to 1983 publicly ridiculed the Reagan administration's claims that Cuba and Nicaragua had been supplying arms to the Salvadoran rebels.
- Directly before his arrival in the United States Robert D'Aubuisson, the leader of the right wing ARENA party in El Salvador, was linked to a plot to assassinate the US ambassador to El Salvador in retaliation for US support to Duarte, the new president of El Salvador from the Christian Democratic Party.
- The wounding of Eden Pastora, head of the Sandino Revolutionary Front (SRF), a CIA-backed counterrevolutionary group in Nicaragua, was apparently the result of a long standing feud between the SRF and another "contra" group headed by Alfonso Robello.

While these divisions in the imperialists own camp can in no way be considered a retreat from military intervention in Central America, they nevertheless represent the type of "early warning" signal that has historically preceded a period of decisive class confrontations. Coupled with the 1984 elections, the US intervention in Central America represents a potentially explosive question, one that could galvanize all the sectors of the working class and all of its demands into one central struggle against the capitalist class.

Policy

At the present stage, in terms of its policies, actions, and alliances, the goal of the movement against US imperialism should be a massive alliance of labor, Blacks and Latinos, women workers, and youth for the immediate withdrawal of the US from Central America. *US Out of Central America!*

This alliance, even if in an early form, can

have a powerful presence in the 1984 elections through a Workers Vote! That is, no support for the Republicans and Democrats, a fight for the trade unions to put forward their own candidates on platforms that include opposition to US intervention in Central America, and a vote



Young Nicaraguan women defend their country and revolution

for workers and socialist organizations that appear on the ballot.

And this policy should also have the most open and united possible expression in a single fall mass demonstration, uniting all those who oppose the US intervention under a single slogan demanding immediate withdrawal of the US from Central America and the Caribbean.

Finally, a policy in support of the revolution in Central America needs to have a practical expression as well. All the various campaigns of medical and technical aid should be combined into one coordinated central campaign of volunteers for Nicaragua and aid to the rebels in El Salvador.

Unfortunately, many of those planned are being organized around support to the Democratic Party (see article on this page), rather than as an independent mobilization against imperialism, which would necessarily be directed against both the Republican and Democratic parties. For example, the organizers of the demonstration at the Democratic Party National Convention in San Francisco have actually invited Mondale, along with other Democrats, to attend the protest. Mondale! Who has said openly that he is in favor of US intervention in Central America. Such a policy is tantamount to handing over the movement against imperialism to the imperialists themselves.

In many cases, as in San Francisco, the slogans of these actions are deliberately designed

to be acceptable to the Democratic Party and the liberal wing of the US ruling class. The San Francisco organizers are calling for a "Vote for Peace in '84" and according to *The Guardian* summarize peace as:

"... a freeze and reversal of the arms race, a foreign policy of non-intervention, and the redirection of national resources to jobs and human needs."

But such a "peace" is in reality only an instrument of war. Does a "reversal of the arms race" also apply to the army of Nicaragua? Then must Nicaragua disarm also? But this is also Reagan's message. Perhaps he is for "peace" too! And what exactly is a "foreign policy of non-intervention"? Whose foreign policy? The policy of the Reagan administration or perhaps the new Mondale administration (who always say they will never intervene even while they are doing it)? Or the policy of the working class and its allies that have to strangle their imperialist ruling class before they can even have a "foreign policy"?

The problem with these slogans is that they leave the question of war, the fate of people, in the hands of the imperialists, their parties, their diplomacy, and their generals. They leave them with all their deceptions and ploys to carry on their intervention against the people of Central America.

No support to the parties of imperialism!
Democratic and Republican!

All out against US intervention!

Democratic Party: Imperialist War Party

"The lack of a Central America program on the part of the Democrats is almost as striking as the firm ideological commitment to one of intervention on the part of the Administration. The Democrats run whichever way the wind blows."

So begins an editorial in the monthly publication, *El Salvador Alert*, of the national Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES). We are told "the Democratic response to Reagan's TV speech was pathetic" and that "US policy can be changed but not through a movement which relies on Congress or the Democrats to accomplish its goals." Is this then going to be an energetic defense of the need for an independent movement to get the US out of Central America?

Unfortunately not. In fact, it is the opposite. Because what the editorial admits for the sake of a left cover — that the Democrats have been the right arm for Reagan's imperialist policy in Central America — is completely undercut by the stunning conclusion:

"[Speaking of the Democrats] While such lack of principle presents a rather disgusting spectacle when spread across the nation's mass media, it is nonetheless subject to the pressures that can be brought to bear."

