

# Autoworkers, Take the Offensive!

Every paper in the country carried headline news of the sellout by the UAW leadership to Ford. Trying to project a picture of a triumphant and confident, beaming Douglas Fraser, head of the UAW, they announced "UAW leaders Pleased with Pact at Ford, Expect Its OK."

The UAW Ford Council has accepted the concessions made by the UAW negotiating team. The concessions mean workers will give up billions of dollars in wages, benefits and COLA to Ford. The union chiefs and Ford say this will "save jobs."

The fact is, autoworkers do not want concessions. Even a large proportion of local officials do not greet concessions, fearing that if they were to accept them and try to sell them to the angry autoworkers, they would be replaced. At the meeting of the General Council of UAW Local 600 (Ford River Rouge) discussing the renegotiated contract, lower-level officials, squeaking with fear, asked Mike Rinaldi, Local 600 president, how in the name of God they could sell this one to the production workers.

Hank Wilson, president of the Dearborn Assembly Plant unit, had a heart attack just prior to the negotiations with Ford. No wonder, the pressures are very great. Others who spoke out against Fraser, such as Al Gardner, head of the skilled trades unit at the Rouge and a long-time oppositionist, were set upon by Fraser who said he'd "tear (Gardner's) ass off" and "I'll get you." This rage and abuse from the normally smug Fraser show that he is far from being confident.

In reality, the union bureaucracy is fearful of what might happen in the ratification voting at Ford. They are moving with lightning speed (the only time they do is when selling out), to ram the new contract through. But they did know what the options were before they started the concessions drive.

Fraser, paraphrased in *The New York Times* after the acceptance of the concession package at Ford, said that the choice was between letting Ford lay down the economics the union would have to work under or going on strike.

That means that just about everybody

else knows what the alternatives are. Either accept concessions or prepare the offensive.

Ford workers do not have such short memories that they have forgotten what happened to the Chrysler workers who accepted concessions to "Save Chrysler" and then have had to face an escalation of plant shut-downs and layoffs. They see how the GM auto barons and the UAW bureaucracy are beating down the GM workers in retaliation for their daring to reject concessions.

But there is a way out of this seeming impasse. In his remark in *The New York Times*, Fraser himself touched on it. But more than a strike to answer concessions is needed — the answer is to prepare the General Strike.

But what can autoworkers do now to take steps in that direction? The union is divided, not only between the UAW bureaucracy and the ranks (a fundamental division) but also between the many formations and caucuses opposed to concessions, each one saying, "join us."

But the autoworkers need a way to fight, need to immediately take steps to unify their ranks. It is not enough to vote "no" against concessions — we must be prepared to *defend* this vote. The proof is what's happening to GM workers — 5,000 more are losing their jobs.

The Locals Opposed to Concessions (LOC) have been telling the workers to fight concessions, so have the Independent Skilled Trades Council and the United Front Caucus at Ford River Rouge. And these same organizations have said they are for the General Strike, or at least work stoppages. The General Council of Local 600 voted for a resolution on December 31, 1981, (reported in Local 600's paper, *Ford Facts*, by Rick Martin, president of the Steel division) calling on the entire UAW and the AFL-CIO to organize a nationwide work stoppage against the "ongoing destruction of livelihoods and living standards and lives of people by Reaganomic policies."

Autoworkers must take the offensive, form a factory council embracing all the workers, laid-off, employed, production and skilled workers, and embracing all the

formations and caucuses in the UAW opposed to concessions. This factory council must have a clear aim, the actual preparation of the General Strike.

It has not been enough to be against concessions or to have a good program. As a young militant said at a public meeting of our party, the Trotskyist Organization/USA, in Detroit: "It's very nice to have the right program and to be raising demands that the workers need, but how are they going to get them, how are they going to confront the demands of the capitalist government with words? We need the General Strike to win these demands."

The fight for the General Strike has a good basis. It supports and develops the initiatives and efforts of the GM workers and of other unions that have rejected concessions, including city workers and the United Rubber Workers, who in the face

of proposed concessions said, "Give us higher wages, more benefits."

The struggle for the factory council at the Ford Rouge plant can be the example for other locals and other unions to follow, to break out of the trade union framework of "collective bargaining" and class collaboration, to unify the unions against the imperialists and their agents in the leadership of the unions.

We have said before, and we say again, that the successful organization and victory of this fight requires a new revolutionary leadership, a workers party.

But this party cannot be proclaimed. It will come into being as a result of the tests passed or failed by all organizations in the struggle that we have outlined here. That is the road forward.

TRUTH



Rebel youth in El Salvador.

# Victory to the Rebels in El Salvador!

"We are losing the fight with the guerrillas in the countryside."

This is what even Jose Napoleon Duarte, the so-called President of El Salvador — more exactly, civilian front man for the military dictatorship's junta — has had to admit (*The New York Times*, February 17, 1982).

The junta, at the advice of Reagan and Haig, had scheduled elections for March 28. These elections were a fraud from the beginning, being proposed and organized in the midst of an all-out terror campaign against the dictatorship's opponents. They were supposed to legalize and legitimize the rule of the handful of gangsters and ruthless exploiters who make up the US-organized "government" of El Salvador.

It is now clear that these elections will fail in this purpose. The recent successful offensive of the guerrilla forces of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN), linked to the political groups of the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR), has been aimed at disrupt-

ing, exposing and preventing these fraudulent elections.

Such elections cannot help a government that is, in its own words, already "losing the fight."

So this is the political situation. The rebel forces are on the verge of victory. The dictatorship, set up by Carter and backed to the hilt by Reagan, is in the gravest danger.

At this critical point, in order to prevent a defeat of American imperialism, all the forces of counterrevolution have gone into motion.

American imperialism itself, facing the reality that its plans have failed, is now trying to prepare, directly or indirectly, a military intervention under the mask of "human rights progress." That is why — in a scene played so often during the Vietnam War — Haig "refuses to rule out" the use of force, while Reagan says there are "no plans to send American combat troops into action." This is the same deal going on with the

use of rifles by US "advisers."

At the same time, the Kremlin bureaucracy, through its agent Castro, and others who think it possible to have "peaceful coexistence" with American imperialism — the Nicaraguan Sandinistas, the leadership of the FDR/FMLN — are desperately seeking a "political solution."

This is what is involved in the secret meeting between Haig and Castro's vice-president (November 23, 1981, in Mexico City). That is what is behind the letter from the FMLN to Reagan (January 27, 1982).

A military victory alone will not make the Salvadoran Revolution, link it to the growing revolution in the Americas, solve the problems of the workers and peasants.

But breaking the offensive, stopping the mass movement, for the sake of a deal that imperialism will go back on as soon as it can, will only, as the old twist puts it, "snatch defeat from the jaws of victory."

What can the workers and the oppressed

and the youth of the United States do to help insure the victory of their class brothers and sisters, to insure the highly desirable defeat of Reagan?

We think it would be fine if — against the cries of Reagan-Haig about "foreign weapons" — Americans organized a drive for *guns for the Salvadoran rebels*, as well as other practical support measures.

This blow against the enemy at home can be deepened and made part of the preparation of what is the only sure guarantee of the revolution in Central America — the revolution in the United States.

Organizing the *boycott of the Salvadoran dictatorship*, extending it to include all the Latin American dictatorships backed by the US (since it is looking to them for possible military aid against El Salvador), is inextricably connected to organizing the General Strike to bring down Reagan — the opening of the revolution in this country.

TRUTH

# Questions of the Iranian Revolution

The revolution in Iran, together with the Nicaraguan Revolution, marked the beginning of the new period of the revolutionary upsurge on the world scale, a period defined by the Polish Revolution.

## Revolution Continues

Today, three full years since the insurrection that overthrew the Shah, the Iranian Revolution continues. There has been — despite the best efforts of Khomeini, imperialism and Stalinism — no “stabilization.” This fact alone shows that the period which we are in continues to be that of the revolutionary offensive.

But, at the same time, the revolution is not yet secure. Not only in the international sense, in the sense that no revolution in the colonial and semi-colonial countries can be secure without the destruction of imperialism and its Stalinist agent (this is the prospect that the Polish Revolution opens), but in a very different sense.

Political power in Iran is not yet consolidated in the hands of the working class and its allies. The land does not yet belong to those who work it. The commanding heights of the economy are still under private ownership or under the control of a government which supports private ownership and imperialism.

The current struggles in Iran, the positions of the different political tendencies, the interventions of the masses, as well as the concerns of American militants who earnestly supported the Iranian Revolution, center around the question: how can the revolution be carried through to the end, how can it achieve victory?

This is a question which puts to the test not only the revolutionary groups in Iran, but those all over the world which claim to stand for socialism. The Iranian Revolution is a touchstone of the claimants to the leadership of the international workers movement.

