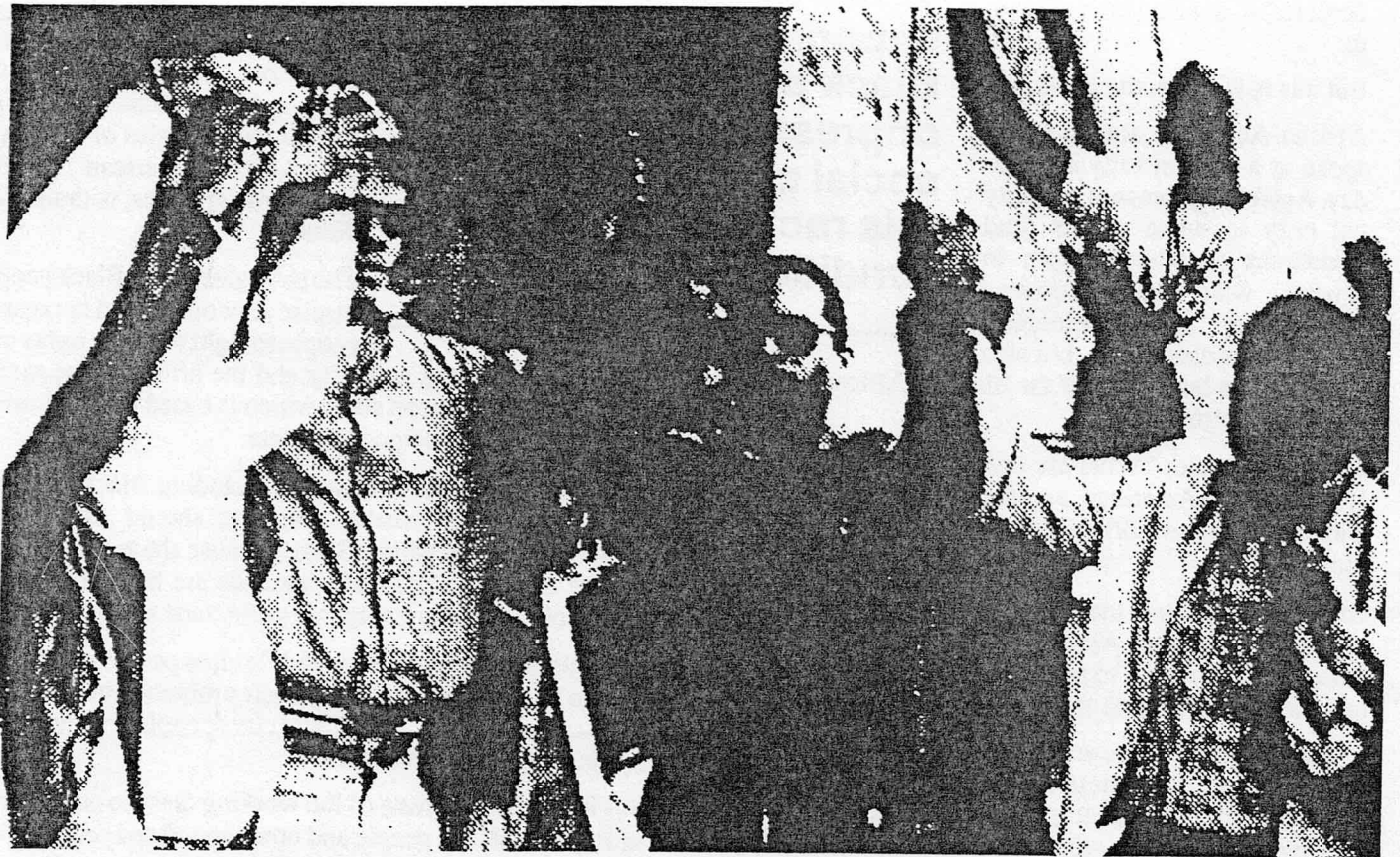


TRUTH

A REVOLUTIONARY TROTSKYIST BULLETIN IN DETROIT-FOUNDED 1974

Edited by the Detroit Trotskyist Committee, Supporter of the International League (for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International)

Equality and the Right to Self-Determination for African-American People



African-American students rally at Wayne State University.

Workers Candidates for Detroit Mayor and City Council (Back Page)

Truth No. 228 April 15, 1989 \$0.50

African-American Students' Struggle

Over 200 Black students at Wayne State University organized a sit-in at the Helen Newberry Joy Student Services Center on April 12. They are demanding that the University stop dismantling the Black studies program and make it a full department, as well as other measures against the University's racist policies. (See the students' demands reprinted on page 3.)

Both the *Detroit News* and the *Detroit Free Press* are trying to downplay the significance of this development. They portray the differences between the Black or African-American students, and the University administration, as a family quarrel. And they portray the sit-in, or "study-in," as the students call it, as some kind of love-in.

But this is far from the truth.

African-American students that spoke at a support rally on Sunday, April 16, expressed hostility not only to white racists (and sometimes to white people in general, which revolutionaries should not find particularly surprising or disturbing), but also to the current leadership of the Black or African-American people in Detroit.

One student said: "What are our so-called leaders doing? If all African-American organizations were fighting the way we are, we wouldn't be in the situation that we are in today."

Another student said that the U.S. government was preparing to put African-American people in concentration camps, just like it did to the Japanese during World War II, and she said: "It's time to take our people home."

It was obvious that these students were not just interested in equality within American society as it is today. They want their own home, their own nation, free from oppression by white people. One student referred to African-American people as a nation, and some said that the only African-American leaders that they admired were "the three Ms": Marcus Garvey, Martin Luther King, and Malcolm X.

