

# TRUTH

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ORGAN OF THE TROTSKYIST ORGANIZATION USA/FRATERNAL SECTION/FOURTH INTERNATIONAL  
FOR A TROTSKYIST CONGRESS REBUILDING THE U.S. SECTION OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL



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Organ of the Trotskyist Organization of the USA  
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For a Trotskyist Congress Rebuilding the US Section of the Fourth  
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PO Box 32546 Detroit Michigan 48232

Editorial Board: Kevin FitzPatrick Margaret Guttshall David Mark  
Fred Michaels Barbara Putnam

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## Lesson of the P-9 Strike: A New Program for Labor

By Barbara Putnam

More than anything else, the P-9--United Packing House Workers Local 9--strike against Hormel has shown the vital necessity for political struggle and a new program to break the unions from the trade union bureaucracy, which is holding back the struggle against the bosses' offensive on the unions. We propose an Alliance for a Labor Party based on the unions to develop the workers' class struggle against concessions. Above all, the P-9 strike went farthest in providing a basis for a new program to be developed, and carried out that will succeed in raising the class confidence of the workers and draw to their side the poor and downtrodden, the youth without a future, and the poorer sections of the middle classes.

Already a basis for a Labor Party began to reveal itself in the actual attempts of the workers to come to general conclusions about the employer/government collaboration in union busting. An overview of the P-9 strike itself, and the conditions in which it took place, reveals that the central task is to advance beyond the limits imposed by trade unionism, pure and simple, to the formulation of a program and, consequently, to the formation of a Labor Party to put it into practice.

Every good strike, like a good story, has a beginning, a middle and an end. But in order for the current struggle against Hormel to come to a good end, in order for the present phase now going on to be only a low curve in a spiral soon to rise, and higher than before, review the P-9 strike, see its inner dynamic, draw conclusions, and fight for a turn to a new beginning, a higher form of struggle than the one in the past.

Way back at the beginning of the story, 1933, the Austin meatpackers waged the first powerful, militant sit-down strike that forced the bosses to recognize their union, the United Packinghouse Workers of America Local No. 9, CIO. The strength of this struggle was to last for many years, holding fast the positions the workers gained during the rise of industrial unions and the CIO.

But gradually, in the absence of a clear

program and a Labor Party, a reformist labor bureaucracy developed, eroding the gains of the past and adapting the unions to the needs of the capitalist bosses under the watchword "business unionism," a policy whereby the workers are supposed to accept their inferior status, and act as junior partners with the companies.

Recent changes taking place in the meatpacking industry resulted in a monopolization of the market, plant closings and filing of bankruptcies. However, Hormel, the most profitable company in the industry, seized the opportunities presented by the bosses' offensive on the unions to demand deep concessions. In response to the concessions drive the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) leaders, now representing most meatpackers, declared a policy of "retrenchment," which the P-9 workers say "drives union wages down to and finally below non-union competition. This causes high profits and corporate growth for UFCW companies." ("We Can Have Our Union Back," a pamphlet put out by former P-9 members). They also say that UFCW leaders have grown fat off dues that have doubled since 1975 based on increasing numbers of part-timers replacing full-time union members. For example, UFCW President Bill Wynn's annual salary is \$165,000!

Concessions and abject class collaboration have presented a great challenge to the workers of the 1980's. By 1978 a new leadership was being born in P-9 and began to form in these last years of struggle of the ranks and big strikes against concessions: PATCO, crushed by the Reagan administration in 1981; the Greyhound workers strike that began to draw in support of other unions; the Wheeling - Pittsburgh steelworkers strike; Phelps-Dodge and others.

Processes set in motion by the union busting strategy of the bosses and the government, not to mention the capitulation to it by the labor bureaucracy, began to come to a head in Austin as the meatpackers prepared to strike Hormel. The UFCW leaders had accepted

separate contract expiration dates for the different locals in the Hormel chain, breaking up the solidarity of the workers in the chain. A split began to develop between P-9 and the UFCW leadership that was a result of the UFCW leadership's policy of class collaboration and concessions.

August 17, 1985, Local P-9 went out on strike. Hormel had made its last offer for a contract that was so bad even UFCW officials recommended rejection and promised to support P-9. But when P-9 voted down the contract twice and decided to strike Hormel, the UFCW leaders denounced them and later released a scurrilous "fact book" defending Hormel and slandering P-9.

Where other local unions and union oppositions had not been able to carry out an effective, independent struggle against concessions, Local P-9 began a vigorous strike, revitalizing methods long buried since the 30's: large, militant picket lines around the plant to keep out scabs, large-scale support from the surrounding community, roving pickets sent to other locals in the Hormel chain to bring them behind the strike (i.e., to Ottumwa Local 431 in Iowa, etc.).

Hormel's virulent response, and that of the State of Minnesota and the UFCW bureaucracy, showed the high stakes of this strike. The bosses realized that Austin would necessarily be a test in which they would be obliged to gauge the fighting capacity of the labor movement. At the behest of Hormel, "pro-labor" Democratic Governor Perpich along with the union-card-carrying Austin mayor, Tom Kough, called in the National Guard, January 20, to break the strike.

But support from the underdogs in the labor movement flowed toward Austin in a series of well-attended, militant support rallies, and in the form of donations, food and supplies for the strikers, etc. On February 15, there was a mass rally of 3,000 unionists and socialists held in the Austin high school auditorium based on car caravans of supporters from far-away states.

Right then and there existed a basis to conclude that the attacks by the bosses, their government and its lackeys required more than a strike. It required taking opposition to concessions to the plane of

political struggle and a united leadership to systematically organize around a fighting workers program throughout the labor movement. But the socialists, who were the backbone of organizing labor support for P-9, withdrew from this task. Ominously, Tom Kough, the same mayor who was instrumental in bringing out the National Guard, was warmly greeted by P-9 President, Jim Guyette, and spoke to the rally about a peaceful settlement with Hormel. At this same rally, the P-9 leaders announced a new tactical turn, away from the militancy that had won the labor movement to the side of the strike, to an ineffectual national boycott of Hormel products. Consequently, militant support began to die away, bit by bit.

