

TRUTH

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

Lessons of the first 100 days . . .

The U.S. State: Violent, Racist, and Anti-Worker!



Miami police attack Black people in January.

Virginia police arrest striking Pittston miners in April.



Inside:

Does Jesse Jackson really represent the Black people and the workers?

Interview with Margaret Guttshall, workers candidate for Detroit City Council

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Lessons of the first 100 days ...

The U.S. state: a violent, racist, anti-worker state!

Since George Bush — the epitome of the largely white, and very aristocratic and capitalistic ruling class — was elected president of the United States, there has been one struggle after another between the oppressed and the oppressor, between the exploited and the exploiter.

The Black people's uprising in Miami, the workers opposition movement in the UAW, the Eastern Airlines workers strike, the Pittston workers strike, the tremendous demonstration in Washington, D.C. for the democratic right to abortion, the Black students' sit-ins ...

And it is becoming clearer and clearer what is standing in the way of the most elementary democratic rights for the Black people, the women, the immigrants, and decent jobs, homes and schools for all working people.

- The mayor of Miami, who works with both the Republicans and the Democrats, ordered police to attack, arrest and imprison, over 400 Black people protesting racist policemen's murder of two Black men.

- The head of the UAW, a Democrat, raised thousands of dollars to finance an all out campaign against the workers opposition in the UAW, including slander and physical intimidation of opponents.

- U.S. judges, many of whom were also associated with the Democratic Party, ruled against allowing Eastern Airlines workers to picket and extend their strike to railroad workers; they ruled against allowing Eastern Airlines workers to mass picket; they ruled in favor of allowing Lorenzo to declare bankruptcy and, in this way, avoid meeting the workers demands.

- The governor of Virginia, a Democrat, order state police to provide escorts for scabs, for strikebreakers, and to attack, arrest, and imprison, striking Pittston miners, their family members and supporters.

- The mayor of Oak Park, Michigan, a Democrat, and her counterparts in many other towns and cities, ordered police to protect right-wing religious fanatics physically preventing women from exercising their democratic right to abortion.

- The president of Wayne State University, a Democrat, and his counterparts at other universities, ordered police to block doors and prevent more students from joining the Black students' sit-in ...

Both the Republican and the Democratic Party, their judges, and their police, are enemies of the Black people, the women, the immigrants, the workers, and all oppressed

people ...

They constitute a violent, racist, anti-worker state machine, that is dead set on maintaining the privileges and power of the current ruling class at any price.

The American working class has the power to dismantle and destroy this vicious state machine, and establish a workers government, that provides elementary democratic rights, and decent jobs, homes and schools for all working people.

But in order to do this, the American working class has to have its own political party, and its own defense guards.

This is why the Trotskyist Committee of Detroit is fighting for a united workers slate for Detroit mayor and city council, and this is why it has put forward its own candidate, Margaret Guttshall, to build support for this struggle.

A fight for a united workers slate in Detroit, can be a step toward building a workers party, and workers defense guards!

The Trotskyist Committee

May, 1989

Miner calls for help for a comrade downed by a scab truck.



Does Jackson really represent the interests of the African-American people and the workers?

During the 1984 and 1988 presidential election campaigns, more and more Black people and many workers of different races and nationalities, began to support Jesse Jackson. They did so because they thought he was *different* from all the white and Black upper class politicians who knew absolutely nothing about the problems facing Black people and workers and cared even less.

The fact that so many Black people and workers thought Jesse Jackson was different, and supported him, is not surprising. There was a tremendous propaganda campaign on the television, in the newspapers, in Black organizations, in the trade unions, and elsewhere, to convince the Black people and the workers of this. Many working class organizations supported this campaign (like the Communist Party and the Workers World Party). Others caved into it (like Labor Notes, Solidarity, the Socialist Workers Party, and the Workers League).

The Trotskyist Committee opposed this campaign for Jesse Jackson. We said that his 1988 presidential campaign was initiated with the collaboration of the top circles of the American ruling class in an effort to prevent Black people and workers from breaking with the Democratic Party and beginning to build a workers party or labor party. We fought for a workers candidate or labor candidate for president and all offices, for a workers or labor party, and for a vote for working class candidates on the ballot.

The developments that have taken place since George Bush was elected are showing that this was and is correct.

Jackson's Record

- As we said in *Truth* No. 225, right after Bush was elected, Jesse Jackson dined with Bush and said: "... that Bush will attempt to use the White House to 'send forth a moral tone' to the country, and "... that he was not offered a post by Bush and is satisfied to be a member of the 'loyal opposition.'"
- Jackson did not support the Black peoples' uprising in Miami;
- Jackson supported the Black Democratic Party machine candidate in the Democratic Party primary in Chicago, Eugene Sawyer, that even many Black Democrats in Chicago refused to support;
- Jackson is supporting Bush's nominee to head the so-called Civil Rights Commission, William Lucas, a notorious Black right-wing Republican from Detroit, that even the NAACP refuses to support;
- At the African-American Summit, Jackson said that African-American people have political power (as if the fact that a handful of upper-class Black politicians now hold office means that the masses of Black people have political power), that all they need now is economic power, and urged Blacks and workers to

put their pension funds into a special investment fund (in other words, to give even more money to the rich bankers and businessmen);

- Jackson did not support the workers opposition movement in the UAW;
- Jackson claimed to support the Eastern Airlines workers strike; in reality, he tried to pacify the workers while Lorenzo, Republicans, Democrats, judges and police, plotted against them;
- Jackson also claims to support the Pittston strikers; but while the Democratic Party governor orders state police to escort scabs and strikebreakers, while scabs and strikebreakers are running trucks into striking miners, while police are beating, cuffing, arresting and imprisoning striking miners and their family members, Jackson is calling on striking miners to be non-violent!;
- Jackson said that instead of picketing Pittston, workers should be purchasing Pittston; in this way he tried to appeal demagogically to the workers growing sentiment that the workers should own the mines, mills and factories, and, at the same time, to foster the illusion that this change in ownership can be accomplished without the kinds of strikes, sit-downs, and violent clashes with the scabs, strike-breakers, police, and other authorities, that are taking place today;
- To date, Jackson has not said one word against the U.S. sending additional troops to Panama and against Bush calling for the overthrow of Noriega, both racist, imperialist acts that show the true character of the U.S. government; evidently, it's OK for Bush to be violent, but not for Blacks in Miami, or miners in southwest Virginia.