Thus it's not surprising that these young people were hostile to the current leadership of the Black or African-American people in Detroit, beginning with, but not ending with, Coleman Young. Young claims to represent Black or

African-American people in Detroit, but he's really nothing but a puppet for the racist, anti-worker corporations that dominate Detroit.

And it's not surprising that various bourgeois and petty bourgeois politicians, connected with the racist, anti-worker Democratic Party were all over the place, "supporting" the students in an effort to suffocate them, to keep them from going any further, and to keep the struggle from getting out of control. On several occasions students said that they wanted to make it clear that the "elected officials"

who were there were not speaking for the students, that the students would speak for themselves.

The Trotskyist Committee urges all workers to support the struggle of the African-American students at Wayne State University, and all the struggles of the Black or African-American people against racist forces, without conditions.

The struggles of the Black people inspire all workers and oppressed people to fight for their rights and

they undermine the authority and the power of the racist, anti-worker American state, which is based on the illusion that this is a truly democratic state.

Some working class tendencies, including Black workers, seem to question whether workers should support the Black students at Wayne State, because these students are middle class, because their demands are limited, because bourgeois and petty bourgeois politicians support them.

And this is understandable. Middle class people of all races tend to be far more concerned their problems than with the problems of the masses. Middle class people are often very arrogant towards workers.

But it is in the interests of the working class to support the struggles of Black people and other oppressed people in all social classes against this racist state, without conditions.

By doing this, the working class can show the Black people and other oppressed people that it is the class that they can rely on. And it can bring together the forces necessary to overthrow this state, establish a workers state, create the conditions in which Black people and workers can be free, and begin to build socialism.—M. Guttshall

“ . . . it is in the interests of the working class to support the struggles of Black people and other oppressed people in all social classes against this racist state, without conditions.”

The Students' Demands

These are the proposals of the ad hoc student group, The African-American Students of Wayne State, which were delivered to President David Adamany on Monday April 7:

Dr. Adamany,

Here is a list of proposed changes for the Center for Black Studies and its staff. The proposals were drafted and ratified by Wayne State African-American students and are supported by the African-American community at large. By noon, April 12, 1989, we would like a commitment from the University to honor these proposals.

Sincerely,

The African-American Students of Wayne State

1. Stop the dismantling of the Center for Black Studies.
2. Transform the Center for Black Studies into a full department to be named the "Africana Institute" (but not under its present weakened condition).
3. Incorporate the "Institute" into the Liberal Arts curriculum, fulfilling those group requirements listed under Humanities, Social Science and Natural Science of the University General Education Program.
4. Fixed percentage (on contract) of State and Federal funding allocated annually to the proposed "Institute" to finance items listed below:
 - a. Programs launched outside the University in conjunction with Project 350, Upward Bound and other community based organizations in order to enhance African-American student enrollment in institutions of higher learning.
 - b. Programs launched within the University to increase academic achievement and greater cultural awareness.
 - c. The hiring of research assistants and the funding of graduate student assistantships along with an annual stipend.
 - d. The establishment of a departmental bulletin.
 - e. Establish a budget for funding guest lecturers and speakers.
5. All monies that have been cut back from the Center for Black Studies over the past 10 years will be made retroactively payable to the proposed "Institute's" new budget.
6. Budget to finance full or partial scholarships and grants for African American students.
7. The hiring of five (5) tenured African Americans for the proposed "Institute's" faculty with accompanying and competitive salaries reflective of their educational training and experience, also the additional hiring of staff, student and graduate assistantships, and research fellows.
8. The proposed "Institute" is to be co-chaired.
9. The immediate removal of the acting director of the Center for Black Studies, certain faculty members and staff.



African-American students march at Wayne State University.

10. The upkeep and maintenance of a departmental library for the "Institute" (the present library is to remain intact and will not be donated to any museum or organization).
11. The proposed "Institute" is to be expanded to the entire fifth floor of the Student Center Building with an accompanying meeting room. However, should it be necessary to move the proposed "Institute" to another location it is to be comparable (spatially) to the conditions stated above.
12. Courses are to be added to the course listing to encompass all aspects of African and African-American society from a political, historical, sociological, economic and cultural perspective.
13. All faculty members to teach a course on Africana (e.g. Intro to Afro-American Literature (ENG 239), African Civilizations to 1800 (HIS 160), The Black Experience in America I: 1619-1865 (HIS 314), History of West Africa (HIS 773) are to be African or African American and meet with the approval of a board of African American students and selected members of the community.
14. All courses taught on Africana are to be transferred within the proposed "Institute" under its course listing.
15. A 30 percent increase in hiring of African American faculty for all colleges and departments therein; and students will be active in the search and review of vitae of potential applicants for these positions.
16. Project 350 and Upward Bound Program head will be removed and the directorship is to be handed over to an African American. An active search for the remaining openings are to immediately resume for the Fall 1989 semester.
17. Dr. Martin Luther King's holiday and the date of Malcolm X's assassination (February 21, 1965) will be recognized as a holiday by the University.

Wayne County Community College students sent a solidarity statement to the students. See page 9.

Afro-American Freedom Through Unity: A Contribution from a Reader

Afro-American people in America have for the past two hundred years been fighting for freedom. Freedom to control one's own destiny is the main goal of Black people in this country, but for some reason white racist institutions of America maintain the racial status-quo of white America for White Americans.

