

To end concessions, unemployment, war, build a . . .

LABOR PARTY!

Declaration of the Secretariat of the Trotskyist Organization

Three months after the 1982 elections, after all the new Democrats have taken their positions in office, after the Chrysler Corporation and the Fraser gang in the UAW have succeeded in averting a major showdown with the American working class by granting a wage increase — one thing is certain — there has been no slackening off of the class struggle, there has been no amelioration of the conditions of the working class.

The situation in auto itself, where local strikes are already taking place, is a clear indication of what is in the air, of what is coming. So are the riots in Miami after the brutal killing of another black man by cops. Steel workers have rejected concessions, setting the stage for a possible national strike. And the possibility of an independent truckers' strike looms on the horizon.

At the same time what the Trotskyist Organization said before the 1982 elections — that the alliance of labor bureaucrats and liberal black leaders around the Democratic Party was fundamentally an attempt to save Reagan — has also proved true. The new Democratic governors, (this is where the alliance was to have scored a major victory) have all taken office now, only to institute the very same programs that Reagan has stood for. And Congress has "saved" Social Security with a "bi-partisan" effort that includes new taxes on the already despicably miserable health care benefits of

American workers. And, of course, with the grumblings of a few liberals, the new Congress can be expected to certify the human rights of the mass murderers it props up in El Salvador.

There is only one lesson in all of this. In order to finish with Ronald Reagan and all that he represents, the American working class, trade unions, and blacks must finish with their alliance with the Democratic Party and build their own independent working class party.

There is one other point worth raising again about the 1982 elections. And that is the miserable showing of many organizations that claim to represent the working class, in particular, the Communist Party and the Socialist Workers Party.

Does this mean that the American working class is not ready to accept the idea of a Labor Party? No! It means that the American working class, while taking up a fight for its class independence, didn't even notice the passive campaigns put forward by these organizations. In the case of the CP this was obvious since it actively campaigned for the Democratic Party.

The Trotskyists are for a Labor Party! We don't put forward this slogan to hide the revolution, but precisely because we are for socialism.

We, Trotskyists, think that just as the formation of an independent trade union in Poland, Solidarnosc, went immediately over to a confrontation with the Stalinist bureaucrats, so the formation of an independent

Labor Party, would mean a break with the whole capitalist regime and its hangers-on in the trade unions, like Fraser.

Such a development would have importance for every sector of the globe and the struggle of workers and oppressed. Not the least, it would mean an end to the crimes committed by American imperialism in Central America.

That is why the Trotskyist Organization is for a united campaign for the Labor Party by working class organizations and trade unions.

In particular, that is why we are for such a campaign in the upcoming elections for convention delegates to the National Convention of the UAW. These elections, which will begin to take place in February and early March, can be instrumental in continuing the fight against concessions and for a Labor Party. We call on all working class tendencies who are for a Labor Party to join in a common fight in the UAW elections.

Lastly, we wish to make one point clear. In the past the Trotskyist Organization of the USA has called for a Workers Party. However, we have never considered the name to be as important as the content of our fight. We have decided to change the name, for a Labor Party, but we are as resolute as ever on the policy. We think this change will enable us to reach more and more workers and youth who are looking for internationalism, revolutionism, and a proletarian party.

Labor Party and the UAW

With each passing day, the crying need for a labor party, a party based on the mass workers organizations and involving all the exploited, becomes more obvious.

The economic depression that means the highest unemployment and sharpest cut in the living standards of the working class since the 1930's is the framework for continued attacks.

For instance, Michigan Governor James Blanchard, elected just last fall as a "labor-backed" candidate, has "deferred" state aid of more than \$500 million to schools and local governments. This means that cities and education in Michigan could go broke.

Blanchard's proposal to end the situation is for state income taxes to be raised over 30%, bleeding the workers to make sure that Wall Street collects its interest.

But Blanchard was the *Democratic* candidate, presented by Detroit Mayor Coleman Young, UAW president Doug Fraser and so on as the *alternative* to the screaming Reaganite Republican candidate, Richard Headlee.

What kind of an alternative is this? *What could Headlee have done to us that Blanchard isn't doing?*

Blanchard's attacks — and these are just the beginning — are the fruit of supporting the capitalist Democratic Party.

The need for a labor party is especially clear in auto. Just as we predicted, the auto companies are trying to take back what was gained by the Chrysler strike. To revenge itself on the Canadian workers, Chrysler is closing plants in and shifting production out of Canada.

In the US, it provoked a walkout over work rules — although it took shape over drinking coffee at work — at its technical center in Detroit. It then fired five workers, suspended eighty-five and reprimanded 134 others. Now the workers have voted to strike, which has yet to be approved by the UAW.