Now we are entering the middle of the story. During this same period, a new labor organization began to take shape, the National Rank and File Against Concessions (NRFAC). It cut across all the tendencies and unions opposed to concessions. The NRFAC held a founding conference, December 6-8, 1985 in Chicago. It was a step in the right direction because it began to lift the struggle beyond the confines of the individual local and posed the possibility of breaking the spell of trade unionism, pure and simple, so deeply embedded in the consciousness of the American workers. This had all the potential of a new beginning of political centralization of the fight against concessions. Every unionist who spoke said that "concessions do not save jobs" and opposed the "partnership-with-the-bosses" ideology of the labor lieutenants. A minority present, including our members, members of the Workers League, and others, spoke to the need for a Labor Party. Later, during the Solidarity City days, June 23-28 in Austin, Crystal Lee Sutton (the real "Norma Rae"), who has long been for a Labor Party, spoke. Also, Vernon Bellecourt, leader of the American Indian Movement, addressed the rally, and according to a participant: "His talk, which drew the largest response from the crowd, focused on the needs of labor and those oppressed, to form an independent political party that would truly represent the worker." (*Local 1200 Defense Coordinator*, August 1986, "Solidarity City," by Dennis Koncewicz).

In fact, the logic of the situation demands a Labor Party. If the workers already see their interests as counterposed to those of the bosses and the bureaucrats, then it follows

they must have a means for realizing their class interests, thus breaking the stranglehold of the pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy.

It is not the workers' fault that a split is taking place in the unions. It has been created by the bureaucrats and their total adaptation to the needs of the bosses. A total and conscious break from the bureaucracy is needed. But the NRFAC leaders, many of whom are socialists, contradict this concrete need. The Statement of Purpose they put forward at the Founding Conference in Chicago said: "It is not our intention to single out particular leaders or international unions." Thus, they decided beforehand not to take on the AFL-CIO strikebreakers who collaborated with the National Guard, Governor Perpich, the courts and First Bank to destroy P-9's strike. Instead they proposed only to "provide direct, immediate aid to those unions who have chosen to fight concessions."

Throughout the strike this social worker mentality was the predominant feature of participating socialists and revolutionaries. It did little good to cheer the P-9 leaders on from behind, simply reporting the strike, while refusing to collaborate in a fight for a Labor Party. This was the position of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), the Communist Labor Party, Socialist Action and many others.

After P-9 was put in trusteeship by the local UFCW leaders through the courts, former P-9 members have tried to find a way to continue their struggle. They are forming a new union, North American Meat-Packers Union (NAMPU) and an election will be held September 1 where the meatpackers at the Austin plant will decide between this union and UFCW, or no union at all. While on principle we loyally defend NAMPU from the bosses, we think that forming NAMPU, as well as the concept of "local autonomy" behind it, is no substitute for a political battle to break with the bureaucracy. Furthermore, it is a step backwards from the promising developments opened by P-9's initial reliance on mass support for the strike and from the meaning of the foundation of NRFAC. Worst of all, there is every indication avowedly socialist organizations are already beginning to trail behind this latest development, promoting rank and file unions as the road forward for workers!

Here we are at the end of the story. Or will it be a new beginning? An Alliance for a Labor Party based on the unions poses the critical problem of program and leadership. Those who claim to represent the interests of the working class have a responsibility to unify the workers. Leadership is the true responsibility. A common struggle to lead the fight against concessions to a political conclusion can overcome the isolation of the socialists from the working class and the isolation of the union struggles from the whole oppressed population. These leaderships would regain their self-respect, thus paving the way for a rise of class confidence and class unity.

An Alliance for a Labor Party is based on what the working class organizations and the union oppositions linked to them have in common: a common desire 1) for the unions and oppressed to be free from the bosses propaganda and their parties and candidates; workers candidates vs. bosses candidates, 2) for an end to concessions, layoffs, plant closings and lockouts; workers control of industry, 3) to resolve unemployment and the lowered standard of living through a policy of 30 hours work for 40 hours pay at the best union wage attained; 4) for an end to the courts, cops, National Guard, and labor lieutenants' strikebreaking; 5) to abolish Taft-Hartley and all other anti-labor laws.

The way to turn these desires into a declaration of independence and a program of mobilization of the working class is through a united front effort of all working class organizations and union oppositions to form an Alliance for a Labor Party.

# Alliance for a Labor Party

By Margaret Guttshall

The Michigan Election Commission has just decided to allow Barbara Putnam, candidate for the US House of Representatives from the 13th Congressional District (Detroit) of Michigan, and other independent candidates, on the November ballot.

At this point, Barbara is the only candidate on the ballot in the United States in favor of an Alliance for a Labor Party. Communist Party candidates are campaigning for a "Peace Congress" and support to the Congressional Black Caucus and other pro-capitalist candidates. The Socialist Workers Party, Workers League and Internationalist Workers Party candidates claim to be for a Labor Party, in the past have refused to make a common fight for one, for an Alliance for a Labor Party.

The point of our campaign is to change this situation, to get tendencies that claim to represent the working class, particularly tendencies against concessions, to make a common fight for an Alliance for a Labor Party, through a political struggle and mobilization of workers for this demand.

There is a tremendous struggle against concessions in which workers are making many sacrifices. Yet the tendencies that claim to be against concessions refuse to take up a common political struggle against them, for an Alliance for a Labor Party to lead this fight. This is why workers are making very little real headway against concessions.