This mentality is in line with white conservative views of suppressing middle-class Black people that have moved up the social, economic and political ladder at a steady pace, which threatens white racist institutions of retaining the racial status quo.

Key solutions for Black freedom are education, family stability and Black institutions in order to secure unity and dignity throughout the Black community, which will foster economic growth, political growth, and social growth.

On the other hand, the Black community has this handicap called the J-citizen better known as the Jive citizen illuminating pathetic values of "laziness, high school

... and a response.

Two things are quite clear from this contribution:

1) that the struggle of Black people is for freedom "to control one's own destiny", and that Black people are oppressed by white racist institutions.

2) that there is a deep mistrust of white people. That if whites and Blacks fight together that the whites will take advantage of the situation to use Blacks and end up dominating them again.

As Trotskyists, we defend unconditionally the struggle of Black people for economic, social and political equality; we defend unconditionally the right of Black people to self-determination, that is, to separate and form their own nation. And we defend the right of the Black people to carve this nation out of America, understanding that such a movement will result in a violent struggle with the current state.

The mistrust of white workers in a common struggle is completely justified. That is why we defend the rights of Black people to full equality and to form a separate nation. As Trotskyists, we will fight alongside Black people to the end in such a fight. We do not make a condition that we must be in the same organization or that Black people must accept white workers as allies or any such preconditions. We defend unconditionally the struggle of Black people for their rights.

Finally, the growing movement among Black people, especially among young Black people, that, besides fighting racist actions is also taking the form of increased Black pride, is really the beginning of a movement for the right to self-determination. We wholeheartedly welcome this development. It represents a

dropout, get paid quick concept (selling drugs)." This individual must receive counseling from Black leaders or become extinct from a lack of ambition and dedication to achieve something positive in life.

Turning to the possibility of working class Blacks and whites forming an organization to overthrow racist institutions — this would only benefit white workers social and economic climate, leaving Black workers out of any decisions needed to improve the organization, because white people have this social mentality of being the leader, "I don't believe too many white workers would be in favor of Black workers making decisions," once white workers realize a new powerful institution has been created through Black workers' support.

Black workers would simply be cast aside due to socio-cultural prejudice of whites threatened by Blacks moving up the social ladder of equality for all citizens of racist America. —David Smith

tremendous moral and political awakening among young Black people.

The racism in America is an essential part of the nature of the U.S. state.

The only way to end the oppression of Black people in the United States is to destroy the U.S. state. It cannot be reformed. And, this state is a racist, capitalist state.

In the fight to destroy this racist, capitalist state, Black people must determine what class will destroy it. Will it be the capitalist class (mostly white but with a few Blacks) or will it be the working class (also mostly white but, among Blacks, the largest class)?

Only the working class, white and Black has nothing to gain from supporting this racist state. Many white members of this class have racist attitudes, just like whites from the middle and capitalist classes have. But, unlike the middle and capitalist classes, working class whites have nothing to gain by being racist, that is, their racism is not in their self-interest. This means that from a scientific or objective point of view, it is possible to break them from these attitudes and get them to defend Black people's struggle for freedom and self-determination. This job is the job of education, revolutionary education.

The Trotskyist Committee of Detroit is thus pledged to: unconditional defense of Black rights and the revolutionary education of the white working class on the question of Black rights. — Fred Michaels

The Workers Opposition in the UAW: Articles from *Spark*

We are reprinting two articles concerning the workers opposition from *Spark*.

Spark is a Trotskyist tendency associated with an international tendency called the Internationalist Communist Union, which has made a special effort to sink roots in the working class.

Workers associated with *Spark*, including Sally Bier, president of UAW Local 2500 and others, have played an important role in building the workers opposition in the UAW, including in building support for Don Douglas against Owen Bieber and Bob Lent. Thus their views on these questions are especially interesting.

As readers will see, *Spark* says that it is not enough to have a new leadership in the UAW, that it's necessary to have a new program, and it criticizes Don Douglas for adopting anti-communist policies that divide the workers opposition.

The Trotskyist Committee agrees with *Spark* on this. We think revolutionaries should continue to support Don Douglas and candidates associated with him, against Bieber, Lent and others. Don Douglas has taken a position against concessions, against the top leadership, and bases himself on the workers to a certain extent, while Bieber, Lent and Co. have taken positions for concessions, for the top leadership, and are nothing but agents of the bosses in the unions.

At the same time, it would be absolutely incorrect to embellish Don Douglas in any way, pretend that he is something he is not, or hide his false policies from the workers. Thus the Trotskyist Committee solidarizes itself completely with *Spark's* criticisms, and with any and all workers involved in the opposition that Douglas might attack because they are associated with socialists or communists.—M.G.

First UAW votes: A big NO to the concessions

The election of delegates to the UAW (United Auto Workers) Convention in the Detroit area seems to have shocked the present leaders of the union. Don Douglas is running for Regional Director of Regions 1 and 1b, against Bob Lent, the present regional director.

There may be disagreement over the exact count of delegates at this point, but no one disagrees that delegates pledged to Douglas have won more seats.

The International leadership, of course, has excuses about why Douglas is in the lead. They say that the first votes were at GM where Douglas has his base of support, and where there is dissatisfaction over joint programs, profit sharing and other issues.

In fact, it's not just a question of GM workers. Most auto workers



Don Douglas and Pat Patterson, opposition candidates.

today resent the concession contracts which have been shoved on them by the union and the company. Because Douglas spoke out against the last GM contract, his candidacy serves as a pole of attraction for many workers, even if they don't really know much about him.