## On Which Side

On the Iranian left, there are two basic currents: those who support Khomeini's counterrevolution and those who are fighting it. The central group in the first current is the Tudeh (“Masses”) Party, the Iranian branch of the international apparatus of the Kremlin. The major group in the second current is the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI), an Islamic revolutionary group.

On the surface of things, we Trotskyists would appear to be closer to the “Marxists” of the Tudeh Party than to the Moslems of the Mojahedin. Leaving aside the question of which grouping is actually strengthening the hold of religion over the Iranian masses (we think Tudeh), there is a far more profound question that in fact brings us much closer to the Mojahedin.

That is precisely the question we raised earlier, the question of the line that divides those who want to continue and deepen the Iranian Revolution from those who want to strangle it.

Despite all our other differences — which are precisely what we want to discuss in this article — the believers of the Mojahedin are on the same side of that line as are the materialists of the Fourth International.

## Working Class

The press has reported that at the end of December and the beginning of January a strike took place at the National Automobile plant in Tehran. There appears to be no question that this strike, which was directed against the anti-worker attacks of Khomeini and for workers rights, was organized by the Mojahedin.

Massoud Rajavi, exiled leader of the Mojahedin, had issued a call to the workers of this factory:

Khomeini thus intends to make you pay, as in the past, for the Iranian economy's disasters . . . as well as all the huge plunderings and lootings of his corrupt gang. But he is forgetting that you are the same historically decisive force which dealt the most determined blows to the Shah's regime three years ago . . . I ask all the militant ranks of Iran's working

class, and all the “resistance councils” in the country's factories and production units, to prepare for the initiation of workers' strikes.

Down with Khomeini!  
Down with Imperialism!

In our view, this struggle marks the clear-cut emergence of the proletariat as the leading force in the struggle against Khomeini, for the victory of the revolution.

tatorship. The question now is the leadership of a class, drawing behind it all the oppressed masses.

## Balance Sheet

It is clear from Rajavi's message, and from other statements made by Mojahedin, that the PMOI has made at least a partial (negative) balance sheet of the method of guerrilla warfare which it pursued up to the fall of the Shah.

Far more important is the political question. Didn't this past policy leave the masses under the political leadership of the Khomeini-led clergy, didn't it lay the groundwork for the present political difficulties? The Mojahedin seem to think so.

But as far as we can tell, they have not gone all the way in their balance sheet. For instance, they have produced conclusive evidence that the Tudeh Party has fingered their militants. They accurately depict this party as having a “history full of treacherous actions against the people.” But they have not yet seen this as part of an *international development*, as the aid Stalinism gives to imperialism on the world scale.

This deprives them of the ability to weigh the struggle of the Fourth International against Stalinism, for the world revolution. And it is on this basis that they are deprived of the lessons of the international workers movement, concretized in the Bolshevik-Leninism of the Fourth International.

The Mojahedin are in a political alliance (“National Council of Resistance”) with former Iranian President Abolhassan Bani-Sadr — in order, as they explain, to unite the broadest forces against Khomeini. But the working class has had its bitter experience with such popular fronts, from Spain to Chile.

We think that it is impossible to mobilize the working class and to remain allied with the bourgeois liberals and capitalist forces represented by Bani-Sadr. The last thing such people can stand in the independence of the proletariat. Bani-Sadr, after all, was originally a supporter of Khomeini, not of the guerrillas.

These are the questions we want to discuss with our class brothers and sisters in the common battle to defend the Iranian Revolution, to extend it and to insure its triumph.  
K.F.



First page of Truth article, “Defend the Mojahedin,” in Persian journal of supporters of the Mojahedin.

In our view, also, this development places a great responsibility on the Mojahedin. It is now no longer a question of assuming responsibility only for one's own comrades, of preparing to take arms in hand in courageous struggle against dic-

This is not a question of “peaceful” development. In the Tehran strike, seven workers were killed and thousands jailed. In conditions where open activity is illegal, no one can deny the oppressed the right to armed resistance.

## Workers' Forum

“Every worker in this country has got to fight Reagan”

Under this rubric of “Workers' Forum” we hope to — in the form of interviews, letters, other means — conduct a discussion on the tasks of the revolution in the US today, and on the role of our paper and our party in those tasks.

In our last issue, we published a letter received from a PATCO militant. The fact that we have another communication to publish in this issue indicates that we have the basis for making this department a regular part of the paper.

At the end of 1981, the capitalist and radical press nationwide carried news of a union election. In the Massachusetts-based Local 285 of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), which represents low-paid and government workers, a reform slate, the “Movement for a Better Local 285,” swept the old, conservative bureaucracy out of office. This victory was widely seen as another sign of the developing struggle by the workers against Reagan.

In this issue, we are printing a letter from an activist in that union victory. We think it will be of interest, especially to those who also think we are “a little far to

the left,” but who want to fight Reagan, “the class enemy.”

TRUTH

1/24/82

Dear Kevin:

Thanks for the buttons; the “Solidar-nos” button is one that I have been looking for.

Your paper is a little far to the left for me, but I enjoyed your articles. Specifically, your articles on the UAW.

You asked me what my duties were with the union. I am a chapter vicechairperson and chief steward at St. John of God Hospital in Brighton. Also, I was one of the campaign managers in our grassroots election campaign in December.

Our whole purpose is stated in a paragraph in your UAW article. I quote: “What is a union? Seriously what is it? Is it a big headquarters, filled with flunkies on fat salaries, is it a dues collecting machine? Or is it an organization whose goal is to protect its members' interests from the class enemy, to increase their standard of living, to make gains for the workers?”

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Sincerely,  
Brian  
P.S. I carried the Local 285 banner from the Mall to the Capitol in the Solidarity Day rally.

# Building the Party of the Polish Revolution

By KEVIN FITZPATRICK

There are all kinds of people who will tell you that they are "for" the Polish workers. But at the same time, the overwhelming bulk of these passive supporters have a singular position that calls the nature of their support into question. "The Polish workers," they all say, "have been defeated."

## The Fourth International

Among all the supporters of Solidarnosc there are only two organized forces that disagree with this position — the Fourth International and the Polish proletariat.

The junction of these two forces, the building of the party of the Polish Revolution, is the key to the organization of the European Revolution in all its global importance.

We have covered in our paper the clear signs of the continuing and deepening struggle by the Polish working class against the Jaruzelski military dictatorship. Recent events, the demonstration in Poznan for example, only confirm this perspective.

And now the Stalinist military junta has itself revealed its own fear of the developing revolt. By their own account, in the Orwellian-titled "Operation Calm" the bureaucracy's repressive forces carried out in a two-day sweep in mid-February, the Stalinists discovered 145,000 people in violation of martial law, detained over 3,500 and have already charged 614. What is the state of the observance of martial law? In the Stalinists' own words: "not too good."

"Not too good," either, for all those — from the Pope to Haig to Jaruzelski and Brezhnev — who earnestly hope and pray for "normalization" in Poland. And "not too good," again, for all those who take their own demoralization for a political perspective.

From the coal fields of Silesia to the port of Gdansk, one general slogan appears on walls, putting the Stalinists on notice: "The winter is yours, but the spring will be ours."

To bring about this "Polish spring," to make it into the victory of the international proletariat, the policy of the Fourth International is needed.

In the issue of *Truth* (#142) published just after the December 13 coup, we stated: "Jaruzelski has failed . . . The revolution is deepening and new and even greater clashes are on the agenda."

This editorial was not the result of instructions from the International. At the time it was written, we had not received the official declaration of our International Secretariat. But the line put forward in our paper fully corresponded to the policy of the International and was further confirmed and developed at our Eighth World Congress.

In other words, our position that the Polish workers are not defeated is not the result of some arbitrary decision, but flows logically from the common perspective and policy that the Fourth International has developed toward the Polish Revolution.

The Fourth International alone anticipated the Polish Revolution and prepared it. "Concretely in Poland," stated the Theses for our Seventh World Congress (*The Fourth International* #83; June 27, 1980), "the delimitation of the program and the gathering of the forces of the political revolution is the axis of the propaganda and general activity of the Fourth International."

And the Theses characterized this political revolution:

The international unity of the class struggle consists today in that this political revolution, that is to say, the regeneration of the socialist conquests under the direct power of the revolutionary workers councils, is an absolutely indispensable element of the confrontation of the world working class

## In Silesian Coal Region, Tension Seems to Endure



WARSAW, Jan. 25 — Polish travelers from Katowice say the situation in the Silesian coal-mining region is much more tense than elsewhere in the country, with heavy police and army presence and heavy public anger over the killing of striking miners several days after martial law was declared.

Miners' reports, including one from a local priest, state that perhaps as many as 100 members of the security forces also died in the January 19 strike. The priest has decided that any policeman or soldier who has killed anyone in the country.