Why can't these defenders of "principles" make their own stand clear. Why not just say it outright instead of beating around the bush. "Vote for the Democrats against Reagan." That is the real message that the editorial conveys. But the authors cannot quite bring themselves to make a clear statement. They are, alas, too much like the Democrats they criticize who "run whichever way the wind blows."

But the Democratic Party is no more susceptible to the pressure of the exploited and oppressed than the Republican Party is. The futile attempts to pressure it to stop World War I, World War II, the Korean and Vietnam Wars show that. The only result of these false attempts to channel the movement into pressuring the Democrats has been a *prolongation* of these wars, of the suffering of the soldiers and the oppressed population on both sides. And this is what CISPES's policy can only lead to.

Indirectly, however, this editorial does confirm a point that it is important to drive home. What happens in the 1984 elections is going to have a greater impact on the course of US im-

perialism's policy in Central America than any other single event. In fact, that is precisely why *Truth* has been fighting for independent Labor

Candidates in the 1984 elections. And, amazingly enough, while our liberal CISPES authors can easily bring themselves to recommend a vote for the Democrats, who they themselves admit have done nothing but aid Reagan's policies, they are the first to denounce any attempt to raise the necessity of Labor Candidates. On the grounds, of course, that CISPES is strictly concerned with ending US intervention in Central America.

Well, OK. If you don't want to concern yourself with politics than please stay out of it entirely. We don't need anymore radical fakes spreading illusions in the Democratic Party. The American working class has already endured more than a half a century of that. Out with the Democrats and in with a workers party! Now there is a clear statement.

Why not be honest? Why not go all the way and say what is lurking in everyone's minds. Mondale is nothing but Reaganism without Reagan. But of course that would be going too far. That would be admitting that it is the Democrats, not the Republicans, who have presided over most of the imperialist interventions since World War I. That would be admitting the failure of the policies that the anti-war movement had in the sixties and that our CISPES authors have now. Yes, the US was defeated in Vietnam. But that happened in spite of the wing of the anti-war movement that wanted to subordinate the movement to the Democratic Party.

In some respects we cannot expect much more from the present policymakers at

CISPES. They were apparently never trained or schooled in a revolutionary tradition. And, of course, because of that, they cannot be faulted too much for their historical nearsightedness. That is, for their inability to see that while it is true today that the working class and its gigantic battalions of unions, unemployed, and young have not yet entered *en masse* into the anti-intervention movement, that it is inevitable that they do so and that the movement itself has no future or hope of succeeding if they do not. And, therefore, to cave in now before the Democratic Party and abandon the class independence of the movement before it has scarcely begun is to prepare the worst possible consequences for the future of the anti-intervention movement.

We certainly agree with you that at all costs "Reagan Must Be Defeated in November." And that is why we insist that the workers, Blacks, and the youth cannot accept a Reagan clone from the Democratic Party as their candidate. Whether Reagan or Mondale is elected in November, the working class movement and the movement against US intervention in Central America will be much further advanced if a workers vote is cast in November — for Labor Candidates, for candidates of working class organizations, like Mason and Gonzalez of the Socialist Workers Party, the only candidates for president and vice president calling for a Labor Party. And yes, we are ready to work with anyone who is for building a movement to stop US intervention in Central America — as long as we do not have to kneel before those who hands are stained with the blood of the people of Central America.
D.M.

NO TO MONDALE!
Reaganism without Reagan!
Labor Party, Labor Candidates Now!

Manifesto of the Trotskyist Organization 1984 Elections • Inside

NO TO REAGAN AND MONDALE

For Labor Unity and Independence: Build a Labor Party

Young people, working women and working men of all races and nationalities!

The Trotskyist Organization calls on you to join in a common struggle to build a Labor Party based on the unions, to make the labor movement independent, to unite the labor movement and all exploited and oppressed working people against Reagan and Mondale. We call on you to begin with a common struggle for Labor Candidates in the 1984 elections.

A great movement is dawning within the American working class. The opposition to Mondale in the Democratic Party primaries and the support for Jesse Jackson in the central cities are neither momentary nor simply Black developments. The unions' demands for jobs, getting back concessions and bitter, bitter strikes are not the last gasps of a dying class about to be replaced by "high technology." And the oppositions to US attacks on Central America and the Middle East are not relics of the 60s.

No, these are just the first signs of a tremendous movement that will not stop until it has settled accounts with the exploiters and oppressors in one way or another. It will not stop because it cannot stop. The American working class *has* to fight the Reagan regime and its Democratic Party counterparts in the central cities. It has to fight the banks and the corporations and their attempts to drive down the working class and destroy its unions here and abroad. It has to, for to do otherwise means the destruction of the American working class as a class and that the American working class will never accept.