The vote so far stands as a real rejection of the UAW's concession policy. The UAW leadership tries to deny this, claiming that they just haven't used the right election tactics. What does that mean — election tactics? Their apparatus controls the union pretty much from top to bottom. They have the money, the resources and the staff to send into every plant in the region. Lent has the support of the majority of the elected officials. What does it mean when the International leadership has all this and their man still can't win?

The fact is, many workers blame the whole leadership of the union, top to bottom, for the situation in the plants today. In contract after contract, the International staff men came into union meetings and shoved the contract on the workers. If the workers rejected it, International staff threatened workers that the corporations would close their plant unless they accepted the concessions.

From the very beginning of the concessions drive, up until today, the International has claimed that going along with the company is the only way to save jobs. And yet how many jobs have been lost? Close to 400,000 in the UAW alone.

Claiming that the bosses and the workers can have the same interest — to keep the corporations profitable, the leadership in the UAW has put the corporations' interests ahead of the workers' interests.

In voting for opposition candidates, workers are sending a clear message — that they are sick of the concessions and those who sell them.

Certainly this means that one focus of the Convention will be to vote out the present leadership of the UAW, replacing it with

Douglas in Detroit or Jerry Tucker in St. Louis, as well as others.

But then what? The problem with the current leadership is its policy — its refusal to organize a fight against concessions. It's that policy which the convention has to change. If not, changing the leadership will have changed nothing.

Over the past years, we have seen workers who have been determined not to accept concessions. We have seen strikes that have dragged on month after month, with little or no impact. It is clear that one group of workers, fighting alone, is not usually enough to back the bosses down.

But the workers don't have to fight alone. This convention is going to bring together representatives of the one million workers in the UAW. Nearly every workplace with workers organized in the UAW will be represented there. The convention could be used to discuss what can be done about the real problems facing the workers in the UAW, how to organize the fights that will have to be made.

This convention could draw up battle plans for the coming years: it could prepare to mobilize the power of those one million workers to make the kind of fight needed to turn back the concessions.

That's what it will take to put an end to concessions — workers organizing and defending their interests, not entering into a partnership with the bosses. (Reprinted from *Spark*, No. 375, April 3-17, 1989)

Red-baiting — a tool used to cripple the militancy and destroy democracy in the unions

Don Douglas, the New Directions candidate for director of the combined UAW regions 1 and 1b in the Detroit area, has started to pressure workers and local union officials who are socialists and communists not to run as candidates in local elections for delegates to the upcoming UAW convention.

Douglas says that socialists and communists who are open about their ideas will hurt the Douglas campaign. He says the International leadership will carry on a red-baiting campaign. Therefore Douglas and some of those closest to him in the leadership of New Directions have started to carry out a small witch-hunt of their own.

To engage in any of this kind of attack is truly a step backwards for workers in the UAW. During the late 1940s and 1950s there was a lot of red-baiting and witch-hunting directed against thousands of socialists, communists and other militant workers and union officials in the UAW and every other union. This anti-communist witch-hunt was the counter-attack made by the bosses at that time against the militancy of the working class.

Following World War II, the biggest strike wave in the history of this country occurred. Millions of workers went on strike in one industry after another. They were determined to win back all the wages and benefits they have given up during the war. And

they re-asserted the militancy they had shown before the war in fighting all the little attacks made against workers every day on their jobs.

To break this renewed militancy on the part of the workers, the bosses started a big red-scare. They used every means available to them — newspapers, radio, movies and television; books, school lessons and thousands of government reports and public hearings to try to convince people that the Russians were getting read to attack and even invade, and that they would be helped by communists within the U.S. — in the government here itself; in all kinds of political, professional, educational, charitable and social organizations; in the movie industry in Hollywood; and within the unions.

Many thousands of people were thrown out of their jobs and even their homes. Some people were imprisoned, and a few were killed. The main thrust of this reign of terror was against working people and their unions. Workers and union officials who were socialists or communists were harassed and victimized by the FBI and other government agencies.

Some of the more conservative union officials used this anti-communist witch-hunt as a way to eliminate their rivals for union positions. So they went along with it — some even encouraged it. In the UAW there were such people, including Walter Reuther.

Many workers were scared by this incredible witch-hunt. Some came to believe at least some of the charges that were made against the "reds." And the behavior of many of those under attack lost them whatever respect other workers had for them. Many of the union officials with socialist or communist ideas didn't try to answer the charges against them and refused to speak out publicly in their own defense, or claimed that they had no radical ideas.

Once the communists and socialists were expelled from the unions, the doors were opened for further attacks by the bosses. Most of the militant people were kicked out of the unions, and frequently out of their jobs. Other militant workers were terrorized into silence.

The red-baiting of the 1950s was used to break down the organization of the working class and undermine union democracy. This is how the unions were transformed into organizations that today help keep workers under control for the bosses, rather than being organizations that mobilize the workers to fight for their own interests against the bosses.

Today Don Douglas and others in the leadership of New Directions say they are for more militancy and democracy in the UAW and other unions. Well, how can there be more militancy if they let the present top officials of the UAW determine who can and cannot be a New Directions candidate? Socialists and communists are not going to be elected as convention delegates unless they have the support of the workers around them. How is it democratic to pressure such people not to run at all, despite the support they might have among the workers who know them?

Douglas and the other leaders of New Directions claim they are for more militancy and democracy. But red-baiting leads down a road that heads in the opposite direction. (Reprinted from *Spark*, No. 375, April 3-17, 1989)

Unity against all bosses and all concessions! Fight for nationalization of Eastern Airlines, without compensation and under workers control!