Every day the bosses bombard working people with propaganda blaming the unions, high wages, and work rules for the loss of jobs, the deterioration of working class neighborhoods, schools, etc. And the union bureaucrats say the same. Chrysler and the UAW leadership just forced workers at the Jefferson Avenue Plant to make even more concessions on this basis and they have just done the same to workers at the Trenton Plant.

How can workers hope to advance in this climate, if the parties that claim to be against concessions, and for a Labor Party refuse to make a common political struggle

against the bosses, bureaucrats, concessions and the Republicans and Democrats who support them, for an immediate and concrete alternative to them? This is like trying to take on a heavyweight with your arms tied behind your back.

We do not think they can. Thus, the Trotskyist Organization will concentrate its efforts in the 1986 elections on the fight for an Alliance for a Labor Party against concessions, for a slate to build it, and for a vote for Barbara Putnam as the candidate leading this struggle (as well as other working class candidates).

We plan to build this campaign by meeting with other militants, tendencies and organizations in an effort to win their support, by organizing an open debate and discussion on the road forward for the struggle against concessions and the fight to build a Labor Party, including representatives of different working class tendencies, and by publishing and distributing a brochure on our campaign and candidate at working class meetings and factories in Detroit.

We ask all workers to support this struggle by writing statements in favor of an Alliance for a Labor Party and demanding their organizations support this struggle. As did votes for Barbara Putnam in the 1985 Detroit mayoral elections, this will show workers want class unity.

## D E B A T E:

### Unity Against Concessions, the Labor Party, and the 1986 Elections

Speaker: **Barbara Putnam**, Candidate  
US House of Representatives,  
13th District  
Other working class candidates and  
tendencies invited.

**Saturday, October 11, 2 PM**  
Student Center Building, Rm. 261a  
Wayne State University

## Declaration on Election Results

*This article is about the lessons of the struggle of the workers vanguard in the recent elections in Spain, including our comrades struggle for a Workers Alliance. We urge militants and tendencies in America to take this experience into consideration in deciding their policy here.*

Only the Socialist Workers Will Break Gonzalez's Alliance with the Banks

Only the Workers Alliance Policy Will Break the Isolation of the Communists

To all working class fighters from all parties and from all tendencies:

The June 22 election results show the working class held back in a difficult political conjuncture.

These results will make the new parliament more unstable, the government's policy more indecisive, Gonzalez more dependent on his agreements with capital and the monarchy, and the monarchic regime in general more insecure.

That is, these results will favor the political effectiveness of the workers mass struggle.

Nevertheless, the great mass of workers in the city and the country, deceived by the PSOE [the social democratic party in Spain] but still afraid of the future and its uncertain outcome, have again given their votes, nine million votes, to Gonzalez's alliance with the bankers and the Francoist military chiefs.

There is no point in lamenting this. It is necessary to understand and to act.

Behind alliances with confusing interests, like the "United Left," adopting sectarian attitudes toward Socialist workers and divided in their ranks by numerous slates and groups, the most militant and vanguard sector of the working class did not succeed in winning the votes of millions of more backward workers and employees, did not know how to help them draw a balance sheet of four years of failures, was not able to turn these comrades against the "socialist" chiefs who have gone over to the bourgeoisie.

The balance sheet of these elections is of

the failure of the most conscious and combative workers' sector in its efforts to politically attract the broad masses of the workers. But this indubitable, and in time correctible, failure must be attributed completely to the policy, opportunist (toward the "left" capitalists) and sectarian (toward other workers tendencies) practiced by almost all the parties, groups and factions that claim to be for communism and the proletarian revolution.

Comrades:

The growth of strikes and their radicalization, the political agitation against imperialism and national oppression, the progressive discontent of the peasants, fishermen, storekeepers, the indisputable discrediting of all the PSOE's promises, have established the objective conditions for the working class to break up Gonzalez's alliance with the bankers, Francoists and imperialists in a way that all its organizations and forces can be united against them. After the elections results, these objective conditions will continue to improve. The problem remained and remains the subjective conditions, that is, in the policy that the proletarian vanguard, its parties and tendencies, must adopt toward the Socialist workers, to their party and their union.

It is necessary to fight for a workers and peasants alliance, of all parties that base themselves on the working masses, to fight the power of the bankers, Francoists and imperialists.

Comrades:

The PSOE keeps its majority, but the campaign revealed before millions of voters its alliance with the monied aristocracy, with the top army chiefs and their king Juan Carlos, with US imperialism. Only a little over one million workers decided to turn their backs on Gonzalez because of this pact, and the immense majority of them strengthened not the militant proletariat, but abstentionism or even bourgeois demagogues.

In order to break up this alliance, it is not sufficient to denounce it. The most

combative, communist, revolutionary workers must seek every chance to *link arms* with the Socialist workers in a strike, in a demonstration, in the parliament itself, with the government itself, to the extent that it is a question of fighting against the capitalists and Francoists.

Break the alliance with capital and the monarchy, form a government of the united working class, a government of a workers and peasants alliance.

Fraga's bourgeois coalition maintains its large banking support and loses only a quarter of a million votes, but with this result it *has lost the main thing*; the possibility for the Spanish bourgeoisie to directly recover governmental power by peaceful and parliamentary means. And this result has decisive importance. Fraga's group has failed, will split and will cease to be the threat that paralyzes the more backward workers.

The Francoist monarchy's stability, based in the power of the bankers and of the Francoist military caste, and whose policy is to hand over the Spanish market to the international monopolies, and the oppression of Iberian nationalities, does *not* have, since Fraga's failure in these elections, any other support distinct from the alliance of the PSOE with these reactionary forces. The advance of Suarez's bourgeois party, and the advances of the parties of the Catalan bourgeoisie and the Gallician, Canarian, Valencia, Andalusian and Aragonese regionalist bourgeoisies indicate what new bourgeois forces are that fight for a leading place in the monarchy, but which day by day divide and weaken this regime. The break of the *Socialist workers* with the *monarchist bankers*, whose alliance is the basis for and the most fragile point of the monarchic regime, will permit the working class to take all the initiative away from these bourgeois forces that seek a new arrangement, and proclaim the *Republic* and the *right to self-determination*.