Young people, working women, working men.

The future of this great movement depends entirely on the independence and unity of the forces arising today. The movement itself is inevitable, but the exact tempo of its development, evolution and final outcome are not. A working class leadership independent of the Democratic Party arising today can strengthen the movement, enlarge it and hasten its development. The lack of same can retard the movement, give it a sporadic and uneven character and ultimately lead to serious setbacks, defeats and even destruction.

Young people, fellow workers: building a Labor Party based on the unions is the way to achieve the necessary leadership, independence and unity.

The Democratic Party

The Democratic Party and the different factions within it have all appealed to the working class and particularly to its desire to free itself from the Reagan regime. And a number of different working class parties have supported it or one of its candidates on this basis (the Communist Party supports the Democratic Party; the Workers World Party and the Communist Workers Party support Jackson). But the Democratic Party does not represent the working class. It does not even support the workers' basic demands — for an end to concessions, to discrimination against Blacks, and to US intervention abroad.

Mondale and the AFL-CIO bureaucracy have proven themselves completely incapable of mobilizing the masses of union workers, especially Black workers, behind them, not to mention the oppressed population as a whole. Only a small fraction of voters have turned out to vote for Mondale in the primaries. Nor has

Jackson been able to actually build a "Rainbow Coalition" that unites workers and oppressed peoples against the Reagan regime. This is not because Jackson is Black; it is because he doesn't base himself on the workers' organizations, demands and struggles. His support to the Chrysler concessions agreement, his opposition to the Chicago public school employees strike and his refusal to support the United Farm Workers boycott are only the most obvious examples of this divisive policy.

In fact, the Democratic Party represents the bosses, the bankers, the big business men — in other words, the bourgeoisie or capitalist class — just like Reagan and the Republicans. The only thing that really distinguishes it from Reagan and the Republicans is its rhetoric about compassion for the poor, the oppressed, etc. But compassion has not and never will put meat on the table.

The sole purpose of these campaigns is to divert youth and workers, especially Black youth and workers in and around the unions, the heart and soul of the working class, from a real, mass independent and unified struggle against the Reagan regime; to divide them, to render them dependent on the powers that be.

A Labor Party

A Labor Party based on the unions on the other hand can make the working class independent and unite it.

It can do this because it can base itself entirely on the workers' organizations, demands, and struggles. It doesn't have to answer to the capitalist class like the Democratic Party, thus it doesn't have to hold the line on wages and working and living conditions, favor one group over another, play one group off against another, etc., like the Democratic Party.

It can not only unite the unions and union members, the most powerful and influential organizations in the working class, now divided between Reagan, Mondale, Jackson, Hart, abstaining and others. It can also unite the unions with the oppressed population as a whole — Black and white, men and women, native-born and foreign-born, employed and unemployed — on a broader and deeper basis, on the basis of their interests as workers.

A Labor Party's only job is to fight for the unions and the oppressed population as a whole. This is why it can unite the working class, make it independent and powerful. The Democratic Party's job on the other hand is to defend the status quo. That is why it can only divide the working class, render it dependent and powerless.

How to Build It

Young people, fellow workers of all races and nationalities!

The fight for a Labor Party must proceed today with a fight for Labor Candidates in the unions in opposition to Reagan and Mondale. This is the way to gather together and train the forces arising today that can build a Labor Party.

Many tendencies call for a Labor Party yet they seem to differ widely on how to actually go about building that party. For years tendencies like the Socialist Workers Party called on the labor bureaucracy to form a Labor Party. Today these organizations are all supporting pro-Democratic Party petty bourgeois formations like the National Black Independent Political Party or the Peace and Freedom Party and say these formations will help "inspire"



Toledo auto workers battle police

the formation of a Labor Party. They are also running candidates in the current elections that call for socialism but say little about a Labor Party. Perhaps they think their campaigns will result in a growth of their own organizations and that this will eventually result in the formation of a Labor Party. Perhaps they think socialism is possible without a Labor Party.

In any case, what distinguishes these tendencies and their methods is that they do not base themselves on the movements toward independence arising within the working class; try to make these movements conscious of their significance and lead them toward the foundation of a Labor Party. They avoid any direct, large and open struggle in the unions to actually gather the forces for, train and build a Labor Party.