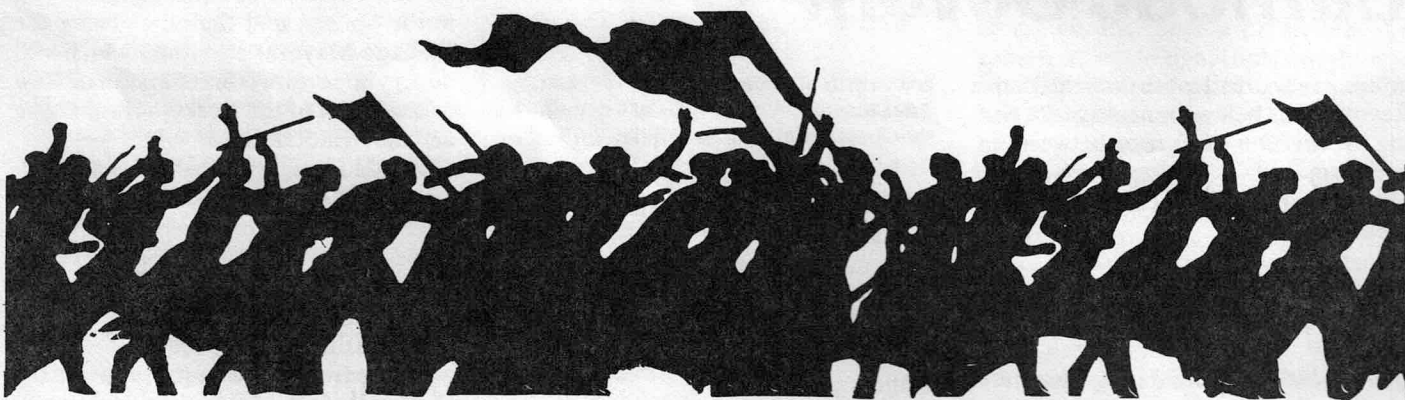
And General Motors has announced a consolidation of its Buick and Fisher Body operations (including closing the site of the 1937 sitdown strike) in Flint, Michigan, which will result in a loss of 3,600 jobs. Flint already has an unemployment rate of 26.5%, the highest in the country.

Such a situation demands a fight for *workers control*. Sitdown strikes, plant occupations, factory committees, etc., have to be the means to wage the battle against these attacks.

Even more, this fight raises the same questions in the UAW as the national situation does — the fight for a labor party. The same bureaucrats — the "administration caucus" — who support the Democrats are also cooperating with the companies' attacks.

Our proposal for a united workers slate for delegates to the upcoming UAW Convention is based on waging a specific, immediate fight for a *new leadership* in one of the most important American unions. The other points in the proposed platform flow from this basic question.

The labor party means, on the level of the whole society, the same thing: a *new leadership* for the American working class. The united workers slate in the UAW is a point of departure and a point of attack for a fight to the finish against US imperialism.



Stop Arms to Guatemala!

Just as Reagan promised, the US government has resumed arms shipments to Guatemala, the first in almost six years.

Now, the military dictatorship there is headed by a "born again" Christian, General Efraim Rios Montt, but these arms (\$6.36 million worth) aren't intended for the Second Coming. Rios Montt is well known for denying that he favors a "scorched earth" policy, saying instead that he has a "scorched guerrilla" policy.

The reality is that these arms, just like the arms the US is pouring into Central

America as a whole, are aimed at crushing the revolutionary upsurge in that region.

This is also what is behind a US-Honduras military exercise — brazenly staged on the border of Nicaragua — February 1-6, in which 4,000 Honduran and 1,600 US personnel will take part.

And where the US falls short, its Zionist agents take up the slack. That is why Israeli Defense Minister Ariel Sharon visited the region recently. Israel was the major arms supplier to the Somoza regime in Nicaragua before the

revolution triumphed.

Workers and youth in the United States have to take up a concrete fight to defend the revolution. This means a fight to boycott and stop all arms shipments to the counterrevolutionaries, and to organize a fight for *arms to the revolutionaries*.

This is the basis on which we should take part in actions against US policy in Central America, such as the recent January 22 demonstration on the Mexico-US border.

K.F.

Chicago Police Attacks and Elections

On January 6, Jane Byrne's "anti-machine" Democratic Party regime in Chicago began taking applications for 3,800 jobs as temporary street cleaners, as part of a campaign to drum up support for her in the coming primary election (February 22).

