

TRUTH

A REVOLUTIONARY TROTSKYIST BULLETIN IN DETROIT-FOUNDED 1974

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

**Workers have
the power . . .
to stop the layoffs,
win more jobs . . .
just like
the East German
workers!**

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Workers have the power . . . like the East German workers!

The capitalists are laying off workers across the country. IBM is laying off 10,000 workers; Kelsey-Hayes is laying off 1,000; Lockheed is closing a plant in New Jersey throwing 950 out of work; Ford is closing the Windsor engine plant with 900 jobs lost; Chrysler is closing Jefferson Avenue with 1700 placed out of work; and over 30,000 autoworkers are on temporary layoff.

But things have happened which the capitalists and these union leaders did not plan for. Things that make them deathly afraid. The uprisings of workers and the general population of Eastern Europe, and especially, the East German workers against the bureaucratic governments.

As one Ford worker put it, "what's happening at Ford is bigger than just one company. It's happening all across the country. . . . Those workers in East Germany stuck together and they brought down a whole government they hated. It shows what can happen if people simply just stick together."

The East German workers, one half of the most powerful working class in Europe, rose up against the rich and privileged bureaucrats that ran their government, tore down the Berlin Wall, and forced the East German government to resign. They have seized the offices of the secret police and have forced the remaining authorities to place the previous leaders under house arrest for corruption, mismanagement, etc.

The bureaucrats of Eastern Europe have lived in luxury while the workers have had to stand in line for hours for food. The bureaucrats have kept the workers' standard of living down to pay back money to the big US banks. They have suppressed democratic rights. In short, they have represented the capitalists inside those countries.

Yes, we have the power, just like the East German workers. The power of the East German workers is the power of the organized, optimistic working class.

Would you have thought a year ago, six months ago, that such powerful workers movement would grow and spread throughout Europe?

The same thing can happen and will happen here in the United States. For the same reasons. The workers will realize that they have the power to create a working class alternative to the power of the capitalists.

US workers cannot take any more job losses, any more layoffs. We must have jobs and we must have good wages.

The only way that everybody can work is if all the work is divided up among all the workers. The only way to insure good wages is to have a minimum weekly wage, a good union wage, that does not change if the capitalists cut the workers' hours.

To win a political struggle, you need a political weapon. A party. A new independent working class political party. A labor party based on the unions.

To get this party we need unions without rich bureaucrats. That is why we socialists support such the New Directions movement in the UAW against the top leadership's Administration Caucus. That is why we socialists support the call by Tony Mazzocchi, secretary-treasurer of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union (OCAW) for a labor party against the Democratic and Republican parties.

The East German workers have shown the power that workers have to change the society in which they live. Let us US workers realize that we too have that power. And start to use it. — Truth

Miners' candidate wins in Virginia!

Jackie Stump, a United Mine Workers official, defeated a Virginia state representative incumbent of 22 years, Donald McGlothlin Sr., by a vote of 7,623 to 3,571 in November.

Jackie Stump was one of the three United Mine Worker officials who was arrested, placed in shackles and jailed for blocking scabs and scab coal at the Pittston strike last June. Donald McGlothlin, Sr., is the father of the judge, Donald McGlothlin, Jr., who has fined the United Mine Workers Union over \$30 million for its strike at Pittston.

Stump's campaign did not even begin until three weeks before the election. It was a write-in campaign! Thousands of miners went door-to-door urging everyone to vote against the Democrat, lackey of the Pittston coal company. In three weeks, they created a real victory for the workers in southwestern Virginia.

We do not know the exact details of why, three weeks before the election, this write-in campaign was launched. In any case, it never could have succeeded without the initiative, the organization and the dedication of the miners, their families and their supporters throughout that region.

The miners want to defeat the capitalists politically. The miners want to have political power and they are convinced the only way to get it is with their own representatives.