Stop and Think

Jackson's attitude toward Bush, toward the Republican Party, toward the Democratic Party machine, toward the masses of Black people, toward the workers, and toward their struggles, should cause the Black people, the workers, and all oppressed people to stop and think. Does this man really represent our interests? Or has he been hired by the powers-that-be to deceive us? Why does he get so much favorable publicity when leaders that we know who were honest, like Malcolm X, or Fred Hampton, or Mark Clark, are dead? When others, like Mark Curtis, or the Kentucky miners, are sitting in prison?

We think that Jackson's words and deeds since Bush was elected, show that it is time for the Black people and the workers to break with Jackson and the Democrats and build a workers party (or labor party) based on the power of the unions, to bring down the racist, anti-worker government in Washington, Detroit, and elsewhere, and establish a workers government. — M. Gutshall.

For a United Workers Slate for Detroit Mayor and City Council!

In this issue of *Truth*, we are publishing an interview with Margaret Guttshall, a working class candidate for Detroit City Council and a member of the Trotskyist Committee. We are also publishing a draft workers platform, and a letter asking working class organizations to support this candidate and join in forming a united workers slate.

We ask all workers to support our candidate and campaign by sending statements of support to *Truth* or by helping to circulate petitions to put Margaret's name on the ballot.

Interview with Margaret Guttshall, Workers Candidate for Detroit City Council

Truth: Why are you running for Detroit City Council?

Margaret: In the November, 1988 elections, there were more than 20 working class candidates on the ballot in the Detroit area, associated with Workers Against Concessions and other working class organizations. Two of these candidates got over 20,000 votes in Michigan. I think this is a really important advance for the working class in the Detroit area. I think working women and working men need to be political leaders themselves. They need to build their own political party, to bring down the racist, anti-working class governments that dominate the U.S. and establish a workers government. I hope that by running as a working class candidate for city council, and campaigning for a united workers slate, I can encourage other workers and their organizations to do the same, and make a united fight. If larger, or more representative, working class organizations can get together and put together a large, representative slate, I would even be happy to step aside. Unfortunately, at this point, as far as we know, there is not a single working class organization that has officially announced that it plans to run a candidate for mayor, or city council, or any other office in this election. Also, as a revolutionary and a Trotskyist, I also see this campaign as an opportunity to let more workers know about revolutionary Trotskyists, what we are really for, what we are really like.

Truth: You're not Black, you haven't spent much time working in factories, and you aren't a member of a union today. Why should people in Detroit vote for you?

Margaret: That's true. I'm not Black, I'm not a factory worker, and I'm not a union member. But I have devoted my adult life to defending the struggles of the Black people,



the workers, the unionists, and other oppressed and exploited people, and to trying to build a working class party that truly represents the most working class sectors of the American working class. I have also lived in a town made up of many Black people, workers and unionists, and I have been a member of working class organizations in which I have worked closely with them. I have learned a lot from this experience and I plan to continue doing so. One of the most important things I've learned is not to judge a book by its cover. Coleman Young obviously has all the credentials. But he's nothing but a puppet of the largely white, racist corporations that dominate Detroit. On the other hand, there are white working class revolutionaries in Detroit and elsewhere that are totally devoted to the Black people and their cause. The whole purpose of my campaign is to fight for young Black working people, Black working women, Black working men, working people of all races and nationalities, to come forward and be political leaders themselves, build a party that truly represents their interests and those of all exploited and oppressed people. It is especially important for unionized workers to do this, to fight for the unions to break with the corporations and their parties and build a workers party or labor party based on the union's power. At this point, I am the only candidate in these elections that is fighting for these things. That's why it's important for Black people, for working women and working men, and unionists, to support me and vote me. In the future, there can and will be more candidates fighting for these things.

A Draft Workers Platform

1. Unions! Break with the racist, anti-worker ruling class and its parties, Republicans and Democrats! 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 revolutionary workers of the Trotskyist Committee are 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.)

Letter to Working Class Organizations

May 1, 1989

To Working Class Organizations

Dear Comrades,

We are enclosing information on the number of votes for working class candidates in some of the most important elections in the last years. As you will see, there was an important increase in the number of votes for working class candidates in the November, 1988 elections. This was due largely, but not exclusively, to the efforts of workers and militants associated with Workers Against Concessions.

We think this represents an important advance for the working class in Detroit. It is very important to continue this struggle for the political independence of the working class, especially since Jesse Jackson and trade union leaders are trying to channel the growing and increasingly militant struggles of the African-American people and the workers into the Democratic Party.

In our opinion, it is impossible to make big progress in building a large working class party, or a revolutionary workers party, outside of a large struggle for the political independence of the working class.

Thus we are fighting for a united workers slate for Detroit mayor and city council, and we have decided to put forward a candidate for city council to help build support for this struggle.

We think that a united workers slate should fight for the unions to break with the Republican and Democratic parties, to run labor candidates for mayor and city council, and to build a labor party to fight for political power for the masses of working people, as well as other measures. And we are enclosing a copy of our draft platform.