Workers at Eastern Airlines are waging a truly heroic struggle against the bosses, their demands for concessions, and their union-busting. They are putting their jobs and their future on the line.

But once again the workers union leadership is breaking ranks and destroying the workers unity against the bosses.

While the workers are on the picket lines and in the union halls chanting, "No concessions, no union-busting!", the union leadership is running around offering to *make concessions*, first to a Presidential or Congressional Board, then to Icahn, head of TWA, and now to Peter Ueberroth!

The *Detroit Free Press* says: "Ueberroth ... was approached last fall by officials of Eastern's unions to consider taking over the troubled airline ... the unions have said they would make concessions if Ueberroth took over, possibly in return for ownership of part of the airline ..."

It is precisely this lack of unity and solidarity on the part of the union leadership itself, which has opened the door to union-busting. You can't bust something that doesn't have a crack in it.

Thus it is necessary to make an all out fight now for **UNITY AGAINST ALL BOSSES AND ALL CONCESSIONS!**

As long as the workers remain **SOLID**, they can win. No one can **FORCE** them to make concessions.

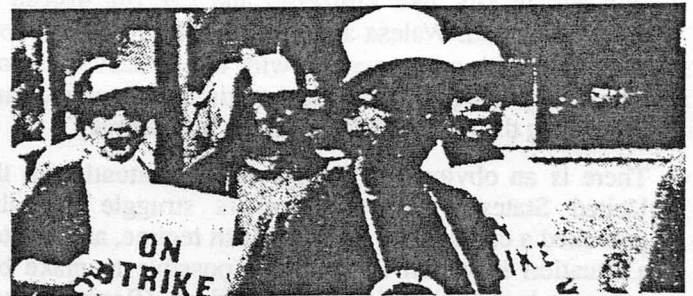
At the same time, in order to strengthen and deepen this unity, it is necessary to develop a concrete alternative to the bosses' various proposals designed to confuse and split the workers, to force the workers to make more concessions and pave the way to destroying their union.

This means a fight for **NATIONALIZATION OF EASTERN**, without compensation and under workers control.

Lorenzo, Icahn, Ueberroth, and others, all claim that Eastern is bankrupt, that they can't run the airline without trying to force the workers to make concessions. Bush, the Republicans, the Democrats, the so-called "friends of labor," all say that there is nothing that they can do about this. This is a lie.

While Lorenzo, Icahn, Ueberroth, and others, may or may not have the resources to run an airline without cutting

workers jobs, wages, working conditions, and union rights, the U.S. CONGRESS certainly does. It spends billions of dollars on pilots, crews and planes that fly all over the world and fire on innocent people. It can drop a few dollars to fly people back and forth to Miami, and wherever else Eastern flies.



Pickets at Eastern Airlines in New York City.

Finally, the workers have to begin to build a **BIG WORKERS PARTY**, based on the union ranks, to fight for their demands, unite the workers against the bosses, and fight for political power for the masses of working people. As long as the bosses have political power, they are going to use it to exploit and oppress working people.

We urge all unions, working people and their organizations, to make a common fight for these goals. The workers have the power to win this struggle, to save Eastern workers jobs, wages, working conditions, and union rights, and to crush Lorenzo. But they have to use that power.

Revolutionary workers should make it clear that they think this is just a first step in the struggle, that a socialist revolution is necessary in which the workers establish a workers government, based on an independent, mass mobilization, take over all the banks, basic industry, transportation, etc., and completely crush the bosses' resistance. But they should **NOT** make agreement with this program a precondition for a common fight against the bosses today, for nationalization of Eastern, or for a workers party. A journey of a thousand miles, begins with a single step!

The Trotskyist Committee of Detroit

(International League for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International)

March 28, 1989

The Situation in Poland

We are reprinting an editorial on the situation in Poland, from *The Fourth International*, the publication of the International League for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International that the Trotskyist Committee of Detroit supports.

As readers will see, the Polish workers struggle has provoked a tremendous crisis in the Jaruzelski regime and the Stalinist bureaucracy as a whole, and created conditions in which it is possible to bring down the Jaruzelski regime and establish a workers government composed of true representatives of the workers, rather than privileged and corrupt bureaucrats, like Jaruzelski and Co. But instead of taking this road, Walesa and other leaders of Solidarnosc prefer to reach an agreement with the Jaruzelski regime aimed at opening up Poland to American businessmen and preserving the power of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

There is an obvious similarity with the situation in the United States where the workers struggle has also provoked a crisis of the Reagan-Bush regime, and created a situation in which it would be possible to make big progress in bringing down that regime. (Reagan's men recently testified that they were *afraid* that Reagan would be impeached.) But the bourgeoisified leadership of the trade unions in this country also seeks to preserve the bourgeoisie's power, to have a little place for itself, at the expense of the masses of workers.

Parties that truly represent the working class are urgently necessary in both countries. We urge workers who want to learn more about these struggles to subscribe to *The Fourth International*. — M.G.

The negotiations to reach an agreement with the Polish Government have a clear tint favorable to an agreement with the Government and the regime, in exchange for impeding, and diverting the workers and the populations' demands for freedom.

The strikers' demands for *freedom for parties* and *freedom for Solidarnosc* have been converted, in Walesa's hands, into obscure negotiations on the terms for the legalization of the workers union, and the conditions imposed could leave the workers movement without the possibility of defending its interests, or of politically confronting the regime that is collapsing.