*Workers and peasants alliance for the republic and national freedom.*

The advance of Herri Batasuna [the political expression of support for ETA, the Basque armed rebels] is proof that there not only exists a growth of the national demand, controlled or detoured by the capitalists of

the CiU and of the PNV toward their policy of family friendship with the Spanish monarchic oligarchy, but there also exists a *political radicalization* of these demands. The proletariat can gain nothing if it holds back this radicalization with "pacts," "negotiations," and "band-aids" that leave the central power with its hands free and the people disarmed and trusting in the words of their chiefs. The proletariat can only gain with this radicalization of the political demands for national freedom on the condition that from now on the workers parties fight tirelessly for the right of self-determination.

*Unconditional amnesty for the Basque fighters!*

The results of the "United Left," for which parliament will not grant and seats and which scarcely got a total of 65,000 votes, the level to which the PCE (Communist Party of Spain) was condemned and sank in 1982, is an irrefutable proof of the failure of the Stalinist policy, a combination of irresponsible *sectarianism* toward the Socialist workers, to whom they directed not the slightest unitary appeal, and *opportunism* toward Gonzalez's government and its reactionary alliances with the bankers and Francoists, to which they counterposed no alternative power. Against NATO, seven million citizens said NO to Gonzalez, and many were socialist workers. To defend pensions, four million workers made a one-day general strike on June 20, 1985. Many were socialists and UGT (Socialist union) members. The policy of Iglesias, Carrillo and Gallego has not brought the smallest fruit. The final figures are terrible. All the factions together scarcely reached 1,200,000 worker voters, barely increasing their catastrophic results in 1982, after four years of swindle and deception of the working class!

What does this mean? That the militant, combative, conscious sector of the vanguard, of the working class, is being increasingly isolated from the masses of its own class, from the backward, inactive sectors of the youth, of the people in general. The attempt to make a non-proletarian "left," separated from the Socialist workers, and from the other parties of revolutionary workers, is carrying the workers movement into a wretched blind alley.

The comrades of the PCE, of the PCC, of the



PCPE, [these three are the results of the split in the Spanish CP] of the MUC, of the PO(m-l), etc. ... must react to their leaders' suicidal policy! Down with sectarianism and opportunism, for a firm and loyal policy of a class united front!

Comrades:

During the years that have passed from 1982 to 1986, the PORE (Revolutionary Workers Party of Spain) has struggled for the first steps toward a workers alliance to be made by some minority parties and groups that, with greater eagerness, claim to be for the workers revolution, or even Trotskyist communism. Gonzalez's electoral triumph in 1982 had as a counterweight, not of small significance, a beginning of 120,000 votes for the PST slate in which the PORE also ran as an ally. As a point of departure for four years of struggle it was a firm support.

During these years we have discussed with the PST, with the POSL, with PO(m-l), with the PCC, we tried with the "Nuevo Claridad" Socialist left, with MC and LCR... Tirelessly we proposed a *workers alliance block* to advance politically and practically in the regroupment of advanced workers and youth within the line of a class united front. All avoided it to the last day. They prefer to counterpose similar platforms to each other; they prefer to fight over the same terrain without trying to extend it together as far as possible. All of us, ourselves included, have not come up to the 1982 figures. We can say that the working class voter, including the one who listens to us attentively, does not bet on this division nor excuse it. He listens to our propaganda, but he reserves his vote.

Thus the only road by which the class can advance, will either be imposed and accelerated by its fighters and most determined groups, or by the workers themselves after defeats and deceptions. But there is no doubt that the *turn* toward action of the workers vanguard and the *conquest* of the confidence of the masses by this vanguard, will be inseparable from the policy of the class united front.

The election results leave us a more favorable objective terrain, but also the proof of the confusion and isolation of the vanguard from the proletariat. The chances to advance will

come, but the means we must set ourselves. It is time to establish the first accords for a workers alliance! There is no time to lose!

Political Bureau of the PORE  
(Revolutionary Workers Party of Spain)

Translated from *La Aurora*, No. 495, 27 June-2 July 1986

## October 25 Actions

By Fred Michaels

On July 9 most of the pacifist and Latin American solidarity organizations issued a call for nationally coordinated regional actions for October 25. The call raises the same basic, four demands around which the April Actions coalition of 1985 was organized: "Abolish All Nuclear weapons by the Year 2000; Stop the U.S. War in Central America and End Intervention in The Middle East; Redirect Resources From The Military To Meet Human Needs and Defend Human Rights; Cut All Ties With South Africa and End Racism at Home." Now, as then, the Trotskyist Organization supports the call for action.

We want to participate in these regional actions, specifically, in the action in Chicago. Our policy is:

Volunteers and aid to Nicaragua!  
Nicaragua, your war is our war!  
Boycott South Africa  
No support to the Democratic Party  
that votes for the *contras*!

United action is the only way that the powerful sentiment against US intervention in Central America and support to the South African Blacks can be directed consciously *against* the imperialists including the Democratic Party.

Once again the apparent initiative for the action came from the pacifist and solidarity organizations, that is, the non-working class wing of this coalition. This is not due to any lack of calls by working class organizations for demonstrations, solidarity actions, etc. Rather, it is due to the constant refusal of the working class organizations to *act together* to lead this movement. Thus the initiative falls into the hands of these petty bourgeois organizations.

What is so bad about that? Isn't it good that they take the initiative?

*The Workers Mobilization and the 1986 Elections*

No, not in the absence of working class leadership.