What would happen if, instead of devoting all of the workers' money and resources to electing Democrats, the union leaders would actually organize to defeat the capitalists politically? The workers, I suspect, would respond the same in Detroit, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Gary and St. Louis. By throwing the capitalist candidates out.

The miners have shown us one of the main ways that a labor party is going to be built in the U.S. By the unions mobilizing locally and electing workers representatives against the Democrats.

We urge local unions and other organizations to invite Jackie Stump and miners' representatives to come to their locals and discuss their victory, and how the workers can repeat this success across the country.
— F. Michaels

Support the FMLN offensive in El Salvador

The FMLN in El Salvador has launched the largest military offensive of the 10 year civil war. El Salvador is located in Central America, near Mexico. It has a population of 5 million, the most densely populated country of Central America. The working masses of El Salvador are currently suffering under 40% unemployment, high inflation, and death squads.

The U.S.-backed government does not deserve an ounce of support from U.S. workers. The government is a military machine to protect the property of the large landowners. These families sell the coffee and other goods to major U.S. corporations. They are responsible for the suffering of the masses.

The government was "elected" in phony elections. It consists of the ARENA party, the party of the death squad killings of trade union militants, peasant leaders and even priests. This government has even been held responsible for the death squads by the Catholic Church.

The FMLN grew up as an organization of the oppressed, as an expression of their desire to end their oppression. It has the support of the major trade unions in El Salvador and also the major peasant organizations.

U.S. workers should give unconditional military support to the FMLN. This offensive represents the desire of the workers and peasants to be rid of a vicious military dictatorship and to take control of their own destiny.

We should do everything we can to stop goods from reaching El Salvador that will go to the government. We should demand the immediate end of all U.S. military and economic assistance to the government.

U.S. workers should do everything we can to make sure that the FMLN fighters have the weapons, medical aid, etc., that they need.



Febe Elizabeth Valasquez, leader of the workers union, FENESTRAS. Her assassination with 3 of her fellow militants, precipitated the offensive.

We, Trotskyists, however, do not give political support to the FMLN. Trotskyists fight for: the complete independence of El Salvador from the U.S. capitalists; the land belong to those who work it; for workers management of all industry; for a workers government; for the reorganization of society on socialist foundations.

El Salvador needs a political party that will fight for this program, a section of the rebuilt Fourth International.

The policy of the FMLN is to try to create a government composed of all the classes in El Salvador, including sections of military and of the capitalists, as long as they will not support the ARENA government.

Today the question in El Salvador is one of civil war between the workers and peasants following the FMLN and the Cristiani government backed by the U.S. and the Salvadoran military. The offensive of the FMLN is the way today to the overthrow of the military dictatorship.

The overthrow of the Salvadoran dictatorship by the FMLN will be power-

ful support to the Black people in South Africa, the Palestinian people fighting the Israeli state, to all oppressed peoples around the world.

Below we reprint some excerpts from the "Manifesto to the Nation" issued by the General Command of the FMLN. It shows the complete legitimacy of the FMLN's offensive, and it shows how much support it has from the workers and the peasants. — F. Michaels

"Since 1981, the Farabundo Marti National Liberation front has pointed out the need for a political solution to the war. This effort has met with the stubborn opposition of the Armed Forces and the ultrarightist sectors in the country . . .

" [The present ARENA government] has responded with an escalation of repression, with torture and murders that culminated in the slaughter of FENASTRAS workers. The government refused our formulas for negotiation, and at the same time deepened the causes of the war, aggravating the social crisis and closing off the possibilities for action by the popular sectors."

" . . . the General Command of the FMLN . . . orders all our units to hold positions that have been won and to proceed to organize a general uprising of our people, to undertake all the tasks of safeguarding and defending the population, as well as requisitioning and distributing food to those most in need.

" . . . it calls on all the working people to stop work as a way of generalizing the struggle that will help to undermine the ARENA government and also enable everyone to join in the fight. Accordingly, so that the people can prepare themselves, we declare that the present transport strike, sabotage of energy supply and shutdown of gas stations will continue indefinitely. . . ."