The negotiations on the legalization of Solidarnosc by the Jaruzelski regime, are mortgaging the Polish workers union's freedom to exist. In a situation in which the dictatorial regime, imposed in order to destroy Solidarnosc and defeat the Polish workers movement, is exhausted and

does not have the strength to keep impeding working class trade unionism's open action.

The bargaining table deliberately suffocates the crucial problem on the political terrain, which is *freedom for parties*.

Walesa, with his Vatican advisors, and a large part of the democratic opposition, is allowing the survival of the Stalinist regime, when the conditions are maturing to give it a final blow on the part of the workers.

The basis of agreement to "save Poland from its crisis," represents grave political compromises and evolution toward a capitalist market economy.

The Government and the opposition are concentrating on getting the workers and the population to accept a *transition* of the Stalinist regime to a regime of capitalist private property and bourgeois democracy.

The workers do not have a direct voice in these negotiations. The *transition* that they are trying to seal does not include *freedom for parties, national freedom for Poland, or freedom for the workers to direct their factories and the functioning of the centralized economy*.

It will be the workers struggle, their strikes, their degree of union and political organization, which, in any case, will win these freedoms and smash the agreement's pro-capitalist plans.

In Solidarnosc, union and political groups are beginning to organize themselves to confront the destructive work of the bourgeoisified leadership of the union grouped around Walesa. These groups are organizing in order to continue the defense of the workers interests, which is what permitted Solidarnosc's motion.

In different gradations, we see the situation being reproduced in other countries, as in Chile, in which the regime is prolonging itself, because of the opposition's policy of avoiding the final blow, diverting important workers mobilizations. Or, as in Spain, where the unionists still negotiate with a Government sentenced by the general strike, and where this Government draws its strength from the inability of the unions to defend a political and governmental alternative in accord with the workers interests.

It is another important symptom of the necessity for the working class to build its revolutionary party. The different Trotskyist tendencies that are growing among the youth in the heat of these crises, are in the process of accumulating the possibilities to build these workers parties.

From *Workers Press*, weekly paper of the Workers Revolutionary Party in Great Britain, April 15, 1989

Stalinist Police Murder Georgians

“They threw themselves on our people like beasts.”

The most brutal operation by the Soviet security forces for 25 years last week butchered to death up to 30 people in Tbilisi, the capital of Soviet Georgia.

Hundreds of others were injured. These were no ordinary killings. No firearms were used. Those killed were done to death by troops wielding clubs and shovels.

“They threw themselves on our people like beasts, and our people couldn’t do anything,” said Ms Leda Qarchvadze, quoting her brother-in-law Mr. Syad Gamsachurdia, a member of the Helsinki watch committee, an independent civil rights watch group in Tbilisi.

This is the worst act of repression since a workers’ demonstration was gunned down in the city of Novocherkassk in 1962.

The action of the security forces in the Georgian capital was a direct response to a strike wave that shut down 30 factories and the public transport system.

Immediately following the action of the security forces the Praesidium of the Supreme Soviet yesterday issued new measures to punish anti-state activities. The measure, to come into force immediately says:

“Public insults or the discrediting of the USSR supreme bodies of state power and government shall be punishable by imprisonment for a term of up to three years or a fine of up to 2,000 roubles (approximately \$4,000).”

Unrest

The latest unrest started with demonstrations last week by Abhazis, a small ethnic minority in Georgia. This minority was demanding secession — from Georgia, not the Soviet Union, and republic status.

The Georgian Stalinists whipped up feeling against these demands, but what started as a resistance to the demands of the Abhazis was rapidly transformed into demands for Georgian independence.

These actions expose those who have peddled illusions in the so-called “liberalisation” of the Stalinist bureaucracy under Gorbachev.

Under pressure from the Soviet working class, and in a desperate attempt to deal with the mounting economic crisis of the Soviet Union, the Stalinist bureaucracy has been forced to grant certain concessions to sections of the working class.

Spots

But it has not changed its spots.

Internationally it forms alliances with imperialism to defeat a rising tide of struggle in the international working class — in the Middle East, southern Africa and elsewhere.

At home the bureaucracy is using whatever brutal measures it requires to cling on to its power and its privileges. It will not peacefully give way under pressure and protest.

It will have to be overthrown in a political revolution that will restore power to the working class from a parasitic bureaucracy that usurped that power in the degeneration of the Russian Revolution in the 1920s.

The brutal attitude of Stalin toward the Georgians was one of the first issues that in the period immediately before Lenin’s death brought him and Trotsky together in a common struggle against the emerging bureaucracy forming around Stalin.

That the question of Georgian nationalism is again becoming a powerful force reveals the depth of the historical crisis facing Gorbachev and the whole of the Stalinist bureaucracy. — Goeff Pilling

Solidarity Statement by Wayne County Community College Students

We, students at Wayne County Community College (Northwest Campus) support the Wayne State University Black students and we support their occupation of the Student Services Center.

We think that the actions of the university show the institutionalized racism that exists at Wayne State and in the United States.

We hope the students are victorious in their struggle.

Signed by 23 students of the “Afro-American Struggle and the American Government” class, WCCC Northwest Campus, April 18, and given to the occupying students that same day.

The Drug Problem and What We Must Do

The problem of drugs has become a life or death situation for the millions of young people, especially Black working class people, in America.

But to understand how to stop this menace, how to remove drugs from the Black working class neighborhoods, we need to understand what are drugs really for and whose interest are served by drugs.

What are drugs for?

Drugs serve one purpose: to stop working class people from thinking. In particular, to stop them from thinking about their own misery and the misery of those around them: poverty, racial discrimination, unemployment; to stop working class people from thinking about who is causing this misery and what must be done to stop them.