But what is most important is to build the largest possible united workers slate, with the largest possible support in the working class. Thus we do not make agreement with our draft platform a precondition for a common fight against the bosses and their candidates in this election and for a united workers slate.

Our candidate will be Margaret Guttshall, who has been active in the workers movement for many years, particularly in the fight for working class candidates.

We ask your organization to support our candidate against the capitalist candidates that will be running in this election, and we ask you to send statements expressing your support.

Even more, we urge you to join us in building a united workers slate.

While there are important political differences between various working class organizations, there are also basic class interests that unite them against the capitalists and their candidates. Thus working class organizations can draw up a common working class platform, form a common working class slate, and make a united fight against the bosses in this election.

Fraternally,
Fred Michaels
for the Trotskyist Committee of Detroit

Capitalism and Socialism

George Bush said recently that "Socialism is dead," and cited the economic and political crises in Eastern Europe, the USSR, and China, as proof.

Bush's remarks are simply one of the latest, and most obvious, contributions to a whole campaign against socialism and communism, and in favor of the capitalist economic system, promoted by the American ruling class and its supporters.

What is interesting is that this campaign about the virtues of the capitalist economic system, and the death or imminent death of socialism or communism, comes at a time when the capitalist economic system is proving to be literally bankrupt.

The capitalist economic system that we live under in the United States, and that thousands of people in Latin America, Europe, Africa, and Asia live under, is based on private individuals owning the basic resources of the society, hiring other people to work for them, paying them less than the value of the goods that they produce, then taking that surplus value, or profit, for themselves. These private individuals then, theoretically, reinvest that surplus value, or profit, and start the process going all over again. And this is what is supposed to keep the economy moving.

The problem is that in many industries, what the individual owner, or even the state, has to pay for equipment and for workers, relative to the value of the products that are produced, has become so high that it is difficult for them to make a profit.

So the capitalists just aren't bothering to invest and produce much that is worthwhile anymore!

This is why everything is falling apart. This is why people don't have decent food, clothes, homes, jobs, and schools.

Instead of investing in industries that produce things that people need, they invest their money wherever they can make the biggest and quickest buck, in other words, junk buildings, junk cars, junk food, junk clothes.

The automobile industry is typical of this phenomenon. Years ago they built cars that would literally last for

decades. Then they realized that they could make a bigger profit if they built them to fall apart and you have to buy a new one every few years.

Capitalists are also putting their money into things that are just pure, unadulterated rip-offs. For example, when it became clear that the savings and loans associations were failing, and that the government was going to be forced to bail them out, hundreds of investors began to invest in these

savings and loan associations and got a tremendous and guaranteed return, from your tax dollars.

And, of course, capitalists also invest in things that are just totally destructive, like bombs and drugs, which is not just a waste of money, but actually destroys the society's resources.

So what was once a source of progress — private ownership of the means of production, private initiative, and the quest for profits — has now become not just an impediment to progress, but a source of the degeneration and destruction of civilization.

tion.

What is the solution to this problem?

Jesse Jackson and other reformists propose various incentives to try to get the capitalists to invest in more productive and useful enterprises. But they don't challenge their ownership and control of the banks and basic industry themselves.

The problem with these incentives is that they mean turning over even more of the society's resources to these parasitic and destructive capitalists. For example, the city of Detroit gave both GM and Chrysler thousands of dollars to keep one or two plants within the city of Detroit. But GM and Chrysler just keep asking for more and more. And it is quite likely that either one, or both, will shut down operations within the city of Detroit altogether. They use and abuse people in Detroit, and, when they are finished with them, they just throw them away.

The only solution to this problem is for the workers to establish their own government, composed of elected representatives of the workers themselves, take over the banks

and basic industry, elaborate and plan for production (with the assistance of scientists, engineers, and technicians truly devoted to the people), and carry it out.

This is socialism.

Centralizing production, eliminating competition between different companies in the same industry (and all the duplication of effort and waste associated with advertising that goes with it), would, in and of itself, lead to a tremendous increase in production. So would having the workers be the masters in the mines, mills, and factories, and incorporating thousands of people into production, who are now doing absolutely nothing. And, of course, the working class does not have to make a profit in the same way that the capitalists do, because it *works*, it does not live off of other people.

What then is the problem in Eastern Europe, the USSR, China, Cuba, etc? Why are there economic and political crises there?

The problems in these countries are not due to socialism, they are due to the lack of it.

The socialist revolutions that took place in these countries were isolated, and a huge, parasitic bureaucracy emerged that began to usurp and destroy the workers power.

In a certain sense, what happened in these countries, is similar to what happened in the U.S.

When workers first organized the unions, they were very dynamic and constructive. But the capitalists succeeded in confining and isolating the union movement in the North, and a huge, parasitic bureaucracy began to develop in the unions, that just used the unions to advance its own interests, rather than try to strengthen and build the unions.

Similarly, when the workers first established their own state in the USSR, it was very dynamic and constructive. The workers managed to lift the USSR from being one of the most backward, and underdeveloped nations in the world, to being one of the most developed and powerful. But, again, the capitalists succeeded in confining and isolating the workers state and the workers socialist revolution, and a huge, parasitic bureaucracy began to develop in this state, that just used it to advance its own interests, rather than try to strengthen and build the workers state itself.

In this sense, a workers union, or a workers state, is just like any living organism. If it does not have the room that it needs to grow in, it is going to become deformed, and it might even begin to degenerate, wither and die. Just like children's feet, if their shoes are too small.

But the solution to these problems, in the US or the USSR,

is not to go back to the days when there were no unions, or go back to the days when there was no workers state, and the capitalists owned everything.

The solution is to go forward, get rid of the parasitic, pro-capitalist bureaucracy, and let the workers once again be the masters in their house, and spread socialism, let it grow and develop.