This call has a contradictory character. On the one hand, there is a strong and powerful opposition to the war against Nicaragua in the vanguard of the working class as well as a growing mobilization among the oppressed around the world. The mobilizations are sufficiently strong in response to the vote for \$100 million in contra aid, that the organizers have been forced to call a public response to this outrage. These mobilizations fundamentally define this need for action, and, hence, the Trotskyist Organization's wholehearted support to it.

But the organizations initiating the call do not seek to advance only the interests of the working class or of the oppressed peoples. They have a stake in the imperialist democracy, from the class on which they base themselves, the petty bourgeoisie, and the political party that they are tied to, the imperialist Democratic Party.

In particular, these actions have been called because the initiating organizations are supporting Democrats in the upcoming 1986 elections. Several of the organizations have expressed elsewhere their goal of electing "peace" Senators, etc., as the *key* to their strategy for 1986.

It is precisely the contradiction between the political goals of these organizations, and the movement that exists, that the Trotskyist Organization wants to resolve *in favor of* of the working class vanguard *against* the Democratic Party.

*Three Responses*

This situation where the initiative falls into the hands of the petty bourgeois organizations is a *direct result of the crisis of Trotskyism in the United States*. It is a result of a policy of abandoning leadership of the anti-intervention movement to the petty bourgeois organizations. This policy takes two seemingly opposite forms among the organizations claiming to be Trotskyist.

One is participating fully in the coalitions under their leadership. This attitude dominates among the larger organizations in the working class.

Equally false is a policy which abandons these coalitions and actions by refusing to make a fight for a united working class leadership.

A correct policy — a united front of *working class organizations* to fight for working class leadership of this movement *inside these coalitions, inside this movement* is the policy of the Trotskyist Organization.

*Following the leadership of the petty bourgeoisie*

What has the Nicaraguan Revolution and the US working class gotten as a result of the policy of following the leadership of the pacifist and solidarity organizations in this movement? What has the supporting the Democratic Party done for this movement?

This policy is responsible for the relatively weak mass movement against aid to the contras.

The current leadership of the coalition is unable to build a mass movement because it is not based on the strength of the US working class, is not based on building solidarity between the US and Nicaraguan workers, is not based on defending the revolution.

Instead the coalition is based on pacifist fear of war, liberal sympathy for poor and starving people (not solidarity) and a stake in American democracy. The ability of the pacifists to occupy a position of "support" to Nicaragua and support to American democracy is rapidly disappearing in the face of the rising war.

*Pro-American Stand*

As the war effort intensifies, the pacifists place more and more pressure on Nicaragua to submit to the Contadora peace process, to accept the presence of reactionary priests and newspapers, to renounce violence against the contras. The same process holds true for South Africa.

Jesse Jackson, the central spokesman today for the Democratic Party left-wing (and the candidate supported by virtually all these organizations in 1984), has recently taken stands on both Nicaragua and South Africa reflecting this increasing pro-American policy.

He called on Nicaragua to allow the printing of *La Prensa*, a veritable rat's nest reaction, and to stop the expulsion of priests who have openly sided with Reagan and the contras (even coming to the United States to plead the case for guns for the contras).

On his tour of Africa in August, Jackson announced that in talks with the president of Angola that he had made "progress" in negotiating the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola (a US policy objective).

*1986 Elections*

As part of this more pro-American stand, the organizations listed above have openly declared their strategy of concentrating on getting key Democrats elected or re-elected. CISPES nationally has said so. Locally the CISPES affiliate, Detroit CASC, has devoted its effort towards organizing a Democratic Party Council subcommittee on Central America in the 14th Congressional District, presumably a district where they hope to defeat an incumbent with a liberal Democrat. The same policy has been expressed by the Nuclear Freeze Movement, SANE, Mobilization for Survival, the Pledge of Resistance, etc.

More than anytime in the past, these demonstrations this year have the character of being supportive to the Democrats.

The call did not issue from any open mass meeting, as did that for the April Actions (which was basically brought into existence by the Cleveland Conference). Therefore, it does not inspire the vanguard. The lack of any democratic character to the coalition is a direct result of its origins.

In the the face of the recent experiences of the P-9 strike, etc., no effort has been made to reach out to the opposition movement in the trade unions. As the call for the April demonstration in 1985 was criticized in the Labor Committee of the Nuclear Freeze Campaign in Detroit (!), how can the coalition reach workers when it does not even address the attack on the unions and workers rights?

Furthermore, just as the US is increasing its war effort against Nicaragua, the organizers go out of their way with the call to claim the tradition of Ghandi as "our" method of resistance (!). In other words, they invoke the

picture of the slaughter of thousands of Indians by the British as the means to achieve independence! So much for solidarity with the Nicaraguans fighting to defend their revolution. In fact, this policy blocks the development of solidarity with the Nicaraguan defense effort.

With the policy of following the leadership of the petty bourgeois organizations, a section of the vanguard is truly hiding its head in the sand, hoping (in vain) that the working class forces will dominate spontaneously at a later stage. Without a struggle for class independence, the actions are more and more defined by Democratic Party supporters.

#### *Abstaining from the political struggle*

The policy of abstaining relies on the utterly false idea that this movement against US intervention is based on the petty bourgeoisie. It is not. It can exist only because of the US working class and the revolutionary struggle (which can reach victory only under the leadership of the working class) of the oppressed peoples. It is obligatory on any partisan of the working class, on any Trotskyist, to fight for leadership of this movement *against* the petty bourgeoisie.

Beyond this general rule, with the crisis of US Trotskyism, it is necessary to make this political struggle.

Since the last time actions of this character were called, October 1985, a development that has been taking place in the US working class has made itself abundantly clear. The mobilization of the working class against concessions to the corporations has deepened and broadened from isolated locals or even isolated national strikes (Greyhound) to include the entire organized sector. The strike against US Steel (the first strike in nearly 30 years) is the clearest indication of this.