"I talked with a father who was present throughout the strike," said a 25-year-old Pole from Katowice, "and he saw as bodies in uniform covered by white sheets." Other reports, including one from a party source, have conceded privately that at least one policeman died at the strike mine, which is in a Katowice suburb. There is no way, however, to obtain independent confirmation of any of the reports from Katowice.

Comments Over from Warsaw

There has been speculation that the authorities may want to keep the details of policeman's death for fear of igniting further violence, especially on the part of the special paramilitary units known as ZOMO.

The report from Katowice also stated that a wire fence placed over a hole knocked into the concrete wall by tank had become a makeshift shrine. Near the fence was a signpost with a cross of wood and a crucifix.

At the foot of the cross were candles and flowers, he said.

"Every miner on his way to work stops, lifts his cap or hands and lights a candle," he said.

Nearby, on the fence itself, were placed scores of leaflets and posters, denouncing the police and exhorting the strikers to resist.

"Solidarity was and will be," read one. Others said: "Death to the fascist murderers of our men," "We are for Solidarity," "They wanted Poland to be our Poland," "ZOMO, just wait till spring," "ZOMO, the besting beast of the party" and "ZOMO — Stalin was defeated and he is rotting."

Various leaders were attached to the fence, including the bodies of a "General" and a priest. The body of a priest was placed in the parish church of St. Peter and Paul in "the memory of the tragically murdered miners." The priest said the authorities had refused permission for a mass funeral for the slain miners. Instead, the body of the priest was laid out in the church on the day it took place and was permitted to have only one priest at the ceremony.

It was also learned that the military commander of the strike mine had ordered the removal of seven miners' bodies that were placed near the cross, each bearing the name of a slain miner. The fact that the authorities allowed the cross and leaflets to remain indicated that they feared antagonizing the local population further.

Elsewhere in Silesia, the authorities have not been so strict. In a town of 100,000 people, a commercial plant of ZOMO equipment had been erected before martial law was taken down. Special paramilitary units, called OBRONKA, are being trained by ZOMO. They are supposed to be the best of the best.

Deaths of Miners Reported

A strike at the mine that began on Dec. 16, the day after the imposition of martial law, was broken up, and the Solidarity chairman, Antoni Rokas, was arrested, according to local sources. OBRONKA units then stormed into miners' homes, searching rooms by room for subversive material.

They took radios, watches, gold rings, and even clothing," said one miner. There are reports, unconfirmed, that a policeman was killed in a fight at one of the dormitories.

Throughout Silesia, and especially in Katowice, police checks of apartments, houses, and individual identity cards are common. Three hotels in Katowice — the Silesia, the Katowice, and the Commercial — have been set aside for military use.

Miners are searched thoroughly on leaving work by policemen looking for weapons. Nonetheless, from time to time, the police take down a national flag with the slogan "We will erect the victory" emblazoned on it, crumpled it, and burned it.

At the strike mine, the mines of the open class between ZOMO and strikers, the wheel of one elevator was working only intermittently one day last week. A miner outside said much equipment had to be repaired.

"I have my family to support," he said. "The I am going to work only where the equipment is O.K."

Many miners are afraid of working in the deepest shafts, he said.

Ministry of Armist Still Vivid

The strike on Wujek is still vivid six weeks after it occurred. Witnesses said of how women and children bent down before 11 tanks approaching from two different directions down Wujecy Pol Street and were scattered by tear gas.

After a tank smashed through the wall, ZOMO policemen roared in and were set upon by miners carrying chains, axes, rocks and broken iron bars. Snipers fired overhead, dropping tear gas and taking considerable damage to the buildings. The miners poured their helmets and two others died under heavy shells thrown down from the mine. The miners were shot by machine-gun fire. Several died instantly and an eighth apparently died later in the hospital. About 40 miners and 40 policemen were injured and taken to hospital.

Some of the wounded miners described their injuries as follows:

There have also been reports, which have not been confirmed, that several policemen arriving in ambulances were beaten by the police and prevented from examining wounded miners. One doctor was reportedly ordered to leave the ambulances and a strike miner was dragged out and dropped into a river. A dispatcher's services report is said to state that 10 orderlies were beaten, according to Solidarity leaders.

Some of the wounded miners are apparently still in a military hospital, under heavy guard.

One leader, circulating in Katowice says: "Problems and matters, our individual resistance brings no effect. Wait for the right moment."

It is argued by the "Council of Salvation of the Workers Movement in Silesia, Solidarity."

The likelihood of further trouble in Silesia is high, travelers report.

## New York Times article that reports on events in the mine in which Trotskyist and Solidarnosc leader Stefan Palka worked in Silesia.

Memorable lessons were taught when the issue arose of defending socialism in the GDR (East Germany — K.F.), Hungary and Czechoslovakia. . . . The political revolution against the bureaucracy, parasitic agent of imperialism in the workers states, is a central element of the political rearmament of the working class to conquer the bourgeoisie.

And the Resolution on Eastern Europe, adopted at the Seventh World Congress as the first strikes were underway in Poland, stated: "A confrontation is both inevitable and imminent . . . The Kremlin has no other way out than desperately seeking to normalize the working class of Poland and the USSR, whether through its satellite, the Gierk apparatus, or directly through an armed intervention."

## Our Policy

And it was on the basis of this Marxist perspective, which those who today announce the "defeat" of the Polish workers then called "magical incantations," that the Fourth International was able to rapidly expand its section, the Revolutionary Workers League (RLRP), inside Poland.

In the last issue of *Truth*, we printed an interview with Stefan Palka, a militant of the RLRP and a leader of Solidarnosc in Silesia. On this page you will find a reproduction of an article from *The New York Times* that reports precisely on our comrade's mine, describing it as a "Solidarity stronghold," in the course of recounting the role it played in resisting Jaruzelski.

Similarly, even the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) — for its own reasons — had to acknowledge the existence of our paper, *Walka Klas* ("Class Struggle"), as one which its European co-thinkers (in their one and only Polish-language appearance) had to make "an effort to differentiate" themselves from (*Intercontinental Press*; December 21, 1981).

(We already pointed out in *Truth* #141 the distortions and falsehoods these Pabloites used in this "effort.")

It is clear that, unlike all the sage doomsayers, the Fourth International knows what it is talking about in Poland.

Our statement that the Polish workers are not defeated, that it is Jaruzelski who has failed, is not some general affirmation. It is directly tied to our analysis that the confrontation has really only begun, that the Kremlin must now make a direct military intervention.

The preachers of "defeat" do not want to face this reality, but it exists all the same. *Red Star*, journal of the Ministry of Defense of the USSR, is quoted in *The Christian Science Monitor* (January 15, 1982) as raising the possibility of a Warsaw Pact invasion:

the whole family tree of the Shachtmanites and, especially, the pseudo-Trotskyists of the SWP. As we pointed out in our last issue, this party has refused in practice to defend the Polish workers, satisfying itself with what it refers to as "getting out the truth."

This policy reflects its real inability to achieve class independence from imperialism. Based on its subordination to Stalinism (through Castro), the SWP has to line up on the side of the enemies of the Polish Revolution, despite its verbal protests that hide this reality no more than do those of Reagan.

Because the SWP, despite its truly hypocritical attacks on "labor bureaucrats" and "capitalist politicians," in every case opposes a policy of class independence from Reagan. That is why it supports the attempt to sell out the revolution in Central America. And that is why it will not support — despite wavering under the pressure of its members — the Polish Revolution in action.

The Hamburg Rally is going to be a key action against the world order of imperialism. It is aimed at organizing the victory of the Polish Revolution, which the SWP says it supports.

What will the stand of the Barnes leadership be? No one will have to think too hard to guess the answer. But, more importantly, what will the stand of militants in the SWP and the Young Socialist Alliance (YSA) be?

The Hamburg Rally is an open mobilization. Open not only to the broadest layers of the youth but also to the militants of already existing organizations who want to take up a common fight for the defense of the Polish workers and for their victory.

One initiative that we have taken to help make this fight come alive in the US is to assume the responsibility for organizing a joint tour of representatives of Solidarnosc and SMOT, the Soviet free trade union.

This tour of Polish and Russian workers will bring into the union movement the lessons of the struggle of the free trade unions of the East, lessons whose culmination is to be found in the Polish Revolution. It will be an actual element of struggle against the bureaucracy that tries to use the isolation of the Polish workers to maintain the hold of imperialism over our unions.

This tour is also an open struggle, open especially to union militants who feel in their bones their class solidarity with Solidarnosc.

In Poland, the workers are anticipating the spring. That season of new life begins April 10 in Hamburg.