Solidarity with the East German workers!

A few weeks ago the Berlin Wall came down. This wall has been in existence for almost 30 years dividing the city of Berlin and all of Germany. A few days ago, the German workers seized the records of the secret police, surrounded the luxury villas of the previous leaders and placed them under house arrest.



Young people swing pick axes on top of the Berlin Wall.

The purpose of our big daily newspapers is to present the capitalist system that we have in America in the best possible light. Some of the journalists are positively happy about the events in East Germany because they think this shows how right they have been about American capitalism.

But they will soon sober up from their drunken glee. For the movement in East Germany, like the movements throughout Eastern Europe, are workers movements. And like all workers movements, they are, in their soul, anti-capitalist. These movements are the first stages of a political revolution against the rich, corrupt bureaucrats who have abused the name of the working class and socialism.

Voice of the workers

For the last few years, American workers have been hearing about Gorbachev, what he thinks, what he is doing. Now, with the miners strike in the Soviet Union last summer, the events in East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Poland, you are hearing the workers speak.

Here are some of the slogans raised in East Germany last week:

"The left against those on top."

"Equal pensions for all."

"The streets are the platform of the people."

"Use your power. Form workers' councils."

"The same rights for all parties."

"Monitoring of the state and the police by elected popular bodies."

"Found political parties."

"No more lies."

East Germany

Germany was divided into two parts by the capitalists on one side and the Stalinist bureaucrats on the other to prevent the unity of the German working class. The German working class is the most powerful working class in Europe.

Today there are 200,000 American troops (along with 60,000 English and 50,000 French troops) occupying West Germany. In East Germany, there are 300,000 Russian troops, all part of the agreement after World War II. These troops are in Germany against the German working class.

The oppression imposed on the East German people requires a political revolution to throw it off. We are seeing the first stage of that revolution now. There is no doubt. There will be a class war between the workers and the bureaucrats in East Germany.

Gorbachev

Gorbachev, head of the Soviet Union, has a policy for the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. It is called *perestroika* (restructuring) and *glasnost* (openness). This policy is pro-capitalist.

In fact, the reason why these revolts are taking place now is that the governments of East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, etc., already started introducing capitalism — high prices, inflation, unemployment, capitalists — into those countries a few years ago. And the workers are rising up against the corruption and the new capitalists that they find around them.

Many of the workers in these countries

think that Gorbachev and bureaucrats like him, with their *perestroika* and *glasnost*, will help them. This is confused. But in this confusion lies the conflict that cannot be resolved — the struggle of the working class to end capitalism and reorganize society on socialist foundations.

Socialism

East Germany is not a socialist country. There are no socialist countries in the world. Socialism is not merely the absence of capitalism. It is organized, planned production to meet all the needs of the society. It requires workers democracy, the workers control over all the aspects of society.

What is needed to advance the struggle of the East German workers is a working class and socialist alternative to Gorbachev and the capitalists:

- Unity and independence for Germany. For the right of an oppressed nation, like Germany, to self-determination.

- Workers democracy. Abolish all restrictions on the right to strike, form working class organizations, and political parties. Bring back to life the democracy of the councils of workers. The workers councils to run the country and the economy. Keep the privileged bureaucrats and the new capitalists and their supporters out of the councils.

- Socialism without rich bureaucrats. No to the privileges of the bureaucracy. Greater equality of wages for all forms of labor. No to private ownership of the basic resources of the society. No to private trade with Western capitalists aimed at the private accumulation of wealth. For a complete revision of the planned economy in the interests of the producers and consumers.

We Trotskyists say that the East German workers need to create a political party. This party will be dedicated to authentic socialism and workers democracy.

It will be a party that can lead the workers to overthrow the bureaucrats and establish workers democracy in East Germany. This party will be a section of a rebuilt international of socialist workers, the Fourth International. — 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.