The most conscious sector of this larger movement has begun to draw conclusions about US intervention in Central America, about South Africa and about Reagan and the Democrats.

And it is this material force that is the energy that has forced these organizations to call this action. Moreover, it is this

force that will provide the energy for the resolution of the crisis of US Trotskyism.

#### *Working Class Independence, a Political Struggle*

Basing ourselves on the strength of the entire workers movement, and especially on the vanguard that has begun to understand even more than simply being against concessions, the Trotskyist Organization fights to resolve the crisis of US Trotskyism. An important part of that fight is this struggle for working class leadership of the anti-intervention movement. And based on the struggle of the vanguard, it is necessary for the organizations claiming to be Trotskyist to take the first step today.

Thus, to resolve the contradiction of the October 25 demonstrations is not to simply to turn over the leadership to the petty bourgeois organizations nor stand by and let them lead. A united working class battle for a working class leadership is the only way that the working class movement against US intervention can find expression; it is the means for truly assisting the Nicaraguan and South African Revolutions.

## Azania -- "Sanctions" and Revolution

By Kevin Fitzpatrick

In the United States and other countries, fighters against apartheid are seeking the most effective way of supporting the Black people of Azania (the Black people's name for South Africa). The question of "sanctions" — or "divestment" — arises as a possible way to reach this goal.

This tactic almost inevitably appears because the racist regime has fattened on the aid of the imperialist corporations for the whole period that it has ruled. At the same time, these corporations have grown richer and richer on the literal *super-exploitation* of Black workers, whose low wages, wretched standard of living and deprivation of rights are the direct product of apartheid. Breaking up this symbiotic relationship is a very inviting way to strike a paralyzing blow at apartheid.

Publicity campaigns for the withdrawal of foreign investment, especially from the US, the most important imperialist power, go back a long way — to the aftermath of the Sharpeville massacre of 1960. But today it is no longer a question of publicity. Even the US Congress has been in the process of adopting a relatively stringent set of "sanctions," including the prohibition of new investment. This and the steps proposed by the British Commonwealth (against the bitter opposition of Reagan and Thatcher) are not the result of any sudden seizure of conscience by the representatives of the imperialist bourgeoisie. No, they are the direct result of the struggle of Blacks in South Africa, or their demands and mobilization, which imperialism is trying to contain.

From the working class point of view, this is the key to the whole situation.

Up to now, the debate over "sanctions" — for or against — has been dominated by those who seek a "peaceful evolution" of the situation in South Africa. One side favors "sanctions" because it feels that nothing less will force the white racists to come to terms with the Black majority. The other fears that such measures will only intensify the crisis. Listen to GM Chairman Roger Smith, whose

company has major investments in the country: "The system of apartheid just cannot continue. I think we're going to have to see some more pressure on the South African people [Smith means the Afrikaners — KF] in terms of their government to get something going there. It's not happening fast enough, but we can't have a bloody revolution." (*Detroit Free Press*, September 10, 1985)

"Bloody revolution" is capitalist code for the *smashing of apartheid* and the establishment of a government of the workers and peasants in South Africa. The bloody repression by the racist government doesn't bother them at all, it has always been the insurance for their profits.

And "peaceful evolution" means the continued misery of the Black people of South Africa. While negotiations go on and on, the Black masses will stay mired in poverty. While "caretaker" governments and "constitutional arrangements" (maybe) follow on each other's heels, the Black masses will continue to be exploited by the same bosses. In the ideal result for imperialism, the Afrikaner regime would be replaced by a Black one that would represent a tiny minority, that would keep the masses "in their place," and that would maintain capitalism.

In reality, *violent revolution* is absolutely inevitable if the Black masses are to completely liberate themselves. This inevitability was born in the imposition of apartheid and baptized in the blood of Sharpeville.

With the victory of the National Party in 1948, the Afrikaners gloatingly repudiated any talk of progress or accommodation. In measure after measure they fastened the chains of apartheid on Blacks. Year after year, they tightened the screws of oppression. When, in all that time, did the US Congress and the capitalist politicians talk about "peaceful evolution"? When did all the corporations talk about "reform"? They not only never did, they completely supported the Afrikaner regime, armed it to the teeth, and scrambled to get on the gravy-train for profit that apartheid was.

It was the explosion of Soweto in 1976, and the rising struggle that has followed it, that suddenly awoke the racist government from its pipe-dream and shook the sated smugness of the imperialist corporations and governments. Then and only then, did some pitiful, token reforms appear (which the masses had already gone beyond, anyway). Then, and only then, did the cries for "peaceful evolution" go up.

Thirty years of racist offensive cannot be outweighed by ten of tactical retreat. The latest events in Azania show more and more that a confrontation is inevitable. The question is on what terms it will take place.

Unionists, students, young people and others who are fighting for "sanctions" must be clear about what they are doing. Our aim must be to strangle the racist regime economically, to give practical assistance to the Black masses by depriving their oppressor of outside aid, finances and support. All of the fighting organizations of the masses, from the ANC/UDF to AZAPO and COSATU and the other unions, are prepared for whatever sacrifices this may mean. Every worker who goes on strike knows that this means harsh sacrifices for the sake of the future is what separates the modern workers from the slave. The Blacks of South Africa are not and will not be slaves.

We are for "sanctions," but we must go beyond them. Our struggle must be for a labor boycott, with the impact of whatever "sanctions" may be imposed seen as by-products or installments of this struggle. Even as they vote for "sanctions," liberal politicians smirkingly observe that of course these steps can be gotten around (as was the case with the former Southern Rhodesia). Others knowingly state that all the investment in apartheid has given the Afrikaners an economic and military strength that they lacked in 1948.

These are hard facts, and they mean that the struggle to cut off the racist government must be relentless. This total struggle separates us in action — on all levels — from those who are trying to keep what apartheid has given them while sloughing off its outworn skin, who oppose the revolution.