## ... And Fidel

The Socialist Workers Party (SWP) — two months late — has finally gotten around to trying to explain away Fidel Castro's support to the Stalinist coup in Poland (*The Militant*; February 26, 1982; and *Intercontinental Press*; February 22, 1982).

Apparently it took this long to get in a full supply of whitewash.

Castro's being a member in good standing of the international apparatus of the Kremlin is reason enough for his support. But he may well have had a more direct inspiration.

*The Wall Street Journal* (December 31, 1981) reports that on December 14 (notice the date?) Castro imposed increases in food prices. But they were temporarily rescinded after "what were described as vigorous protests by trade union and student groups," resulting in the dismissal of "two top economic policy makers."

The Polish Revolution haunts the Stalinist bureaucrats everywhere. K.F.

# To the Comrades of the Revolutionary Workers League

## The United Front is a Class Front

By DAVID HEFFELFINGER

At a forum sponsored by the Trotskyist Organization/USA December 5 in Detroit, a lively debate developed over the tasks of organizing the American Revolution. Present at this meeting and participating in the debate were supporters of the Revolutionary Workers League (RWL).

The Trotskyist Organization/USA openly stated its desire to engage in common action with working class tendencies aimed toward preparing the General Strike.

The supporters of the RWL who were present disagreed with this proposal on the grounds that the General Strike was not a realistic possibility. They proposed that we work with the RWL and the United Front Caucus (trade union caucus at the Ford River Rouge plant) to prepare an Emergency Mass Meeting of Local 600 in late January.

Within the next week, we contacted the RWL and stated our willingness to help prepare such a mass meeting, and that we would intervene to win the workers to prepare a General Strike — as the only means of obtaining their demands.

Furthermore, we stated the necessity of formulating an open agreement, in other words, a joint call to workers to prepare such a meeting. Our aim at arriving at such an open agreement was not simply to spread our name around — we are quite capable of doing that on our own. Rather, we felt, and still feel, that such a joint call would strengthen the preparation of the meeting and be the best means to show to the workers our intention that this meeting be truly open to them and to all working class tendencies.

Much to our surprise, the RWL responded to this proposal by refusing to issue a joint call for an open meeting, stating that they were unable to enter into an agreement independently of "other forces" who were behind the preparation of this meeting.

For this reason, and for the general importance that the united front has for the working class, the Trotskyist Organization/USA has decided to openly continue the debate in its newspaper.

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"... The working masses sense the need of unity in action, of unity in resisting the onslaught of capitalism or unity in taking the offensive against it. Any party which mechanically counterposes itself to this need of the working class for unity in action will unfailingly be condemned in the minds of the workers." ("On the United Front," Vol. II, *The First Five Years of the Communist International*)

Why is the workers united front an important tactic for the working class today, and why is every tendency in the working class — from the trade union bureaucrats to socialists and communists — raising the cry for unity? If so many are for unity, why is the working class so divided?

### Unity, For What?

These are completely legitimate questions that workers are raising. In fact, if the cry for unity is heard from many sides, it is not because of the desire of the diverse tendencies in the working class to unite, it is because the workers by their struggles are forcing every tendency to submit its program and policies to the test.

Every worker senses, for better or for worse, that confrontations on a massive scale are imminent. They see that the capitalists try to put up a common front to slash workers' living standards, prepare imperialist interventions and military buildup and the attacks on social programs and political rights. And therefore they want to have their own front.

The party that counterposes to the large and massive struggles which are posed by today's situation only its own self-activity will indeed be "condemned in the minds of the workers."

Cries for unity in the working class come from three directions. From the bureaucrats in the unions who want to unite, in fact to chain, the workers to this dying system. From working class tendencies who are legitimately concerned with organizing the

### On the Workers Party

No question is more pressing for the workers of the United States, in particular, than that of building the working class leadership that they need, the Workers Party.

The question of this party is the key issue in all the disputes and struggles going on today. General Strike? But to do what? To pressure the government or to bring it down? Reform or revolution? The answers to these questions depend on the nature and existence and struggle of the Workers Party.

At the same time, many are those who "call for" the Workers Party, or the Labor Party, or some such thing. We want to begin now to use these pages in our paper to discuss and to fight out all the problems of this fundamental question.

TRUTH

workers against the capitalists. And from tendencies, smaller even in conception than they are in numbers, who are swamped by the enormity of the class struggle and the approach of the revolution.

We, of course, do not question the seriousness of the RWL toward its proposals for the united front, but we disagree with what seems to be its conception of it.

First of all, it is impossible to speak of the united front without speaking of the objectives that the workers must fight for. We don't unite the working class around anything, like the union bureaucracy which is always calling for "unity" in order to reinforce its dictatorship over the unions. But at the same time we don't unite the working class around everything under the sun either. The very fact that the workers feel the need for unity presupposes that they want to see their forces concentrated at the most important point to bring about the maximum effect.

A united front without a clearly defined, and correct, objective, is like a lever without its fulcrum, useless and even possibly harmful.

Our objective and the slogan that we have raised in the working class is *the General Strike to bring down Reagan*. We did not suck this demand out of an egg.

There has been a change in the world situation, a new period has opened up with the Nicaraguan, Iranian and the Polish Revolutions. In each case the working class inaugurated this new period with the General Strike.

This slogan corresponds to the necessity of the American working class, particularly of the trade unions, to mobilize the entirety of the working class — employed, unemployed, blacks, women, the poor and the industrial workers — in a common front against Reagan's policies. It corresponds to the necessity of the organized workers to break out of the present framework of class collaboration that the unions are in, and for the unorganized workers (more than 75% of the working class) to take their place in the working class struggle. It corresponds to the fact that not one single demand, from transitional demands to even the most minimal demands of the workers, can be won in isolated partial struggles. The struggle against the "company" cannot succeed without confronting the companies' state, as well as the bourgeois who claims to be the master of that state, Ronald Reagan. And lastly, it corresponds to the sentiments of the most advanced workers who believe that such a struggle is necessary and possible.

For our part we welcome debate and any other proposals for common action, but we have heard precious few. Without an objective the united front reduces itself to a proposal for unity for unity's sake, and the basis for such unity is purely a matter of convenience for the parties involved, not answerable to the working class.

### Once Again, the "Non-Aggression Pact"

In *The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany*, Trotsky wrote:

The Social Democratic leaders propose to the Communist Party to conclude a "non-aggression pact" . . . The formula of the non-aggression pact . . . is today in vogue and at the present time it is at the center of all discussions.

The formula has been borrowed from diplomacy. The meaning of this type of pact is this: two states which have sufficient causes for war engage themselves for a determined period not to resort to the force of arms against each other. The Soviet Union, for example, has signed such a rigorously circumscribed pact with Poland. Assuming that a war were to break out between Germany and Poland, the said pact would in no way obligate the Soviet Union to come to the aid of Poland. Non-aggression and nothing more. *In no way does it imply common action for defense.*

We don't quote Trotsky simply to add a touch of orthodoxy to the debate. With a little ingenuity one can find a quote to support almost any position. But rather we think that the non-aggression pact, though it be called the united front, is in vogue again today. And in no way does the united front interpreted in this manner commit any tendency to common action.

There is another side to the non-aggression pact. That is the idea that the united front is merely a maneuver to split the centrists and reformists. We don't agree.

If two tendencies enter into an agreement for common action to advance the cause of the working class, it is obvious that they do so without in any way obligating each to accept the other's entire program, otherwise they would be in the same party.

But that is not the same as seeing the working class as merely a passive spectator to a maneuver between two parties. The united front is a *class front*.

### The Concessions

Concretely, in auto today, the entire situation cries out for a class front to defend the workers' gains and rights, to stop the concessions. But, of necessity, a class front in auto cannot be only of a defensive or local character. It must also be offensive in nature, departing from the desire of the workers to maintain their jobs and wages and all the other gains they have won in the past.

The formation of UAW dissident local presidents, Locals Opposed to Concessions (LOC), does not want a class front. These oppositionists want a trade union front which excludes all radical working class tendencies and, corresponding to this aim, they are only concerned with the limited defensive objective of voting down the renegotiated contract.

They ought to heed their own advice, however. Less than a week after the GM negotiations fell apart there were massive layoffs at some of the locals which formed the core of LOC. LOC leaders claimed these were retribution for their refusal to support concessions. Indeed, GM and the auto companies already possess such a vast reserve army of unemployed that they are capable of such tactics. And so?

Obviously, in this case, the best defense is an offense. The concessions will not be defeated by votes alone. It is a first step, but it is not anywhere near a bold enough step. The autoworkers sense this as well.

On the other hand you have blockheads (at best) like the "Spartacist League" who are for a *two-day* sitdown strike, as opposed to a "reformist" one-day sitdown

strike.