When the American working class takes power, when it rids the world of the parasitic, cowardly bullies that make up the American capitalist class, when it takes over the tremendous resources of American society, and begins to develop production in accord with the needs of the people, there will be no limit to what it will be able to accomplish, in collaboration with the workers and oppressed peoples of other countries.

Future generations will look at life as we know it today, in the same way that we look at the lives of cave men.

This is the meaning of socialism or communism.

George Bush's ramblings about the "death of socialism" are just wishful thinking. More, the senile ramblings of a senile representative of the senile capitalist economic system that already has more than one foot in the grave. — M. Guttshall.

Capitalists in Detroit guilty of murder

In the last few weeks, capitalists in the Detroit area have managed to kill at least four workers.

On April 24, two workers at the Ford Rouge plant were killed by an explosion that resulted from cuts in maintenance crews and poor maintenance.

On April 27, a worker at the Chrysler Trenton Engine plant was killed when a robot fell on the back of his neck and pushed him into assembly line machinery.

And on May 14, a worker at the Marathon Petroleum Co. was burned to death when leaking naphtha caught fire. Another worker was also burned.

The fact that these parasites, who think that they are so smart, and so much better than the workers, are incapable of organizing production without slaughtering workers, shows how worthless they really are.

It is necessary to fight *now* for workers control of production, as a first step in workers management of industry. — M.G.

African-American students and Trotskyists

The African-American students' struggle at Wayne State University raised important questions about revolutionary Trotskyist policy and showed the class character of various tendencies that have been associated with Trotskyism in Detroit.

Because revolutionary Trotskyists see the working class, which is composed of workers of many different races and nationalities, as the only class that can resolve the problems facing humanity, we always analyze things in class terms, we always determine our policy on the basis of what we think will best advance the interests of the working class as a class.

Thus, when we look at anything, and try to decide what to do about it, the first question we ask is: "What class forces are involved?"

When we looked at the struggle at Wayne State University, what we saw was African-American middle class students and their supporters opposed to racist policies on the one hand, and, bourgeois and petty bourgeois politicians and administrators in favor of maintaining racist policies on the other.

Thus we urged Black people, workers, and all oppressed people to *support* African-American middle class students struggling against racism, *against* bourgeois and petty bourgeois politicians and administrators favoring racist policies.

Why?

Class Struggle

Because it is in the best interests of the working class to support all democratic and progressive struggles, against undemocratic and reactionary forces, not simply in the interests of democratic principles themselves, but also because these struggles bring out the *class* struggle. The more and more the Black people acquire democratic rights, the more and more the Black working class can play an independent role. The denial of democratic rights to the Black people as a whole, tends to push the Black people together, it tends to push the Black bourgeoisie, the Black petty bourgeoisie, and the Black working class together. This makes it difficult for Blacks workers to differentiate themselves, and play the independent and leading role in history that they are destined to play, in collaboration with workers of other races and nationalities.

The way to resolve this problem is not for the working class to take a hands-off attitude toward the struggles of Black people of other classes. And it is not to simply follow the leadership of the Black bourgeoisie or the petty bourgeoisie. The working class has to support the struggles of Black people of other social classes in an independent way, and develop itself as an independent political force within this struggle.

The Trotskyist Committee

Thus the Trotskyist Committee of Detroit urged workers and their organizations to support the African-American students' struggle at Wayne State University, against the racist administration, and, at the same time, differentiated this support from the so-called support of bourgeois and petty bourgeois politicians like Coleman Young.

"... 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 ... 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 ... 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 ... 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 ..." (*Truth*, No. 228, April 15, 1989.)

Spark

Spark, another Trotskyist group in Detroit, with important roots in the working class, also supported the students, at the same time as it attempted to differentiate its support from that of the bourgeois and petty bourgeois politicians.

"By the time the students who were active in the sit-in left the student center building they had occupied, they were in high spirits. They felt that their determination to stand up and be heard had made a difference. And they were right. Because when you say nothing and do nothing in the face of racist attitudes and actions, nothing changes ... The fight against racism which the students started at the university will be finished in a fight to change the very underpinnings of this society, a society which has always required racism as a reinforcement for exploitation." (*Spark*, No. 377, May 1-15, 1989.)

There are obviously important political differences between the Trotskyist Committee's line and Spark's line. The Trotskyist Committee draws out the class differences between the various forces involved. It also tends to put more emphasis on the struggle for the democratic rights of all Black people. For example, it is also possible to say that it is not possible to "change the very underpinnings of this society," the economic foundations we assume, without fighting racist polices against middle class students at universities, because, without this, the working class cannot put itself at the head of all the oppressed people fighting this racist, imperialist state, and lead them in overthrowing it.

But it is also true that while there are important political differences between the Trotskyist Committee's line, and Spark's line, there is an abyss that separates the lines of these Trotskyist groups with certain roots in the working class, and the line of certain other groups that have been associated with Trotskyism.

The Socialist Workers Party

For example, the Socialist Workers Party, which was once the Trotskyist workers party in the United States, reported on the action without distinguishing themselves in any way, either from the leadership of the sit-in, or from all the bourgeois and petty bourgeois politicians that claimed to support it. They even present AFL-CIO leader Tom Turner's intervention as if he really did support the students.

"Volunteers from Operation Get Down and other church and civic groups donated food and other supplies for the students. Supporters outside formed a chain to pass the supplies to the students inside the building. Tom Turner, past president of the Detroit Metro Labor Council, declared his support for the protest ..." (*The Militant*, No. 15, April 28, 1989.)