When thousands of people showed up to apply for the jobs in Washington Park on the Southside and long lines began to form, the police arrived and started clubbing people.

According to Jim Rockett, a laid-off teacher quoted in *The Militant*: "...they didn't say a word, they just started swinging their billy clubs and hitting people on the heads. They hit two men very hard and they were bleeding." Police also arrested a unknown number of unemployed workers.

This vicious attack on unemployed workers is not accidental. It is not an "unfortunate incident." It is a manifestation of the Democratic Party's tremendous crisis, of its uncontrollable

fear of the working class. Over 28,000 people showed up for these jobs throughout the city. Byrne and her cops were obviously afraid, even in January, that the people might riot, and panicked.

This crisis, and the attacks that flow from it, make the fight for a union candidate to build a labor party, an independent party of the working masses to fight for power, in the Chicago elections, both possible and imperative.

None of the other Democratic Party candidates has anything to offer workers. Richard Daley is the descendant of the original kingpin of the Chicago Democratic Party machine. Harold Washington claims to represent workers and blacks but offers tax breaks to corporations in order to "attract business."

And none of the candidates enjoys the unequivocal support of the unions.

The unions have the power to begin to build a labor party and deal a death blow to the Democratic Party in these elections. Thus it is the responsibility of

every tendency that claims to be for a labor party, to make a common fight for a union candidate to build this party in these elections.

While it is too late for a union candidate to be on the ballot (nominations closed December 29), unions will be able to express support for a union candidate by voting for a working class candidate who will be on the ballot, Ed Warren of the Socialist Workers Party.

But it would be mistake to reduce the struggle for a union candidate and a labor party to a campaign of support to the SWP, because this party represents only a fraction of the working class and, moreover, one with a false program of avoiding the struggle for a massive union break from the Democratic Party today.

Trotskyist Organization members will be in Chicago in the coming weeks to carry forward this struggle. We ask *Truth* readers and all those for a labor party in Chicago to join with us.
M.G.

Letter to the International Workers Party

Truth reprints here a letter directed to the International Workers Party from the leadership of the Trotskyist Organization. Even though we have not as yet received an answer to our proposals (we don't know why), we remain committed to them.

We reiterate our desire to forge a common campaign for the construction of the Labor Party with any tendency that believes, as we do, that such a struggle in front of masses of workers is the best way to resolve the differences over the nature and program of the party.

November 23, 1982

Dear comrades,

We have received the Electoral Manifesto of the International Workers Party (Fourth International) and read it carefully. The Trotskyist Organization also was fighting for a united working class vote in the 1982 elections for candidates of workers' organizations. We are sorry that we did not receive your proposal until the beginning of November for we would have wanted to take up joint work with you around such a campaign.

We agree that the fight for the Labor Party must develop around such struggles where questions of the program and nature of the party can be an affair of masses of workers. Even though we were unable to undertake a joint campaign in the 1982 elections we would like to take up with you the kind of struggle and joint action you propose in your Manifesto for the Labor Party.

While we certainly feel that it is not too early to begin, as you propose, to prepare for the 1984 elections, nevertheless, we also see ahead two other important possibilities for a united campaign for the Labor Party. One in the UAW union's National Convention coming up in the Spring, and the other being the Chicago Mayoral elections, which will be very important from the point of view of the break of the workers from Byrne and the Democratic Party.

Would it be possible to organize a meeting of representatives of the respective leaderships of our two organizations in order to begin to develop a campaign toward the 1984 elections? We would be open to hearing your proposals on this as to time and place.

Related to this, we understand that the IWP is in favor of demonstrations on December 13 in support of the Polish Revolution. We are organizing a demonstration at the Polish consulate in Chicago. For us what is most important is that it gather as large as possible a force of currents and organizations who defend the Polish Revolution. Would your participation in Chicago be possible? If so would it be possible to hold an initial discussion at this time on joint work toward building the Labor Party?

We look forward to hearing from you at the earliest opportunity.

Communist Greetings,

David Heffelfinger
For the Secretariat of the Trotskyist
Organization/USA

Poland, Central America and Barnes?

We want to take up, in this brief article, just one key point that Jack Barnes, National Secretary of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), made in his recent speech, the so aptly titled "Their Trotsky and Ours."

On the one hand, Barnes stated that Central America is the chief battle ground today for socialism. In the words of Larry Seigle (*The Militant*; January 21, 1983), who is another member of the SWP leadership and who spoke the next night:

Central America and the Caribbean are at the center of world politics...

It is there that the battle is going on to extend the socialist revolution.