Even the sitdown strike, or any isolated strike, can succeed only if it immediately becomes general in character, involving only trade union workers but reaching out to unorganized workers and the poor as well. This is the heart of the political attack which is behind the concessions. Of course it is an attack on workers' conquests, but it is more. It is a means to divide the organized workers from the unorganized by blaming the union for the economic crisis.

The general strike and the united front correspond to the tasks facing the working class. We can say vote down the concessions, yes, but prepare a general offensive the day after or the vote will mean nothing. We demand, not ask, for the workers united front from all tendencies in order to bring such a mobilization — including the LOC. We demand a common front to organize the general strike because it corresponds to what the workers need. And we demand that all agreements be open, no secret maneuvers behind the backs of workers. This is the "method" of the working class united front.

And a common workers front must have its concrete forms; again, forms of struggle which are open to the working class. Trade union caucuses, whatever utility they have at this or that moment, are wholly insufficient for the tasks at hand. Neither do they have one clearly defined objective, nor are they truly "open" in practice. They are neither fish nor fowl.

We fight for strike committees and factory councils. The demand for factory councils in a situation where the apparatus of the unions is paralyzed with inaction can become an important means for the workers to pass to the plane of action. But these proposals will ring false to the workers if they are made in a sectarian spirit.

### The Workers Party

Through such an open struggle and by such a struggle will the central problems of the American working class, the need for a workers party, be resolved. The nature and the program of the workers party will not be decided behind closed doors or worked out through passive means. In the construction of the workers party to the large task, one before the whole working class, and it is only natural that this task be solved in a large way — by confronting the problems of the class struggle itself.

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# The Labour Party and the Workers Party

The bourgeois press and the radical press have fully covered the open attack on supposed "Trotskyists" and other leftists in the British Labour Party, but the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) has not so much as mentioned it.

In fact, at the height of the attack, the SWP published an article ("The struggle inside the Labour Party"; *The Militant*; January 1, 1982; and *Intercontinental Press*; January 18, 1982) whose sub-title — "class polarization forces shift to the left" — indicates a deliberate policy of hiding the truth.

Let us look at the actual situation, at why the SWP cannot deal with it, and at what we in the US can learn about building a workers party from this situation.

In the last several years, particularly since the election of Conservative Party Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, which has led to three million unemployed, the highest number ever, there has been a deepening radicalization of the British working class.

The British Labour Party, a thoroughly conservative and reformist party that at the same time is the party that the bulk of British workers think is theirs, was bound to reflect this radicalization, while trying to contain it in the limits of parliamentary pressure politics.

The form that this conflicting development took was the increasing strength of the traditional left wing of the Labour Party, the "Labour left."

With the growth of the "Labour left," an increasing struggle took place in the conferences of the Party, basically between the "left"-dominated constituency (membership) clubs and the parliamentary representatives of the right, with the trade union bureaucrats (the unions control the Labour Party financially and through the fact that at conferences their membership is counted as party membership) holding the balance of power.

In recent months, the increased strength of the "left" led to the election of Michael Foot, well-known as a left-wing leader, as party leader. That is, if the Labour Party were in office, Foot would be Prime Minister. The same forces led to the resignation of a number of right-wingers and their formation of the Social Democratic Party.

This is the situation that led the SWP and many other radical groups to conclude that the Labour Party was "moving to the left." The clear implication was that this could lead to the Party's becoming the instrument to bring socialism to Britain.

But the picture was a little unreal. Because the "Labour left" is a very special type of left wing. It has traditionally served not only as a means to control and pacify radical workers, the traditional function of a Social Democratic left, but above all as the nursery of the Party's traditional right wing leadership. Reactionary Labour Prime Ministers like Ramsay Mac Donald, Clement Attlee and Harold Wilson were once all "lefts." In other words, the "Labour left" is the means through which the reformists have renewed the Labour Party and its hold on the British workers.

The election of Michael Foot as party leader meant that this function had once again been accomplished. Now it was time to settle down, especially since all the turmoil had led to the split of part of the right.

Needless to say, the SWP did not see things that way. That is why it has been caught unaware and speechless by the attacks on the "Trotskyists" by none other than Michael Foot himself.

No, the SWP had counted on the peaceful development of a reformist party into a workers party. And it had counted on this not only in Britain but also in the United States. That is the meaning of a "labor party that will stand up and fight in Congress." That is the meaning of the enthusiasm over the remarks, supposedly "for a labor party," by bureaucrats from Harry Patrick to William Winpisinger, from John Henning to Douglas Fraser.



"March for Jobs led to London rally of over 150,000.

And this connection with the US is not our logical deduction, either. The SWP spelled it out. In *The Militant* of November 7, 1980, and in *Intercontinental Press* of November 24, 1980, the SWP published parts of an interview with Tony Benn (Anthony Wedgewood-Benn, correctly), the leader of the left wing of the "Labour left," on the question of the labor party in the US. In the same two issues, it also published an article by Frank Lovell, then SWP trade union director, on Benn's remarks.

The true timidity of Benn came through in the interview. This "left-of-the-left" leader came out and openly endorsed the approach of Michael Harrington's Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee (DSOC): "I think the right thing to do at this stage is to form a labor representation committee and a socialist fraction within the Democratic Party."

Now, Lovell's article, once we get through all the ritual and historic references, comes down to disagreeing with Benn on support to DSOC and its perspective. Michael Harrington, Lovell tells us, is no good. We are not surprised.

But what is Lovell for? What political conclusions does he draw about Benn's policies in Britain, based on his advice for the US?

On the first question, the answer is clear: "In this country today the union movement can be come a greater power in government in a shorter time, once the break with capitalist politics is made and the movement for a labor party begins to roll."

"A greater power in government." In other words, a reformist labor party that will "stand up and fight in Congress."

"Once the break with capitalist politics is made." A break with capitalist politics should mean, to a socialist, the development of revolutionary politics. Or is there some other, half-way, kind of politics that Lovell is for?

"The union movement." Which union movement? The one of the struggling workers or of the backward bureaucrats? Lovell formally denounces DSOC, but in the same article he lists the Machinists as one union that refused to endorse Carter in 1980, adding: "A serious discussion is developing in the labor movement about the need for a labor party and how it will be formed."

Of course, we know that the president of the Machinists, and one of the leaders in this "serious discussion," is William Winpisinger — whom Lovell happens to mention in this article: "Top union officials who are members or expressed sympathy with DSOC include William Winpisinger . . ."

So we find that by different routes we arrive at the same position.

As for our second question, Lovell never even thinks about how someone whom he calls "the leader of the left wing of the British Labour Party" can be for an outright reformist perspective in the US and be so very "left wing" in Britain.

Could it be that he isn't? But what would

that say about the peaceful radicalization of the Labour Party?

The crackdown in the British Labour Party, dating from the defeat of Benn's candidacy for deputy party leader, raises questions for Britain and here that the SWP cannot answer. So it clams up.

Beginning with an investigation of the Militant Tendency (named after its paper, *Militant*), a pseudo-Trotskyist grouping headed by the old revisionist Ted Grant that has practiced "deep entry" into the Labour Party for many years and that may have as many as 5,000 supporters, an investigation aimed at excluding it from the Labour Party, Foot and his gang are out to once again domesticate the "Labour left," to restore the status quo.

Thus, they have also refused to endorse the candidacy of left-winger Peter Tatchell for a seat in Parliament, as well as threatening to dis-endorse the candidacies of five Militant Tendency members.

And Benn? He says he will fight the

attack, but for a very special reason. ". . . Because," he says, "we must show that we have a range of views inside the party." That is, the "Labour left" must be preserved in order to safeguard the hold of the Labour Party over the workers — and of the right wing over the Labour Party.

The SWP particularly avoids mentioning that Tariq Ali, a well-known leader of its British sister organization, the International Marxist Group (IMG), quit the IMG in order to join the Labour Party, only to be rejected for not accepting "parliamentary democracy."

From the "entryists" to the SWP, all those who put their bets on reforming the reformists have failed miserably. Work in the British Labour Party means separating the workers from the misleaders. That is the conclusion that the SWP does not want to talk about in this country. That is the lesson for the building of the Workers Party. K.F.

## Workers Fund for the International

### The Party Needs Your Aid

On February 17, just three days after the UAW and Ford announced their agreement to cut workers' wages and benefits, a banner appeared at the gates of the Ford River Rouge plant, the largest auto plant outside the Soviet Union.

It said: "No Concessions! General Strike! Workers Party!"

It was a new banner, a banner radically opposed not only to concessions, but also to the official opponents of concessions who are counseling workers to write letters to the UAW heads and ask them not to continue giving in to the companies.

It was the banner of the Trotskyist Organization/USA.

Workers at the Ford River Rouge plant must also have thought that this banner represented a good idea. Many stopped to buy copies of *Truth* or take leaflets.