The Workers League

The Workers League, which was once part of the IC which made a contribution to the struggle for Trotskyism, takes an ambiguous position on the sit-in. It's not clear whether they support the sit-in against the university administration or not. It seems that they think that the fundamental problem in the United States is not the racist, imperialist ruling class, and the support to it by the aristocracy of labor and backward white workers, but petty bourgeois Black nationalism.

"... the perspective advanced by the leadership of the 'study-in' is a reactionary one based on petty-bourgeois black nationalism and anticommunism ... Black nationalism splits black workers from their class brothers ... this political outlook was encouraged by the ruling class to block the unity of the working class against capitalism ... it is the ideology of the social stratum of black capitalists, politicians and administrators ..." (*The Bulletin*, No. 1801, April 21, 1989.)

Revolutionary Trotskyists are for the right of the Black people to self-determination. We believe that the Black people, which today constitute an oppressed race in the United States, must have the right to decide themselves whether they wish to constitute a separate nation or not. It is up to the Black people themselves to decide this, and no one else. At the same time, we are not in agreement with petty bourgeois nationalist theories, programs, policies, or organizations, because they suggest that it is possible for the Black people to achieve the right to self-determination without winning the working class to this struggle

and building a workers party. However, there are radical and even revolutionary petty bourgeois nationalist tendencies, and our attitude toward them is not at all the one that the Workers League expresses.

As Leon Trotsky himself said: "... The old ideological covering will burst, all questions will emerge at once, and since the country is so economically mature the adaptation of the political and theoretical to the economic level will be achieved very rapidly. It is then possible that the Negroes will become the most advanced section. We have already a similar example in Russia. The Russians were the European Negroes. It is very possible that the Negroes also through the self-determination will proceed to the proletarian dictatorship in a couple of gigantic strides, ahead of the great bloc of white workers. They will then furnish the vanguard. I am absolutely sure that they will in any case fight better than the white workers. That, however, can happen only provided that the communist party carries on an uncompromising merciless struggle not against the supposed national prepossessions of the Negroes but against the colossal prejudices of the white workers and gives them no concessions whatever. (Discussions with Arne Swabeck, an American Trotskyist, Prinkipo, Turkey, 1933.)

Petty-bourgeois tendencies

Both the Socialist Workers Party and the Workers League, orient toward various sections of the petty bourgeoisie and adapt their line to this milieu and its prejudices, the Socialist Workers Party to the liberal wing of the trade union bureaucracy and petty bourgeois Black groups, the Workers League to the aristocracy of labor and backward white workers imbued with petty bourgeois prejudices. Neither orients themselves to the most proletarian sections of the American working class. Thus neither is truly Trotskyist. The SWP has already recognized it. The WL continues to use the term in order to better enable it to abuse and discredit Trotskyism.

The African-American students' struggle at Wayne State University, and the Black students' struggles breaking out across the country, show how important it is for more working class and revolutionary Trotskyist groups like the Trotskyist Committee, Spark and others, to enter into discussions and common work oriented toward clarifying and resolving their differences and rebuilding the Trotskyist workers party.

Such student struggles are signs of the tremendous working class upheavals that are on the way. Now more than every it is necessary to arm young workers with revolutionary Trotskyism, especially young Black workers. Armed with revolutionary Trotskyism, they will indeed be invincible, and Trotsky's prediction will be surpassed. — F. 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.

Revolutionary Educational Class:

Does Jesse Jackson really represent the Black people and the workers?

(Including articles from Black and working class publications for and against support to Jesse Jackson)

Sunday, June 11, 6 p.m.

Call 546-8167 for exact location.

Building the Trotskyist Committee

We were able to sell only 10 copies of *Truth* No. 228 and one copy of *The Fourth International*, No. 143, because we had to spend a lot of time on technical work necessary for our election campaign.

However, we did hold our first revolutionary educational class. It was very interesting and it went very well.

The topic was "Oppressed People from other Classes and Revolutionary Workers."

We read material from various working class tendencies on the African-American students struggle at Wayne State University, material from Lenin's pamphlet, "What is to be done?" on the Russian revolutionary workers policies, and material from Trotsky's discussions with American revolutionaries on the struggles of the Black people.

One of the things that was clear in the discussion was that the bourgeoisie's propaganda "supporting" the African-American students at Wayne State, had made workers suspicious of the students, which was precisely what it was designed to do.

Another question that came up was just who is, and is not, part of the working class. This is an important question because it concerns who really can, and cannot, be relied on. We decided to go back and double-check what Marx said about this, and we will be writing about this in future issues of *Truth*.

Our next revolutionary educational class will be on Jesse Jackson and whether he really does or does not represent the Black people and the workers in the United States. All readers are welcome to attend. — M.G.

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What is the International League?

The International League is an organization of workers and working class militants. It has members and supporters in the Antilles, Bolivia, France, Poland, Spain and the USA. It was founded in 1973 to rebuild the Fourth International, the world party of the socialist revolution.

The Fourth International is the only international party that fights for the socialist revolution. It needs to be rebuilt because it was broken into many different organizations by the capitalists and their agents in the workers movement, the Stalinists, through terror and repression. It was also broken up by those in its own ranks who adapted to the petty bourgeoisie and turned away from the working class.

But all during these years that it was broken up there has always been a core of working class militants who made as their main goal rebuilding the Fourth International - the International Committee from 1953-1973 and the International League from 1973 until the present.

During this same time, many organizations of sincere working class Trotskyists have existed and continue to fight for many of the principles of the Fourth International.

In this sense, the International League is one of several working class Trotskyist organizations that exist today including the Liga Internacional de los Trabajadores (LIT) centered in Argentina, Socialist Action in the US, the Workers Revolutionary Party in Britain, etc.

The International League is trying to convince these organizations to place the unity of the Fourth International, that is party unity, above the narrow factional interests of each organization.