Instead they base themselves on the eventual reform of various petty bourgeois forces, like the labor bureaucracy, NBIPP or Peace and Freedom, or at best, the spontaneous evolution of workers consciousness in favor of a Labor Party. But the development of the class struggle since 1968 shows that these petty bourgeois formations will never lead a struggle for a Labor Party. Indeed, at each point that the working class has moved in this direction, these petty bourgeois forces have tried to drag it back into the Democratic Party. This is the role that the labor bureaucracy has consistently played and the role that NBIPP and PFP are playing today.

And for precisely this reason the movement itself will not evolve spontaneously into a Labor Party. The movement itself will evolve, yes, but not into a Labor Party, not because the working class is backward or stupid, but because the bourgeoisie, the labor bureaucracy, the Kremlin and its petty bourgeois supporters are doing everything in their considerable power to stop it. Thus at each point, promising movements that opened up the possibility of building a Labor Party have been diverted back into the Democratic Party, divided and broken for want of an alternative — in 1972 it was McGovern; in 1976 it was Carter; today it is Jackson.

The tendencies and methods that have based themselves on the eventual reform

of petty bourgeois forces or the spontaneous evolution of the movement into a Labor Party have not only not brought us one step closer to building a Labor Party, they have allowed these promising movements to be divided and dispersed and this in turn has led to the division and dispersal of forces within the working class for a Labor Party. Today there are at least five major organizations for a Labor Party — Socialist Workers Party, Internationalist Workers Party, Revolutionary Workers League, Socialist Action, Fourth Internationalist Tendency — and taken together they don't have the influence in the unions that one of them had a decade ago.

A common struggle for Labor Candidates on the other hand, can not only bring together organizations for a Labor Party and Labor Candidates, it can go far beyond this. It can gather together the forces arising within the unions and the working class as a whole against Reagan. It can overcome the obvious divisions between Black and white workers, employed and unemployed workers, organized and unorganized workers. In this sense it can lay the foundation for the construction of the Labor Party.

Naturally there will be people who will say that this is a nice idea but it's too late — we don't have such candidates, even if we did we couldn't get them on the ballot, etc. But this is beside the point. With a struggle for Labor Candidates in the unions it will be possible to find appropriate candidates, a way to express this on the ballot, etc. Without this, the working class will remain divided, dependent on the Democratic Party, in other words, sitting ducks for the Reagan regime.

Labor Unity

All tendencies for a Labor Party and Labor Candidates must unite forces and make a common fight for these goals in the unions — in other words, build a Labor Party Coalition (or alliance or united front).

Such a common struggle, such a coalition, will take many different forms and have many different manifestations — a common slate, a common platform, a common fight to put candidates on the ballot, to get the unions behind this, to

Manifesto of the Trotskyist Organization on the

MONDALE!

Labor Party Coalition!

build Labor Candidate or Labor Party Committees or caucuses in the unions. It can even take the form of a common fight against union support to Democrats, for an industry-wide auto strike; or against solidarity organizations' support to parties that are not for immediate withdrawal of US forces from Central America, for a national demonstration, referendum, etc., for immediate withdrawal. It can also take the form of common candidates or slates in local union elections.

What is essential is not the form, but the content — a common fight for the independence and unity of the unions and the working class as a whole, for Labor Candidates and a Labor Party.

The Trotskyist Organization has waged a systematic struggle to achieve this — in 1980 for a Labor Candidate and Labor Candidate Committees in the unions to lead this struggle in the 1980 presidential elections; in 1981 for a Workers Candidate for mayor of Detroit; in 1982 for Union Candidates in the Congressional elections; in 1983 for a Labor Party slate in the UAW convention delegate elections and for a Labor Candidate in the convention itself; in 1984 for a Labor Candidate and a Labor Party Coalition to lead this fight.

Petty Bourgeois Disunity

Yet other tendencies that claim to be for a Labor Party have never joined in this struggle. By and large they haven't even responded to us. Even the participants in the Emergency National Trotskyist Conference who voted for putting forward a common slate in the 1984 elections have refused to do anything to actually carry this out. And the only responses that we have received on this score have been from the IWP that basically argues that there should be no common fight because the Trotskyist Organization is no good and from the RWL that proposed a meeting that it has refused to carry out.

Why do these tendencies refuse a common struggle? Why don't they even bother to respond, or if they do, they do so with divisive attacks and evasions? This is not simply because they disagree with the Trotskyist Organization's method for building a Labor Party. This might explain why they might not get involved in the struggle, but not why they don't even bother to respond in a principled fashion.