While the AFL-CIO has on paper demands for harsh "sanctions," it confines this to the same level as the capitalists — legislative action, "corporate campaigns" and other means

that are really nothing but part of the pressure campaign for the "peaceful evolution" of apartheid.

But no material aid to the racist regime gets there by any other than material means. It travels by truck and rail, by ship or plane. At every point — production, distribution, transportation — this aid can be cut by the unions in the US and internationally. Even the electronic communication of credit is subject to such intervention.

The fight to bring the unions into the struggle in this way, to involve others who can help, is one that will be difficult. But it is one that will produce great results not only for the masses of South Africa but for the working class of the United States itself. Rising to the level of our internationalist duty will mean at the same time rising to the level of the tasks of the American Revolution.

Turning the fight for "sanctions" on its head, making it into one for working class solidarity, giving it a working class character (strikes, "blacking" and "hot - cargoing"), organizing the labor boycott, is the chief task that revolutionaries in the anti-apartheid movement face. It is the dividing line between imperialism's supporters and enemies, the line on which the most advanced elements can be organized, educated and won to the revolutionary party.

## The Tenth World Congress of the Fourth International

— revolutionary continuity in the general reorganization of the workers vanguard  
— preparing a new step forward in the building of the Fourth International

By David Mark

The Tenth World Congress of our world party concluded its work during the first four days of August by voting unanimously to adopt its Manifesto, addressed to militants claiming the banner of the Fourth International and to workers and youth everywhere fighting their oppressors, and launching an open and international struggle for a step forward in the building of the Fourth International, the world party established by Trotsky and his collaborators in 1938.

*"...The Fourth International, while reaffirming the complete immediacy of its program and the fundamental correctness of the course followed by our movement, declares that the only road for clarification in the ranks of the working class vanguard and for advancing toward the building of the world party of the socialist revolution is the road of the broadest discussion, without pre-conditions, among the currents, organizations and militant regroupments that place themselves on the ground of the struggle for the Fourth International, around the balance sheet of its crisis, of its tasks at the current moment, as well as on its perspectives and methods of being built. But a discussion that will be fruitful being encompassed in the framework of practical collaboration and of common struggle to mobilize the proletariat of the different countries against imperialism and the Kremlin. Our Tenth Congress considers that such a discussion, such a process of clarification, in the framework of common action, is now unavoidable, that it is made possible today by the political stirrings of the proletarian vanguard in every country, and that it constitutes the decisive task of the moment."(Manifesto of the Tenth World Congress of the Fourth International)*

Our Tenth World Congress recognized an important turn in the international class struggle concentrated in the upsurge of the oppressed people of the world against imperialism. Already, this upsurge is beginning to find a link to the working classes of the imperialist countries, signaled by the courageous and bitter struggle of the British miners against the anti-working class Thatcher government. At the same time, all the debate, every delegate and the documents of the Congress, while based on an orientation toward the masses and this upsurge, were completely preoccupied with the general reorganization of the workers vanguard that is taking place, particularly with the ferment present in all the organizations claiming Trotskyism.

Since our last World Congress two years ago, the struggle of Blacks in South Africa against the apartheid regime has touched the working classes of every country. The Marcos dictatorship in the Philippines, propped up for decades by the United States, was toppled by a mass movement, so powerful in a spontaneous sense, that Reagan had to allow the petty tyrant to fall. Duvalier (in Haiti) was also rescued by his imperialist benefactor from the people he brutally ruled. Even if the working classes of the imperialist countries have not yet taken a decisive and active stand with the oppressed and their upsurge, the British miners strike signals a change and a first round of battle against the conservative imperialist governments.

It is precisely in relation to this upsurge that the general retreat of the large workers parties in the last period (the so-called "communist" and "socialist" parties in Europe), the sharp attacks of the revisionists against Trotskyism, like Barnes of the American Socialist Workers Party, stand in such sharp relief against the need for an historic step forward in the building of a revolutionary leadership.

In this sense, the Tenth Congress had an urgent character also. In the workers movement of every country, and especially in the parties and currents that claim to represent Trotskyism, there is a general

for another road and an alternative to the leaderships that have tried to revise the program of the Fourth International and destroy it as a world party. There is no clearer example than the virtual explosion of the Healyite International Committee resulting in a complete reappraisal in its ranks of its past, particularly in the British Workers Revolutionary Party. Here is a party, established to combat Pabloite revision, but isolated for more than a decade by Healy's precipitous split from the International Committee and his philosophy, a monstrous idealism and inward focus. Yet in the balance sheet being drawn, it is strikingly evident that Trotskyist traditions continued to exist in spite of Healyism.

Represented by three dozen delegates from its sections in France, Spain, the United States, the Antilles, Poland, and Bolivia, our Congress necessarily developed its line, its perspectives, and its orientation on the basis of a real struggle, normal in a world party based on the Leninist principle of democratic centralism. The Ninth world congress had been concluded on the basis rejection of a sectarian faction, allowing the Tenth Congress to hammer out, not only a general strategy and orientation toward the masses, but also to develop a tactical response (codified in the Resolution on Tactics adopted by the Congress) on a whole series of questions. The struggle within our World Congress was concentrated around a clarification of two poles, which appear in the overall reorganization, and a rigorous debate of lines and tactics on this basis. Thus the Manifesto says:

*"Our method is opposed to that of groups and tendencies who want to begin a "reorganization" of the Fourth International on the basis of a common reference to the Transitional Program — plus a few more or less general agreements — avoiding the question of continuity. The International (rebuilt) states that on such fragile bases there cannot be any real solidarity of ideas nor in the same way, the necessary discipline in action that for the Marxists, have as a sole basis the common comprehension of events and tasks, and authority won politically by a leadership. A regroupment on a single reference or a single discussion, of a theoretical character, would only be a compromise between national leadership*