We urge our readers to read *The Fourth International*, publication of the Executive Committee of the International League and to write to us about it. — F. Michaels

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French Trotskyists on the right to vote for immigrant workers

We are reprinting excerpts from an article by French Trotskyists associated with the International League for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International on the right to vote for immigrant workers. They are organized in the Ligue Ouvriere Revolutionnaire de France (Revolutionary Workers League of France), and their publication is called La Verite (Truth).

Unlike the defenders of the current system, we give great importance to those excluded from office, those who do not have the right to speak, and those, like us having an interest in overthrowing this system of exploitation and oppression: the immigrant workers. If they were a subject of discussion in the course of the last electoral campaign, it was above all through the racist campaigns of the candidates of the extreme right. The official organizations of the workers movement, the Socialist Party and the Communist party, waiver on this question and defend incorrect positions. Similarly, "Lutte Ouvriere" considers that the equality and the unity of the French and immigrant workers exists in the struggles and in the strikes. Consequently, it does not make the question of the right to vote for immigrants a stake in the political struggles in the country. It is in this way that one finds oneself before a situation in which the French workers, which yesterday were in struggles shoulder to shoulder with the immigrant workers, today, vote, that is, take a position, in a deformed but real way, on the political questions that will determine, on one level or another, the living conditions for everyone, including the immigrant workers. But the immigrant workers are excluded from this process. And tomorrow, as today, the immigrant workers will confront the same inequalities in employment, housing, schools, etc. The racists continue to feel encouraged by the isolation in which the immigrant proletariat finds itself. All the more so since clemency toward authors of racist crimes is becoming more and more inscribed in the justice system in the

country.

For consolation, the immigrant workers must be content with words from the "enlightened" bourgeoisie and the democratic petty bourgeois on human rights and coexistence between communities ...

"Lutte Ouvriere's" policy on this question is not opposed to the ... crude phrases passed out ..., particularly by the Socialist Party, on the place of immigrants in French society. To the real problems of the isolation of the immigrant workers and the division of the proletariat in this country that flows from it, "Lutte Ouvriere" responds with conjunctural unity realized partially in union struggles. It is obvious that on many occasions the French and immigrant workers have demonstrated a capacity to mobilize around economic demands. But on the political terrain, one is obliged to see that the French workers do it alone. The unity in economic struggles that "Lutte Ouvriere" presents as a substitute for the struggle for political equality, is, in reality, a solid basis to advance toward this equality.

One must not hesitate to say that, without this political unity, without the desire to achieve this political unity, the working class in this country will never find enough resources to raise itself to the height of the tasks, to overthrow the domination of the imperialist bourgeoisie.

This is why the platform adopted by the LOR conference does not create an impasse on this question: Unity of the workers, French and immigrant! Equal rights! The right to vote for immigrants! Abolition of anti-immigrant laws! Punish racist criminals! Self-defense against racist attacks! It is also why the LOR struggles for the working class to resolve this question in the framework of the preparation of its necessary struggle against the capitalist and reactionary state. March 14, 1989.

Translated from *La Verite*, No. 305, March, 1989.

Trotskyist Tendencies

The Trotskyist Committee of Detroit obviously thinks that our tendency, the International League for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International, is the tendency that has made the most consistent struggle for Trotskyism and the Fourth International.

But it is not the only tendency. There are other tendencies that have made contributions to the fight for Trotskyism and the Fourth International, including Spark, tendencies associated with the International Workers League, Socialist Action, tendencies associated with the Trotskyist Coordinating Committee, and others.

We plan to set aside space on a regular basis to reprint material from these tendencies so that our readers can learn more about them, their strengths and weaknesses, and what must be done to rebuild the Trotskyist workers party in the U.S. and the Fourth International as a whole. We also aim to encourage these tendencies to take up discussions and common work oriented toward clarifying and resolving the differences that separate working class, revolutionary and Trotskyist forces.

In this issue of Truth we are reprinting an article from Socialist Action, on the destructive role that Jesse Jackson's supporters are playing in the struggle against racism in New York, by Chris Butters.

As readers may know, members of the Trotskyist Committee were once members of Socialist Action. The majority of Socialist Action voted to exclude us from this organization, and we obviously consider this to have been a serious political mistake. But this does not lead us to write-off this tendency and its members. It's principled opposition to Jesse Jackson's destructive role, is one of the reasons. We do not agree with the call for a Black party in this article; we are for a workers or labor party. We plan to take this question up in future issues. — F. Michaels.

NEW YORK — The Martin Luther King Day rally each January has been a good place to pause and assess the state of the anti-racist movement here.

Last year's demonstration was unusual; it was animated by red-hot struggles for justice for victims of specific acts of racist violence. In particular, the struggle for justice for the victims of the lynching at Howard Beach, Queens, gave the anti-racist movement a sense of its own power.

This year, likewise, there has been no scarcity of cases waiting to be championed by the anti-racist movement. Unfortunately, this year's event had a pronounced electoral emphasis. Prominent on the speakers' list were those urging that the number-one task of activists in the year ahead is to "Dump Mayor Koch."

The marchers were given a campaign rally for David Dinkins, Manhattan borough president and highest ranking Black official in New York City, who has announced his candidacy for mayor.

Activists were urged to register 250,000 new voters for Dinkins "in the spirit of the civil rights movements in the 1960s."

The civil rights movement

One of the central insights of the reawakened anti-racist movement in New York since 1986 has been the recognition of the need to bring the civil rights movement of the South to the northern cities.

To listen to Dinkins and his supporters at the rally, the victory of the civil rights movement was due to its support by Democratic Party politicians. But the civil rights movement won everything it fought for by militant struggle — legendary sit-ins, freedom rides, and protest marches — not by lobbying Democrats.