They don't even bother to reply because they aren't concerned with the unity of working class or Labor Party forces. They envision a Labor Party as a by-product of the self-reform of various petty bourgeois forces, be it the labor bureaucracy, NBIPP or PFP. Thus they are far more concerned with forging alliances with these petty bourgeois forces than they are with working class forces. And this is an endless task for the petty bourgeoisie is by its very nature incapable of real unity against the bourgeoisie.

One can say at best that these tendencies don't appreciate the importance of alliances, even between small organizations, in opening up the class struggle. They don't realize what they are up against in forging such alliances — the

bourgeoisie, which at every turn tries to divide and split the working class and its forces. They don't realize that such alliances don't just happen; they must be forged, fought for, sealed and maintained in a difficult and exacting political struggle; that revolutionaries, when such alliances are necessary, do not allow anything to get in the way of building them. Like everything else, these tendencies think that this unity is simply going to arise in the course of the class struggle.

But this has not happened and it is not going to happen. On the contrary the heightening of the class struggle has produced even more splits within working class parties and organizations and will continue to do so — SWP, IWP, RWL, SA, FIT, etc. And the masses of unionized workers are sick and tired of seeing half-a-dozen different organizations in front of their factories that can not seem to make a common struggle for the most basic goals, nor even explain their differences in an intelligible fashion.

The refusal of the different tendencies to enter into a common fight for a Labor Party and Labor Candidates has not only left the masses of workers in the hands of the Democratic Party and the labor bureaucracy in the unions with no alternative to them; it has also diminished the authority, influence and growth of every single one of these organizations.

The Alternative

A common fight for a Labor Party, Labor Candidates and a Labor Party Coalition in any form will rapidly reverse this situation. It will change the relationship of forces between the labor bureaucracy and the Labor Party forces in the unions. Instead of seeing the monolithic pro-Democratic Party bureaucracy on the one hand and half-a-dozen different, seemingly indistinguishable and insignificant, radical or socialist organizations on the other, union members will see two alternatives: the pro-Democratic Party bureaucracy and the Labor Party Coalition. And in such a situation it won't be difficult for the vast majority of workers to choose.

Thus a Labor Party Coalition will be greater than the sum of its parts, no matter how small. It will be a clear alternative to the masses of union members and all exploited and oppressed people. It will strengthen the authority, influence and growth of all independent working class parties and organizations.

Comrades: there is no excuse for further delay. All tendencies have a responsibility not only to join in common struggle to achieve these goals but also to make an all-out struggle for every tendency that claims to represent the working class to do so. Tendencies that refuse to unite forces against the bourgeoisie must be swept aside.

In order to build the fight for a Labor Party, Labor Candidates and a Labor Party Coalition, the Trotskyist Organization calls on all working class organizations to support the Socialist Workers Party candidates for president and vice president, Mel Mason and Andrea Gonzalez, and

put forward a common slate including these candidates.

The Trotskyist Organization has been working to build a Labor Party Coalition with a fight to put a Labor Party Coalition itself on the ballot in Michigan and thus provide Labor Party tendencies with a framework in which to decide their own candidates, platform, etc. But we have not yet been able to mobilize enough support to achieve this goal. Thus the only candidates on the ballot for a Labor Party and Labor Candidates in a large number of states will be the SWP candidates. Other working class candidates that may be on the ballot will be pro-Democratic Party candidates like the Communist Party or Workers World Party candidates. Thus all Labor Party tendencies have a responsibility to support the SWP candidates against the bourgeois candidates and pro-Democratic Party working class candidates.

But support to Mason and Gonzalez without a struggle for a Labor Party and Labor Party Candidates, a struggle to actually build a Labor Party Coalition in the unions, will mean nothing. Once again we call on all tendencies for a Labor Party, especially the Socialist Workers Party, Socialist Action, and the Fourth Internationalist Tendency, other Mason-Gonzalez supporters, to join in a common fight for a common slate in the unions.

The Youth

The working class youth must play a leading role in the struggle. Only a fight for a Labor Party and Labor Candidates against Reagan and Mondale can bring about the union and working class independence and unity necessary to create a life for the working class youth in this moribund system and ultimately free them from it, necessary to win the jobs, schools, housing and freedom that the youth must have to live. And only the youth are free from the ties to the old policies and organizations holding back this struggle for the independence and unity of the working class.

Thus the Trotskyist Organization addresses itself especially to you, working class youth, young men, young women, of all races and nationalities, you who suffer daily the oppression and indignities of this dying system. Your struggle for a Labor Party, Labor Candidates and a Labor Party Coalition in 1984 can transform, revolutionize your class, render it one, independent and powerful.