It is there that giant strides are being taken toward resolving the question of our epoch — to bring an end to imperialist domination and an end to capitalist rule. It is there that victories are being won for our side in this battle.

And, on the other hand, as we noted in the last issue of *Truth*, Barnes stated that the Polish workers have "gone beyond the limitations of criticism of communism."

What is the significance of this quite conscious counterposition of the revolution in Poland to the revolutions in Central America? Up to now, the SWP

has at least given lip service to the importance of the Polish Revolution.

There is one force that has consistently tried to counterpose the Polish Revolution to revolutions and struggles elsewhere (El Salvador, South Africa or wherever). That force is the Kremlin and that is what Barnes' speech as a whole represented a total capitulation to.

The SWP went out of its way — far more so than in many years — to bring young people to the convention of the Young Socialist Alliance (YSA) at which Barnes' speech was given. Even its own figures bear this out — 850 registered at the convention, of whom only 150 were delegates; over 1,200 attending Barnes' speech itself.

Barnes wants to pump into these youth — and through them others — hostility to the revolution against Stalinist rule in the name of their enthusiasm for the upsurge in Central America. He wants to abuse this enthusiasm by presenting Stalinism (the Salvadoran Communist Party, not to mention Castro) and forces dependent on it (the Sandinistas, the FMLN/FDR) as being in fact revolutionary leaderships, as being, as he put it "real proletarian communist revolutionaries."

Free the Solidarnosc Seven!

On December 16, the Fourth International was in Gdansk and took part in the demonstrations held at the monument to Polish workers the Stalinists killed in 1970. At this moment, when the masses' will to struggle is in contradiction to the retreat by the existing leadership, the Trotskyists alone are fighting to provide the Polish Revolution with the program and leadership it needs.

The Stalinists know full well that the revolution is not finished. That fact is revealed by their continuing attacks on the leadership of Solidarnosc ("Solidarity"). The regime hopes to either behead the movement or to compel the leaders into surrender.

That is the significance, for example, of the continued harassment of Lech Walesa. In recent weeks, this has taken the form of the "investigation" of the finances of Solidarnosc, a refusal to let him return to work and accusations that he was "pro-Nazi" for having supposedly made the terrible statement: "The Poles and the Germans know what suffering means."

This accusation also reveals a great fear of the bureaucrats. In it, they accuse Walesa of having called the post-war division of Germany a tragedy. There is

nothing they dread more than the Polish Revolution's being connected with ending the division of Europe between imperialism and Stalinism, a division whose symbol and expression is the status of Germany.

Nor is it a question of Walesa alone. Besides the trial of the leaders of the "moderate" oppositionists of the KOR, above all, of Jacek Kuron (see *The Fourth International* #103), there are two other key examples.

At the time that the regime "suspended" martial law, it released those interned under its provisions. But it immediately re-arrested seven important leaders, members of Solidarnosc's National Commission elected at the historic Gdansk Congress. The *Solidarnosc Seven* are: Andrzej Gwiazda, Seweryn Jaworski, Marian Jurczyk, Karol Modzelewski, Grzegorz Palka, Andrzej Rosplochowski and Jan Rulewski.

The spirit of these men is best shown by a statement made by five of them (together with three others) even before "lifting" of martial law:

We were elected to the top boards of the union in democratic elections and we received the mandate of confidence from union members. No decision of the authorities

can strip us of this mandate... We shall continue the fight for the rights of our union within the scope of our possibilities.

The New York Times (January 10, 1983) eagerly announces that the regime is "breaking up the remnants" of Solidarnosc. But the real picture revealed by raids and arrests in at least Poznan, Warsaw, Lezno and Kedzierzyn-Kozle is of a vibrant, nationwide network of resistance.

This living movement is even now preparing a general strike for the spring. It is the responsibility of every working class fighter to defend the leaders and militants of Solidarnosc — without any conditions.

The charge against the Solidarnosc Seven is that they planned to overthrow the regime. Unfortunately, along with Walesa, Kuron and others, they in fact advocate a "national accord." The government's aim in trying them is to get them to repudiate this goal as "Trotskyist" and, thus, to split the movement and disorient its militants. The defense of all those accused has to take up the stake of the fight, freedom for political independence, for political parties in Poland.
K.F.

The Trotskyists Will Build the Workers Party

By DAVID HEFFELFINGER

In the preceding articles in this series, we have taken up the relationship of Trotskyists to the demands for a Labor Party up to the present day. But Trotskyists have not always put the Labor Party demand in the forefront. In fact, they have done so, when, as we have shown, the possibility existed to build the revolutionary leadership in a mass mobilization. And this is precisely the opportunity in front of revolutionaries today.