But an idea is only as strong as the material force organized to make it happen.

To make the General Strike happen, we have to organize all the forces in the working class who are for it into a party, into a fraction, into an organized fraction of the working class that will fight in every battle to organize the General Strike.

This requires money, for the press, for distribution, for the international rally in Hamburg, Germany, which will bring together youth from across the world who want to make this kind of fight.

If you're against concessions, if you want a General Strike against them, you can help build a party to lead this struggle by making a pledge to the Workers Fund for the International. Contact us today!

M.G.

I want to make a regular pledge to the International Workers Fund, in order to build the party of the Polish Revolution. My pledge is for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ on a  monthly,  weekly basis.

I want to contribute to the IWF by buying the button(s) checked below. All buttons \$1.00 each.

- Solidarnosc  
 We Are All Polish Workers  
 Poland Won't Be A Czechoslovakia  
 Todos Somos Obreros Polacos  
 General Strike!

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 Pay/Send To: Truth; PO Box 07066; Detroit, MI 48207

**Black Liberation Today**

# Malcolm X and Young People Today

Seventeen years ago, on February 21, 1965, one of the greatest and most courageous of black leaders, Malcolm X, was assassinated. The life and the struggle of this black man has been, and is today, a model for many young rebels, both black and white, against this system.

**Who He Was**

Malcolm X, whose father was murdered by racists, grew up in the streets of black America. His experiences were not so different from the lives of many of his race. He did not have much of a formal education, his early life was intertwined with drugs and crime — the modern plague of the youth, both black and white. He finally wound up in prison. During this whole period Malcolm X was rebelling but, as he himself understood, not in a conscious way. In his book, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, there is no attempt on the part of this man to hide his early experiences, no sugar-coating at all.

That is why the capitalist class was terrified of Malcolm X. He rose from the most degrading depths of this system, from being a pimp and a drug peddler, to become one of the most articulate and revolutionary spokesman against racism and oppression in America and all over the world. And he never tried to hide his past. Instead he wore his early experiences like a badge of courage.

International Young Guard/USA named its circle of youth in Detroit after this man. The name is appropriate, because the original forces which founded the Malcolm X Circle were won in the course of the campaign for a workers candidate against Coleman Young in the 1981 mayoral elections in Detroit. Coleman Young, and many of his associates in the Democratic Party, represent just the opposite of Malcolm X. Young travelled a different road. From being a young black radical and a leader of the unions in Detroit he degraded himself to become a capitalist politician whose daily task is to defend the system that

Malcolm X wanted to end.

The October 1981 issue of *International Young Guard* reprinted this quotation from Malcolm X:

The young generation of whites, blacks, browns, whatever else there is, you're living in a time of revolution, a time there has to be a change. People in power have misused it, and now there has to be a change, and a better world has to be built, and the only way it's going to be built is with extreme methods. I for one will join with anyone, I don't care what color you are, as long as you want to change this miserable condition that exists on this earth.

This quotation, the message it contains, and the struggle of the Malcolm X Circle to "change this miserable condition that exists on this earth," ought to become a permanent feature of *International Young Guard*.

One of the most important tasks of a newspaper of revolutionary youth is to teach the youth, to raise them from the level at which capitalist society tries to keep them to the level of the tasks of the revolution, which is working class and socialist.

**The Struggle Today**

Because an organization like the Revolutionary Youth International exists, the youth have an advantage even over Malcolm X. Malcolm taught himself from the dictionary in prison, reading it page by page and memorizing it from cover to cover — until he could match the greatest speakers and debaters of the ruling class head to head. The Revolutionary Youth International can teach in a much more effective way. Teach by doing, by participating in and being in the forefront of the struggles that are going on today for the revolution.

That is what Malcolm X would have wanted the youth to take from his life and his political struggle. He would want them to be a part of the revolution, to dedicate themselves to building a "better world," and to realize that to correct the extreme

decay of this system, "extreme methods" are necessary.

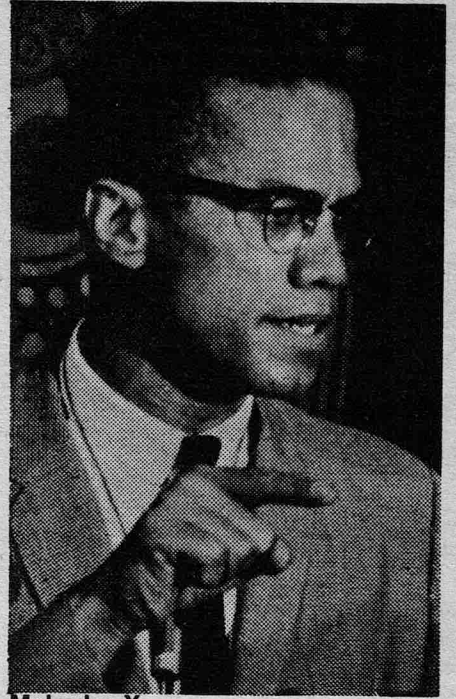
Today, when all the partial gains of black men and women are being attacked by Reagan and the capitalist class, the youth would do well to remember that Malcolm X predicted as much. He lived and fought in the same period that John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr., did, but he was not in any way associated with them. He said then: "I'm for anybody who's for equality. I'm not for anybody who tells me to turn the other cheek when a cracker is busting my jaw."

Despite any gains that the civil rights movement won — and it did win some very important gains for blacks and the working class — because its leadership wanted to work within the system rather than get rid of it, today that very same system is taking back those rights and gains.

Is it possible to resurrect those days, to win back some breathing room for blacks? Not any more than it is possible to resurrect Malcolm X. Today the starting point for fighting for the rights of blacks and the whole working class is the revolution, the process by which the poor and exploited raise themselves to the task of reconstructing society in the interest of the majority of mankind.

There is another reason for naming a circle of revolutionary youth after Malcolm X. He was a leader. Not a messiah, but a leader. He organized blacks in their own self-defense and preached that the emancipation of blacks was a task to be accomplished by blacks themselves. That is what distinguished him from other black leaders of his time who tried to pressure the capitalist Democratic Party to defend blacks.

International Young Guard/USA is such a leadership. It seeks to organize the working class youth to rely on their own independent movement and the independent movement of the working class. It is the revolutionary leadership that consciously



Malcolm X

organizes the working class as a separate class with its own interests and its own destiny. To think that the revolution will just happen without a vanguard to prepare it and without organization is the greatest danger of all.

Even though Malcolm X was religious he didn't preach that blacks should place their trust in God to change the way things are. He preached self-reliance, strength of organization and complete political and organizational independence from the enemies of the exploited. In that sense, he had a lot in common with some of the best revolutionaries that history has produced — leaders like Lenin and Trotsky, who believed that "religion is the opiate of the masses."

On the seventeenth anniversary of the assassination of Malcolm X, there is something to celebrate. We are living in his time, the "time of revolution." D.H.

## Free Black Voting Rights Fighters!

By FRED VITALE

"We've got a monster in the White House and his army in the Senate. We have to show them we're for real." With these words, Tony Liuzzo, a young white worker and son of the slain civil rights fighter, Viola Liuzzo, answered those who asked why he was demonstrating for voting rights in the South.

Tony Liuzzo, along with other demonstrators, marched the same route as the famous Selma to Montgomery march for voting rights led by Martin Luther King, Jr., in 1965. As Viola Liuzzo took demonstrators home from that historic march, she was murdered by Ku Klux Klan members, including FBI agent Gary Rowe.

This latest march was called by the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) to demand the extension of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and to win freedom for two jailed black voting rights fighters.

Maggie Bozeman, 51, president of the Aliceville, Alabama, NAACP, and Julia Wilder, 69, president of the Pickens County Voters League, were arrested on the day before the general elections in November 1979. They were charged with "vote fraud," in fact, with helping elderly blacks in rural Pickens County to vote.

The prosecution attempted to intimidate these elderly blacks by calling them to testify against the two fighters.

One elderly woman, Lou Sommerville, 95, said, "The lawyer said to me, didn't Ms. Bozeman come to my house and try to make me let her fix up my ballot. It wasn't true . . . No matter how many times they



Maggie Bozeman (left) and Julia Wilder.

ask me, I'm going to tell the truth."

Only one of those testifying presented what even the State Court of Appeals described as "confusing" evidence. Yet it ruled this was enough to convict them. The original verdict was handed down by an all-white jury.

The US Supreme Court refused to hear the case, in effect confirming the decision of the lower court.

After her conviction, Maggie Bozeman was fired from the teaching job she had held for twenty-seven years. She described why, in part, she and Wilder were prosecuted. "In 1978, the politicians were especially afraid of the young woman we ran for School Board against a white banker. She only lost by 146 votes."