Join this struggle. Organize yourselves in circles or clubs of young revolutionaries to lead this struggle.

As the American Trotskyists said in 1946: "The American working class is the source of unlimited power... it can lift the whole world on its shoulders when it rises... this is the premise of all our calculations."

For the Independence and Unity of the Working Class!

Labor Party, Labor Candidates, Labor Party Coalition Now!

Down with Reagan and Mondale!

For a Labor Party, a Labor Press

Many youth and workers like the idea of a Labor Party, but they are reluctant to buy *Truth* and still more to subscribe. But to build an independent Labor Party you have to have an independent labor paper.

The fight for a Labor Party is a fight for the independence of the unions and the class as a whole. This means they must have their own positions, strategy and tactics. They have to have their own struggle. And there is no way to do this if workers do not have their own paper.

Every day the bosses publish reams and reams of propaganda against the workers and their struggle. Read the editorials, the "news" in the daily papers. Catch their slant. And, more often than not, the union papers just echo this stuff.

We are fighting to build a paper — and a party — that represents the working class, serves its interests, a real workers paper. And we need your support.

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Summer Schedule

Preparations for the Ninth World Congress of the Fourth International and summer vacations oblige us to publish *Truth* less frequently. The next issue of *Truth* will be published on August 8.

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Toledo area workers mass picket at AP Parts

1984 Elections

For a Labor Candidate from Toledo UAW Local 14!

Brothers and sisters of UAW Local 14:

We are writing to you to propose a common struggle for a Labor Party and Labor Candidates because that is what is lacking on all fronts in the struggle against concessions, scabs and the entire fight against the bosses' and government attacks on the unions. This situation demands a *political* response so the interests of the workers can come to *dominate* the situation.

Since the May 21 demonstration supported by 3,000 militant unionists and the June 3 rally in commemoration of the Toledo Auto-Lite strike organized by the Toledo Area Solidarity Committee (TASC), the company has ceased negotiations, has persecuted 19 strikers who now face grand jury charges, and has *added a second shift of scabs*. Worst of all, the International supports Mondale in the elections and thus puts itself in opposition to independent organization. This is what the strike is presently facing and what it has to answer.

What won 3,000 workers to your side was the will you showed to fight the tactics of the company — scab labor and "Knuckles." Thus it is necessary to continue this struggle, to make a fight throughout the UAW for mass picketing of AP Parts.

But this determination must begin to take a political form. The main problem is that the Republicans and the Democrats dominate the political scene — the elections. It would be a mistake for you to turn a deaf ear to doing political work that would further your cause in the immediate sense and build a workers party — a Labor Party. For instance, at the June 3 rally organized by TASC we heard that the ballot requirements of your state are such that it would be possible even at this late hour for you to collect enough signatures to put candidates of Local 14 on the ballot.

You could also support the candidates of the Socialist Workers Party who are running for president and vice president (Mason and Gonzalez) as a way to take a step toward breaking

with the Democrats and Mondale, who is falsely identified in the minds of many workers with labor.

At the TASC rally we saw a sign that said "Who we are not" and they listed *The Militant* (newspaper of the Socialist Workers Party) along with "New Solidarity." This is a mistaken view. Although we are not in political agreement with the SWP, it is a working class organization and "New Solidarity" is not. "New Solidarity" is an anti-labor organization that has attacked worker militants. The kind of people who belong to it are off-duty cops. But the SWP was once part of a tradition of leading the way for a working class party and even today it still runs working class candidates against the two capitalist parties. Organizing support for its candidates doesn't mean we have to agree with its platform and the way it put it forward, but it does mean making a break with the Democrats.

We do not have such short memories that we have forgotten that Carter and Mondale *designed* concessions and that "our own" Governor Blanchard, the liberal Democratic governor of Michigan, proudly boasts of "saving Chrysler." Now you pay the penalty of the union heads accepting this policy. The company went too far when it tried to gouge you for 35% *more* concessions just as many unions are showing signs of inner turmoil and struggle against the leaders who betrayed the ranks over concessions, as it becomes clear that the worker got *nothing* out of concessions.

The Democrats, much like the Republicans, *do not in any way represent labor*. All their policies are geared to represent business interests. They are the left and right hand of the state itself. Your candidates, like all Labor Candidates, would truly represent the interests of labor and they would answer to labor and not to businessmen, the administration and the courts.

The current leadership of the UAW does not support your struggle. Bieber was silent and issued no statement here at Solidarity House

even as help poured into your local, because he didn't want "his man" Mondale to be embarrassed by having to take a position on the strike. Don't forget that it was Carter/Mondale who invoked the Taft-Hartley Law against the miners!