There are different kinds of "drugs." The most powerful drug of the past was religion. Its purpose has been and continues to be to get working class people to forget about making themselves happy on earth. It says they will be happy after they are dead.

Another drug that is used to attack working class people today is alcohol. There is very much alcoholism among older workers that has caused deep suffering to the workers and their families.

For today's working class young people, especially among some of the most rebellious, it is illegal drugs. And illegal drugs serve the same purpose as religion and alcohol: to destroy minds, to convert a few young people into dealers, that is, pawns who do the dirty work; to make some into addicts and destroy not only their minds but their bodies; and to demoralize and weaken the rest of the working class young people.

Whose interests are served by drugs?

We live in a class society, that is, a society that is divided into two main classes. The capitalist class is made of the owners of industry, the large corporations and the banks. It rules this society. It controls two major political parties and thus it controls the state. The capitalist class is a tiny minority in the U.S. And, it is a dying class. Drugs serve the interest of the capitalist class because drugs help keep it in power.

The other major class is the working class. This is the majority of the population. The working class is forced to sell its labor in order to live. The capitalist class gets all its wealth by stealing it from the the working class. The working class is a revolutionary class. Drugs stop the working class from thinking, from raising itself to the task of overthrowing the capitalist class and placing the working class

in power.

The young generation of the working class is the hope for the future of the working class and the whole society.

The capitalist class is trying to maintain its power and control over the whole society by poisoning the young generation of the working class with drugs. The capitalist class needs to weaken and destroy the young workers because they will be the best fighters against the capitalist class, the most self-sacrificing, the most energetic, the most revolutionary, especially young Black working class people.

What is the solution?

The problem: the capitalist class is poisoning the young generation of the working class in order to maintain its power. The solution: remove the capitalist class from power and place the working class in power. This solution, the solution that is permanent, is called the socialist revolution.

The working class must make a socialist revolution to end this poison of drugs because as long as the capitalist class has power, it will attack the working class with drugs of one form another. In order to prepare a socialist revolution in the fight against drugs, all the things that we can do today, the partial solutions, must strengthen the independent power of the oppressed and the working class.

We need to develop actions independent of the capitalist class and their state, which includes the police, courts and prisons.

First, we need to build an independent political party to fight for this power, a labor or workers party.

We also need to take direct action against the drug dealers. For example, we need to organize patrols of workers and young people to drive the drug dealers out of the neighborhoods; the unions must investigate the connections between the big banks and the drug dealers. We need to organize ourselves strong enough to take drug profits away from the dealers and from the big banks.

But all these actions will be steps along the road, the road of removing the capitalist class from power, and placing the working class in power, the road of the socialist revolution.

This is the permanent solution to drugs. The majority whose lives are made miserable by the rule of the capitalist class must take over and run this society. The majority must decide how the resources of the society will be used to better the masses of people and not the rich. When this happens, drugs will disappear from the lives of the working class. — Fred Michaels

What is the Trotskyist Committee?

The Trotskyist Committee of Detroit, Supporter of the International League for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International, is a revolutionary workers group in Detroit.

The Trotskyist Committee calls itself "Trotskyist" because of Leon Trotsky and his comrades. They continued the struggle for the socialist revolution after Stalin betrayed it, founded the Fourth International to lead this struggle, and devoted their lives to this cause.

The Trotskyist Committee is open to young workers, women workers, and all workers and militants who are for:

- equality and the right to self-determination for the Black people and all oppressed peoples;
- the workers against the bosses and their agents in the unions;
- the socialist revolution;
- the Fourth International;
- the struggle of the International League for the reconstruction of the Fourth International.

The International League is for rebuilding the Fourth International. This means rooting Trotskyism in the working class, winning fresh working class forces to the revolutionary workers cause, and uniting truly working class, revolutionary Trotskyist forces on a principled basis.

The Trotskyist Committee welcomes all who share these goals, are prepared to accept its decisions, contribute financially to its work, and take part in its work on a regular basis.

The Trotskyist Committee concentrates its work on developing and spreading revolutionary propaganda, educating workers as revolutionaries, and on recruiting workers, and militants from other social classes truly devoted to the working class, to the revolutionary workers cause.

As Leon Trotsky said: "... in the final analysis all the problems of our planet will be decided upon American soil."

And, "I am sure of the victory of the Fourth International, go forward!"

Thus we urge young workers, women workers, and all workers and militants in the Detroit area, to seriously consider joining the Trotskyist Committee and devoting yourselves to this struggle. There is a place for each and every one of you, in this struggle.

The Trotskyist Committee of Detroit

(International League for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International)

**Revolutionary Educational Class:
Oppressed People from Other
Classes and Revolutionary Workers
(Including readings from Lenin and Trotsky)
Sunday, April 30, 4 PM.**

Call 546-8167 for exact location.

Building the Trotskyist Committee

The Trotskyist Committee sold nearly 30 copies of the last issues of *Truth* and 5 copies of *The Fourth International* at Wayne County Community College, the Ford Rouge Plant, on the west side, and at meetings in solidarity with Eastern airlines workers, the people of Central America, and Mark Curtis.

Once again we found that many workers, Black and white, agree that the leadership of the labor movement is not fighting for the rights of the Black people, and were interested in seeing workers or labor candidates for Detroit mayor and city council that really would do this.