But there is one major difference between the situation today and that in 1938, or even 1946. Today, the situation is even more favorable than when the Fourth International was founded and the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) was its leading party.

The October Revolution has renewed itself in Poland. The American Revolution itself has begun to develop in Central and South America as a continental offensive against imperialism. The American trade unions are undergoing a differentiation of bureaucrats vs. ranks; in the face of the results of years of class collaboration — massive unemployment, an attack on workers rights, and the general pauperization of the working class.

But the subjective element, the most necessary one, the revolutionary leadership is under attack from all sides. Most importantly, it is under attack from the SWP, which has ceased to be a party forged against Stalinism and its historic collaboration with the American bourgeoisie.

To call for a Labor Party today, while ignoring this fact, would be like the ostrich hiding his head in the sand. Because, in the last analysis, for the Labor Party to be built, requires more than a situation objectively favorable, more even than the basis in a working class mobilization. Both of which exist today. It requires a leadership, a conscious head of the class in whose interest it is to build the Labor Party.

The trade union bureaucracy will not do it. Its very existence, all its privileges are tied up with the Democratic Party. The Frasers and McBrides will go down with the ship rather than abandon it to the uncertain waters of class confrontation. Neither will the opposition, which has developed against concessions, play anything more than a defensive role. Even more likely, as in the 1982 elections, it will play no role at all.

And the Communist Party, which takes its orders from the Kremlin, will continue, as it did in the 1982 elections, to try to link the workers to liberalism and the Democratic Party.

Now, at this historical moment when so much is at stake and so much is possible, when the working class party in the United States is on the mind of every advanced worker — it is the leadership of the Labor Party that must be forged and steered against the misleaders who stand in the way of the mobilization of the

American working class driving toward its class independence.

The first important step toward the massive development of the Labor Party is a *Trotskyist Congress* — *rebuilding the American section of the Fourth International.*

Trotskyism

Twenty years after the Socialist Workers Party split from the International Committee of the Fourth International, casting its lot in with Castro and a pro-Stalinist tendency, Jack Barnes, National Secretary of the SWP, stood up at the Young Socialist Alliance (YSA) Convention and made a very curious speech.

He said, "... I predict, none of us will call ourselves (Trotskyists) before this decade's out . . . if I'm right that what Trotskyism originated as was a fake term by the Stalinists . . . Trotskyism as such doesn't have much value . . ."

But try as much as he would like to, Barnes can never erase the traditions of Trotskyism that the SWP itself once stood for. Because those traditions reside in the consciousness of the American and international proletariat.

It is impossible for Barnes to turn back the construction of sections of the Fourth International in Latin America, led and supported directly by American Trotskyists. Or the living experiences of the Bolivian proletariat with the popular assembly of 1970, a product of the struggle of the Bolivian section of the Fourth International. Nor can he hide, with his praise of Fidel Castro, the fact that Trotskyists languished in his prisons long after Castro became a "revolutionary" in the eyes of the SWP. No other tendency has a record to compare to the struggle for the permanent revolution, which Barnes now attacks.

No other tendency has set its roots down in the proletariat nor elaborated as clearly a proletarian policy. The Trotskyists were a major force in the sit-down strikes and industrial unionism of the thirties. The Minneapolis Teamsters strike, which the Trotskyists led, will stand as a model long after Barnes has been forgotten. And the Trotskyists were the only tendency in the American working class to defend and maintain a defeatist position in World War II. It was the Trotskyists who went to prison for "sedition" for maintaining a policy of revolutionary defeatism. All this is an acquisition for the construction of a working class party that cannot be erased.

It is now not only a part of the living experiences of the American working class, but it is also a part of the consciousness of the international proletariat, because the Fourth International has been continued. Trotskyism is not "dead," as Barnes says, nor even, as many other tendencies claiming Trotskyism believe, is it a vague idea. Trotskyism stands for a lot — but above all exists and stands for the party.

And those who renounce the traditions and lessons of Trotskyism, are not only cutting themselves off from the past, but also from the revolutionary future, and from the new generation of workers and young proletarians who are searching for an alternative to Stalinism, for a link to the Polish Revolution and the struggle against US imperialism.

What else can Barnes' statement — that Polish workers have "gone beyond the limitations of criticism of Communism" — mean but that this party, once the pillar of the Fourth International has irrevocably isolated itself from the most advanced workers and the radical youth in its headlong pursuit of Stalinism?

After Solidarity Day, a demonstration that was explicitly tied to the Polish workers and their most audacious ac-



tions against the so-called "communist" regime of bureaucrats and hangmen, who can believe that such a policy has anything to do with a proletarian policy or a proletarian party?