If you look back to the Toledo Auto-Lite Strike of 1984, and search for the reason for its success, you'll find that it had a political (or semi-political) leadership. The Unemployed League that organized it was a part of a larger organization trying to form the American Workers Party. They understood how to fight the courts, the government and the bosses and did not leave the political field open for the

Democrats to destroy the fight for the CIO. We know this because the organizers of the strike ended up in the same party with our predecessors who went on to provide the leadership of the Minneapolis Teamsters strike.

We hope to know your response soon for a common struggle for a Labor Party and Labor Candidates.

Fraternally,

Barbara Putnam
Organizer, Detroit Local Committee
Trotskyist Organization
and member Local 2071, UAW

No to the Oppression of Blacks!

On June 12, the Supreme Court ruled against a lower court order that was supposed to prevent a disproportionate layoff of Black firefighters in Memphis who were under the "protection" of an affirmative action consent decree. Reagan's attorney general, William French Smith, hailed the decision saying, "federal courts cannot impose quotas based on racial considerations . . . we have maintained all along that quotas are a device for discrimination."

The worst side of the story is that the firefighters union, on behalf of three white firefighters, filed the appeal claiming that the affirmative action consent decree was a violation of seniority clauses in the union contract, and this was upheld by the Supreme Court. This decision is a blow to Black workers. It underlines the necessity of having an independent policy to begin with. It is clear that what the left hand giveth, the right hand taketh away.

While the seniority system in the unions was historically designed to prevent industry from using up workers for a short time,

then throwing them into the streets, the unions have never consistently defended the rights of Black workers. Blacks, women and immigrants have always been "the last hired and the first fired." The new ruling institutionalizes this reality with the collaboration of the unions. Albert Shankar, head of the teachers union and a member of the AFL-CIO executive council, as a staunch opponent of affirmative action, gave the union seal of approval: "We believe seniority rules are good in the long run for minorities because they're objective." But objectively, Blacks, women and other minorities are "the last hired and the first fired."

We don't believe that affirmative action will solve centuries of racial discrimination. But a strong fight in the unions led by Blacks can begin to untie the Gordian knot the union bureaucrats have made by tying the unions to the state and the needs of industry. This means a fight for a sliding scale of hours, dividing work among all workers with no cut in pay.
B.P.

To the SWP Oppositions: For a Common Fight

We are writing to you, comrades of the Fourth Internationalist Tendency (FIT) and Socialist Action (SA), because your two factions and our organization have all taken a strong position in favor of a Labor Party. While we are supporting the candidates of the Socialist Workers Party for president and vice president, Mason and Gonzalez, we are doing so critically — in order to raise the fight for a Labor Party to the central place it ought to have.

We propose to you, the expelled oppositionists of the SWP, a common and coordinated effort to raise this urgent struggle in the trade unions in the course of the 1984 election campaign. Concretely, in addition to support for Mason and Gonzalez, we propose to you that we fight for the formation of Labor Party Committees in the key unions in which our organizations have influence, and that where the SWP is not putting up candidates, we encourage the fielding of Labor Candidates from these same unions.

Please note that we are making a very concrete proposal — the formation of Labor Party Committees and Labor Candidates in districts where no working class organizations appear on the ballot — though certainly a difficult struggle. Nevertheless, the rewards for the American working class far outweigh the difficulty.

Finally, we know that there are some political obstacles to such an agreement.

In "Socialist Strategy for Class Struggle Transformation of the Unions," a draft resolution presented to the SWP NC in August 1983 by what is now the FIT, we read:

"The central propaganda slogan of the revolutionary socialist party today is 'Build a labor party — independent working class political action!'

"Revolutionary workers in the unions should try in all possible ways to organize a broad rank and file movement favoring the formation of local labor party committees, raising the prospect of running labor candidates endorsed by their unions. Where we find a favorable response to these initiatives we must be prepared to move from the plane of propaganda to agitation and action."

In this case there would seem to be every political basis for joint work. The only possible barrier is the expressed intention of the FIT that it remain as a loyal faction of the SWP and not engage in any public activity. But in this case, in such a central struggle, the FIT would be wholly justified in engaging in public activity that would at the same time be an educational experience for young members of the SWP, not

to mention workers as a whole.

On the other hand, while Socialist Action does engage in public activity, it puts forward a different position on the Labor Party in its "Trade Union Resolution," submitted to the same SWP NC Plenum:

"The most pressing objective need now facing the American working class is the construction of an independent labor party.