Several Black workers began to tell us about their own experiences with discrimination on the job. Some Black workers at the Rouge plant felt that even though they constituted an overwhelming majority of the workers at the plant, that they did not get their fair share of better jobs. There are still few opportunities for Blacks to enter the skilled trades. One worker thought that there should be quotas, and that these quotas should be in line with the percentage of the population that Black people represent in this area. In other words, they shouldn't be 10%, or 15%, but at least 50% and higher. Black people make up a large percentage of the population in the Detroit metropolitan area, but they make up a minuscule percentage of the skilled trades. This is a clear case of discrimination.

Two Black workers that we met were involved in suits against discrimination. The fact that Black workers are forced to take their cases to court, alone, shows that the leadership of the labor movement has abandoned them. The labor movement has to use its power to fight for the rights of the Black people, not send them off to the racist bosses' courts to do battle against the racist bosses by themselves.

We also found that workers still have illusions in Jesse Jackson, even after he supported Dukakis, extended his hand to Bush, and continued to express his loyalty to the Democratic Party even after it selected the son of the racist murderer, Richard Daley, as its candidate for Chicago mayor.

This is obviously not a problem that can be resolved in a short conversation at a factory gate or on a street corner. Thus, in addition to trying to show that the working class is the only class that can defend the rights of the Black people, the workers, and all oppressed people, and in addition to our election campaign, we are also going to start including more material on Jesse Jackson again, and we are going to establish regular revolutionary educational classes.

We just recruited our first new member, we have initiated regular discussions of *Truth* and *The Fourth International*, and we have won a few regular readers of *Truth*. So we are definitely making progress in building the Trotskyist Committee.

Once again, we remind readers that we welcome contributions to *Truth* and we welcome assistance in distributing *Truth* and *The Fourth International*. — M.G.

Subscribe!

- A one-year subscription to *Truth* (10 issues for \$5.00) A one-year subscription to *The Fourth International* (10 issues for \$12.00)
 A one-year supporting subscription to *Truth* and *The Fourth International* (10 issues of each for \$30.00)

Name _____

Address _____

Write for overseas rates. Make checks payable to M. Guttshall, P.O. Box 48085, Detroit, MI 48237.

TRUTH

P.O. BOX 48085, DETROIT, MICHIGAN 48237; (313) 546-8167

Workers Candidates for Detroit Mayor and City Council

The Trotskyist Committee of Detroit has decided to run a candidate for Detroit city council. The purpose of our campaign will be to fight for the unions to break with the current ruling class and its parties, to put forward independent labor candidates for Detroit mayor and city council, and to build an independent labor party to fight for political power for the masses of working people.

As long as the unions continue to support the current ruling class and its parties, the vast majority of the Black people will continue to be exploited and oppressed, because the current ruling class profits from the super-exploitation of the Black workers and the oppression of the Black people as a whole.

The Trotskyist Committee does not think that the formation of a labor party, or even a workers or labor government, will guarantee the liberation of the Black people. It may still be necessary to fight for full economic, social, and political equality for Black people, and even for the right of self-determination for Black people, for their right to establish their own nation on American soil, if they chose to do so.

But we do think that the formation of a labor party, and a workers or labor government, based on an independent, mass mobilization, can be a big step forward in this direction.

The Trotskyist Committee plans to focus on organizing young workers, factory workers, and other working class organizations, particularly Trotskyists, to make a common fight for this platform, and for the largest possible united working class slate on the basis of this platform. At the same time, we will not make agreement with every line in this platform a precondition for a common fight in these elections. We will work with any working class tendency that is in favor of a united working class slate, and we welcome other proposals for platforms.

We urge all workers and their organizations who are against support to the racist bosses and their candidates in these elections and who are for a workers party, to contact us today!

The Trotskyist Committee of Detroit
(International League for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International)

April, 1989

OUR CANDIDATE

The Trotskyist Committee has decided to put forward a candidate for Detroit city council. In order to get our candidate on the ballot, we will have to collect over 1,000 signatures. Based on past experience, it's possible for one person to get about 20 signatures an hour. So this is many hours of work. We ask readers to help us. If you can, please contact us at 546-8167.

OUR DRAFT PLATFORM

Thus our basic platform for our campaign will be:

1. Unions! Break with the racist, anti-worker ruling class and its parties! Independent labor candidates for Detroit mayor and city council! Build an independent labor party to fight for political power for the masses of working people!

2. For unconditional defense of the struggles of the Black people and all oppressed peoples against this racist state!

— Full economic, social, and political equality for the Black people!

— For the right of the Black people to self-determination, to establish their own nation on American soil!

— Abolish all restrictions on immigration and citizenship! Cancel the "Third World" debt! Stop U.S. aid to reactionary forces in Central America, Southern Africa, and to the State of Israel!

3. For a program of emergency, anti-capitalist measures to deal with the most serious problems facing the masses of Black people and workers, including:

— a program of public services and public construction to provide decent jobs, union wages, schools, and housing; increase taxes on the rich to finance these programs.

— union defense guards to protect young people and others from drug dealers and other racist, anti-worker forces; for a union commission of inquiry into the drug trade to find out which bankers, businessmen, politicians, police and union bureaucrats are involved and profiting the most, to map out concrete plans to destroy the trade and punish those responsible.

— for nationalization, without compensation and under workers control, of large banks and corporations that claim to be unable to meet workers demands.

The Trotskyist Committee is also for a *socialist revolution* in which the working class completely takes over the economy, reorganizes it in the interests of the masses of people, and crushes the capitalists' resistance. But a successful socialist revolution is impossible without an independent working class party, thus it is necessary to focus on building such a party as a first step in this direction.