After they were freed on bond, Bozeman and Wilder went back to organizing blacks to vote. The local District Attorney

said, "They could have been arrested on other charges since their conviction. They are not satisfied with voting themselves. They have been bringing people into the polling places, watching them vote, insisting that they be allowed to assist people" (emphasis added — *Truth*).

What crimes!

On January 11, the two were sentenced — Julia Wilder received the maximum five years, Maggie Bozeman, four years. Due to strong protests from around the country, they were taken out of prison and placed on work-release program two weeks ago.

This is not an isolated incident in either Pickens County or the South. At a Voting Rights Act hearing held at the end of the Selma march, witnesses testified that Willie Davis, a young black man, was arrested for disorderly conduct last year in Pickens

County for helping blacks at the polls. Another fighter, Ms. Gay, testified that local gas companies refused to service her home because of her activities.

Witnesses said that Alabama legislators have developed a plan called "re-identification," which provides that voting lists would be destroyed every ten years and voters forced to re-register. This move is aimed at disenfranchising blacks and the poor.

The Reagan regime is opposed to extending the Voting Rights Act as it now exists. It wants to gut the act of all enforcement provisions, for example, by codifying into law the 1980 Supreme Court ruling that demands that victims of racism prove "intent" to discriminate on the part of the politicians who wrote the laws. This "change" would make the act virtually unenforceable.

The goal of the Reagan administration in the South is clear: rebuild the Jim Crow system. Rebuild the system that legalized and enforced racism against blacks, rebuild it against successful union drives at Newport News and J.P. Stevens, against blacks and workers around the country.

At the Montgomery rally of 4,000, eighty-four-year-old John Eutsey, a black who marched in 1965, was asked why he was marching today.

"For freedom," he answered.

Workers and the oppressed of all colors will never get freedom from the capitalist class that runs this government. All rights, voting rights included, are in danger until this government is brought down.

# Murder in the Mines and the General Strike

By BARBARA PUTNAM

The ruling class has opened up an attack without mercy on the working class and its unions and organizations. Concessions, decertification of PATCO, anti-worker legislation, denial of political rights, the frame-up of the Weathermen and the Black Liberation Army; it doesn't stop there — murder, too, is the order of the day.

"It's dark as a dungeon way down in the mines." These are words of an Appalachian folksong traditionally sung like a funeral dirge by the wives and families of the coal miners. The dark forces of nature, lethal gases that can cause a powerful explosion, a mine cave-in and suffocation, threaten the miners each day as they descend into the "dungeons."

The unnatural thing, the inhuman thing, is the "de-emphasis" of mine safety and cutbacks in the number of mine inspectors by the Reagan regime, resulting in an extreme escalation of deaths.

In the space of six days in December, twenty-four miners were killed in explosions. A total of at least 153 miners died in explosions in 1981. And on January 20, another seven miners died in Kentucky.

At a major mine of the RFH Mining Company in eastern Kentucky where seven miners were killed by an explosion, coroners found that four of the miners had died from carbon monoxide poisoning. One or two others died because they suffocated as they tried to put on respirators. There are new self-contained self-rescuers available, but that mine did not have any. The mineowners are no longer required to get these self-rescuers, all they have to do now is show a purchase order to pass inspection.

On January 16, mine inspectors ordered eighteen of seventy-five eastern Kentucky underground mines to be closed temporarily. The top mining official said, on visiting the mines: "I could hardly believe my eyes." He said he counted twenty-five coal surfaces being mined, none of them properly cleaned and dusted. He said that there were at least forty places in the mine where explosives in holes drilled in the coal seam had failed to detonate, meaning that explosives set off in the next hole could backfire into the shafts where miners were working. All this he blamed on owners' and workers' ignoring safety precautions. In other words, the workers are to blame for their own death.

Deaths in the mines have created a tremendous mobilization of miners belonging to the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), historically a very militant union. On February 9, a threat of a national walkout was enough to get mine inspectors out to the coalfields and assurances from the White House that it will ask Congress for a two million dollar supplemental appropriation for mine safety enforcement in this fiscal year, and fifteen million dollars more in the fiscal year beginning October 1.

But the miners should not rest on assurances from the White House about bringing mine safety back to 1980 levels. Reagan and his staff killed miners with their callous cutback in mine safety and are forcing concessions on all unions, above all, the UAW.

If the safety standards were any better in 1980 it was due to the long and militant strike of the miners in 1977-78. Nearly 188,000 miners went on a strike that lasted 180 days. They sent caravans of 500 to 1,000 miners to shut down non-union mines where, incidentally, the conditions are ten times worse than in the unionized mines, in West Virginia, Pennsylvania and Kentucky.

But the gains they made through the strike were not permanent. The problem began when Arnold Miller, then head of the UMWA, sold out the strike, settling for an agreement that penalized wildcat strikers with heavy fines and giving up the

local right to strike.

When the miners burned Miller's contract in disgust, they were called "ultra-left" by the Socialist Workers Party, who apparently thought the time was not appropriate for the methods and tactics they had chosen, which included blowing up bridges to stop scab coal from coming out. But these kinds of extreme methods can have a real place in the General Strike.

The Church leadership of the UMWA is no better than that of the deposed Miller. Church is known by the miners for having agreed to a sellout contract that allowed

## Strange Bedfellows

The US government is presently reviewing two pieces of legislation that would reinforce the involvement of the terrorist state in the internal life of the unions. The union bureaucrats are supporting one of the bills and "opposing" the other. But passage of either of the laws would mean that the state could increase its interventions in the unions, that the problems inside of the unions will be dealt with by a supposedly "neutral" party, the government.

One of the proposed laws is an extension of the Hobbs Act, a law that deals with acts of violence or extortion committed in interstate commerce. In a 1973 decision, the US Supreme Court held that the Hobbs Act didn't apply to acts of violence in "the course of legitimate collective bargaining."

But the extension of this law, pushed by arch-conservative and racist Strom Thurmond and right wing organizations such as the "National Right-to-Work Committee," would overturn this decision. This could mean prosecution resulting in sentences of up to twenty years and fines of up to \$250,000. It would not affect scabs, security guards or cops, only strikers alleged to be involved in "violence."

The labor bureaucrats say that the FBI doesn't even keep statistics of such "violence" on the picket lines. But this is because most strikes are settled "peacefully" by these same union bureaucrats.

Why does the Federal Government want to replace the local cops and bureaucrats? The terrorist state is arming itself for counterrevolution with its attacks on the unions: the busting of the PATCO strike, the ramming through of concessions under the threat of plant closings and layoffs.

Most of the union leaderships have come out against this blatant anti-worker piece of legislation. But at the same time, through another piece of legislation, the union bureaucracy invites the state into the internal life of the unions, asking the same strikebreakers and criminals who have slashed the budget for job health and safety, for unemployment benefits, social welfare and Social Security, to stand as a "neutral" arbiter that can determine what goes on in the unions. It is welcoming this terrorist state into the unions on a red carpet through the S1785 bill pushed by conservative Georgia Democrat, Sam Nunn.

The S1785 bill, or the Labor-Manager Racketeering Act of 1981, as it is called, is supposed to crack down on corruption in the unions. It says that the

too many loopholes over safety. Fearing replacement, Church was forced to call for a national walkout February 9 over the deaths in the mines, but immediately retracted it upon assurances from the White House.

If the miners want to have lasting gains and a fighting leadership of their union, they must decide on an aim. What really can answer the murders in the mines short of preparing the General Strike? The miners have a most important and powerful role to play in its preparation. It is an explosive question for all workers that daily becomes

a burning necessity.

There are many tendencies and groupings in the working class who tell the workers now is not the time for the General Strike, but the workers cannot wait until they are all nearly dead to make their move.

Murder in the mines says with the utmost clarity: the workers must take the offensive, aim for the General Strike to bring down the murderer, Reagan. All tendencies, programs and parties will be put to the test in the heat of the struggle for the General Strike.

FBI can, under the guise of cleaning up extortion, bribery and the "mob," enter the unions.

It is not only the capitalist government that wants to use the threat of Federal prosecution against struggling workers. AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland gives a clue as to why he thinks the bureaucrats should support Nunn's bill. He has been quoted as saying that this bill needs union support because it could punish a union official who "misuses the right to strike

(Teamsters for a Democratic Union), a union "reformer" known for his demagogic attacks against more militant forces within the TDU. He said "We'd like to see our union come out in favor of this (S1785 — B.P.) but you can bet they'll be against it."

These reformers and bureaucrats are asking the same government that wants to jail striking workers for "extortion" and "violence on the picket line" to police the unions!



FEDERAL CASE? Strikers confront cops in Newport News, Virginia.

for his own benefit."