Trotsky once said about the party that . . . The scientific character of our activity consists in the fact that we adapt our program not to political conjunctures or to the thought or mood of the masses as this mood is today, but we adapt our program to the objective situation as it is represented by the economic class structure of society. The mentality can be backward; then the political task of the party is to bring the mentality into harmony with the objective facts, to make the workers understand the objective task.

Any tendency today that believes the working class party can be forged behind the coattails of Stalinism is both hopelessly adrift from the masses and totally mistaken about the world situation.

And precisely what is the objective situation? The complete breakdown of post-war stability, founded on a world-wide offensive of the working class that has been developing ever more deeply since 1968, in which each "up" of the class struggle is higher than the preceding one. And now with the Polish Revolution heading toward a confrontation with the Kremlin tanks, and with Stalinism supporting another bloody "peaceful" settlement in Central America, as in Lebanon, Barnes predicts that Trotskyism will be forgotten at the end of the decade. Such a prediction, if it came true, could signal only one thing — the definitive defeat of the revolution and barbaric counterrevolution.

Cult and Revelation

In 1953, when the SWP fought a pro-Stalinist tendency that raised positions remarkably similar to the positions of Barnes today, James Cannon wrote that Pabloism was based on a conception that

"In the Day of the Comet," the socialist revolution will be realized and carried through to conclusion without a revolutionary Marxist, that is, a Leninist-Trotskyist party . . . Pabloism is the substitution of a cult and a revelation for a party and a program. ("Factional Struggle and Party Leadership," November 1953)

This is what Barnes has to offer — the cult of Castro and the revelation of a revival of Stalinism. The Barnes SWP has come full circle from the stand it took in 1953 to become the new cheerleaders for Stalinism.

If indeed it is the defense of the revolution in Central America against imperialism that motivates this new turn — what single question is more important than the construction, as Trotsky said, "of the independent party of the toiling masses to seize power in the state."

In truth, the young proletarians who want to join arms with the revolution in Central America are nothing more to Barnes than cannon fodder to be cynically turned against the party of the revolutionary future, the Fourth International. The only force today that is capable of building the workers party to unite the struggle of the oppressed of both continents against imperialism.

The rebuilding of the American section of the Fourth International in a Trotskyist Congress signifies a new leadership against imperialism in this hemisphere, and the renewed link of the World Party of the Socialist Revolution to the proletarian movement in America.

No other force can or will assume the responsibility for the construction of the workers party. No other tendency but Trotskyism today can claim to represent the continuity of the struggle for a proletarian party in America.

We have said before in this series that the movement for a workers party is much more than just the formal resolutions of trade unions or positions on paper of various organizations. It is a movement based on the struggle of the masses, the armed struggle in Central America, the strikes and demonstrations against Reagan's government. We will go one step further and say that these mass struggles are the essence of the movement for a workers party.

The rebuilding of the Trotskyist party in America, is no less based on this movement. It is therefore neither an internal affair nor an act of proclamation. It cannot draw one single conclusion about the crisis of the past nor resolve one single difference, if it is not an active element of the preparation and formation of the new generation of workers and youth as proletarian revolutionaries.

That is why we believe that the Trotskyist Congress must be open, and must be developed in an open delimitation against opportunism in the mass movement. Just because Barnes has given up on Trotskyism does not mean that all the acquisitions of Trotskyism in the construction of the proletarian party are destroyed. But neither does it mean that the Trotskyist party has been rebuilt. That task belongs to those who defended its past and to the future Trotskyist cadres, who will come forward to lead the struggle for the workers party. Young workers! Militants!

The Trotskyist Congress is the first big step toward the building of your proletarian party and the victory of the workers socialist revolution. Join the fight!

WORKERS OF THE WORLD, UNITED

THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

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Organ of the Executive Committee of the FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

Demonstrate in the Streets of Gdansk!

December 13, with the Polish Workers, in the Name of Solidarity, Against the Stalinist Oppression of Workers Power

The defense undertaken by the Polish workers in Gdansk is a historic event. It is the first time in the history of the world that workers have taken up arms against their oppressors. This is a call to all workers to support the Polish workers in their struggle against the Stalinist regime. The Polish workers are the vanguard of the international proletariat. Their struggle is the struggle of all workers against imperialism and Stalinism.

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Revolution Enters New Phase

By MARGARET GUTTSALL

The revolution in Central America is entering into a new phase, a phase of increasingly open war with US imperialism's forces, with Nicaragua on one side and Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala on the other.