"We cannot depend on any political party, for both the Democrats and Republicans have betrayed the basic principles of the Declaration of Independence," wrote John Lewis, head of the student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, in a speech for the August 1963 March on Washington that was suppressed by the march organizers.

Given the existence of a mass movement against Jim Crow that threatened to go beyond the bounds of Democratic Party politics, President Kennedy acceded to the March on Washington — and then only to be better able to control it.

The "Chicago example"

Another theme harped on at the Martin Luther King rally was the need to emulate the "Chicago example." In 1983, Democrat Harold Washington became Chicago's first Black mayor.

"The example of Chicago" is indeed worth examining. If the Chicago campaign of 1983 is any indication, Dinkins will face a racist campaign waged against him by his chief campaign rival — a racism fostered and perpetuated by the Democratic machine Dinkins has been loyal to all his life.

Mayor Edward Koch, who since 1977 has built a base among white ethnic groups on the basis of fighting affirmative action and "poverty pimps," has recently been exposed as a patronage pimp for white-owned businesses and Democratic Party hacks. Koch's policies have been instrumental in creating a climate where racially motivated incidents like the 1986 Howard Beach lynching are on the rise.

But if "the Chicago example" is any indication, mobilizing on behalf of Dinkins will be a trap for working people. Dinkins'; running on the Democratic Party ticket is a pledge in advance that he will serve the interests of the banks and corporations — not workers, the poor, and the homeless.

This is the reason why big-business newspapers like the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Sun Times*, and *Crain's Chicago Business* endorsed the Washington campaign. For the same reason, *The New York Times* and *Newsday* have already written favorably about

Dinkins in the first few weeks of his candidacy.

The first big test

One task of New York City's next mayor will be to administer the biggest round of cutbacks since the city's budget crisis of the mid-1970's. At stake are the jobs of thousands of city workers and the maintenance of many vital city services — including fire protection, child care, drug-treatment programs, and education.

Mayor Koch has already announced a \$480 million shortfall for the coming year, due to reduced state aid by Governor Cuomo as well as the loss of anticipated tax revenue due to the October 1987 stock market crash.

One of the first big tests for Dinkins and his supporters came at a "Campaign for a People's Budget Conference" held at Hunter College on Feb. 4. The event, attended by 800 people, was sponsored by the New York State Rainbow Coalition.

In a manner strikingly similar to that of Martin Luther King Day, the conference was orchestrated like a Dinkins campaign rally by Democratic Party supporters behind the scenes. But Dinkins' speech to the gathering did not even criticize Governor Cuomo, let alone the banks and corporations whose profit drive is the source of the budget crisis.

"I didn't work this hard and register all those people and walk all those miles doing Rainbow work to have somebody whose views I don't agree with walk in and think he's got it made," said one activist in an article on the conference in "The City Sun," a Black weekly.

Yet this is the terrible logic of the Rainbow's "inside/outside" strategy with regard to the Democratic Party.

Anti-racist activists now face the grim prospect of any demonstrations over the next year being subordinated to the agenda of electing Dinkins. A similar situation is faced by trade unionists, housing and AIDS activists.

Given this prospect, some activists may withdraw from electoral politics, instead devoting themselves to work around single issues. Of course, mass mobilizations are needed on a whole range of single issues.

But the situation points to another lesson as well. Anti-racist activists need an independent Black political party they can truly call their own, a party that educates, agitates, and mobilizes in their interest 365 days of the year — every year.

The entire course of events since the Howard Beach protests — from the struggle for justice for Tawana Brawley to the recent maneuvers with regard to the New York mayoral elections — points to the fact that this party must be independent of the big-business interests of the Republicans and Democrats. — Chris Butters, reprinted from *Socialist Action*, April, 1989.

International Notes

Chile: The Chilean United Workers Central (CUT) called a general strike on Tuesday, April 18. The workers' main demand was for the release of the president and vice president of the federation, who had been convicted of subversion as a result of their role in organizing an earlier general strike. Police attacked and injured many strikers.

Southern Africa: An international working class campaign to free Moses Mayekiso, a leader of a South African metal workers' union, has been successful. On April 24, a South African judge was forced to rule that Mayekiso was not guilty of charges of subversion and treason, filed against him as a result of his role in organizing the Alexandra Action Committee. This committee had played a leading role in organizing Blacks in Alexandra, a poor district in Johannesburg where 200,000 to 300,000 people live, where as many as twenty families living in one room houses are forced to share a single tap, and where there are no toilets. Black people in this town began to organize themselves to carry out basic tasks including digging toilets, passing out food, organizing day care, and establishing people's courts. And when police attacked the community they organized self-defense.

Southern Africa: Thousands marched in solidarity with David Webster, a white opponent of apartheid, who had been assassinated in front of house. The march took place on Saturday, May 6. Many militants say that the assassin was part of the official security force.

Palestine: Yasser Arafat, head of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), recently declared that the PLO's charter calling for the destruction of the racist, Zionist, Israeli state has been invalidated or superseded. However, it seems that young Palestinians, organizing and leading the *intifada* (uprising) don't agree with him. According to the *Detroit Free Press*, the underground leadership of the *intifada* issued a call for a "get tough" policy with all Palestinians guilty of collaborating with the Israeli

state, and there has been a wave of killings of such collaborators. An uprising has also taken place in Jordan, against King Hussein's austerity measures, imposed as part of an agreement with the International Monetary Fund. At least ten people have been killed and 72 wounded and the prime minister and several cabinet ministers have been forced to resign.