While this may sound confusing, we can imagine that the most rightwing bureaucrats, such as Kirkland, McBride of the Steelworkers union and Fraser of the UAW, could use this bill to finger strike leaders, particularly those engaged in wildcat strikes, to the FBI.

"Strange bedfellows" says one paper, adding that "union reformers and activists may soon find themselves in alliance with what many of them probably once thought of as enemies: organizations like the FBI and people like Sam Nunn." Specifically mentioned is Ken Paff of the TDU

## "Military Justice"

There is a saying that was popular among GI activists and their supporters in the sixties: "Military justice is to justice as military music is to music."

In *Truth* #133 ("Navy Deaths"), we reported on the deaths of two young sailors in connection with the Correctional Custody Units (CCU's) maintained on board US Navy ships.

The case of a young Detroit black, Bernal Johnson, has long ago been swept under the rug — "accidental drowning."

And now the same process is underway in the case of Paul Trerice, a young white from Algonac, Michigan, who died (at age twenty), according to the Navy, of "heart failure."

First, all the commanding officers got the whitewash treatment, at best a slap on the wrist because they "should have

known" what was going on. And who says they didn't?

And then it was the turn of the various petty officers (non-commissioned officers) and Marine guards in the CCU. Here, too, nobody was found guilty of being responsible for Trerice's death.

So, more than a year later, the Navy — and the whole US military — are once again back in the business of crushing the youth given to them as cannon fodder.

The terrorist state of U.S imperialism has many faces. One of its most brutal is found on its military machine. It is a menace not only to the oppressed of other countries, but also to those caught inside it.

Down with the terrorist state!  
Down with "military justice"!  
K.F.



# TRUTH

## Defend the Right to Revolution!

By MARGARET GUTTSHALL

The Trotskyist Organization/USA held an open forum ("Who Are the Real Terrorists?") in defense of the October 20th and New Afrikan Freedom Fighters on February 13 at Wayne State University in Detroit.

The October 20th Freedom Fighters is the name taken by the militant members of the Revolutionary Armed Task Force and the Black Liberation Army who have claimed responsibility for the attempt to rob a Brink's truck in Nyack, New York, on October 20, 1981.

The New Afrikan Freedom Fighters is the name taken by others, associated with the Republic of New Afrika, who, while having absolutely nothing to do with the action in Nyack, have been framed up, charged and arrested.

Margaret Guttshall spoke for the Trotskyist Organization/USA. A representative of the National Committee to Defend the New Afrikan Freedom Fighters was supposed to speak also, but did not appear. Why this did not happen is not yet clear. Members of the Moslem Students Society (supporters of the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran) and of the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) also participated in the forum.

A number of young independent black militants also attended the forum.

Comrade Guttshall's speech concentrated on defending the October 20th Freedom Fighters against the real terrorist, the capitalist state.

"Didn't they have a right to do what they did. Isn't this a justifiable action, indeed an action with which any revolutionary would sympathize?" she asked.

"Didn't the American and French Revolutions proclaim the right of man to overthrow a government that has become oppressive, tyrannical and despotic?"

"... In a situation where the wealth of society is increasingly monopolized by a small handful of people who are using it to aggrandize themselves and destroy the majority, who are building up a vast army of police and spies to maintain this, doesn't a person have a right to help himself to their coffers, to take back a bit of what has been stolen? Doesn't a person have a right to eliminate a few of those whose station in life is to maintain this injustice?"

Guttshall denounced organizations which claim to be revolutionary but refuse to take a principled stand in this conflict, in particular the Socialist Workers Party.

She said that the Trotskyist Organization/USA and the Revolutionary Armed Task Force and the Black Liberation Army have much in common. Each thinks that no peaceful resolution of the conflict between the exploited and the exploiters is possible and that the imperialist state must be attacked and destroyed.

But the Trotskyist Organization/USA is working to build this struggle on a mass scale and thinks that political leadership and organization — the workers party to organize the General Strike, not inspirational acts like robbing a Brink's truck —

are the road forward.

She concluded by asking all those present to join not only in the struggle to defend the October 20th and New Afrikan Freedom Fighters, but above all, through this defense, in the struggle to build this new leadership, and to begin with demonstrations for the immediate liberation of the arrested militants.

The discussion which followed was very interesting.

A supporter of the Mojahedin spoke. He

its proponents is very important, particularly the SWP. He said the same thing is happening in Iran. "We are ready to help in any way that we can with this struggle," was his conclusion.

A member of the RCP also intervened. She said that it is necessary to defend those arrested, but that we shouldn't politically support them.

"Their policy is wrong. There are larger questions involved. We have to build class consciousness, build the revolutionary

defend the October 20th Freedom Fighters right to do what they did, even if revolutionaries do not agree with their policy or tactics. "We can't say, 'We defend them, but ...'"

A supporter of the Mojahedin asked: "If we can't defend the Brink's robbers, build the workers party and the General Strike, how can we fight American imperialism? The Mojahedin existed for twenty-some years but it was the general strike that brought down the Shah."

David Heffelfinger said that the RCP abstractly counterposed building class consciousness to defending those arrested. He said this case concerns "the right to revolution," to destroy the state and expropriate the bourgeoisie. If we don't defend them in this situation, then we are working against class consciousness. "The RCP's conception is spontaneist, waiting for the historic conjuncture."

Kevin FitzPatrick argued that the arrests in conjunction with the Brink's robbery were not just one more case of political repression, but the point of departure for an attack on the entire workers movement, including the Communist Party and the Socialist Workers Party. "Those who are sticking their heads in the sand will be next."

The discussion continued until 10 PM. It was very positive because there was a real political struggle to define what is at stake in the Brink's case and how to defend those arrested. This struggle laid the basis for future political action.

Notable for their absence from this struggle were the Revolutionary Workers League and the Revolutionary Socialist League. Both agreed to come and did not. Whether this is a case of fundamental opposition to defense of the October 20th Freedom Fighters, vacillation, an ostrich policy or something else remains to be seen.

Defending workers rights, above all the right to revolution, from the attack on them by the terrorist state, is key to building the leadership that can meet the tasks of the emancipation of the human race.



Fulani Sunni Ali

said that it was very important to defend the "Brink's robbers."

"We can't say that killing imperialism's mercenaries is a crime. We can't say that freedom fighters are criminals or terrorists. We may disagree with their timing and criticize them when we speak to them, but we can't call them criminals or terrorists."

He said that fighting this position and

party, prepare the historic conjuncture which is on the horizon in which there will be war between the US and the USSR and revolution will be possible."

She also said she was against the general strike, that it is "economist."

A number of people responded to this intervention.

Margaret Guttshall argued that revolutionaries must be prepared to politically

## Nyack Militant Freed

Another thread in the government's vast frame-up of militants has come unraveled.

Eve Rosahn, indicted for criminal facilitation on October 29, 1981, on grounds that she rented a red van and lent her own Honda for use in the Nyack Brink's robbery, was able to prove that she did not rent the van.

She had hard evidence — samples of her own handwriting which did not match the handwriting on the application for the van rental. In addition, another one of the government's eyewitnesses proved to be unable to identify her. The prosecutor also said that hours of testimony, provided by her lawyers, helped to convince him that she did not rent the van.

The fact that her car was used in the

hold-up is not considered sufficient basis for an indictment (it could have been stolen), so Eve Rosahn was released.

She declared her release "a tremendous victory over the government's current campaign of repression and terror" and sent "strongest greetings of solidarity to the captured combatants," referring to others still under indictment and in jail.

This is the second time that the government's manufactured evidence has been destroyed and a "co-conspirator" released. Earlier, Fulani Sunni Ali of the Republic of New Afrika, who was formerly known as Cynthia Boston was indicted on grounds that she was identified entering a "safe house" after the robbery. The government was forced to release her

when she produced physical evidence that she had been in New Orleans, Louisiana, having her car repaired at that time.

The government's evidence in the Nyack case is so flimsy, so clearly manufactured, that it leads one to wonder whether any of those indicted actually carried out the Brink's robbery and, if they did, if it were on their own initiative.

As we said above, we are prepared to defend them, whether they did or not. But do we have any reason to believe that Boudin, Clark and others knew that guards and policemen would be killed in the action? Why were cars of known militants used in the action? Why was a van rented? ("Rent-a-getaway"?) Isn't this much like leaving a trail of clues for the police? Where are the people who actually attempted the robbery and killed the guard? Boudin and Clark, after all, were allegedly only driving getaway cars. And where is the third getaway car and its occupants? Funny that the police should know nothing about them, but are capable of uncovering the entire "conspiracy" that planned the action in a matter of days. Or did they have their fingers in it from the beginning?

The details are not yet entirely clear. One thing is however — the real criminals, the terrorist state and its handmaidens, are on the wrong side of the jailhouse wall. M.G.

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