Revolutionaries must fight for the working class throughout the hemisphere to do everything within its power to insure Nicaragua's victory in this conflict, including sending arms and other forms of aid to the revolutionaries in these countries and boycotting arms and aid to the "contras."

But the outcome of this war will not depend simply on the number of men and arms amassed by the opposing sides, but above all on the struggle to advance the revolution throughout the hemisphere.

So, despite the pressures to the contrary, revolutionaries must maintain their independence from the official peace and solidarity movements and fight for the working class to carry forward the revolution, to build a leadership adequate to this task, in opposition to the Kremlin, Castro and even the Sandinistas of Nicaragua and the Farabundo Marti Liberation Front (FMLN) of El Salvador.

Reagan's initial plan to bring a halt to the revolution that began to unfold in this hemisphere with the overthrow of Somoza in Nicaragua, a plan based on reinforcing the various military dictatorships in power, has failed.

This failure is manifest in Nicaraguan workers' growing demands for the nationalization of the factories and the land, in the growth of workers' strikes and the guerrillas' offensive in El Salvador, and in the general strike and near general strike in Argentina and Bolivia and in the growth of strikes, demonstrations and opposition to the Democratic Party in the US.

Reagan can no longer count on the Kremlin apparatus to hold back the revolution as a result of the revolution in Poland and its repercussions. Nor can he count on the American working class to remain relatively indifferent to the revolution in Central America. So Reagan has no choice but to initiate a war against the revolution *in order to maintain his own power*, a war aimed at the complete overthrow of the revolution in Nicaragua and the Sandinista regime that arose on the basis of it, and the eventual restoration of the Somocistas.

This is the significance of the US-Honduran military maneuvers on the Honduran-Nicaraguan border and Reagan's endorsement of the most rightwing elements in Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala, elements like

Montt, D'Aubuisson and the Somocistas in Honduras who openly espouse Vietnam-style scorched earth tactics to destroy the revolution.

Reagan cannot hope to militarily defeat the forces of the revolution in Nicaragua, El Salvador and elsewhere, even with these tactics. The forces of the revolution are too strong to permit a quick defeat and the American working class will not permit a prolonged war. Vietnam, Iran and the conflict in El Salvador have already shown that.

What he does hope to do is to *exhaust* the most advanced elements of the revolution, the most conscious forces, and then, on this basis, reach an agreement with the Sandinistas for the deployment of "peacekeeping forces" as a prelude to a direct imperialist intervention, *as he did in Beirut*.

But revolutionaries and workers can make short shrift of these plans by unleashing an offensive to advance the revolution in this hemisphere to build a new leadership adequate to this task. In such a mobilization it will be possible to inoculate the masses against such maneuvers and forge the kind of leadership that will be capable of carrying the revolution through to its conclusion.

This demands a struggle not only against the Kremlin and Castro but also against the Sandinistas and the FMLN who have already indicated themselves disposed toward such a "peaceful solution" to the "Nicaraguan problem."

These forces not only defended such a solution in Beirut. The Kremlin's January 6 Warsaw Pact meeting issued a peace proposal to US imperialism in which it simply mentions the situation in Central America in passing. Out of 500 lines, the demand for an end to "threats and provocations against Cuba and Nicaragua and to any attempts at outside interference in their internal affairs," merits four. This is the same sort of silence with which it responded to Israel's invasion of Lebanon.

Castro, the Sandinistas, and the FMLN responded to the US's attack by calling a special meeting of the Non-aligned nations in Managua that wound up simply denouncing the US. These people can be expected to defend Nicaragua as much as the Arab and other Non-aligned nations defended the PLO.

And Daniel Ortega, leader of the Sandinistas, said in an interview that he "was studying very carefully the idea (of placing inter-American forces on the Honduran-Nicaraguan border) because it *might* (our emphasis) be used to facilitate or justify a greater US presence in Central America." Are we really to believe, after Beirut, that Ortega is that

naive?

No doubt the Socialist Workers Party and others like them will tell us that overtures to US imperialism and other bourgeois nations are just maneuvers designed to win further support for the revolution and that Castro, the Sandinistas and others are prepared to carry forward the revolution.

But this readiness to reach an agreement with US imperialism coincides with an equal readiness to avoid the mobilization of and even suppress the working class.

Representatives of the Sandinistas and the FMLN in the US have always spoken of centering the movement in the US on simply demanding that the US withdraw its support to the reactionaries. They have never come out for an active struggle for arms and aid to the revolutionaries, for a boycott of the counterrevolutionaries. At a recent meeting sponsored by the SWP, a representative of the FMLN, when asked what can we do to support the Salvadorans, said: "Support our vanguard's policy of negotiations."