To Our Readers:

In the last issue of *Truth*, we said that we were going to reprint more of the platform of the Nicaraguan opposition that favored socialism and that we were going to continue the series on Black Socialists. Both of these articles will appear in the January issue. We apologize for any confusion this may have caused.

Building the Trotskyist Committee

We sold 15 copies of the last issue of *Truth* to workers at the Ford Rouge plant and WCCC students, and militants of other organizations.

In particular, with the proposed sale of the Ford Rouge Steel Company, we tried to convince workers to vote against the proposed contract. While the contract passed, the vote was very close. Several workers said that the problem was not just at Ford, but across the country. They pointed out that the main reason for the sale of Rouge Steel was to destroy UAW Local 600. They said that the problem was that the workers did not have anyone on their side in Washington. This gave us the opportunity to further discuss the fight for a labor party.

One worker said, "when workers hear about a labor party, they think of socialism, then of communism, and communism is bad."

This all the more underlines the need for socialists who are for a labor party to make propaganda for socialism, to explain what it is, and to defend the workers movements in Eastern Europe today. Furthermore, it also shows how true it is that the fight for the labor party, for supporting Mazzocchi's call for a labor party will greatly expand the discussion about socialism among the workers. We also distributed some more copies of Mazzocchi's call and his political questionnaire for workers.

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**Free Annette
Evans-Lee!
Open all the schools
to working class and
Black children!**

Annette Evans Lee faces up to 14 years in prison for trying to get a good education for her child. She is being tried for violating the residency requirements of the Southfield Public Schools. Southfield is middle-class suburb of Detroit where there are Black residents.

All unions and working class organizations should demand that charges be dropped against Lee. All schools should be open to all working class and Black children!

The inequality of this capitalist society is most glaring when it comes to how women and children are treated. Here the richest make sure that their schools get the most money, the best facilities. Here the tax structure is purposely meant to cause suffering of working class and poor children.

Lee was apparently evicted from her house in Southfield. The owner refused to fix the leaking roof and after she stopped paying rent, he threw her out. And, so, when the school discovered that her proof of residency was incorrect, they brought charges against her in court!

She correctly said, "it's racism!" Yes, it is anti-working class. And, this from one of the liberal suburbs. In fact, the only reason it probably couldn't happen in any of the other Detroit suburbs is that there are so few Blacks in them that a Black mother wouldn't dare to register her child in those schools.

Open all schools to working class and Black children!

Drop all the charges against Annette-Evans Lee!

TRUTH

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**Layoffs for Black autoworkers . . .
a raise for Coleman Young!**

The layoffs of workers, especially Black workers in the auto industry are, once again, regular and depressing news in the newspapers (see front page article).

But this time they are coupled with a new twist. A raise for Coleman Young.

Many Black workers will be scraping by, trying to eke out a living from unemployment checks and a rapidly diminishing Supplementary Unemployment Benefit (SUB) fund.

At the same time, a special committee of the Detroit City Council decided that Coleman Young should get a salary increase, to \$130,000 a year.

Coleman Young is quiet as mouse about the layoffs. Is he going to attack the very people he works for — the small group of very rich whites who actually own the city? No.

Coleman Young and the others, John Conyers, George Crockett, Tom Barrow, Keith Butler, work for the rich whites, the capitalists who own Ford, GM, Chrysler. They live very comfortably while the masses of Blacks (and poor whites) suffer through these layoffs.

Only the working class has the power to stop the layoffs and win jobs, to achieve equality for Black people, and provide decent wages, homes, schools and unions for all working people.

Coleman Young and the other Democratic Party and Republican Party politicians do not represent the workers.

The workers need their own political party, a new independent working class party.

That is why we urge workers to support the call of Tony Mazzocchi, secretary-treasurer of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union, for a labor party. It can be the beginning of building such a party.

Support Mazzocchi's call for a labor party

Mazzocchi's call for a labor party and his political questionnaire for workers are available from *Truth*. Call us at 313-831-0593, write us at PO Box 441283, Detroit, MI 48244-1283 or ask your *Truth* distributor.