*groups, and would be condemned to blow up at the first difficult turn in the class struggle. It is indisputable that a step forward for the Trotskyist forces implies a regroupment with many contributions of different struggles for revolutionary leadership for the working class, of struggles against opportunism and revisionism, of cadres trained and tempered in them. The central axis around which all these contributions will be based will be the reaffirmation of the struggle of the IC against the revisionism of Pablo, Mandel, and Hansen up to 1972, and the clarification of the road followed afterwards by the different factions of the IC, that of Healy, that of Lambert, that of Lora, and that rebuilding the Fourth International. The clarification of this continuity reinforced by every kind of contribution and purified of errors, is a much firmer base for a really revolutionary international leadership than any compromise between national groups on programmatic references separated from the living course of the political struggle for the International...Finally, the method, the program and the principles of the Fourth International are radically opposed to the conception — at bottom, shared by all these leaderships — of the building of the world party starting from the development of strong national sections...There is no real fight for the building of the revolutionary party outside of the battle for the building of the Fourth International."*

Thus the debate at the Congress, in which every delegate already stood on the ground of a firm defense of the rebuilding of the Fourth International, was able to consider different, even counterposed tactical lines in relation to the general reorganization that is taking place, in the spirit and the practice of a world party. And finally, concluded its work by voting on a Manifesto, and calling for an International Conference, open to all parties and currents that claim the banner of the Fourth International, in which the line of the rebuilt Fourth International can be tested against others — on the basis of common action and a principled struggle.

This Manifesto, which represents the public fight of our Tenth Congress, will be our calling card in the next period, during which our own section, the Trotskyist Organization, will engage in a fraternal and frank debate regarding the evident need to take a step forward in the construction of the Fourth International in the American working class.



## British WRP Sponsors Polish Trotskyist's Tour

We are reproducing here an article from the June 21, 1985 issue of Workers Press, newspaper of the British WRP (Workers Revolutionary Party). Following its expulsion of Gerry Healy, this organization has entered a period of deep ferment and openness.

This short article gives an account of part of the tour organized by the WRP in Britain for Stefan Bekier and Gerard Laffont of the Fourth International. The purpose of this tour was to link the defense of the British miners' strike to the defense of the Polish workers--especially because the anti-worker Jaruzelski regime in Poland was supplying coal to the strikebreaking Thatcher government in Britain.

Accompanying this article was a long interview with Stefan Bekier on Trotskyism in Poland. Because of the length of the interview, and because the material is familiar to our readers, we are making this interview available in a different way. Any reader who wants a copy of it should write us and we will send one out.

One point of interest in the interview is that Stefan Bekier linked the question of Polish Trotskyism and the question of the fight we made to rebuild the Fourth International in a direct and forthright way. The WRP did not suppress these statements but presented them honestly and fairly, letting its readers judge for themselves. This highly positive action should not pass unnoticed.

### THE EDITORIAL BOARD

GLASGOW shipbuilding workers gave a great welcome last Monday to Stefan Bekier, who is touring Britain to win support for 'Solidarnosc' trade unionists jailed in Poland.

On Tuesday, Bekier spoke to the shop stewards' committee at Govan Shipbuilders about the repression of 'Solidarnosc' since the imposition of martial law in Poland by General Jaruzelski in December 1981.

Now the committee is to consider what initiatives it can undertake for the exchange of information between British and Polish trade unionists.

Bekier was welcomed to the Yard by convenor Sammy Gilmour and went on a guided tour of the yard, where a car ferry is now under production.

When current contracts are completed, there is no new work for the Govan yard. Trade unionists there are already preparing a campaign against the threat of closure.

The speaking tour began with a visit to the Scottish miners' Gala last Saturday in Edinburgh.

Bekier joined the miners' march through Edinburgh and then spoke at a well-attended fringe meeting organised by Scottish Labour Briefing.

He outlined the struggle of the Polish working class against military repression for the independent trade union 'Solidarnosc' and how the movement has been maintained as an underground organisation since 1981.

Trade unionists at the meeting discussed the question of the relations between 'Solidarnosc' and the Catholic church and the dangers of counter-revolutionary activity by imperialist agents.

Bekier explained that the real risk to the socialist property relations came from the Stalinist bureaucracy who have put Poland in debt to capitalist banks and have now joined the International Monetary Fund.

Their entry fee into this capitalist organisation is that workers in Poland now face a level of exploitation reminiscent in many ways of the nineteenth century.

New laws to be approved later this month by the 10th Congress of the Polish Communist Party legalise longer working hours and, for example, allow night work by women.

On the Church, Bekier pointed out that the hierarchy had always collaborated with the Stalinist bureaucracy, although many of the clergy had supported the workers.

Following discussions with miners in Lothian and Fife, the next stop on the tour was Glasgow.

An early high point was a visit to the Govan Young Republicans Flute Band at their weekly rehearsal.

The young bandsmen broke off their practice to hear a short speech by Bekier, followed by some extremely searching questions about Stalinism and the national question.

Bekier then went on to meet senior shop stewards at the Yarrow Ship Yard on the other bank of the Clyde to discuss the possibility of 'adopting' a Polish shipyard and exchanging information with workers there about the struggle of trade unionists in Poland and Britain.

He also visited the picket line at Morris', Glasgow, where young workers are now in their 13th month of strike action.

Members of the Republican Band Alliance, which organises marches in Glasgow to support the Irish Struggle, explained to Bekier that their movement also had Political Prisoners.

Bekier expressed support for them, pointing out that in 1981 his own workers' newspaper had highlighted the Long Kesh Hunger Strike.

On Monday Bekier spoke to a meeting of technical college lecturers, members of the Scottish Teachers' Union, EIS, at Langside College in Glasgow.