In Nicaragua, since the US escalated its attacks, the Sandinistas declared a state of emergency, limiting freedom of speech, press, and association, as much for the working class as for the bourgeoisie. And even the SWP admits that this has created disunity in the ranks of the workers.

And in El Salvador, the FMLN has pursued a policy of limiting the war to the countryside, in opposition to the mobilization of the working class. And it has offered to come to an agreement with the present junta in which the present military will be preserved.

This conciliatory, anti-working class policy is not accidental. Nor is it a product of lack of courage or will. It is a result of the class nature of these leaderships so clearly revealed by their reaction to the workers' revolution in Poland and Central America.

Thus the struggle to insure Nicaragua's victory in this war, which depends on the struggle to advance the revolution throughout the hemisphere, is inseparable from the struggle to build the new, working class leadership of the revolution.

This is the purpose of the conference of Trotskyist Militants of the Americas that will meet in Lima, Peru, this spring. We call on all tendencies in the workers' movement that want to advance this struggle to join us in an open mobilization to:

Defend the revolution in Nicaragua!
Advance the revolution throughout the Americas!

Unions to the Aid of Nicaragua!

American unions have the power to *cripple* Reagan's war on the revolution in Central America, with arms and aid to the revolutionaries, with a boycott of arms and aid to the counterrevolutionaries, and above all with a Labor Party to fight for power. But they are not using it.

This is not just the result of the imperialist bureaucracy of the AFL-CIO that has long given open or tacit support to US imperialism's crimes — Korea, Vietnam, *et al.* — in exchange for a place in its order. It is also a result of the official peace and solidarity movements that have systematically refused to open up a struggle within the unions to mobilize the unions against US imperialism for fear of a confrontation with this same imperialist bureaucracy.

The formation of the World Front in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador, with "an orientation toward working people," and Salvadoran unionist Molina Lara's recent union tour in the US are not alternatives to the policy but a

continuation of them. They are centering their struggles on organizing unions to *ask Reagan not to intervene*, not on mobilizing the power of unions as unions.

Thus the solidarity movement remains dependent upon *liberal imperialists*. Large mobilizations tend to occur when they want them to and not when they do not. Thus a million people marched for peace in front of the UN on June 12 but barely a soul hit the streets to protest the imperialist slaughter in Beirut. On a daily basis the solidarity organizations are reduced to a handful of people and CISPES is left hanging banners over freeways to protest Reagan's certification of El Salvador as respectful of human rights.

We Trotskyists do not think that such actions begin to correspond to what is both necessary and possible given the tremendous support that exists in the US for the revolution in Central America. It is high time for a concerted effort to place the unions on the side of the revolu-

tion.
Unions to the aid of Nicaragua!
Arms to the revolutionaries!
Boycott the counterrevolutionary dictatorships!
M.G.

Blacks in Reagan's America

January 15 was the birthday of the late Dr. Martin Luther King. So our president, Ronald Reagan, decided to get into the act. On his weekly radio broadcast, besides the usual empty praise for someone safely dead, Reagan mentioned that "traces of bigotry and injustice still remain."

Straight from the horse's mouth. No one has done more to roll back the limited gains black people won in the 1950's and 60's than Ronald Reagan. No administration has so openly attacked black people and encouraged attacks on them to the extent that Reagan's has.

This was made even clearer a few days later, when the Urban League, a very moderate black organization whose whole purpose is to get small gains by working with big corporations, made public the 1983 edition of its annual survey, "The State of Black America."

This was introduced by the Urban League's head, John Jacob, who noted that 1982 "started with savage cuts in poor people's programs and ended with a riot in Miami." Stating that blacks had been in a "terrible situation" a year ago and that things had "intensified over the past twelve months," he concluded that the "state of black Americans has become more desperate."

But you would never know from Jacob just who it is who has been running this country over these last two years in which the "terrible situation" first arose and then "intensified."

No, Jacob did not mention who it was who tried to give tax credits to segregationist schools, whose Justice Department has opposed school busing and affirmative action, whose administration even tried to stop the extension of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, one of the fundamental gains achieved by the civil rights movement.

On the contrary, this black defender of "democracy" and "free enterprise" called on Reagan to declare a "state of national economic emergency" and create a full employment and jobs training program!

How long can this kind of fakery go on? Black people should not devote one second of their time, one tiny fraction of their effort, towards such a truly "desperate" proposal — asking the imperialist tiger to change his racist stripes. The only road for black people is the road of the general strike, the labor party and the revolution.

K.F.

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