Poland: While Lech Walesa recently signed an agreement with the Stalinist dictator Jaruzelski, pledging his cooperation in implementing various economic "reforms" that include closing many factories, in exchange for some seats in a phony parliament, thousands of Polish workers are already making it clear, that they don't recognize this agreement. Polish coal miners organized wildcat strikes and illegal demonstrations in several cities. On May Day, independent working class and socialist political tendencies organized demonstrations in several cities. In Wroclaw, police tried to break up these demonstrations with water cannons, tear gas and clubs.

The USSR: The USSR recently held elections that it claims show that it is changing, that the people now have the democratic rights they need. But workers and oppressed people, in Armenia at least, are not convinced. Over 300,000 demonstrated in Yerevan, for the return of their territory Nagorno-Karabakh and for freedom for imprisoned nationalist leaders. They are demanding that the Armenian parliament take action; if nothing is done by May 18, they are calling for a general strike.

China: Thousands of Chinese students are demonstrating against the bureaucracy in the USSR and for more democratic rights. While the imperialist press says that these students are anti-communist, this is a lie. Many of these demonstrators are singing the "International," a socialist or communist workers song. Many of them obviously want to get rid of the bureaucracy, and build true socialism or communism. They don't want to go back to capitalism.

TRUTH

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Self-Determination for Panama; U.S. out now!

On Thursday, May 11, George Bush ordered 2,000 more U.S. troops to Panama. Later, he called for the overthrow of the current Panamanian government.

Bush claims that his former partner General Manuel Noriega (who collaborated with Bush in both arming the contras and in dealing drugs), has stolen an election, is abusing his political opponents, and violating the democratic rights of the Panamanian people. And he says that this is why he sending troops to Panama and calling for the overthrow of the current government.

This is a lie.

Noriega and company are undoubtedly corrupt, dictatorial and undemocratic. But Bush is just using this as a pretext to try to clean up the U.S. government's image and reassert *U.S. domination* in Central America.

The U.S. has absolutely no right to have troops in Panama, or in any country in Central America, or, for that matter, in any country in the world.

The American ruling class recognizes the democratic right to self-determination for only one nation, the United States.

The American working class must pursue a different policy. It must fight for the democratic right to self-determination for all oppressed peoples and nations. In this way it will be possible to unite the struggles of workers and oppressed peoples of all nations into a single struggle to overthrow the racist, imperialist U.S. state, and free the world of this menace. — M.G.

Reagan and Bush guilty

Oliver North and his attorneys submitted a 42-page summary of the conspiracy to arm the reactionary Nicaraguan contras, in violation of a Congressional decision. A U.S. judge accepted this summary and said to the jury: "You are instructed that the United States has admitted for the purposes of this trial the following facts to be true."

These documents show that both Reagan and Bush were definitely involved in arming the contras. For example, they say: "... CPPG principals (North's group) agreed that a Presidential letter should be sent to President Suazo of Honduras and to provide several enticements to Honduras in exchange for its continued support of the Nicaragua resistance ... The CPPG was in agreement that transmission of the letter should be closely followed by the visit of an emissary who would verbally brief the 'conditions' attached to the expedited military deliveries, economic assistance and other support. The CPPG did not wish to include this detail of the 'quid pro quo' arrangement in written correspondence ..."

Reagan did indeed send the letter; and Bush did indeed visit Suazo. And, "Bush told Suazo that President Reagan had directed expedited delivery of U.S. military items to Honduras. Vice President Bush also informed Suazo that President Reagan had directed the currently withheld economic assistance for Honduras should be released ..." Further, in a

plan for Bush's discussions with Hondurans, it says that one purpose of the discussions, "... was to encourage continued Honduran support for the Resistance. The memorandum alerted that ... (Hondurans) would insist on receiving clear economic and social benefits from its cooperation."

Both Reagan and Bush conspired to arm the reactionary contras through third parties. The jury that heard all this material obviously believes this too, because it decided to acquit North of charges where he appeared to be clearly under orders from higher authorities. It convicted him of charges where it had material evidence that proved that he was guilty, like shredding documents, etc.

The Constitution calls for impeaching officials that seem to be guilty of such crimes and putting them on trial. The fact that the Democrats are not doing this, shows that they are Reagan's and Bush's co-conspirators.

Solidarity with Pittston Miners

The Pittston miners' strike in southwest Virginia is turning into a virtual civil war. The miners are wearing combat uniforms because they say it's a war. They are occupying roads to block vehicles carrying scabs. Their wives have formed a support group called "Daughters of Mother Jones," the famous working class militant, and their children have walked out of school in support of their parents. So far, police have arrested over 400 miners. They have treated them very brutally, handcuffing them and pushing their faces into the dirt. One miner has already been seriously injured when a vehicle full of scabs deliberately drove into a group of striking miners. We urge all workers to send statements of support and contributions to the miners at: Justice for the Miners, UMW District 28, PO Box 28, Castlewood, VA 24224.

Black students' struggles

Since Black students at Wayne State University occupied the administration building, Black students and their supporters at Ferris State, and Michigan State have followed suit. And these are only some of many similar struggles taking place across the country. Over 10,000 students at community colleges in New York City rallied against a proposed tuition-hike and forced the administration to back down.

Unity against Ford's plans to sell Rouge Steel

The Ford Motor Company is once again talking about selling Rouge Steel, this time to Worthington Steel in Ohio. Ford already used constituting this part of the Ford complex as a separate entity as a tool to reduce steelworkers' wages and further split up UAW Local 600, which is the largest autoworkers union local near the city of Detroit, with 17,000 members. The leadership of UAW Local 600 is "talking tough" and says that Ford's talks represent a "major break of commitment and integrity" and that selling Rouge steel would have a "serious negative impact on the possibilities of peaceful contract negotiations in 1990." But, it is impossible to rely on this leadership to lead this fight. Workers opposition groups within UAW Local 600 need to make a common fight against any attempt to sell Rouge Steel.