"The launching of this historically necessary and decisive step can only occur through the inspiration and mobilization of the mass of

American workers and their allies."

Thus while SA agrees on the necessity of a Labor Party and on its objective importance, at least at the time of this resolution, it does not see any concrete steps that can be taken to raise this struggle in the working class. But then, this resolution is already a year old. In that year, the crisis of the Democratic Party has accelerated sharply, and the question of class independence in the 1984 elections has come to the forefront of the political situation in the US. And while it is true that a mass Labor Party is not on the

political horizon before the elections, it is also just as true that the fight we are proposing could make the workers' experiences in the elections an integral part of the formation of a Labor Party.

In simple terms, the needs of the present situation far outweigh any reasons either the FIT or the SA might have for abstaining from such common work. We await your reply.

Secretariat of the Trotskyist Organization

What You Can Do for Nicaragua

A coalition including a number of left trade union leaders — Victor Reuther, Pete Kelly from the United Auto Workers (UAW); Ron Weisen from the United Steel Workers (USW); Tony Mazzochi from the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW) — has just issued a call for an "Emergency National Conference to Plan United Action Against U.S. Military Intervention in Central America/The Caribbean" on September 14 in Cleveland, Ohio.

This is the first time that these leaders have taken any action against US intervention in Central America; they did not even fight Lane Kirkland, AFL-CIO head, and his participation in Reagan's war planning board. Thus, their decision is a manifestation of the tremendous will of American young and working people to end their government's exploitation and oppression of their class brothers and sisters in Central America, to establish free and fraternal relations with these peoples and end their mutual isolation. Thus we support this call and appeal to others to do the same.

At the same time, it is also clear that these same leaders want to channel this action into pressure on the right-wing trade union bureaucracy and the imperialist Democratic War Party as a whole. The call reads: "The urgent need now is to unite all opponents of U.S. government intervention in order to mobilize the kind of broad, clear, massive *expression* (our emphasis) necessary to stop the war against the peoples of Central America/the Caribbean."

But an "expression" will not stop either Reagan or Mondale from intervening in Central America. American youth and workers have *expressed* themselves on this question thou-

sands of times in the course of wars led by the imperialist Republican and Democratic Parties — World War I, World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Iran, Nicaragua, Grenada — yet neither the Republicans nor the Democrats budged one inch.

The US finally withdrew its troops from Europe and Asia after World War II only when revolutionary workers in *the US and Europe* rose up against the presence of those troops; when strikes and near general strikes swept the US and France, when revolutions swept Italy and Greece, when the troops themselves organized massive demonstrations in Paris and Guam demanding to be sent home. The US finally withdrew its troops and aid from Vietnam when the North Vietnamese *drove them out* in 1975.

Thus the only way to *stop* US intervention in Central America and the Caribbean is to *defeat* the US intervention. This means a fight for immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all US troops and aid from Central America; *volunteers* and other forms of material aid to defend Nicaragua against the imminent US invasion; a union boycott of all US troops and aid to Central America; workers parties and workers candidates based on the unions to lead this struggle throughout the Americas.

Today the Trotskyist Organization is fighting for a united front of all working class organizations for immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all US troops and aid from Central America as a first step in this struggle. But other tendencies that claim to represent the working class, particularly the Socialist Workers Party, are very reluctant to join in such a struggle. They do not want to alienate the liberal Democrats. They want to leave the door open to a negotiated settlement in Central Am-

erica in which the US retains its power and privileges but cuts its costs.

But the American youth and workers cannot accept such an orientation. The US has nothing to negotiate. If we allow Reagan, the US bankers, businessmen and bosses the right to retain power and privileges over our brothers and sisters in Nicaragua or El Salvador, we allow them the right to retain their power and privileges over us as well. Behind the US intervention in Central America is the fundamentally *racist* ideology according to which these people are incapable of ruling themselves, the same racist ideology they use to rule over us. So, for their freedom and ours, US out of Central America; defend Nicaragua.

If you support this struggle you can march on July 21 in Detroit. You can join the fight for a united front or volunteers. You can make a pledge to the International Workers Fund to help finance our struggle to build workers parties to lead this fight. Your pledge is especially important today at the time of our World Congress, which involves delegates coming together from across the world.

Make your pledge today. (Make checks payable to IWF-Margaret Vitale, and send to Truth.)
M.G.

PLEDGE —
to the International Workers Fund
Send checks or money orders payable
to M. Vitale to TRUTH, P.O. Box 32546,
Detroit, MI 48232